



“When it comes to our health, social connection is arguably right up there with the importance of physical activity, if not more so.”

— DR. DAVID SABGIR, PICTURED, FOUNDER AND CEO OF WALK WITH A DOC



WALKING FOR WELL-BEING

Building Community Through Movement

AS A LOCAL CARDIOLOGIST SPECIALIZING IN CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE, David Sabgir, MD, knows the risk factors that contribute to the deadly disease—and what steps to take to prevent it, including regular exercise. Early in his practice, Dr. Sabgir talked with his patients about the many benefits of an active lifestyle and felt that he was connecting with them in a way that would help patients improve their health. Yet despite these conversations, he began to realize that many of his patients weren’t incorporating exercise into their routines.

In 2005, wanting to do more to help his patients outside of a clinical setting and encourage them to be more active, Dr. Sabgir invited his patients to join him and his family for a Saturday morning walk at Sharon Woods Metro Park. To his surprise, 101 patients and community members showed up,

energized and ready to move.

“That day was truly magical—it was incredible,” said Dr. Sabgir. “I realized this needed to be part of the way I and other doctors practice medicine.”

After witnessing such a positive response, Dr. Sabgir knew he was onto something: an idea that could inspire communities through movement and conversation. He founded the nonprofit **Walk with a Doc** and began reaching out to other doctors and healthcare providers to organize walking groups throughout the community. Although the idea took time to gain traction, it eventually caught the attention of healthcare professionals—locally and nationally—who were eager to start Walk with a Doc chapters of their own.

[continued on page 3]

3

A LIFE OF SERVICE TO OTHERS

Former State Senator Ben Espy, who passed away in January, was a respected leader and dedicated civil servant.

4

A BEACON OF HOPE

House of Hope provides a home for treatment and a community of recovery for individuals with substance use disorders.

6

CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF IMPACT

Since 1955, the *Columbus Youth Foundation* has made a difference in the lives of young people through recreation and sports.

7

SUPPORTING CENTRAL OHIO’S YOUNG LEARNERS

The Columbus Foundation invests in nonprofits that provide impactful programming to young learners in our community.



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



Douglas F. Kridler
PRESIDENT AND CEO

GENERATIONS. It is amazing how motivating children can be. Even before they can speak their first word, they inspire us and reveal to us a deep sense of humanity and connection across the ages. With just a look of wonder and a trusting smile, they remind us of our responsibility to them, their health and safety, and their future.

It is that hope for a brighter future that drives us now and for generations to come. The Columbus Foundation was founded during WWII, when the world faced great danger, and, as British conservative historian Niall Ferguson recently observed, when international trade had all but collapsed because of protectionism, depression, and war. Each generation in the 81 years since has done a magnificent job at further bolstering the ability of this anchor institution to provide ballast and support during the most difficult of times, from war times to collapse of financial markets to a pandemic to division in our country.

How does that happen? First, through the flexible, enduring structure of The Columbus Foundation. Secondly, through the generosity of those who invested in strengthening our role in the sentry box of our community. And, thirdly, through a track record of prudent stewardship, financial management, and deployment of funds when and where most needed.

Even when things seem the most tumultuous, there is a need to be steady, unflinching, and discerning—but always on, ever alert. In 1796, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe described it like this: “Ohne Hast, amber ohne Rast” (“without haste but without rest”). More than three centuries later, Austin Goolsbee, Chicago Fed President, recently said on *CNBC* about the Fed: “People ask us what keeps us up at night. Our job is not to

sleep at night.” Towards what end, that commitment? To keep the trust that binds us together in community, in service to you and to the needs of now, and in hopes that we leave the world better for our time on this earth, so we can look into the eyes of the young, and know we did our best.

Our country will find its way through the headwinds and crosswinds of today. Inspirations still abound, person to person, kindness to kindness, bird song to human song. The gloriously restored Notre Dame Cathedral might provide some inspiration. Ransacked and defaced during the French Revolution, more recently ravaged by fire, what was destroyed has been built again, leading to this inspiration from Michael Kimmelman writing in *The New York Times* about the most recent restoration: “For a wider world, it underscores that calamities are surmountable, that some good and true things endure—that humanity has not yet lost touch with its best self.”

