



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Gantt to Join The Leon Levine Foundation Board**

*Sonja Gantt, a former Charlotte news anchor, is the executive director of the CMS Foundation*

**CHARLOTTE, NC--** [The Leon Levine Foundation](#) (TLLF) announced today Sonja Gantt has been appointed to its Board of Directors, effective immediately. Gantt is the ninth member of TLLF's Board of Directors.

The Board has strategically expanded twice in the past two years to support organizational growth, enhance governance, and reflect thoughtful succession planning following the passing of TLLF Founder Leon Levine in 2023. The addition of Gantt signals the completion of this intentional expansion phase, positioning the Board to guide the Foundation's next chapter with renewed strength and continuity.

"Sonja's commitment to education, nonprofit leadership, and community engagement reflects the very values that guide The Leon Levine Foundation," Michael Tarwater, chairman of the Board of Directors, said. "Her experience and insight will be instrumental as we continue to build on Mr. Levine's legacy and invest in organizations creating lasting impact across the Carolinas."

Gantt is the executive director of the CMS Foundation, the nonprofit fundraising partner of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. In her role, Gantt manages the organization's fundraising strategy and oversees its programmatic focus areas, working closely with local corporations, foundations, and community groups. She also serves as a member of the school district's executive leadership team, a role that gives her keen insight into both the challenges and opportunities within school systems.

A former news anchor and reporter, Gantt possesses deep knowledge of the Charlotte community; she served the majority of her 30-year media career covering Mecklenburg County and the surrounding region.

"Sonja has a unique ability to bridge community needs with thoughtful, mission-driven leadership," Tom Lawrence, president and CEO of The Leon Levine Foundation, said. "Her deep



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roots in the Charlotte region and strategic experience in philanthropy will be a tremendous asset as we look to the future of the Foundation's work to empower underserved Carolinians to be self-sufficient and strengthen our Jewish community."

In addition to her role at CMS Foundation, Gantt has previously served on the boards of directors of EdNC, the YMCA of Greater Charlotte and the Z. Smith Reynolds Community Leadership Council.

A Charlotte native, Gantt holds a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"I am honored to join the board of an organization that has long championed opportunity in the community I proudly call home," Gantt said. "The Leon Levine Foundation has had a profound influence on countless lives, and I look forward to contributing to its continued success in uplifting communities and advancing self-sufficiency."

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**About The Leon Levine Foundation:** Established in 1980 by Leon Levine (Founder and Former Chairman of Family Dollar Stores, Inc.), The Leon Levine Foundation pursues its mission of "Empowering underserved Carolinians to be self-sufficient and strengthening our Jewish community" by supporting programs and organizations that align with its four core mission areas: education, healthcare, human services, and Jewish values. Based in Charlotte, N.C., the Foundation invests in nonprofits across North and South Carolina with strong leadership, a track record of success, and a plan for financial sustainability. Learn more online at [leonlevinefoundation.org](http://leonlevinefoundation.org)