

# NEXUS



THE COLUMBUS  
FOUNDATION

FALL  
2020



**NEX·US** (něk'səs) N., **1.** A MEANS OF CONNECTION; A LINK OR TIE. **2.** A CONNECTED SERIES OR GROUP. **3.** THE CORE OR CENTER.



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Grant benefits Learning  
Extension Centers





Douglas F. Kridler  
President and CEO

knowledge, the discovery of emerging talent and ideas, making investments in organizations that count now, and about the transcendent work of kindness and flourishing.

Which brings me to the other thing that happened on this day, the day of my writing this. This one was a *Dispatch* story just as heartwarming as the experience of joining so many others in the festival of civic engagement at the Board of Elections. It was a story about beating the odds, and the sharing of a vivid, colorful thoughtfulness. It was a story about 91-year-old artist Bonnie Bowen, of Upper Arlington.

Here are the final words of that article—I think they speak for themselves, and include, once again, the unique way and words not only of the heroine of the story, but those of the heroine of our early days experiencing the most pervasive health crisis in over 100 years, now The Columbus Foundation’s Director of Kind Columbus, Amy Acton.

“Though the survival odds were stacked against the nonagenarian, Bowen’s recovery (from COVID) didn’t surprise Acton. ‘She’s become this unifying force in the community,’ Acton said. ‘Acts of kindness, in science, we know the health benefits—it’s good for her, it’s good for us.’ Acton said she cherishes the ‘precious’ painting Bowen did of her and her daughter and knows others had similar reactions to (the now over 200) pieces that spoke to them. ‘It’s no small thing,’ Acton said. ‘It might be all we have. Bonnie is the epitome of pulling people together.’”

There is goodness in the world. We appreciate your joining with us in the discovery and strengthening of it.



**YEAR-END REMINDER**

Please note that Donor Advised Fund grant suggestions received **by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, December 8** will be mailed prior to yearend. Questions? Contact us at [dsd@columbusfoundation.org](mailto:dsd@columbusfoundation.org).

**Happy Holidays!**

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**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.



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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.



# Central Ohio Digital Divide Fund

**INSTEAD OF PACKING** backpacks and meeting up with friends at the bus stop this fall, nearly 50,000 Columbus City Schools (CCS) students began the year fully remote, a reality that posed great challenges for many parents and their children.

In an effort to support and engage students in learning when they couldn't be together in the classroom, a group of corporate and community leaders, local government agencies, faith-based leaders, higher education institutions, and others were convened by CCS' Chief of Engagement Alesia Gillison to strategize ways to address issues related to remote learning.

That group determined it would be beneficial to identify Learning Extension Centers (LECs), locations throughout Columbus where students in grades K-12 could have access to reliable internet, academic assistance, meals, and wraparound services that would have been available to them in a traditional school setting. As of October 31, there were 145 LECs ready to serve 3,000 students on any given day, with most located in recreation and community centers, places of worship, and nonprofit sites. Center hours vary by location, with service hours offered during the academic day. Many LECs are also offering before and after-school hours.



Photo courtesy of YMCA of Central Ohio

“The funding from the Central Ohio Digital Divide Fund was exactly what we needed. It allowed us to jump start some of this work for our most vulnerable populations.”

— KATINA FULLEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, I KNOW I CAN

“Through a collaboration of faith-based [organizations] and community partners who have committed to work together and to expand their collective capacity, students will be able to more easily access the tools and resources they need to succeed personally and academically this year,” said Katina Fullen, Executive Director of I Know I Can. Fullen also serves as Co-Chair of the Community Partnership Sub-Committee on CCS' Reopening Task Force along with Melinda Carter, Vice President, Chief of Program Performance & Strategy, at Columbus Urban League.

According to Fullen, because remote and hybrid learning models widen equity gaps



Photo courtesy of YMCA of Central Ohio

and provide fewer opportunities for students to receive support services, the need for a solution for students was great.

