



EDUCATION IN BLOOM

Youth Garden Offers Opportunities for Growth

THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF MAGIC, and a lot of fertile soil, serving as the foundation of a thriving community garden on Columbus' West Side. For more than 12 years, young hands have helped plant, water, and harvest crops from the [Highland Youth Garden](#), and with a recent expansion of the garden and purchase of a home to serve as

valuable indoor space, Executive Director Shelly Casto says they're just getting started.

The half-acre garden was established in 2009, following the closing of two West Side recreation centers. Volunteer founders wanted to create a space to bring people together. Eventually, this grew into the idea of using the

garden as a learning space for neighborhood youth, since it's located just across the street from Highland Elementary School in the Highland West neighborhood of the Hilltop.

"We are a neighborhood that has significant challenges in terms of poverty, food access, safety, and health outcomes," said Casto.

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PRESIDENT’S PERSPECTIVE



Douglas F. Kridler
PRESIDENT AND CEO

There is so much in the world to be concerned about. And, over the coming weeks, months, and years, that may change in specifics, but is not likely to differ much in volume or predictability.

WHAT TO DO? So many things can be made better, so, lest we harry ourselves into a state of permanent discouragement over the challenges, let’s carry on, together, to put our wherewithal into something that sustains and renews us and our communities, for now, and forever.

Of course, there are fears to be reckoned with. When Olympic alpine skier River Radamus was asked earlier this year what there was to be afraid of in his risk-filled sport, he replied, “You’re on two planks of wood going down ice. But, you know, I am also scared of failure, scared of wasted potential.” In our service to you, and to our community, we are fueled by that desire to not waste one bit of our potential to be genuinely helpful to you as you make a difference—and to help everyone have an opportunity to fulfill their potential.

Our success in doing so is measured in the moment, but more deeply assessed over time. I read recently that it took a thousand years for England’s York Cathedral to be built, depending on generations of stonemasons who were willing to work towards completion knowing they would have no chance to see

it completed, but knowing their efforts were essential to reaching that goal.

It hasn’t taken a thousand years to build The Columbus Foundation, but it took courage, patience, and vision to, in the middle of World War II, get started by putting its foundational bricks into place. Since then, it has taken decades’ worth of generosity and care to help this vital anchor institution realize its potential to strengthen and improve our community for the benefit of all of its residents; in our time, it is we who are the stonemasons of the construction and sustainability of this place of community caring.

We recognize and honor the roles selflessness and social cohesion play in this work. We also recognize that for many the Foundation is a significant part of the answer to what each of us is willing to sacrifice personally for the collective good. When recently asked if Italy would join the boycott of Russian energy, which accounts for 40 percent of Italian energy, Mario Draghi, prime minister of Italy, responded that indeed he would join the boycott, saying, “Do we want to have peace or do we want to have air conditioning on?”

So, yes, navigating through the myriad of challenges in our communities, country, and the world does at times feel like we’re cascading down a mountainside of ice on two wooden planks. But, at least we know that, together, we are a team in taking on that challenge with total conviction, in pursuit of the goal so that when we cross the finish line, we know that none of our potential to be of service to humanity was squandered.

CRITICAL NEED ALERT

Critical Need Alert: Our World, Our Community - UPDATE

THANKS TO AN EXTRAORDINARY RESPONSE, the **Critical Need Alert: Our World, Our Community** has, since launching in early April, leveraged more than \$550,000 to help seven local refugee- and immigrant-serving nonprofit organizations. In addition, more than \$1.8 million has been granted from donors to support national and international organizations assisting those impacted by the war in Ukraine—bringing the total to more than \$2.3 million for efforts that help our neighbors here and around the world. Thank you for your incredible generosity. There’s still time to support this Critical Need Alert! Visit columbusfoundation.org to learn more.

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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.

Want to share NEXUS with a friend?
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For more information, visit columbusfoundation.org or call 614/251-4000.



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Education in Bloom [continued from cover]

“We were founded with the original idea, which we continue to this day, to bring the children of that school over on a regular basis to garden, learn about healthy eating, do STEM-based activities, develop social and emotional learning skills, and connect with each other in an outdoor learning environment.”

