

# NEXUS

THE COLUMBUS  
FOUNDATION

FALL  
2023



PICTURED:  
Ellen Mosley-Thompson, PhD, and  
Lonnie Thompson, PhD, at the Byrd  
Polar and Climate Research Center at  
The Ohio State University.

## ‘Glaciers Tell the Truth’

World-renowned researchers are on a mission to preserve glacial ice cores for future generations of scientists

**LONNIE THOMPSON, PHD, AND ELLEN MOSLEY-THOMPSON, PHD,** have lived extraordinary, adventure-filled lives. As spouses, research partners, and globally recognized paleoclimatologists—scientists who study ancient climates—Lonnie and Ellen have journeyed across continents and

hemispheres to retrieve glacial ice cores that help us better understand our Earth’s climate history.

Collectively, their expeditions have taken them to destinations as remote as Antarctica, with bitter subzero temperatures, and as high as Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, a dormant volcano that rises more than 19,000 feet above sea level. Ice cores collected from these sites and others are housed at the Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center at The Ohio State University, where Lonnie and Ellen work as Distinguished University Professors.

Collecting an ice core is no simple task: it requires a well-trained team and a great deal of preparation, heavy equipment, problem solving, and patience—often in remote, harsh environments. But preserved in each ice core is a vivid and unique history that helps scientists better understand the

[continued on page 3]

4

### THE POWER OF PLAY

Adaptive Sports Connection is empowering individuals with disabilities through outdoor and therapeutic recreation.

5

### SUPPORTING THE CAUSES MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU

Fueled by the generosity of donors, Field of Interest Funds are helping to support remarkable programs and organizations.

5

### A PLACE FOR HOPE AND HEALING

Directions for Youth & Families recently celebrated the grand opening of the new Crittenton Community Center.

6

### 2023 PHILANTHROPY AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The Columbus Foundation recently honored extraordinary acts of generosity at the annual Celebration of Philanthropy.

# NEXUS

Fall 2023

## THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION

### GOVERNING COMMITTEE

Clark Kellogg  
*Chairperson*

Jeffrey W. Edwards  
*Vice Chairperson*

Jane Grote Abell  
George S. Barrett  
B.J. Hicks, MD  
Lisa Ingram  
Katie Wolfe Lloyd  
Marchelle E. Moore  
Matthew A. Scantland

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

Douglas F. Kridler  
*President and CEO*

Sharee Blackmon, PHD, SHRM-SCP  
*Director of Human Resources*

J. Bradley Britton, JD, LLM  
*Director of Planned Giving  
and General Counsel*

Scott G. Heitkamp, CPA  
*Senior Vice President and CFO*

Steven Moore  
*Chief of Staff*

Gregg Oosterbaan  
*Vice President, Information Technology*

Angela G. Parsons, JD, CAP®  
*Vice President, Donor Services*

Dan A. Sharpe  
*Vice President, Community Research  
and Grants Management*

Amy Vick  
*Vice President, Communications  
and Marketing*

### EDITORIAL STAFF

Chelsea Kiene  
Challen Brown  
Megan Denny  
Margaret Robinson  
Amy Vick

### OUR MISSION

To assist donors and others in strengthening and improving our community for the benefit of all its residents.

### OUR PROMISE

To help you help others through the most effective philanthropy possible.

**Want to share NEXUS with a friend?**  
Find our digital version online at [columbusfoundation.org/fall2023nexus](http://columbusfoundation.org/fall2023nexus)

For more information, visit [columbusfoundation.org](http://columbusfoundation.org) or call 614/251-4000.



*Photos by Challen Brown, unless noted.*



Confirmed in compliance with national standards for U.S. community foundations.



©2023 The Columbus Foundation

## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



**Douglas F. Kridler**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO

Pictured (l-r): Doug Kridler, President and CEO of The Columbus Foundation, Jackie Calderone, Founding Director of TRANSIT ARTS, and Columbus artist Richard Duarte Brown at Central Community House's Village Makers Festival. Photo courtesy of TRANSIT ARTS.



**F**IRST, a disclaimer, or a reassurance, or an admission: Artificial Intelligence was not used in the writing of this message to you.