In July, The Columbus Foundation announced the creation of the *Central Ohio Digital Divide Fund*. The fund was created as a branch of the *Emergency Response Fund* that launched in March to address needs related to COVID-19. The Foundation recently announced plans to double the initial investment to help bridge the digital divide, expanding the original investment of \$500,000 to \$1 million in order to ensure all community members have high-quality access to education, employment opportunities, and other aspects of life that are increasingly found online. Foundation donors and community partners are also contributing generously to the fund.

The first grant from the Central Ohio Digital Divide Fund was awarded to I Know I Can to help with the establishment of LECs and to provide much-needed support services to students while school buildings remain closed.

“We are sharing the funds from the grant with our community partners who are working with us in the LECs. This support will also expand our collective capacity to serve students and families during this time,” Fullen said. Two of the organizations benefiting are the YMCA of Central Ohio and Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services (ETSS).

The YMCA operates LECs for middle and high school students in four of their branches, as well as the Van Buren shelter. ETSS is teaming up with CCS to provide five bilingual liaisons who will work specifically with English Language Learner (ELL) families, helping them navigate the technology needs through home visits and phone calls, ensuring they are connected to the necessary resources to help children in those families succeed.

As we've seen as a society there are many challenges to living in a mostly virtual world. That's no different for students. But, even with the challenges at hand, Fullen is proud of the work that has been done by CCS, and all who have stepped up to help provide the best resources for kids during this time.

“It's been inspiring to see the collaboration and comradery between faith-based, corporate, government, and community partners, and to help facilitate this work. We are grateful for the investment in support of Columbus students,” Fullen said.

## Renowned Stanford Workshop Goes Virtual for Central Ohio Nonprofits

**WHEN THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION** announced its unprecedented partnership with Stanford University's d.school in February, there was no way to know the novel coronavirus would have such disruptive and long-lasting effects on our country. As it became clear that hosting the world-renowned “Designing for Social Systems” workshop in person would not be possible, the institutions devised a way the human-centered design training could take place virtually.

“We knew that, as important as this work was to the community pre-COVID, now it was even more imperative to provide our nonprofit leaders with skills and tools that they can use within their organizations to help strengthen our social systems and embed equity practices in solution creation to better serve the most vulnerable,” said Heather Tsavaris, Principal Consultant on the Foundation's Human:Kind initiative.



In August, 40 leaders from social service nonprofits, as well as local city and county agencies, were immersed online in five days of intensive, interactive sessions with the goal of creating and testing new ways of engaging with their constituents for better solutions to complex challenges.

The results? Innovative ideas that ranged from shoring up feelings of isolation and abandonment in Columbus City Schools students, to helping people who are housing insecure better navigate the public housing system.

“Columbus Metropolitan Library has often sought customer input when creating programs and designing services. And yet, the “Designing for Social Systems” immersive workshop provided us with a new framework that encourages co-collaboration and co-creation with customers and community members throughout the entire development process,” said Donna Zuiderweg, Chief Community Engagement Officer at Columbus Metropolitan Library. “It's the difference between, ‘Tell us what you need and we'll try to do it,’ and ‘Tell us what you need and then sit with us, and we'll design the solution together.’”

In addition to the knowledge and skills developed during the training, participants in the workshop will continue to learn from one another through an ongoing community of practice. Once per quarter, the nonprofit leaders will come together for a discussion of best practices and local practices in human-centered design. The meet-ups will give group members the chance to talk about how they're applying the problem-solving methods they learned and to get feedback on specific projects they're working on.

The Stanford training was part the Foundation's larger investment in our community's social well-being. By providing an inclusive method of problem solving with, not just for, our residents, human-centered design offers organizations and leaders in our community a fresh way to understand the issues: through the eyes of those who experience them. More information at [cbusfdn.org/dss](http://cbusfdn.org/dss).



# 2020 Philanthropy Awards Announced at Annual Celebration of Philanthropy



THE HARRISON M. SAYRE AWARD WINNER

Catherine Willis

The Harrison M. Sayre Award, given in honor of the Foundation's founder and volunteer director for 25 years, recognizes leadership in philanthropy in central Ohio.