When asked recently in an interview in the *Financial Times* about a recent global concern, a country’s foreign minister replied, “One doesn’t spend one’s life worrying about what ifs. One spends one’s time planning for what ifs.” The leaders of the free world were doing that and more in the year of our founding, 1943—gathering intelligence, considering scenarios for action, and pulling together resources to meet the moment, all with no or little sleep. The fact that they succeeded gave us the chance to continue, for multiple generations now, the building of this country, this community, and even this place of trust and investment in a brighter future for all, The Columbus Foundation.

And so we do the work of our generation. Will it be enough? It must. Look at that smile.

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, Esq.
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
- Kate Oliphint
Director, Center for HumanKindness
- 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.

For more information, visit columbusfoundation.org or call 614/251-4000.



Photos by Challen Brown, unless noted.



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



©2025 The Columbus Foundation

Everyone has a seat at **The Big Table®** on October 21!



Registration opens Tuesday, September 9.
To learn more, scan the QR code or visit columbusfoundation.org/thebigtable.



Today, Walk with a Doc, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in April, has grown into a global movement, with more than 600 local chapters in communities across the world. Open to people of all ages and levels of physical health, Walk with a Doc chapters host walking groups that are led by doctors, healthcare providers, or medical students. During each walk, participants learn more about a specific health topic, such as heart health, diabetes, cancer, dementia, nutrition, healthy aging, and more.

Beyond the health education and physical benefits that participants receive at Walk with a Doc events, Dr. Sabgir said that the group walks also promote social connection—between healthcare providers and patients, and between community members. This, he explains, can be just as important to patients’ overall health and well-being as regular exercise.

“We’re dealing with an epidemic of loneliness that was really exacerbated by the pandemic,” explained Dr. Sabgir. “When it comes to our health, social connection is arguably right up there with the importance of physical activity, if not more so.”

One way the organization works to expand its outreach and impact is through innovative community partnerships, including here in central Ohio. Walk with a Doc began a partnership with the City of Columbus in 2013 to organize neighborhood walking clubs in health-vulnerable areas. The partnership, which now includes a collaboration with OhioHealth and YMCA of Central Ohio, allows Walk with a Doc to serve communities where opportunities for physical activity are often limited.

“I realized this needed to be part of the way I and other doctors practice medicine.”

— DR. DAVID SABGIR, FOUNDER AND CEO OF WALK WITH A DOC

In 2021, to help provide long-term financial stability to the organization and its programs, Walk with a Doc established the *Walk with a Doc Fund*, an Organization Endowment Fund at The Columbus Foundation. As Dr. Sabgir shared, the fund has been vital to supporting the organization’s ongoing presence in the community.

After two decades, Dr. Sabgir looks back with an immense sense of gratitude. His hope is that hundreds more chapters will start in the coming years, so that the organization can transform even more lives.

“We hear so many stories from all over the world about how lives have been changed through these walks,” said Dr. Sabgir. “That is something that we’re beyond grateful for and that we don’t take lightly. It’s an absolute gift.”

Community members who are interested in joining a local Walk with a Doc program can visit www.walkwithadoc.org to learn more.



PICTURED:
Community members join a local Walk with a Doc walk event at Highbanks Metro Park on Saturday, March 20, 2025.

A Life of Service to Others

FORMER STATE SENATOR

BEN ESPY, who passed away in January at the age of 81, was known by many in the central Ohio community as a respected leader and dedicated civil servant. To his four daughters—Elizabeth, Amy, Laura, and Lynnette—Senator Espy was also a proud family man who shaped countless lives through his boundless optimism, generosity, and sense of humor.

“He always talked about the importance of using what you’ve been blessed with for a purpose that’s greater than yourself,” said Laura.

Senator Espy grew up in humble means. Sharing a two-bedroom house in Sandusky, Ohio, with his parents and two sisters, Senator Espy received a scholarship to attend The Ohio State University, where he was recruited to play football under legendary coach Woody Hayes. After graduating from Ohio State in 1965, Senator Espy earned a law degree from Howard University in Washington, D.C.