After 12 years of organic farming on the same plot, the result is some very healthy soil. Casto remarked that some scientists at The Ohio State University think they may have the healthiest plot of land in Franklin County. She said they basically grow anything you can grow in Ohio that you can eat, from radishes, spinach, and greens to kale, collards, beets, and zucchini. A favorite crop for the kids is jewel corn, Casto explained. She loves to watch the kids peel back the husks in wonder and amazement at the rainbow of color each ear produces.

Vegetables aren’t the only things growing. The garden is home to multiple berry bushes, an apple tree, a cherry tree, and a beautiful array of flowers. A recent expansion of the garden will enable the addition of new crops to include some that are familiar to neighbors originally from South America and Latin America—like chayote and tomatillos.

Children pre-K through third grade regularly come from Highland Elementary to the garden not only to plant, harvest, and taste but also to count, write about, and draw the things they see. This fall, with the opening of Columbus’s new early learning center nearby, the garden will start serving an additional 240 4-year-olds.

“We work with the teachers at the schools to make sure we are reinforcing their curriculum,” Casto said.

The garden also offers an afterschool program for grades K–6 three days a week. Groups of 12 participate in activities and have a healthy snack created from garden produce that they help cook. Its summer youth employment program is geared towards West Side teenagers and offers teens an opportunity to help with the garden, staff the Garden Market produce distribution operation, and go on field trips to learn about food justice around Columbus.

In 2021, the board of the Highland Youth Garden established the *Highland Youth Garden Endowment Fund* at the Foundation to provide long-term support and sustainability for the garden.

“We knew that we needed two things to be sustainable as an organization—one was an indoor space and the other an endowment,” Casto said. “We are 100 percent committed to that particular spot. We want to have kids grow up and know that it’s their garden and come back and visit it as adults and bring their children. The board and I really felt the first thing to do was to secure the financial base and we wanted to do that before purchasing the home.”

After operating entirely outdoors for more than a decade, the organization purchased a home in March and will be completing renovations that will allow for programming to continue despite weather challenges.

Casto noted one special feature of the garden is that it is welcoming to anyone.

“We have no barrier fence, which is an unusual thing for a community garden but a really important symbol for us that we trust our neighbors, we invite and welcome our neighbors, and we are there for them,” Casto said.



“We’re really a learning institution first—we just happen to be a garden and that’s the tool that we’re using. Really, it’s about the children and their learning and well-being.”

— SHELLY CASTO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HIGHLAND YOUTH GARDEN

All photos courtesy of Highland Youth Garden

Highland Youth Garden’s Garden Market

LAUNCHED DURING THE PANDEMIC as a way to develop closer relationships with its immediate neighbors and provide fresh produce, Highland Youth Garden started a twice-weekly produce market. Staff and volunteers harvest for two hours before the market so everything is super fresh and people can choose what they like. While donations are accepted, they are not required. The only requirement is for individuals to provide their ZIP code to ensure the garden is primarily serving families closest to the garden. Casto said they’ve met that goal over the last two years, with at least 85 percent of individuals receiving produce living in the immediate neighborhood. The Garden Market is up and running again this spring! Visit highlandyouthgarden.org to learn more.





Columbus Foundation Announces 5 Nonprofits to Watch in 2022

In 2014, The Columbus Foundation launched its **5 Nonprofits to Watch** program as a way to honor remarkable nonprofit organizations working to strengthen and improve our community. In [March](#), the Foundation introduced its newest cohort of five exemplary nonprofits, with an intentional focus on small- to medium-sized organizations.

EACH YEAR, the 5 Nonprofits to Watch are announced to celebrate the takeoff of Jerrie Mock’s historic around-the-world flight in her single-engine Cessna named Spirit of Columbus. Mock’s journey started at Port Columbus International Airport on March 19, 1964, and culminated on April 17, when she became the first woman to fly solo around the world. These five nonprofits promote the bravery, boldness, and determination that Jerrie illustrated, and we are proud to honor her spirit along with the work they do in, and for, our community.