As a Columbus City Schools (CCS) teacher, Catherine Willis dedicated her career to instilling knowledge and developing students to become lifelong learners. Nearly 50 years ago, she co-founded Friends of Art for Community Enrichment (F.A.C.E.) to introduce children to the art and culture of Africa and African Americans. Among its activities, F.A.C.E. presents local, regional, and national artists' work, encourages participation in intergenerational art activities, and furthers awareness and understanding of the African American culture through artistic portrayals of community experiences.

Since 1987, Mrs. Willis has served as part of the *Helen Jenkins Davis Scholarship Fund* Lunch Bunch, which awards scholarships to Black CCS graduating seniors who demonstrate high scholastic and ethical standards. Mrs. Willis and a colleague developed the fund to recognize Helen Jenkins Davis, who led the desegregation of CCS and committed her professional life as an educator to mentoring and motivating underprivileged and at-risk Black students.

In her retirement, Mrs. Willis continues to advocate for children through her volunteer work.

In 2007, she founded Urban Strings, an organization dedicated to supporting underserved minority youth in playing string instruments. Mrs. Willis' commitment to the young people of our community is further seen through her 30 years of service on the board of the *Columbus Youth Foundation* (CYF), The Columbus Foundation's first Supporting Foundation. CYF improves the lives of youth from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods by providing healthy, positive opportunities to learn life lessons through recreation and sports.

See Catherine Willis' acceptance speech at [cbusfdn.org/catherinewillis](https://cbusfdn.org/catherinewillis).

**“As I reflected on what I knew about Harrison Sayre, he too was patient, compassionate, generous, and committed to helping his community as the founder of The Columbus Foundation. I accept this award in his memory, and I share this award with all of you, my family, my friends, and those of you who provided funding, prayers, and participation in those things I am passionate about. Thank you all for being the wind beneath my wings.”**

—CATHERINE WILLIS

**While we weren't able to gather** at The Columbus Foundation for the annual Celebration of Philanthropy this year, a special virtual version, recorded in the Foundation's garden and sent to donors and friends on September 10, shared a number of highlights, including the announcement of our 2020 Philanthropy Awards. Now, more than ever, we celebrate the dedication, commitment, perseverance, and kindness of these incredible award winners.



THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION AWARD WINNER

Human Service Chamber of Franklin County

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

With a mission to unleash the power of human potential through every act of human service, the Human Service Chamber of Franklin County (HSC) strives to enhance system efficiencies and effectiveness in order to develop one voice for the human service system. It does this by promoting, enhancing, and advocating for human service organizations and the clients they serve in central Ohio.

Established in 2010, HSC was conceived by local leaders who realized that the human service sector needed to create an entity that would represent the sector as a whole.

HSC helps facilitate collaborations to address complex, systemic issues, provide useful professional learning opportunities, and achieve economies of scale through shared services and pooled resources. Under the current leadership of Michael Corey, HSC has seen tremendous membership growth, from less than 50 to more than 90 members, and it is still growing. With close ties to governmental programs, HSC helps promote collaboration and growth in the human service sector.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, HSC has been instrumental in helping human service organizations and our community adapt, stay healthy, and meet the

needs of vulnerable community members. From communicating with appointed and elected officials about COVID funding and shaping the public funding response, to helping disseminate needed PPE and educating people about the Payroll Protection Program loans/grants and other efforts to stabilize operations, HSC has been on the frontlines of this pandemic response since the beginning.

See Michael Corey's acceptance speech at [cbusfdn.org/hsc](https://cbusfdn.org/hsc).

**“Our agencies are there to meet the needs of our community when they need help the most... The amount of suffering in our community and across the country is palpable right now, but there is still hope and our agencies embody that, and the people in need in our community are turning to our agencies for hope now more than ever. I believe this recognition from The Columbus Foundation represents the community's understanding of the importance of our sector right now, and it's a communal congratulations and thank you for the incredible work that these 13,000 people do and all of their volunteers.”**

—MICHAEL COREY, Executive Director, Human Service Chamber of Franklin County



# The Big Table Illustrates the “Unity” in Community

On October 16, our community came together in a BIG way to encourage conversation and cultivate kindness through The Big Table.