He went on to lead a long and distinguished career in public service—as an attorney, a member of the United States Air Force, a Columbus City Councilmember, the city’s first Black person to serve as President Pro Tempore, and a State Senator. Living by the motto, “If it is to be, it is up to me,” Senator Espy also established the Columbus Youth Corps, a program that taught work ethic and professionalism to youth.

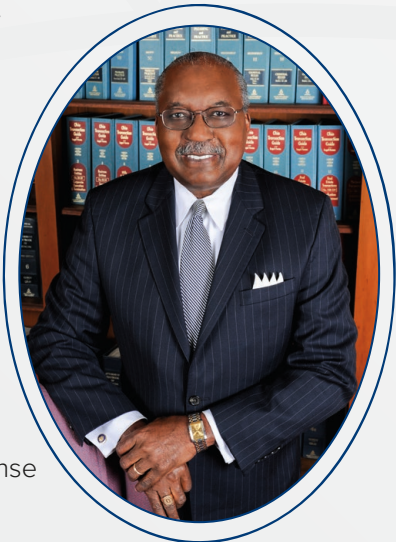
As his daughters shared, Senator Espy was particularly passionate about helping young people succeed. “He felt a moral obligation to make this a better place for not just his children, but other people’s children,” Lynnette explained.

Following Senator Espy’s passing, friends and family approached The Columbus Foundation to establish a charitable fund in his honor. The *Senator Ben Espy Opportunity Fund* will support the causes he cared deeply about, including providing opportunities to youth—especially those experiencing poverty, food insecurity, violence, or other challenges.

Reflecting on the many lessons they learned from their family, Elizabeth, Amy, Laura, and Lynnette credit their parents, who were married for 54 years, for instilling in them strong values of service and leadership. Their mother, Kathy Duffy Espy, was also deeply involved in the community, including through volunteer board service. Kathy passed away in 2022.

“The four of us were very blessed to have parents that demonstrated what it looked like when you give back and you are a servant leader,” Elizabeth said.

“They both had a deep sense of community,” added Amy.



PICTURED:
Former State Senator Ben Espy. Photo courtesy of the Espy family.



PICTURED:
Third graders at Greensview Elementary School in Upper Arlington.

Local Classroom Raises Funds to Support Disaster Relief

THIRD-GRADE STUDENTS AT GREENSVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL in Upper Arlington are proof that philanthropy can start at any age. Each year, as part of an annual sucker sale organized by the school’s third-grade classrooms, students research and select a nonprofit to support with the proceeds. This year, the third graders voted to support The Columbus Foundation’s *Disaster Relief Fund* to help victims of the southern California wildfires that occurred in January.

Chris Donovan, JD, CAP®, Director for Donor Services at The Columbus Foundation, visited Greensview Elementary School to thank the students for their generosity and share more about the importance of charitable giving. In total, students raised nearly \$2,000 to benefit the *Disaster Relief Fund*—thank you, Greensview Elementary School third graders and teachers!



A Home for New Beginnings

Located among the beautiful historic homes in Columbus’ Victorian Village is a place that, for more than half a century, has been a beacon of hope and new beginnings for individuals with substance use disorders.



PICTURED (L-R): Kyle Harden, Outreach Director; Carolyn Ireland, CEO of House of Hope; Andrew Smith, Program Director, Long-Term Treatment; and Rob Yurisko, Program Director, Short-Term Stabilization/Outpatient.

FOUNDED IN 1959, House of Hope is the longest standing long-term substance use disorder provider in Columbus. The nonprofit started from humble beginnings when George Connor, a local service station owner, began opening his shop at night to give men battling alcoholism a place to sleep and to encourage them to seek sobriety. Connor was later approached by a local physician who recommended he purchase the nearby Sells mansion to open a halfway house—which is where House of Hope was born.