Why am I stating this? At a recent forum for nonprofits on the topic of Artificial Intelligence and Philanthropy held here at The Columbus Foundation, the national expert featured in the presentation said that most columns published today are generated by Artificial Intelligence, and then edited by a human. Rest assured, this entire issue of NEXUS was conceived of, written, and edited by us, the staff of The Columbus Foundation, and this column, written by me.

That isn't to say that Artificial Intelligence won't play a helpful role in our work down the road. But, we continue to center humanity, and celebrate its authentic and best moments and manifestations.

The photo above is of one such moment. It was taken this summer at TRANSIT ARTS, a remarkable youth and arts-focused program affiliated with Central Community House. TRANSIT ARTS is the brainchild of Jackie Calderone, one of our community's largely unsung heroes doing the hard and heart work for decades in our neighborhoods to build positive connection with and between our community's youth. We celebrated Jackie, as we did her performer/filmmaker husband Robert Post, a few years back as part of The Columbus Foundation's "Columbus' True Originals" honorees, recognition richly deserved.

With Jackie and me in the photo is the artist Richard Duarte Brown, a truly remarkable

human who is also an artist of high distinction, whose honors include being the first Artist in Residence at Aminah Robinson's restored home/studio. Duarte was also a recipient of one of The Columbus Foundation's *The Spirit of Columbus® Awards* a few years back, and just last week, we were honored to install one of Duarte's extraordinary paintings at The Columbus Foundation. That painting depicts the late, great artist Aminah Robinson, with her arms around two exceptional Columbus-based creatives of international acclaim: Ann Hamilton and Hanif Abdurraqib.

The photo above was taken after a ceremony during which both Duarte and I were among those presented with Village Makers Awards from TRANSIT ARTS and Central Community House. I couldn't be prouder to stand with Jackie and Duarte, as I consider them and the extraordinary people and places they serve, mentor, and lead to reflect the grounding of our work at The Columbus Foundation. They aren't just who we support and celebrate; they, too, embody why we exist. The humanity they bring to all they come into contact with and the dedication they have shown to and shared with others help strengthen our community, as have those of Aminah, Hanif, Ann, and those highlighted in this issue of NEXUS. There is so much humanity in their work and so much inspiration in their connections with others that will never be rivaled by Artificial Intelligence, no matter how ubiquitous AI may become.

For that, and for them, and for you, I am thankful.



## STUDENTS INVITED TO APPLY FOR 2024 Summer Fellowship Program

**EACH YEAR**, The Columbus Foundation inspires the next generation of nonprofit leaders through our Summer Fellowship Program, an immersive 10-week program that provides college students, recent college graduates, and graduate students the opportunity to work with local nonprofit organizations. By participating in the Summer Fellowship Program, students receive valuable experience and a paid stipend for their work, while also building the organizational capacity of central Ohio nonprofits.



**The Columbus Foundation is accepting student applications for the 2024 Summer Fellowship Program through December 8!** To learn more about the program, including student eligibility and the application process, please scan the QR code.

global climate and changes in the environment. Spanning back hundreds of thousands of years, ice cores tell the Earth’s story—a story that, in recent decades, has been increasingly punctuated by the impacts of climate change.

“Ice cores are probably our best recorder of the past on this planet,” Lonnie explained. “They record not just climate—things like temperature and greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane—they capture things like precipitation, volcanic eruptions, microbes, anything that’s in the air at the time. They’re just an amazing recorder of so many variables.”

“Glaciers tell the truth. They are sending a very loud message to all of us. But the record is disappearing—once these glaciers are gone, they’re gone.”

— LONNIE THOMPSON, PHD

As Ellen put it, she and Lonnie, both from West Virginia, came into the field of glaciology and paleoclimatology serendipitously. The couple met while attending a holiday party at Marshall University, where they each completed their undergraduate studies. When Lonnie started graduate school at Ohio State, he initially planned to study coal geology before discovering what was then called the Institute of Polar Studies. After joining an expedition to Antarctica, Lonnie knew he wanted to dedicate his career to studying ice cores. In the 1970s, Lonnie became the first scientist ever to collect ice cores from tropical mountain glaciers. His story is the focus of a recently released documentary, *CANARY*, now streaming.