Each 2022 honoree was awarded a \$20,000 grant. In addition, this year the Foundation is also offering each organization a consulting engagement to help address growth, capacity building, and sustainability. Over the course of 2022, each of the 5 Nonprofits to Watch organizations will have the opportunity to work with a local strategy consulting and project-based delivery firm. Capacity-building projects will be selected by the organizations themselves, and reflect the organization’s greatest need.

“The Columbus Foundation is thrilled to be able to provide funding and services that get these already impactful organizations to the next step in their development,” said Danielle Tong, Director of Capacity Building and Community Knowledge at the Foundation. “The ability of a community to serve its neighbors is really dependent on the capacity of each individual organization within that community, and the Foundation hopes to honor these spectacular nonprofits in a way that expands their reach.”


Pictured (l–r): Co-Leader & CEO of Restoring Our Own Through Transformation (ROOTT), Jessica Roach; Co-Leader & COO of ROOTT, Dorian Wingard; Director of Martin de Porres Center, Yahaira Rose; Executive Director of Muslim Family Services of Ohio, Nicol Ghazi; Founder & CEO of Halt Violence, Thell Robinson III; and Executive Director of Sanctuary Night, Hannah Estabrook.

THE 5 NONPROFITS TO WATCH IN 2022:



HALT VIOLENCE

Halt Violence is committed to helping mediate disputes ahead of violence and to creating a solid foundation for youth, young adults, and adults in our community. Its Moral Therapy Initiative is a program designed to support the development of coping mechanisms and life skills that can help end cycles of poverty and violence for community members. The program helps individuals develop skills in various areas, with an emphasis on mental health, academic, and cognitive skills.




Martin de Porres Center serves Latinx families and youth, supporting intergenerational connection, reducing trauma, and using evidence-based strategies to stem violence in Latinx youth. Its program, Dare to Live in Peace, has helped produce a 25 percent reduction in violence since inception in the area it serves and has resulted in more youth graduating high school and going to college.




Muslim Family Services of Ohio provides culturally centered community care coordination for Muslim residents in need. Its services range from basic needs assistance and resettlement support to job skills training and Janazah (Muslim funeral) services. During the pandemic, Muslim Family Services of Ohio saw a 40 percent increase in service utilization over just a twelve-month period.

“5 Nonprofits to Watch is an important opportunity to celebrate, as well as learn about, pressing community needs and the organizations doing meaningful work to help all of our neighbors. Our goal is not just to elevate the stories, but to invest deeply in the missions.”

— DAN SHARPE, VICE PRESIDENT FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND GRANTS MANAGEMENT



Restoring Our Own Through Transformation (ROOTT) is a Black Family-led community-based organization dedicated to “collectively restoring our well-being through self-determination, collaboration, and resources to meet the needs of women and families within communities.” Its notable Perinatal Support Doula model focuses on combating the disparately high rates of infant and maternal mortality among Black families in Ohio. Since its inception in 2017, ROOTT has served hundreds of families and has a 0 percent Black maternal and infant mortality rate.



Sanctuary Night serves vulnerable women who need a place to rest, eat, connect, and get desired resources. The organization started by hosting a Monday night drop-in, but quickly realized that the demand was greater. This month, Sanctuary Night is opening a drop-in center, with the goal of being open 24/7 by the end of 2022.

 **Stay tuned for more exciting updates about each of the 5 Nonprofits to Watch in 2022!**

Columbus Foundation Announces Plan to Increase Capital to Support Entrepreneurs of Color

The Columbus Foundation recently launched a new effort focused on helping to close the racial wealth gap in the Columbus region by increasing access to capital and services for entrepreneurs of color and in particular, Black-owned and led businesses.

THE FOUNDATION’S COMMITMENT TO RACIAL EQUITY centers on creating a community where every resident has the opportunity to flourish, unencumbered by disadvantages inherited simply by the color of their skin or the ZIP code in which they were born.

In 2020, the Foundation announced a plan that included \$5 million to fund a Small Business Program-Related Investment (SBPRI) initiative. Program-Related Investments (PRI) are a vehicle used by foundations to invest in solutions to strengthen the community, with the potential to recycle those dollars for new investments. Once the low-interest PRI is repaid, the money can be redeployed

into new charitable investments and opportunities. The Foundation has invested in a number of PRIs in the past to help strengthen and sustain nonprofit organizations in our community.