Although the organization has evolved over the decades—including expanding services, moving to a new location on Dennison Avenue, and acquiring additional properties for recovery houses—House of Hope’s mission remains the same: to provide a home for treatment and a community for recovery. Today, House of Hope offers short-term stabilization and long-term treatment services for men, as well as outpatient services for both men and women.

“We want our clients to come here and thrive and be successful,” said Carolyn Ireland, CEO of House of Hope.

Oftentimes, clients are referred to House of Hope by probation officers, detox centers, or short-term recovery programs. Other times, individuals learn about the organization through word of mouth from former clients. No matter the starting point, those who are seeking treatment will often begin in the short-term stabilization program, which integrates a 12-step program with evidence-based practices to help clients on their path to recovery.

For those seeking extended treatment, House of Hope provides long-term programming—averaging six months—that helps clients build the skills and tools necessary to maintain their recovery, including employment support, financial literacy courses, and health and wellness programs. According to House of Hope, clients who engage in the organization’s full

continuum of care have, historically, had the highest rates of success.

One such client is Kyle Harden, who now serves as Outreach Director for House of Hope. After putting off treatment for years, Harden finally decided to start his path to sobriety. “I would hear people in other treatment centers talk about House of Hope,” Harden explained. “It was called ‘the last house on the block,’ meaning if you’ve been to treatment a bunch of times and you want to give yourself the best possible chance, go to House of Hope.”

Harden is one of many staff members who received treatment at House of Hope before going on to advance their education and careers. In fact, according to Ireland, between 90-95 percent of staff have been clients of House of Hope. Not only does this help create a strong culture of compassion and care—it also serves as an inspiration to current clients.

“It feels like home, and that’s what we want to create for our clients. This is a home for recovery.”

— CAROLYN IRELAND, CEO OF HOUSE OF HOPE

“It helps them see that there is life after treatment. I think it’s very helpful for clients to see someone who’s gone through the same thing as them,” said Ireland.

It’s this community of support that has also cultivated engagement among House of Hope alumni, who regularly come together for events, including a monthly brunch where alumni meet with current clients to answer questions and share their recovery journeys. As the organization’s network of alumni grows, House of Hope is planning even more opportunities for alumni to stay connected with the organization.



Over the years, The Columbus Foundation has supported House of Hope through numerous investments, including a grant to help renovate the carriage house (pictured above) located beside one of the organization’s residential facilities. Today, the renovated space is now used to host health and wellness programs, employment services, case management support, and more.

As it looks towards its future, House of Hope continues to combine “tried and true” programs with modern, evidence-based practices such as adventure therapy. Core to the organization’s mission, though, is ensuring that House of Hope remains a welcoming and supportive family-like atmosphere to everyone who walks through its doors.

“It feels like home, and that’s what we want to create for our clients,” said Ireland. “This is a home for recovery.”





PICTURED:
Back row (l-r): Eryn Hathaway, Executive Director and Co-Founder of EPIC Youth; Sherome Hathaway, Co-Founder and COO of EPIC Youth; and Kate McGarvey, Executive Director of Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio. Front row (l-r): Shelly Douglas, Executive Director of Green Columbus; Dr. Dorothy Hassan, CEO of Our Helpers; and Sheldon Johnson, Executive Director of Partners Achieving Community Transformation.

Meet 5 Nonprofits to Watch in 2025



Central Ohio’s nonprofit sector is full of dynamic and impactful organizations dedicated to strengthening and improving the region. For more than 10 years, The Columbus Foundation’s **5 Nonprofits to Watch** program has highlighted an array of nonprofits. Each of these organizations, like many nonprofits in our community, has a deep dedication to building a vibrant, thriving central Ohio for all.

5 NONPROFITS TO WATCH IN 2025:

EPIC Youth

Founded in 2012, EPIC Youth has evolved into a comprehensive mentoring and empowerment organization, equipping young people with leadership, career readiness, and life skills. Through in-school programs, leadership academies, mentorship, and youth-centered events, EPIC Youth helps young people lead with purpose.