The Big Table offered people an opportunity to talk, help, and act as a way to connect with others in our community. On October 16, BESA coordinated a volunteer opportunity at New Salem Baptist Church’s Bread of Life Food Pantry.



**SINCE 2016**, The Big Table has brought central Ohio residents together for a day of connection and community-building, usually through in-person conversations. Over the years, thousands of people have come together at hundreds of tables to share their insights, ideas, and hopes for the future.

While we couldn’t gather in person as we have in previous years, we came together through our words and actions to show the strength and resiliency of the Columbus community.

“I’m lucky enough to have an employer who allows a half day off to volunteer twice a year. When I saw my favorite volunteer organization, BESA, was working with The Columbus Foundation right near where I live in my North Linden community, I immediately signed up,” said Kristan Myers about participating in this year’s Big Table. “I volunteer to create connections—with my community and with those I come in contact with while volunteering. I’m excited to be a part of The Big Table, an event that is creating connections across the city of Columbus.”

Thanks to all who made this a remarkable day of connection!



# Foundation Fellowship Program Seeks Students

**KNOW A COLLEGE STUDENT INTERESTED** in a career helping others? The Columbus Foundation’s Summer Fellowship Program is a terrific opportunity for college students or recent graduates to participate in a 10-week, full-time, paid fellowship with a nonprofit organization in Franklin County. These fellowships provide hands-on learning, where fellows serve as a part of a nonprofit’s staff, working on a specific project or goal.

The 2021 fellowship will kick off on June 7, 2021 and run through August 13. Each fellow selected will receive a stipend of \$6,350. Applications are due December 11.

Prospective fellows are asked to list their top three choices of projects when applying. The selection committee does its best to honor these choices and match students with a nonprofit based on interests, skills, and the nonprofit’s specific needs or objectives. Selected fellows also attend five professional development sessions culminating in an end-of-summer presentation on August 13.

College juniors, seniors, May/June 2021 graduates, and graduate students in the fall of 2021 who have either graduated from a Franklin County high school, or are attending a college/university in Franklin County, are eligible to apply.

This year, there will be 15 fellowship opportunities for students.



Summer Fellows, like this group from 2018, participate in a wide variety of roles, helping nonprofits with specific project work while gaining real-world experience.

Photo by Lynsey Pipino

## PARTNERS AND PROJECTS FOR 2021:

- Central Community House of Columbus, Inc.**—to support the development department with strategy, research, grantwriting, marketing, fundraising, and increasing earned income.
- City Year Columbus**—to support the development team with donor prospecting, media, communications, and development operations.
- Columbus Metropolitan Library Foundation**—to create a strategic plan for the future of the stewardship program.
- Economic and Community Development Institute, Inc.**—to increase capacity of the staff to provide high-impact programming for the community garden, coaching, and the Food Fort.
- Equitas Health Inc.**—to support the planning and execution of Art for Life.
- Family Mentor Foundation**—to support the Buddy Box weekend food program, fundraising, and other special events.
- Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed**—to improve website design, development opportunities, and database organization.
- Grange Insurance Audubon Center**—to create an ongoing process focused on engaging equitable and diverse audiences.
- Hope Hollow**—to assist in the development and implementation of a marketing plan to acquire corporate sponsorships and board members.
- Martin de Porres Center**—to serve as a creativity coach for the summer camp program.
- Muslim Family Services of Ohio**—to develop and launch a print and digital marketing campaign.
- Netcare Access**—to support marketing and fundraising activities.
- Ohio Designer Craftsmen**—to serve as the assistant camp coordinator for the Young Masters summer day camp.
- Ruling Our Experiences (ROX)**—to create and develop advocacy resources for various stakeholders.
- Zora’s House**—to develop an operations and employee manual.