Since April 2021, the Foundation has worked in partnership with Next Street—a national, mission-driven firm that mobilizes capital, customers, and capabilities for small businesses and entrepreneurs that have been systemically held back—to develop and implement its SBPRI strategy. Next Street previously worked with the City of Columbus to help develop the Columbus Small Business Agenda in partnership with 30+ regional stakeholders, and the Foundation’s work builds upon these previous efforts.

“We know that Black-owned businesses face disproportionate challenges in accessing capital, and that historic patterns of systemic exclusion exist when it comes to small business support. These intentional investments will help foster a more inclusive and equitable small business ecosystem in our community by increasing this critical access to capital.”

— DOUG KRIDLER, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE FOUNDATION

The Foundation is seeking to make, on average, 10 investments of \$500,000 each to organizations that catalyze capital and/or build capacity in the small business ecosystem for small businesses owned by people of color, such as:

- Direct investments into nonprofit organizations that support business owners of color
- Credit enhancements and guaranties to spur additional lending
- Black-led investment funds focused on entrepreneurs of color
- Alternative funders focused on inclusive credit options

Nationally, small businesses are responsible for two-thirds of net new private-sector jobs in the economy. In Columbus, small businesses dominate the local economy, representing 98 percent of all businesses in Franklin County. However, although people of color represent one-third of the population in Franklin County, businesses owned by people of color account for only 17 percent of total small businesses locally; Black-owned businesses only account for 4 percent. While the primary focus is intended for intermediaries that support small businesses, the Foundation will also review opportunities to directly invest in for-profit small businesses that align with the SBPRI vision and strategy.

The Foundation has assembled an SBPRI Committee, consisting of small business community champions, to oversee evaluation and decision-making for investments. Committee members include Sandra Moody Gresham, Dehan Enterprises LLC; Anthony Joseph, White Castle System, Inc.; Timmy McCarthy, The Business of Good Foundation; Doug McCollough, City of Dublin and Color Coded Labs; and Elizabeth Blount McCormick, Uniglobe Travel Designers.

“These well-respected and community-engaged individuals bring a diverse set of experiences in small business ownership, investment knowledge, and small business support,” said Steve Moore, Chief of Staff for the Foundation, who explained that the committee will bring an important community perspective into the management of the SBPRI portfolio.

The Foundation plans to make its first investments through the SBPRI this year.

LISA INGRAM JOINS GOVERNING COMMITTEE

IN JANUARY, the Foundation welcomed Lisa Ingram to its Governing Committee. Ingram is President and CEO of White Castle System, Inc., where she is the fourth Ingram family member to serve as President. She is also Chair of the White Castle Board of Directors. White Castle was founded in 1921 as the world’s first fast food chain.

Active in the Columbus community, Ingram serves on several boards, including at OhioHealth and M/I Homes. In addition, she served on the board of the National Restaurant Association for four years and is currently a member of the Columbus Partnership.



Lisa Ingram

“Lisa brings a unique range of civic and business leadership experience to her service on the Governing Committee, as well as being part of a multi-generational commitment to philanthropy,” said Doug Kridler, President and CEO of The Columbus Foundation.

Nancy Kramer, a member of the Governing Committee since 2014, continues her service as Chairperson in 2022. Kramer is Chief Evangelist of IBM iX, as well as the Founder of Resource/Ammirati. Clark Kellogg, CBS Sports college basketball game and studio analyst, is serving as Vice Chairperson.

Governing Committee members continuing to serve in 2022 are George S. Barrett, Jeffrey W. Edwards, Michael P. Glimcher, Katie Wolfe Lloyd, Marchelle E. Moore, and Matthew A. Scantland. The Foundation is grateful to Joseph A. Chlapaty, whose outstanding service to the Governing Committee ended in 2021.