Green Columbus

Green Columbus leads initiatives to enhance environmental sustainability and is dedicated to fostering resilient communities and increasing positive environmental outcomes for central Ohioans. Green Columbus has distributed thousands of free native trees from its community nurseries.

Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio

Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio is a nonprofit law firm that provides free civil legal aid to low-income individuals and families, veterans, and seniors. The organization works across eight locations, including Columbus, to deliver comprehensive legal services that help reduce poverty and increase opportunity.

Our Helpers

Our Helpers is dedicated to improving the lives of immigrant, refugee, and underserved communities in central Ohio. The organization provides vital services and resources, including English as a Second Language classes, digital literacy programs, career counseling, youth development, housing assistance, and more.

Partners Achieving Community Transformation

Partners Achieving Community Transformation (PACT) started as a partnership involving the City of Columbus, The Ohio State University, Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority, and Near East Side stakeholders. PACT uses a comprehensive approach to community development to improve access to safe and affordable housing, quality healthcare and education, and employment opportunities.

Congratulations to these 5 Nonprofits to Watch in 2025!

Honoring the Connection Between People and Their Pets

The bond between people and their pets is often deep and mutually beneficial. Pet ownership has been linked to improved mental and physical health, and many consider animals part of the family.

IN APRIL, the Center for HumanKindness at The Columbus Foundation awarded the **HumanKindness Prize** to two organizations that are supporting humans and their beloved pets: **Faithful Forgotten Best Friends** and **Pet FBI**. Both organizations are dedicated to keeping people and their pets together, whether by providing free pet food and veterinary care to vulnerable populations or helping reunite lost and found pets with their families. As part of the prize, each organization received a \$10,000 unrestricted grant to help further their missions.

The HumanKindness Prize recognizes nonprofits that exemplify unwavering and intentional human kindness in action.



PICTURED:
Faithful Forgotten Best Friends hosts regular events to provide veterinary care and food to animals in need.



To learn more about the latest and past honorees, scan the QR code.

Community Snapshot



PHOTO BY JAMES DECAMP PHOTOGRAPHY

IN FEBRUARY, Volunteers of America Ohio & Indiana hosted a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to open the doors to the Fresh Start Recovery Center in Columbus. The Fresh Start Recovery Center helps women recover from substance use disorder, break the cycle of addiction in families, improve health outcomes, and promote the birth of healthy babies. The Columbus Foundation supported the project with a \$100,000 grant in 2023.

A Lasting Gift for the Community

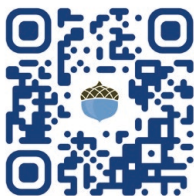
The Columbus Foundation is honored to work with donors throughout the many stages of their philanthropic journey—from identifying their unique giving goals and creating personalized charitable funds to helping donors leave a lasting legacy through a planned gift.

ONE SUCH DONOR IS LAURINA “LAURA” MIGNARDI HARPER, who passed away in December 2024 at the remarkable age of 102. Born in Ithaca, New York, Laura was a passionate educator who taught high school English and eventually led the English Department at Brighton High School in Rochester, New York, where she and her husband John lived for many years. After their retirement, the couple moved near Grove City to live on a farm John inherited from his great-grandfather. Tragically, John passed away unexpectedly in 1984. However, having spent nearly a decade building a new life in central Ohio, Laura felt at home and decided to stay.



PICTURED:
Laura Harper. Photo by Rachel Karas, originally published in Discover Grove City Magazine January/February 2023.

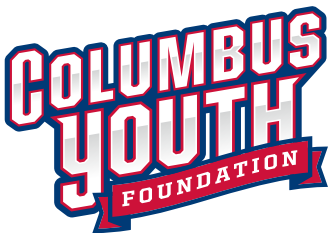
Laura was dedicated to her community, joining local organizations such as the Columbus Museum of Art, Friends of the Southwest Public Libraries, and the Grove City Arts Council. She was also deeply committed to the Grove City Cancer Thrift Shop—a nonprofit benefitting LifeCare Alliance Cancer Services—where she volunteered for 40 years. In 2008, on the recommendation of a trusted friend, R.L. “Rick” Richards, Laura established a Donor Advised Fund at The Columbus Foundation, the *John T. and Laurina M. Harper Charitable Fund*, to support causes she cared about. Later, Laura worked closely with The Columbus Foundation to set up a Charitable Gift Annuity and a bequest to the Foundation through her trust. Both planned gifts help to carry on Laura’s legacy, ensuring that her philanthropic wishes continue for years to come. “Laura quietly and generously honored her and her husband’s families, education, the arts, and her community with her time, talent, and treasure during her life and now after her passing through The Columbus Foundation,” said Rick, who now serves as the successor advisor to her fund.