Ellen, who also attended graduate school at Ohio State, started her field work in Antarctica and Greenland, where she has since led more than a dozen expeditions to retrieve ice cores. A highly accomplished researcher, she has authored more than 140 peer-reviewed papers and is an elected member of numerous prestigious scientific organizations, including the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Together, Lonnie and Ellen have amassed an impressive ice core collection and body of research that have provided substantial evidence of rapidly accelerating climate change. As Lonnie explained, glaciers are the proverbial canary in a coal mine—an early warning system for the planet telling us there’s danger. But as global temperatures rise and glaciers continue to melt, scientists are losing valuable information archived in the ice.

“Glaciers tell the truth,” said Lonnie. “They are sending a very loud message to all of us. But the record is disappearing—once these glaciers are gone, they’re gone.”

Earlier this year, Lonnie and Ellen established the *CANARY Ice Core and Education Fund* at The Columbus Foundation to raise funds to preserve a unique archive of ice cores so that future generations of scientists can research and extract climatic and environmental histories from the cores. As both Lonnie and Ellen explained, the ice cores contain valuable information and insights that scientists have yet to discover.



Pictured, above: Ice cores stored at the Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center at The Ohio State University.

Left: Ellen Mosley-Thompson, PhD, and Lonnie Thompson, PhD, at Ohio State’s Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center.

“When we started this ice core group many years ago, we made one measurement—that was it. We measured the insoluble dust, the dust that falls out on the glacier,” Ellen said. “Now, because of the development of more equipment and asking more complex questions, we measure probably 50 or 60 things, if you add every element. We’re really just beginning to scratch the surface.”

“You can only imagine 20, 30 years from now with new technologies the questions that could be answered that we haven’t even thought to ask,” Lonnie added.

Lonnie and Ellen also plan to use their fund to provide educational opportunities to students who, for instance, are the first in their family to attend college.

“There are so many smart people out there who don’t ever get a chance to contribute their talents to the world,” Ellen explained. “We’re really passionate about trying to open up opportunities for motivated young people.”

Lonnie and Ellen are also dedicated to getting the message out on the devastating effects of climate change in the hopes of inspiring others into action. Although climate change presents many complex challenges, both Lonnie and Ellen remain optimistic about humanity and people’s

ability to work together to solve the climate crisis.

“We didn’t leave the stone age because we ran out of stones. We found a better way,” Lonnie said.

## The Columbus Foundation Joins National Climate Collaborative

**IN MAY**, The Columbus Foundation joined a nationwide coalition of more than 40 community foundations to launch the **Community Foundation Climate Collaborative**. Members of the collaborative share a commitment to support climate action in their respective communities and to address inequities fueled by the climate crisis.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [www.cfon.org/cfcc](http://www.cfon.org/cfcc)



# An Experience for Everyone

## ADAPTIVE SPORTS CONNECTION STRIVES TO MAKE SPORTS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

**ON A CLEAR SUNDAY MORNING** in early October, a group of volunteers gathered near Alum Creek Lake in Delaware County to prepare for the day's activities. Bicycles bearing names like "Superman" and "Silver Tadpole" were lined up along a trail entrance, waiting to conquer the rough terrain nearby. The tire pressure of each bike was checked while safety equipment was prepared and tested. Soon, the volunteers would welcome athletes and their families to Discover Mountain Biking, a course designed to teach individuals with disabilities the basics of mountain biking.

The event, hosted by Adaptive Sports Connection in conjunction with the Central Ohio Mountain Biking Organization (COMBO), is one of many adaptive sports programs the organization offers to individuals with disabilities and their families. For more than 30 years, Adaptive Sports Connection has served children, adults, and veterans with disabilities through outdoor and therapeutic recreation and other athletic opportunities.

As Sharon Bucey, President and CEO of Adaptive Sports Connection, shared, the organization engages individuals with a diverse range of physical and cognitive disabilities. Whether an athlete has a brain or spinal cord injury, a limb difference, Parkinson's disease, Autism Spectrum Disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the organization's goal is the same: to ensure people of all abilities can enjoy the health benefits, freedom, and sense of belonging that comes with recreation and outdoor experiences.