Foundation Awards \$10,000 Grant to Columbus Fashion Alliance during Philanthropitch 2022



The Columbus Foundation’s Dan Sharpe presented [Columbus Fashion Alliance](#) founder Yohannan Terrell with a \$10,000 grant check during Philanthropitch on April 12. Five finalists—Besa, Columbus Fashion Alliance, Elevate Northland, the Ohio Association of Student Leaders, and Wild Good Creative—all vied for dollars to help their nonprofits reach new heights. More than \$162,000 was donated during the event. Congratulations to all the finalists!

CONGRATULATIONS, DANIELLE!



DANIELLE TONG, MPH, LSW, Director of Capacity Building and Community Knowledge at the Foundation, was recognized in April as one of three “Women on the Rise” by YWCA Columbus. She was also recently named to the 2022 “40 Under 40” class by *Columbus Business First*.



BETTER TOGETHER

The Buckeye Ranch’s Better Together project, [Cases for Kids](#), kicked off in February with an initial goal to raise \$7,000 to provide 100 suitcases for children and youth in foster care and residential services in Ohio. Thanks to an incredible response, and an investment of hard-shell suitcases from Bath & Body Works, \$12,200 was raised—allowing the organization to triple its impact to 310 total suitcases! We truly are Better Together.

BETTER TOGETHER UPDATE!

FROM SUPPORTING community gardens and building more inclusive school libraries to addressing food insecurity, Better Together donors stepped up in 2021 to support the dedicated and hardworking efforts of 24 nonprofits serving our region. In total, more than \$140,000 was raised!

2022 is off to a great start, with 8 projects launched as of May 1. The Columbus Foundation continues to underwrite the cost of credit card processing fees so that the nonprofits receive 100 percent of the Better Together donations.

Terrific new projects are launching regularly, so visit columbusfoundation.org/BetterTogether to see how you can continue to help strengthen the fabric of our community and foster a sense of belonging for all.

2021 BETTER TOGETHER NONPROFIT PARTNERS:

Bikes for All People • Buddy Up for Life • Columbus Early Learning Centers • Columbus Fashion Alliance • Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services • Flying Horse Farms • Franklinton Cycleworks • Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed • Gators Bike Park • Girl Scouts of Ohio’s Heartland • Grange Insurance Audubon Center • Growing & Growth Collective • Habitat for Humanity MidOhio • Harper’s Corner • Jazz Arts Group • Kaleidoscope Youth Center • Local Matters • Neighborhood Services Inc • Ohio Wildlife Center • Seeds of Caring • The Refuge • We Amplify Voices • YMCA of Central Ohio • YWCA Columbus

Putting Patients First

Boundless Health provides whole-person care for I/DD community

FOR DECADES, [I Am Boundless](#) (formerly Franklin County Residential Services) has been championing innovative programs and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). So, it is no wonder its newest effort—a healthcare center dedicated to providing quality care for people with I/DD, their families, and the greater community—is a first of its kind in Ohio.

Boundless Health launched in September 2021 and is helping close a gap in services for its population by focusing on patient-centered care with an emphasis on approaching every situation with the understanding it is unique, and tailoring experiences to make patients comfortable and build trust.

“We hear stories from families about some providers just not feeling equipped to address the needs of someone with an intellectual or developmental disability,” said Anna Wuerth, Vice President of Clinical Operations and Executive Director of Boundless Health. “There are a lot of wonderful providers in our community, but not all of them feel prepared to address those needs.”

After a range of assessment work, including a review of federal data and a survey of existing clients involved in residential and center-based programs, Boundless Health was developed to respond to the needs of the I/DD community. It offers a comprehensive range of care, from primary care and dentistry to psychiatry, mental health services, and speech and language pathology. In late 2022, it plans to open an on-site pharmacy. Dr. Cindy Ripsin serves as Medical Director.

“Thirty-eight cents of every dollar that Medicaid spends on healthcare is spent on someone with complex needs. There is a high dollar amount associated with care around our population but we’re still seeing the individuals we serve face significant health disparities,” Wuerth said.

Wuerth reported that data shows that those with disabilities face significant health and healthcare disparities, including:

- People with disabilities or complex needs live on average 16 years less than the general population.
- People with disabilities or complex needs are prescribed up to four times the number of medications. This is why having an onsite pharmacy at Boundless Health where all their prescriptions are managed in one place is so important.
- People with disabilities are hospitalized 1.7 times more than the general population.

