



PICTURED:  
LC Johnson, Founder  
and CEO of Zora's House

## A DREAM REALIZED

### Zora's House offers solidarity and support for women of color

**WHEN LC JOHNSON MOVED TO COLUMBUS IN 2015**, she struggled to find community. She dreamed of a place where women of color could show up as their authentic selves to nurture their leadership, creativity, scholarship, entrepreneurship, activism, and service. Now, as Founder and CEO of Zora's House, Johnson is providing other women of color a place to realize their own dreams.

Zora's House is a coworking space and leadership incubator designed by and with women and gender-expansive people of color. Named after

author and activist Zora Neale Hurston, Zora's House offers its members an array of programs including creative workshops, professional and leadership development, business planning courses, financial literacy and wealth-building education, and more.

To its members, Zora's House is more than a physical space contained within four walls. As Johnson describes it, Zora's House is "a culture, a feeling, a community"—a place where women of color have permission to be themselves and where they can connect, grow, and thrive.

"It is extremely rare that Black women or other women of color get to enter a public space that was created explicitly for them," explained Johnson. "There's something about being in a space that's for you that allows you to think more boldly, dream more boldly, and be more authentic."

[continued on page 3]

4

#### A PATH TO ADVENTURE

The Ohio to Erie Trail is connecting communities to central Ohio's natural beauty

5

#### 2023 5 NONPROFITS TO WATCH

Meet the dynamic group of nonprofits doing extraordinary work in the community

5

#### A RECORD-SETTING YEAR FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

The generosity of donors is helping local students achieve their educational dreams

6

#### BOOKS THAT INSPIRED ME

Columbus Metropolitan Library CEO Patrick Losinski reflects on how books have impacted his life

# NEXUS

Spring 2023

## THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION

### GOVERNING COMMITTEE

Clark Kellogg  
*Chairperson*

Jeffrey W. Edwards  
*Vice Chairperson*

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

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

Douglas F. Kridler  
*President and CEO*

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

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

Tamera Durrence  
*Vice President, Supporting Foundations*

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

Steven Moore  
*Chief of Staff*

Gregg Oosterbaan  
*Vice President, Information Technology*

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

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

Amy Vick  
*Vice President, Communications  
and Marketing*

### EDITORIAL STAFF

Amy Vick  
Challen Brown  
Megan Denny  
Chelsea Kiene  
Margaret Robinson

### OUR MISSION

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

### OUR PROMISE

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

### Want to share NEXUS with a friend?

Find our digital version online at [columbusfoundation.org/spring2023nexus](http://columbusfoundation.org/spring2023nexus)

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



Photos by Challen Brown, unless noted.



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



©2023 The Columbus Foundation

## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



**Douglas F. Kridler**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO

**I** WAS IN A MEETING a few weeks ago when a leading economist said, “We are in a time when we don’t know if good news is good news, or good news is bad news.” Though referencing economic data and the Fed’s actions, the phrase itself is an interesting one to consider across many dimensions of society today.

Sometimes, it is bad news that creates an impetus for good, via adaption and change. I can speak to that from firsthand experience when I came to Columbus to run the Columbus Association for the Performing Arts (CAPA), which at the time was millions of dollars in debt to a consortium of banks. The bad news was the debt. The good news was, in classic “necessity is the mother of invention” form, we re-shaped the organization’s business model in ways that have paid huge dividends for decades.

If, Albert Einstein once said, life is research, then each day is an exploration, with good news and bad to vector to. How we respond defines us.

Isabelle Autissier, French explorer, sailor, and writer—and the first woman to have completed a solo world navigation in competition—said in a recent interview when asked about the perils on the seas when winds, storms, or other unanticipated developments arise: “It’s more fun. The charts are wrong, so you end up in places where you have no idea where you’re going... It’s pretty exciting in terms of navigation—and it’s magnificent.”

I have a hunch that the reason it can be magnificent for Autissier is that she has prepared herself for what might come her way, even on the world’s oceans, sailing all alone.

I remember hosting the tightrope walker Phillipe Petit at an international conference I was chairing in New York City just three months after 9/11, at a meeting space just three blocks from the charred ruins of the World Trade Center. It was an emotional time, and Phillipe, who had walked a tightrope between the Twin Towers years before in a fascinating stunt that took the authorities by surprise (documented in the film “Man on a Wire”), was asked how he had the courage to walk on that high wire more than 1,300 feet in the air, a most perilous undertaking. His response? That his goal was to prepare so well that once he stepped onto that high wire, he could revel in the magnificence of the experience.