"We all know the tremendous physical and mental benefits of getting outdoors and enjoying recreation," said Bucey. "It's so important to make these experiences available to everyone."

Through its year-round programming and with the support of more than 700 volunteers, Adaptive Sports Connection serves thousands each year, reaching 44 Ohio counties. Whether it's mountain biking, kayaking, soccer, sailing, or snowboarding, the organization offers adaptive recreational opportunities to all individuals with disabilities, regardless of skill level, prior

experience, or age. In fact, Bucey says Adaptive Sports Connection currently works with adaptive athletes ranging from age 3 to age 92.

Beyond the health benefits of sports and recreation, Bucey also emphasized the role these activities play in fostering a sense of connection and belonging.

"A big piece of what we do is keep people connected," Bucey shared. "Connection is so important for our mental health and well-being. We strive to be a place where people can come and connect."



Pictured: Adaptive Sports Connection volunteer David Giesmen follows alongside adaptive rider Eva Simons on a mountain bike trail near Alum Creek Lake.

One of the many ways Adaptive Sports Connection is building community is through its programming for veterans. This summer, the organization partnered with the National Veterans Memorial and Museum, Team Red, White & Blue, and the Wounded Warrior Project to host a Veterans Adventure Weekend. The free event welcomed veterans and their families to central Ohio for a weekend of recreation, games, entertainment, and—perhaps most importantly—camaraderie.

"We had veterans from five different states come and one guy said to me, 'This is healing my heart,'" Bucey said. "You could just see it in his eyes, that sense of connection. We are planning to form a veteran think tank so that we can

Pictured, above: Adaptive Sports Connection volunteers prepare a bicycle for adaptive athlete Will Smith before exploring mountain bike trails near Alum Creek Lake.

create programming that is developed by and for veterans."

In addition to its programming for veterans, Adaptive Sports Connection is also undertaking a capital campaign to build two new, state-of-the-art facilities. The facilities—the Adventure and Wellness Lodge in Shawnee Hills and the Adaptive Sports Complex in New Albany—will

each provide spaces for individuals with disabilities and their families to gather, connect, share resources, and support one another. As Bucey envisions it, the new facilities will also serve as places where Adaptive Sports Connection can partner with other nonprofits, hospital systems, and Veterans Affairs clinics to provide holistic support and programming.

"We really believe in collaboration with other nonprofits and that we can all lift each other up," Bucey explained. "We see this facility as an impact investment for the whole community."

The Columbus Foundation—along with the generous support of the *William H. Davis, Dorothy M. Davis and William C. Davis Foundation* and *The Walter Foundation*, both Supporting Foundations of The Columbus Foundation, *The Big Lots Foundation Fund*, and other Columbus Foundation donors—has awarded several grants to support Adaptive Sports Connection's capital campaign.

For individuals who are looking to support Adaptive Sports Connection while also enjoying outdoor recreation, Bucey invites the community to get involved with the organization's social enterprise, *Get Out Adventures*. Launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, *Get Out Adventures* offers people of all abilities the opportunity to get outdoors to kayak, cycle, and ski, with 100 percent of net revenue supporting Adaptive Sports Connection.

# The Power of Field of Interest Funds

For 80 years, The Columbus Foundation has worked with passionate individuals, families, businesses, and organizations to help them achieve their charitable giving goals through the most effective philanthropy possible. One vehicle through which donors are helping to strengthen and improve our community is Field of Interest Funds.

**THROUGH THIS FUND OPTION**, donors make contributions to specific areas of interest that have meaning to them—such as the arts, youth services, education, healthcare, or conservation. Once a donor establishes a Field of Interest Fund, The Columbus Foundation’s knowledgeable Community Research and Grants Management team identifies and makes grants to organizations that are making the greatest impact in the donor’s areas of interest.

Fueled by the generosity of donors who have established Field of Interest Funds, The Columbus Foundation awards grants to nonprofits twice each year through a competitive grantmaking process. These grants—known as Focused Funds grants—typically range between \$1,000 and \$10,000 and support a wide range of areas, from historic preservation and mental health to summer camp maintenance and end-of-life care.