In 2021, The Columbus Foundation awarded two grants totaling \$115,000 to The Boundless Foundation to support Boundless Health. The grants, made possible through Unrestricted Funds at the Foundation, are helping fund

renovations to the existing building on the campus that will serve as the home for Boundless Health services and to support operations of the clinic.

This year, Boundless Health is applying to be a Federally Qualified Health Center Look Alike (FQHC-LAL).

“Health centers are by and large a community’s safety net provider,” Wuerth said. “FQHCs are committed to caring for lower-income populations, communities that are underserved, or those that experience significant barriers to care.” Wuerth explained that some of the key requirements that set an FQHC apart are the fact that it offers a sliding fee scale to clients and it is governed by a board of directors, the majority of whom must receive care at the health center—more than 51 percent need to be active patients.

“There is a strong emphasis on quality and safety in the health center structure,” she said.

While its focus will be on the I/DD population and their families, the health center is open to the public.

Boundless Health is currently operating out of a building on the organization’s Worthington campus, but will soon move to a larger building previously used for administration. Renovations are underway and the larger space will allow the organization to increase from four exam rooms for primary care services to fifteen, and from one dental bay to six.

“We have a fantastic partnership established with The Ohio State University’s Nisonger Center,” Wuerth said. “They have a strong dental program that is specifically built to serve the I/DD population and their dental director, Dr. Stephen Beetstra, is helping us launch our dental program.”

The renovated building will also offer larger spaces for speech and language, psychiatry, psychology, and behavioral therapy teams. A movement room filled with mats, a swing, and sensory items will be available for clients to use between appointments or if they need a break during a session.

Wuerth is grateful for the community support in making Boundless Health a reality.

“The introduction of new service lines—primary care, dentistry, pharmacy—these are big projects and we’ve been so encouraged by the support of the community and our board members. The community recognizes we need to expand services to support the I/DD population and our organization can’t do it alone. The Columbus Foundation has been a great partner and is allowing us to explore some innovative strategies and solutions that we would not otherwise be able to.”

Grants for Boundless Health were made possible thanks to the *Alfred B. Ashman, Jr. Memorial Trust #2 Fund, Maxine Brown Fund, Kathleen P. Callahan Fund, Henry E. Coyle Fund, Anna C. Dixon Fund, Gene B. Henkelmann Fund, and Frances M. King Fund.*



Miles Balfour on the campus of Columbus College of Art and Design

SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

Miles Balfour

The Columbus Foundation is proud to be the home of hundreds of scholarship funds established by donors to help make a difference in the lives of young people. Here’s a spotlight on one such student:

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? Where did you grow up and what high school did you graduate from? My name is Miles Balfour and I was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio. I graduated from Fort Hayes Metropolitan High School in 2019.

Where are you attending college and what is your major? I’m currently attending the Columbus College of Art and Design, majoring in illustration.

Has art always been something that has interested you? Can you share a little about how you got started and why art is important to you? Surprisingly, it wasn’t always a passion I felt I could envelop myself in. I originally had a passion for science, particularly marine biology, but I decided to invest in my artistic pursuits because I believed it would not only challenge me but also be a greater component in my efforts to share and connect with other individuals around me and, more grandly, the world. Art became important for me as I soon realized that my values and ideas could have tangible weight in this world—and more importantly, that I do.

Who has inspired you on your journey as an artist? I have many great inspirations that have influenced me as an artist, the earliest being filmmakers and directors such as Tim Burton, fine artists such as Monet, and most recently, Jean-Michel Basquiat, who himself is a Haitian artist. He used captivating social themes and nuances that still inspire and, at times, baffle me as well. It’s something that I would like to translate into my medium as well someday.

What do you plan to do after you graduate? My goals are to work towards better situating myself to work as part of the creative and entertainment industry on the west coast, typically in the Los Angeles area. Possibly for some small studios; I’m just searching for opportunities to work. I’m not opposed to traveling or moving. I’m grateful for the impact and connections I’ve made in Columbus, but there are more areas for me to explore and travel to and seek inspiration from. There’s a part of me that still finds interest in possibly returning to seek further higher education.