We’re here to help. Interested in learning more about planned giving? Scan the QR code to connect with our Donor Services team.

Celebrating 70 Years of Impact

Since 1955, the *Columbus Youth Foundation* has made a difference in the lives of young people from low-income neighborhoods by providing healthy, positive opportunities to learn life lessons through recreation and sports.



TODAY, THE COLUMBUS YOUTH FOUNDATION—which became the first Supporting Foundation when it was transferred to The Columbus Foundation in 1976—focuses on Columbus’ youth through annual grants that help young people attend summer camp, participate in recreational opportunities, and enjoy cultural enrichment activities. Among the Columbus Youth Foundation’s recent grant recipients are Adaptive Sports Connection, Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Ohio, Girls on the Run of Central Ohio, Recreation Unlimited Foundation, and YMCA of Central Ohio, among other organizations.

Since 1985, the Columbus Youth Foundation has also sponsored the Best All-Around Student Awards, an annual awards celebration that recognizes a male and female student from each middle and high school at Columbus City Schools for their outstanding citizenship and achievement.

“The Columbus Youth Foundation has provided opportunities for generations of our community’s youth by investing in organizations and activities to help them grow and develop,” said Cathy Lyttle, Chairperson of the Columbus Youth Foundation Board. “As we celebrate 70 years of impact, we are especially grateful to our founders, donors, nonprofit partners, and others who have been part of this incredible legacy.”

A MAJOR SUPPORTING FOUNDATIONS MILESTONE!

In 2024, Supporting Foundations at The Columbus Foundation achieved a significant milestone. Since the first Supporting Foundation was established in 1976, more than **\$1 BILLION** has been collectively granted to support programs and causes in central Ohio and beyond. Today, The Columbus Foundation is home to 25 Supporting Foundations, each with unique missions and philanthropic goals.

\$5.5 MILLION+
amount of grants awarded by the Columbus Youth Foundation since 1955.

100+
number of nonprofits to receive grants from the Columbus Youth Foundation since 1955.

3,500+
number of students celebrated through the Best All-Around Student Awards.

BRINGING MUSIC TO LIFE

IN FEBRUARY, THE CARPE DIEM STRING QUARTET—a classical string quartet based in Columbus—took the stage at Carnegie Hall in New York City to perform the New York premiere of *Ubuntu*, composed by Dr. Mark Lomax, II. Lomax, who also serves as the Director of Arts & Generational Grantmaking at The Columbus Foundation, joined the quartet to introduce his work, which one critic called “a sensational start to the program.”

An award-winning composer, Lomax is an acclaimed recording artist, renowned jazz drummer, and educator.



PICTURED (L-R):
Ariana Nelson, Dr. Korine Fujiwara, Laura Kaminsky, Dr. Mark Lomax, II, Sam Weiser, and Dr. Marisa Ishikawa at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall in New York City. Photo by Bob Handelman.

Supporting Central Ohio’s Young Learners

A strong educational ecosystem—one that supports young learners’ development and provides enriching opportunities to learn both inside and outside the classroom—can equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive. Through strategic grantmaking, collaboration, and capacity building, The Columbus Foundation supports nonprofits that deliver impactful programming to young learners in our community.



PICTURED:
Members of the education community of practice, who represent 14 nonprofits that serve young learners in the central Ohio region.

PICTURED:
Chasity Edwards, Director of Education Grantmaking at The Columbus Foundation.