**Applications are due December 11!**  
**To learn more, visit [cbusfdn.org/students](https://cbusfdn.org/students).**



# Love Lives On

## FUND HONORS MATRIARCH’S LEGACY OF KINDNESS

**WHEN ASKED** to describe her mother, the words come easily for Matina Zenios. Compassionate. Caring. Loving. Big-hearted. Kind.

Sue Bouzounis was all these things and more. The mother of two and grandmother of four was the North Star of her family, and someone who consistently put others above herself. After she passed away in 2016, her family, who for years have worked together in a family business, wanted to do something that would honor Sue’s memory, and continue the legacy of her good work and passion to help others.

“Both my mom and my dad were very generous to the community when we were growing up, starting with our church and spanning out from there,” Zenios said. “My mom helped get the business off the ground and then devoted most of her time to raising us and balancing everything. She would spend all of her spare time serving others. It’s just who she was. She volunteered in the surgery waiting area at The Ohio State University Hospital for more than 30 years.”



Born and raised in Greece, Chris Bouzounis came to the United States in 1966 to give his sister away at her wedding. While in the states he met Sue, and the two were married a short

time later. They decided to make their home in Columbus, and Chris started his own print shop, Olympic Press, the name a nod to his homeland. That company eventually became Olympic Incentive Ideas in 1967 when Chris shifted the business to focus on promotional branding. Chris and Sue initially ran the business out of their basement, producing branded business cards, matchbooks, and calendars for local companies. When the Olympic games came to Atlanta in 1996, however, the family was forced to change the name of their business when the U.S. Olympic Committee sent them legal papers saying they owned the rights to the name Olympic.

“It was my mom who came up with the name Artina, a combination of my name and my brother, Art,” explained Zenios. At first Matina and Art weren’t sold on the idea, and talked through many other names before circling back to Artina. “It is a family business, and the name really spoke to it being a family business.” Both Zenios and Art are involved with Artina Promotional Products today, with Zenios serving as President and Art as Vice President.

The *Artina “Choose Kind” Fund* was established in March 2019 as a way for the company to facilitate its philanthropy and honor Sue. The Donor Advised Fund works well for them because it offers the flexibility and choice to give to organizations and causes they want to support. A committee, including some members of the Artina team, works together to identify needs and opportunities in the community.



Above: Matina Zenios. Inset, left: Sue and Chris Bouzounis. Photo courtesy of Matina Zenios



“Great ideas come when you put multiple minds together,” said Zenios. Through the fund, the family plans to support organizations with a mission to help families and children facing situations of need, such as homelessness, severe illness, financial distress, and other challenges—all things that were meaningful to Sue. Since its inception, the Artina “Choose Kind” Fund has awarded grants to Children’s Hunger Alliance, A Kid Again, and Family Promise of Delaware County.

In addition to fundraising events, the company is capitalizing on its own expertise to help grow the fund, through the “Choose Kind” store on its website. From t-shirts and tumblers to blankets and tote bags, the merchandise all conveys a message that is helping this family honor a legacy.

For Zenios, she sees no end to the good they can do through their philanthropy.

“The sky is the limit,” she said. “We want to grow our fund and help provide grants to as many opportunities as we can. I think my mom would be really proud and honored with what we’ve accomplished.”

# CRITICAL NEED ALERT

**TWO YEARS AGO**, The Columbus Foundation issued a *Critical Need Alert* (CNA), **Our Kids**, that put a spotlight on two vulnerable populations in our community—children at risk of losing access to early childhood education and youth experiencing homelessness. The CNA asked donors to join the Foundation to help local nonprofit organizations address the needs of these kids, recognizing that the commitment to the future success of our young people is a commitment to the success of all of us.

Donors’ response was both immediate and generous. The initial goal of \$1.5 million was eclipsed by more than \$900,000, leveraging a total of \$2.4 million—making Our Kids the largest CNA in the Foundation’s history.

While strides continue to be made on both fronts, those who work in the field of early childhood education recently celebrated an incredible win.