You have been the recipient of numerous scholarships from funds at the Foundation. What have these scholarships meant to you? The awards and scholarships have been the opportunities of a lifetime. I would not have been able to have attended the Columbus College of Art and Design without them. During the years 2020 and 2021, my scholarships provided me with crucial financial support that I had not found available elsewhere. These scholarships have been lifesaving beyond all expectations and I am immensely grateful for the support they have provided. As well, they act as a reminder of my time and dedication to the communities I immerse myself in and the resources and education that I receive from them—and the inherent value in such. I can’t describe just how transformative these awards have been to me, as an individual, scholar, and member of my community.

Miles has been awarded scholarships from the following funds at The Columbus Foundation:

Rahsaan Roland Kirk Scholarship for the Arts Fund

Gideon Development King Lincoln District Scholarship Fund

Dorothy Cage Memorial Scholarship Fund

Foundation Announces Grantmaking Evolution

Earlier this year, the Foundation announced the intentional evolution of its grantmaking strategy—the most agile, responsive, and inclusive grantmaking to date—and one that better reflects the intersecting qualities of race equity with class, gender, and climate action. The strategy development was a ten-month undertaking by the Community Research and Grants Management team, and consisted of national research and benchmarking, reflecting on the past, listening to neighbors within the greater Columbus community, and finding ways to move intentionally into the future.

“Our learnings of evolved community needs through our COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund, as well as emerging cutting edge trends across the foundation world, have shown that wholesale innovation and reprioritization can be warranted, and well-received,” said Dan Sharpe, Vice President for Community Research and Grants Management at the Foundation. “Social sector problems are persisting and need new vigor and approaches to infuse equity and fresh thinking towards efficient and effective charitable responses.” Through this process, the Foundation identified three fundamental components upon which to build its grantmaking:

- A commitment to prioritizing racial equity, to ensure that every Columbus neighbor has the tools and soil upon which to grow and flourish;
- Significantly increasing the opportunities for general operating support and flexible program-specific funds and;
- Supporting the holistic well-being of nonprofit organizations by investing in capacity building, so they can go further faster, and with a greater sense of organizational health.

“The emphasis on operating support as well as capacity building is intended to ensure a strong nonprofit sector, and empower organizations to do their mission-oriented work the best they can,” Sharpe said. “That’s important for them, for funders, and most important for donors to honor, too.”

Visit the Nonprofit Center at columbusfoundation.org to learn more.



Members of the Community Research and Grants Management team (l–r): Mark Lomax II, Director, Arts and Generational Grantmaking; Emily Savors, Senior Director, Grantmaking; Dan Sharpe, Vice President; Matt Martin, Director, Community Research; Hena Masood, Director, Evaluation and Data Insights; and Danielle Tong, Director, Capacity Building and Community Knowledge



JOANNA M. PINKERTON AND COTA TEAM HONORED WITH 2022 SPIRIT OF COLUMBUS AWARD

Pictured, from left—Trudy Bartley, COTA Board of Trustees member and former Chair; Marcia Woods-Johnson, Learning and Development Trainer, COTA; Joanna M. Pinkerton, President/CEO, COTA; Craig Trench, COTA Board of Trustees chair; and Emile Williams, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, COTA



The Spirit of Columbus Award, also known as The Jerries[®], was created in 2013 in honor of pilot Jerrie Mock, the first woman to fly solo around the world.

THE AWARD RECOGNIZES those who exhibit bravery, determination, and boldness through their actions, something Joanna M. Pinkerton, President/CEO, and all those at Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) did through their ongoing commitment to keep people safe, healthy, and moving in the midst of the peril and uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Given the challenges they overcome and the determination they show, COTA is the Spirit of Columbus coursing through our community every

day. COTA helped lead the way for our community during the pandemic, ensuring frontline workers could continue to get to their jobs, and people could get to critical medical appointments and to care for loved ones,” said Doug Kridler, President and CEO of the Foundation. “These were heroic efforts during a treacherous time, and we are proud to honor their collective commitment in this way. Joanna and her team will play a crucial role in helping our region meet the challenges of continued growth.”

Congratulations to Joanna and the team at COTA!