“With a Field of Interest Fund, your generosity can join with others’ to affect organizations that align with your interest in a specific cause or social issue—heightened with the collaboration of our community research experts,” said Jeff Byars, CAP®, Associate Director for Donor Services at The Columbus Foundation.

In 2023, a record-setting number of nonprofits applied to receive Focused Funds grants from The Columbus Foundation, demonstrating the important and growing role these funds have in supporting the community—now and in perpetuity.

One such grant awarded earlier this year was to Canine Companions, a nonprofit that offers individuals with disabilities a means to enhance their independence by providing expertly trained service dogs at no cost to the recipient. The grant, made possible by the *Alfred B. Ashman, Jr. Memorial Trust #2 Fund* and the *Otto and Beatrice Knoll Field of Interest Fund*, will help cover the overall costs of raising, training, and matching service dogs with people needing this support. Another organization that was recently awarded a Focused Funds grant is Hospice of Central Ohio to support the Pathways of Hope program. Pathways to Hope provides grief-focused mental health services to adults, families, and children at no cost. This grant was provided from the *Arthur and Sara Jo Kobacker, Alfred and Ida Kobacker Fund*.



To learn more about Field of Interest Funds, scan the QR code or email The Columbus Foundation’s Donor Services team at [dsd@columbusfoundation.org](mailto:dsd@columbusfoundation.org).



Pictured: Jenn Smith of Canine Companions trains a future service dog at the organization’s training center in New Albany.

## A Place for Hope, Healing, and Connection

**FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY**, Directions for Youth & Families (DFYF) has inspired hope, healing, and resilience for youth and families in central Ohio. Through counseling, education, and support programs, the organization is helping to build healthy individuals, strong families, and safe communities.

For years, DFYF has operated two youth centers—the Ohio Avenue Youth Center and the Crittenton Center—where young people can engage in activities that promote creative thinking, self-expression, leadership, personal responsibility, conflict resolution, and more. However, due to limited space at the Crittenton Center, DFYF has long struggled to keep up with demand, with programs quickly filling to capacity.



Pictured: Directions for Youth & Families’ new Crittenton Community Center.

In response to this challenge, DFYF launched “Rooted in Change,” a capital campaign to raise funds to build a new community center in Columbus’ Eastland area neighborhood. The Columbus Foundation, thanks to the generosity of donors and Supporting Foundations, awarded several grants to support the capital campaign.

On October 24, DFYF celebrated the grand opening of the new Crittenton Community Center with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. In partnership with more than 20 nonprofits, the new center will offer services that address food insecurity, housing stability, workforce development, education, legal aid, mental health, support for seniors, youth programming, and more.

“The new Crittenton Community Center will serve as an important resource, community hub, and source of hope for countless individuals and families,” said Dan Sharpe, Vice President for Community Research and Grants Management at The Columbus Foundation. “We congratulate Directions for Youth & Families for this incredible milestone and look forward to witnessing how this space will help lift up our neighbors and strengthen our community.”

Last year, in recognition of the organization’s vital role in bringing stability and opportunity to youth, families, and neighborhoods, Directions for Youth & Families was named the 2022 honoree of *The Columbus Foundation Award*. The award recognizes organizations that have made a difference in the quality of life in our community.

## A Community of Readers



**IN JULY**, more than 34,000 people gathered at the inaugural Columbus Book Festival at the Main Library and neighboring Topiary Park. The free, two-day festival—hosted by Columbus Metropolitan Library

in recognition of the organization’s 150th anniversary—welcomed families, book-lovers, authors, performers, and others for a lively weekend of community, connection, and celebration.

The Columbus Foundation is honored to have been a major sponsor of this year’s Columbus Book Festival. Congratulations to Columbus Metropolitan Library for organizing this successful and memorable event!

# Generosity Honored at 2023 Celebration of Philanthropy

During the annual Celebration of Philanthropy in September, The Columbus Foundation honored extraordinary philanthropists and nonprofits and announced the 2023 honorees of *The Harrison M. Sayre Award*, *The Columbus Foundation Award*, and the *Acorn Award*.