When the CNA launched, more than 20,000 children from low-income families were at risk of losing access to early childhood education due to the state’s Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) mandate, which stated that all childcare providers that accept publicly funded childcare needed to have a one-star SUTQ rating by July 1, 2020 (which was shifted to September 1 due to COVID-19). As of September 2018, just 28.5 percent of childcare providers in Franklin County had earned a SUTQ rating.

SUTQ is a five-star quality rating and improvement system administered by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. It recognizes and promotes learning and development programs that meet quality program standards that exceed licensing health and safety regulations.

Grants from the CNA benefited several organizations on the frontlines of the issue, including Action for Children, Columbus State Community College, and FutureReady Columbus. Funds supported technical assistance and professional development training related to achieving Step Up To Quality ratings, as well as support to help childcare providers complete their Child Development Associate credentials ahead of the 2020 deadline.

**As of September 1, 2020, 100 percent of children receiving support through publicly funded childcare in central Ohio have been connected to a quality early education program, and more than 750 providers in Franklin County have stepped up to earn at least a one-star rating!**

“Thanks to support from the Critical Need Alert, we can all rest assured that the places that our most vulnerable children are going to are that much more prepared to help those children get ready for school,” said Eric Karolak, CEO of Action for Children. “All our kids deserve a strong, firm foundation and, with Step Up To Quality, you know that all programs have a minimum set of conditions that make for a better opportunity for children.”

Congratulations to all who made this incredible goal a reality!



Books that Inspired Me

with Dr. Amy Acton



**D**R. AMY ACTON sees books as more than just words on a page. To her, books represent a way to climb into someone else’s world and see through their eyes. They are a vessel for knowledge. She remembers books serving as a lifeboat during her childhood, and her love for reading continues today. We had a chance to ask Dr. Acton, Director of Kind Columbus at The Columbus Foundation, about some of her favorite books, and what she’s reading today.

If there was one author you could spend the afternoon with, who would it be and why?

Matthew Goldstein of BESA recently shared a moving Instagram clip between Dave Chappelle and Maya Angelou, following a thought-provoking conversation about the resilience of the human spirit. What a gift it would be to feel her presence and benefit from her sage soul. This year has been full of serendipity for me. What Matthew didn’t know is that, since the early days of the pandemic, I’ve been longing to talk with Dave as well. He did some small, socially distanced outdoor shows in Yellow Springs, and opened with a comedic play on the viral Mouse Trap spot we created to help people understand the spread of COVID-19. I’m wondering what he’s thinking these days, and am curious about his journey to find a way to express his creativity that feels authentic and on his own terms.

What book has had the greatest impact on you and why?

**Charlotte’s Web.** I read it seven times in a row as a child, and never failed to bawl each time I reached the end. E.B. White’s prose is simple, but his understanding of the interdependent

nature of our existence cuts to the core. I’ve always been fascinated by his friendship with James Thurber and their magical years at The New Yorker. Given our collective experience these past many months, I can’t help but wonder what singular, magical word Charlotte might weave to comfort Wilber—to comfort us. You can see where my imagination is going: To me, **kindness** is an amalgam of timeless values and deceptively simple actions that feels profound in its power to unite us, to wake us up, to heal heart and soul, to weave the complex web of community—kindness lays bare our collective humanity. Each act is a thread, each kind of us uniquely essential in our contribution to the larger whole. It is easy to dismiss kindness as simplistic. I’m sticking with profound. And what I wouldn’t give for a Thurber right-to-the heart-of it, scribble of a sketch right now to pierce through these complicated times.



What book(s) are you currently reading? What’s next?

**On Kindness** by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor

**My Grandmother’s Hands** by Resmaa Menakem

**When Things Fall Apart** by Pema Chodron

**The Great Influenza** by John M. Barry

Looking forward to Robert Putnam’s new book, **The Upswing.**

I’m also reading a number of children’s books in my search for kindness:

**What Do You Do With An Idea** by Kobi Yamada

**Each Kindness** by Jacqueline Woodson

**Eleanor: Quiet No More** by Doreen Rappaport

**I Promise** by LeBron James

What are some books you’ve loved?

