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MITCH LANDRIEU LAUNCHES UNUM FELLOWS PROGRAM FOR SOUTHERN ELECTED OFFICIALS LOOKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL EQUITY
Application period ends April 30, 2020

NEW ORLEANS -- Today, former New Orleans Mayor and E Pluribus Unum Founder & President Mitch Landrieu announced the launch of UNUM Fellows, a signature initiative aimed at equipping local elected leaders in the South with resources, training and technical expertise to advance racial and economic equity in their communities.

In October 2019, Landrieu launched E Pluribus Unum (EPU), an initiative created to fulfill America's promise of justice and opportunity for all by breaking down the barriers that divide us by race and class. One of the key findings of EPU’s initial year-long research project was that where local political, community and philanthropic leaders openly prioritize racial diversity and inclusion, there is more hope and optimism in their community’s future among residents and more awareness and openness to racial equity and diversity. Residents across the South consistently cited political leadership and effective government as critical avenues for creating systemic change to issues of race and class.

E Pluribus Unum Founder & President Mitch Landrieu said, “When the E Pluribus Unum team hit the road in 2018 and 2019, it was clear that barriers that divide us along racial and class lines were put up purposefully to keep us divided by design. We believe that we are better together than we are apart. We need our leaders at the local, state, and national levels to prioritize creating more equitable communities, exchange ideas with each other on what works, listen to the people in their communities most affected by these barriers, and create actionable plans to get it done. Our UNUM Fellows program will do exactly that.”

The UNUM Fellows program is a unique, non-partisan fellowship that aims to ensure local elected leaders in the South can act on the issues of racial and economic equity – driving sustainable change in their communities. The program will push leaders towards these issues and support them in generating an ambitious project with the tools to effectively work towards equity in their communities through sustainable change and collaboration.

UNUM Fellows will:
- Gain perspective on and learn how to talk about the systemic and structural nature of racism that moves people forward;
- Build skills to create equitable organizations and systems;
- Gain a deeper understanding of the economic benefits of equity;
- Learn how to design and implement effective equity-driven policy;
• Learn how to use data and research to develop strategies for equitable organizations and systems change;
• Identify and engage core stakeholders from multiple sectors to craft solutions;
• Develop strategies to build public will for equitable policy & practice;
• Examine successful strategies to navigate political levers at both the local and state levels; and,
• Enhance communications opportunities to advance new narratives.

The core elements of the program include skill-building to support the development of a project that will identify a concrete opportunity in a cohort member’s community that specifically addresses racial and/or economic disparities and to develop a responsive initiative for implementation (e.g., policy reform, organizational change, public art project) at the conclusion of the fellowship. UNUM Fellows will receive project funding, along with ongoing technical support, to implement their resulting projects.

UNUM Fellows participants will gain access to a wide range of nationally recognized partner organizations and individuals that will provide valuable and actionable skill-building around racial and economic equity. They will receive project funding, along with ongoing technical support, to implement their resulting projects. Program partners include:
• PolicyLink;
• What Works Cities;
• Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program;
• National League of Cities University; and,
• The Center for Law and Social Policy.

Over the course of the 16-month program, cohort members must be available to participate in monthly activities during the initial 10-month program term, including the Unum Fellows Opening and Capstone Convenings, webinars, cohort calls and on-site technical assistance visits. A second, six-month phase of the program is focused on project implementation.

The application period opens today and closes on April 30, 2020 at 11:59 pm EST.

To learn more about the UNUM Fellows program, visit unumfund.org/fellows.

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**E Pluribus Unum** is an initiative created to fulfill America’s promise of justice and opportunity for all by breaking down the barriers that divide us by race and class. In its first year, the E Pluribus Unum team traveled extensively across the American South to uncover and confront the challenges we face, to learn from people about what separates us and what can bring us together, and to find bold and effective solutions to tackle the modern legacy of Jim Crow so that an inclusive new South may be born. Incubated at Emerson Collective and led by former New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, the E Pluribus Unum team is building a series of programs and initiatives to cultivate courageous leaders who are committed to realizing an inclusive vision for a new South, champion transformative policies to reverse the enduring harms of America’s Jim Crow era past for those who continue to experience them today, and change narratives that perpetuate systemic and interpersonal racism in order to shift people’s attitudes and behaviors.