Pictured: Dwight and Renée Smith

THE HARRISON M. SAYRE AWARD HONOREES

## Renée and Dwight Smith

Given in honor of The Columbus Foundation's founder and 25-year volunteer director, *The Harrison M. Sayre Award* recognizes leadership in philanthropy in central Ohio.

**FOR RENÉE AND DWIGHT SMITH**, generosity extends far beyond their charitable dollars—it also includes leading by example and encouraging and empowering those around them. Guided by their faith, the couple says that giving back to the community and inspiring others to be generous is a true blessing.

The Smiths, who are longtime Columbus Foundation donors, are passionate supporters of organizations that advance social justice, empower entrepreneurship, uplift older adults, and inspire youth. Renée and Dwight also started My Special Word, a nonprofit that teaches children about the importance of positive, encouraging, and inspiring words. Both Renée and Dwight actively give back to the community through board service, volunteer work, and other charitable activities.

In celebration of the Smiths' giving spirit, Renée and Dwight were selected as the 2023 honorees of *The Harrison M. Sayre Award*. As Mr. Sayre once stated, "The best way to extend your life is to give to the community." The Smiths give generously of their time, talent, and treasure.



Pictured: Karen Mozenter, CEO of Jewish Family Services

THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION AWARD HONOREE

## Jewish Family Services

*The Columbus Foundation Award* recognizes organizations that have made a difference in the quality of life in our community.

**SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY** since 1908, Jewish Family Services is committed to helping individuals and families achieve economic self-sufficiency and emotional stability. Although the organization was originally founded to assist newly arriving Jewish refugees who were settling in central Ohio to meet their basic needs, Jewish Family Services has evolved to serve a diverse client base.

Through its many programs and services, Jewish Family Services helps people find good jobs, supports older adults and caregivers in navigating the challenges of aging, extends critical services for refugees entering the United States, connects people to community resources, empowers family self-sufficiency through financial counseling, and provides opportunities for volunteers to give back.

In recognition of the vital role the organization plays in bringing stability to members of our community, Jewish Family Services was selected as the 2023 honoree of *The Columbus Foundation Award*.



Scan the QR code to learn more about the 2023 Philanthropy Award honorees.



ACORN AWARD HONOREE

## Frontline Medical Ukraine Fund

The *Acorn Award* recognizes a Columbus Foundation fund that displays a generous spirit of giving and inspires others while supporting community.

**AS U.S. ARMY BRIGADIER** General Mark Arnold (Ret.) watched Russia's invasion of Ukraine unfold in early 2022, he jumped into action, collecting medical supplies to send to Ukrainians on the frontlines.

Soon after, General Arnold began volunteering in Ukraine, providing training to medics on the frontlines of the crisis. In March 2023, General Arnold established the *Frontline Medical Ukraine Fund* at The Columbus Foundation to help continue providing medical training and supplies, saving the lives of Ukrainian soldiers and civilians alike.

The *Frontline Medical Ukraine Fund* was selected as the 2023 honoree of the *Acorn Award* in recognition of the fund's extraordinary, life-saving mission.

Pictured: U.S. Army Brigadier General Mark Arnold (Ret.)

## Lessons from Abroad



Pictured: Matt Martin with a member of the Miura Citizen Exchange Center. Photo provided by Matt Martin.

**THIS SUMMER**, Matt Martin, Director of Community Research at The Columbus Foundation, was part of a multi-sector cohort of Columbus leaders that traveled to Japan to learn about the many ways Japanese communities are responding to aging population trends. The trip was sponsored by the Japan Foundation and facilitated by the U.S. office of the Japan Center for International Exchange.

As Martin shared in a recent Q&A, the experience offered inspiring examples of the way

cities are building community, as well as insights into how central Ohio can ready itself for a growing population.

### What are some of the similarities you observed between Columbus and Tokyo, Japan's most populous city?

Columbus and Tokyo are more alike than one would think. Both are centers of government, industry, education, and healthcare. Both cities and nearby regions are growing despite being surrounded by rural areas experiencing population decline. There are also strong business ties between the two regions, due largely to the significant local presence of Honda and other Japanese companies, which employ nearly 20,000 people in central Ohio.