I find this question so painful as books saved my life as a kid. All of them have become so much a part of me it has become hard to decipher. I write and draw on all my books, and many I reread over time.

Most defaced and top of mind of late:

Joseph Campbell’s **The Hero’s Journey** Additionally, Bill Moyers’ six-part series on PBS, “The Power of Myth,” which featured conversations with Joseph Campbell.

**I Asked for Wonder** by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

**Siddhartha** by Hermann Hesse

**To Kill a Mockingbird** by Harper Lee

**Gift from the Sea** by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

**The Wisdom of Insecurity** by Alan Watts

**Walden** by Henry David Thoreau

**Man’s Search for Meaning** by Viktor E. Frankl

Everything Kurt Vonnegut ever wrote

All of my gardening books

“Songs for the CommUNITY”

Created to Boost Spirits Through Song

**FEW THINGS MOVE AND UNITE US** more than music. As a gift to the community, The Columbus Foundation invited a group of local musicians to be part of **Songs for the CommUNITY**, a collection of performances recorded at the Foundation in September to help boost the spirit of Columbus, spread some joy, and inspire us all in a time of unprecedented uncertainty. Several of the songs recorded were original works, and the genres ranged from folk to contemporary classical music.

“With so much of the national discourse seeking to divide us, I believe this project serves as an important reminder that we are better together,” said Dr. Mark Lomax II, Community Research and Grants Management Officer at the Foundation, who facilitated the project.

Performances are being released weekly on the Foundation’s social media channels. All can be found on the Foundation’s YouTube channel at [cbusfdn.org/youtube](https://cbusfdn.org/youtube).

Photo by Margaret Robinson



◀ **Dr. E**  
“To Be Young, Gifted, and Black”  
(Donnie Hathaway)



▲ **Pop Gun**  
“What Would Love Do”  
(Jeff Ciampa)

◀ **Mark Gonzalez**  
“Burst”  
(Mark Gonzalez)



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6 : Love Lives On



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THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION



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“None of this will be easy, or quick, so it is going to take keeping stitched together as we take on these challenges. The Columbus Foundation has a role to play in getting to that better day, and we will get there.”

—DOUGLAS F. KRIDLER, President and CEO



# UNPRECEDENTED FUNDING PLAN ANNOUNCED FOR 2021

*Strategic Focus 21 Fund to address critical community challenges*

On September 10, during The Columbus Foundation’s annual Celebration of Philanthropy, Foundation President and CEO Douglas F. Kridler made a momentous announcement, sharing that the organization would take extraordinary steps, including going above normal investment allocations and tapping into reserves, to address some of the most pressing challenges our community faces in 2021.

LOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE EFFORTS IN THE COMING MONTHS.

The newly established **Strategic Focus 21 Fund** will provide grants to organizations serving four key priority areas. This commitment deepens funding and extends the funding timeline of some of the existing work we are doing, while providing significant new investment in other areas:

01

**COVID-19 Emergency Response** Grant dollars through the *Emergency Response Fund* to support organizations that are battling the ongoing effects of COVID-19 will be expanded by the Foundation, and the timeline of support will be extended through 2021.

02

**Closing the Digital Divide** The Foundation is doubling its initial \$500,000 commitment to \$1 million in the *Central Ohio Digital Divide Fund* to help bridge the digital divide and decrease racial inequities in access to high-speed internet. Grants will also support related initiatives and projects through 2021.

03

**Addressing the Racial Equity Wealth Gap** Collaborating with city and county leaders and community partners, the Foundation will commit \$5 million in Program Related Investments (PRIs) over the next two years, primarily to support entrepreneurs of color and, in particular, Black-owned and led businesses.

04

**Preservation of the Arts** In early 2021, a significant expansion of arts support will be announced to help preserve Columbus’ arts infrastructure, which has been hard hit during the pandemic.