IN SEPTEMBER 2023, Chasity Edwards, Ed.M., joined The Columbus Foundation as the Director of Education Grantmaking. In this role, Edwards researches, reviews, and recommends charitable investments in central Ohio that focus on the vital area of education grantmaking. Working closely with local organizations, Edwards also maintains awareness of ongoing educational trends in the region and provides support to the nonprofit community.

Earlier this year, under Edwards’ leadership, The Columbus Foundation convened a new education community of practice, consisting of 14 organizations that serve youth through early childhood and K-12 education, afterschool programming, or out-of-school programming. The community of practice will regularly meet at The Columbus Foundation over the next three years to collaborate, problem-solve, and put forth innovative ideas to better serve young learners wherever they are—in the classroom, in the community, or with their families.

Edwards recently shared more about her role and what she hopes the community of practice will achieve.

Q: In your role, what have you learned about central Ohio’s nonprofit sector, especially as it relates to education grantmaking?

I quickly learned how competitive the nonprofit sector is, as it relates to funding,

and how this can discourage collaboration. I was also affirmed in my understanding that Columbus is program rich but lacks the civic infrastructure necessary for the type of sustainable collaboration that improves outcomes at a community level. Our community of practice provides the space to pilot critical elements of the requisite infrastructure.

I sincerely appreciate those nonprofit leaders who, early in my role, trusted me enough to issue a call to action: to approach funding differently. Hearing an earnest desire from the sector for collaboration and shared goals and metrics has been a refreshing insight.

Q: Why is it important to focus on young learners’ experiences both inside and outside of the classroom?

Kids are born with an almost insatiable curiosity. Learning is constantly happening in active and passive ways. Intentionally curating community to extend formal learning feeds their innate curiosity, facilitates healthy brain development, and creates the real-world connections kids are craving right now.

Q: How would you describe the organizations that are participating in the community of practice? What do you hope these organizations gain from this experience?

Best in class. We carefully selected organizations that consistently implement evidence-based and/or promising practices, have an appetite for innovation, a proven ability to collaborate, and a track record of strong outcomes. We hope the community of practice partners enjoy a space to think together, and differently, about how we better leverage existing assets to solve complex problems. We also hope our partners can deepen relationships in ways that lend

themselves to sustainable and mutually beneficial collaborations, with the aim of achieving our shared aspirations for the young people and families we serve.

Every child should have access to excellent educational opportunities. Our community of practice partners are best positioned to help The Columbus Foundation understand how, as a community, we make this possible.

EDUCATION COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The following organizations are participating in The Columbus Foundation’s education community of practice.

- Action for Children
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Ohio
- Bridgeway Academy
- The Center for Healthy Families
- Columbus Early Learning Centers
- Columbus Metropolitan Library
- Community Development for All People
- Directions for Youth & Families
- FACCES
- KIPP Columbus
- Lincoln Theatre Association
- The PAST Foundation
- Stay in the Game! Attendance Network
- United Schools Network Inc.



PICTURED:
Dr. David Harrison,
The Spirit of Columbus® Award
2025 Honoree

The Spirit of Columbus® Award 2025 Honoree Dr. David Harrison

In April, The Columbus Foundation named Dr. David Harrison, President of Columbus State Community College, the 2025 honoree of *The Spirit of Columbus® Award*. Created in 2013 in honor of Jerrie Mock’s historic flight around the world in her single-engine Cessna named Spirit of Columbus, the award celebrates those in our community who exhibit bravery, **boldness, and determination through their actions.**

A respected and accomplished community leader, Dr. Harrison has led Columbus State since 2010. Under his stewardship, Columbus State has developed deep partnerships throughout central Ohio, working with a wide range of stakeholders to support students, address regional workforce challenges, and expand access to higher education. His highly collaborative and distinguished leadership has helped increase opportunities for thousands of individuals and families in central Ohio and beyond.

Congratulations, Dr. Harrison!

IN THIS ISSUE:



3
Students Support
Disaster Relief



4
A Home for New
Beginnings



5
5 Nonprofits to Watch

THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION

1234 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43205-1453
columbusfoundation.org

NEXUS