### Based on your observations, how do leaders in Japan approach community-building and civic engagement?

In comparison to the United States, Japan's national government is more supportive of social service delivery, which leads to proportionately less philanthropic engagement in the corporate sector and among individuals. But Japan also boasts greater coordination between national, state (prefecture), and local government agencies in community planning and service delivery. The nonprofits that do exist in Japan tend to be led and operated more by volunteers.

Despite the differences in government and philanthropy, I think our community can learn from the immense impact of volunteerism in the Japanese context. And although we often pride ourselves on a unique willingness to forge partnerships to get things done, the level of coordination we saw challenged our notions of what more could be possible through further alignment of our public, corporate, and nonprofit sectors.

### Tokyo is the largest city in the world and is home to more than 37 million people. As our region grows, what are some lessons that Columbus can learn from Tokyo?

I went into the trip expecting Tokyo to feel overwhelmingly dense, chaotic, and difficult to navigate, but I was shocked by the city's tranquility and how harmoniously the various modes of transportation interacted with one another. Greater Columbus finds itself in a sustained era of growth in which density, mixed-use development, and multi-modal transportation are going to be essential to addressing our emerging housing and transportation challenges in a sustainable way.

It was also inspiring to see how livable a densely populated city like Tokyo can be through thoughtful and integrated planning that balances the needs for convenient mobility, public health and safety, social equity, and environmental conservation.

### Were there any experiences from your trip that you found particularly inspiring?

On the last day of our trip we visited the Kamakura Living Lab, where older residents live amid a multi-generational co-operative independent living community. It was beautiful to see older adults working together to operate a fresh produce market and maintain the community's parks, as well as to witness the way the dignity of every person was honored and preserved in the daily life of Kamakura. This experience left our entire team marveling at the way these places have come to view older adults as assets and community stewards. So many of these programs and initiatives—which are intended to support healthy aging—also make life richer and more enjoyable for people of all ages and stages.

## The Big Table<sup>®</sup> Inspires Community Conversation



Strengthening our community's social fabric begins with forging meaningful connections with others.

**SINCE 2016**, The Big Table<sup>®</sup> has brought central Ohioans together annually for a day of community-wide conversation designed to inspire authentic human connection and civic engagement.

On October 11, thousands of community members gathered at Big Table conversations throughout the region to talk about issues impacting the community—from health disparities and engaging youth to homelessness and cultivating kindness. Together, Big Table hosts and participants discussed the next steps toward a kind and just future for all, one conversation at a time.

"The Big Table is all about bringing people together to discuss issues that matter to our community," said Kate Oliphint, Director of the Center for HumanKindness at The Columbus Foundation. "We hope these conversations inspire ongoing dialogue and a renewed sense of connection as we work together to strengthen and improve our region."

Thank you to everyone who pulled up a seat to The Big Table and joined the conversation!

**"We all benefit when we ensure everyone feels included and part of the community."**

— 2023 BIG TABLE PARTICIPANT



Pictured: Community members participate in The Big Table, an annual day of community-focused conversations and civic engagement. Photos by Challen Brown and Kathryn D. Gentry.



1 : Preserving Ice Cores



4 : An Experience for Everyone



7 : The Big Table



THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION

1234 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43205-1453  
[columbusfoundation.org](http://columbusfoundation.org)

## Giving Tuesday is November 28!



## Kick off this holiday season with a gift from the heart.

Now in its 10th year, the *Gifts of Kindness Fund* works with nearly 50 local nonprofits to identify and provide one-time grants to help people weather the unexpected, ensuring that one setback doesn't spiral into prolonged instability.

This year, thanks to the generosity of the Wolfe family, all donations made to the ***Gifts of Kindness Fund*** at The Columbus Foundation will be matched **dollar-for-dollar beginning on Giving Tuesday, until we reach \$1 million!**

In addition, The Columbus Foundation will cover fees for gifts made by credit card, so **100%** of your donation will go to partner nonprofits helping central Ohio individuals and families address an unforeseen crisis.



To learn more, visit  
[columbusfoundation.org](http://columbusfoundation.org).