Okay, so Isabelle Autissier and Phillipe Petit are renowned adventurers—what does that have to do with us less adventurous types? A lot, I believe. At The Columbus Foundation, the will to prepare is central to our practice of professional responsibility to you and to our community. We can only control how prepared we are, how knowledgeable we are, and how nimble, steadfast, and present we are in the face of the unforeseen challenges that emerge in the ever-changing world of today. Our goal is that this proves to be, for you, our fellow voyagers on the seas of the engaged life, a magnificent journey.

## Extending Our Sincere Gratitude

The Columbus Foundation is recognizing three extraordinary team members as they celebrate their retirements. Combined, these individuals have contributed 92 years of dedicated service to The Columbus Foundation:

**Tami Durrence, Vice President of Supporting Foundations**  
Retiring in June 2023 after 36 years

**Pam Straker, Director of Human Resources**  
Retired in May 2023 after 26 years

**Renilda Marshall, Executive Secretary to the President and CEO**  
Retired in January 2023 after 30 years

Congratulations and best wishes, Tami, Pam, and Renilda!



Pictured (l-r): Tami Durrence, Renilda Marshall, and Pam Straker.



Pictured: Groundbreaking ceremony for the new Zora's House in Weinland Park on February 3, 2023.

Women of color are the fastest growing population in Franklin County—a fact that Johnson says underscores the importance of places like Zora's House, not just for individuals but also for the community. While people often associate the term “brain drain” with educated or skilled individuals leaving a community, Johnson says there’s another form of brain drain—when individuals lack access to support or opportunities.

“Brain drain also happens when people’s genius is left behind, when their ambitions are left behind,” said Johnson. “Langston Hughes famously asked, ‘What happens to a dream deferred?’ It’s not just a question for the dreamer; it’s a question for the community. That’s part of why Zora’s House exists.”

Since the organization’s founding in 2018, Zora’s House has grown quickly—so much so that it has outgrown its 2,000-square-foot home on Summit Street in Weinland Park. Recognizing the potential to expand programming to serve more women of color in a larger space, Johnson and other leaders at Zora’s House launched a capital campaign to construct a new building: Zora’s House 2.0. In February, more than 120 community members gathered to celebrate the groundbreaking of the organization’s future home on North Fourth Street and East Eighth Avenue in Weinland Park.

The new Zora’s House will be a 10,000-square-foot facility featuring offices, coworking space, and a cooperative café. The building will also offer a residential incubator that can accommodate weeklong stays for

“There’s something about being in a space that’s for you that allows you to think more boldly, dream more boldly, and be more authentic.”

— LC JOHNSON

out-of-town visitors. Once the Zora’s House 2.0 project is complete, it will be one of the largest real estate developments built and owned by a Black woman-founded organization in the Midwest. The new building, which was designed in consultation with women of color and is being built by a woman-led construction company, is expected to open in the Spring of 2024.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of donors, The Columbus Foundation awarded a \$100,000 grant to support the construction of Zora’s House 2.0, and in conjunction with Campus Partners was able to provide an additional \$150,000 through a co-funded Weinland Park revitalization investment pool. More recently, The Columbus Foundation awarded the organization a grant to support the exploration of a donor engagement strategy that centers racial equity, social justice, education, and transformative systems change.

“The Columbus Foundation has been such an incredible support for Zora’s House. The Columbus Foundation provided the very first gift that we received related to this capital project,” said Johnson. “It’s important to ensure folks

know that our local community foundation really supports what we’re doing and is investing in our work.”

In 2020, Johnson was also part of a cohort of nonprofit leaders selected to participate in a training on human-centered design facilitated by The Columbus Foundation in partnership with Stanford University’s d.school. The weeklong design sprint provided tools and hands-on learning to help promote the value and importance of incorporating the perspectives and insights of those who experience challenges throughout the process of solving them. This opportunity offered important insight that has helped Johnson guide her work.

“One of my friends and a fellow community leader, Kelley Griesmer of The Women’s Fund of Central Ohio, was also part of my cohort,” Johnson explained. “A few months later, JPMorgan Chase announced its AdvancingCities competition and Kelley and I asked ourselves, ‘How might we utilize design thinking to create more equity in our city?’ The conversation led to the Women of Color Equity Design Institute, which was later supported by JPMorgan Chase with an investment of \$1.55 million.”

With construction for Zora’s House 2.0 now underway, Johnson looks forward to continuing to make space for women of color by changing the way the community thinks about equity and leadership.

“We have a responsibility to support women of color as whole, entire people and to let them know: You belong here,” said Johnson. “We change spaces by being in spaces.”

## Small Notes of Kindness Make a Big Impact



**THE SCIENCE IS CLEAR:** Positive social connections keep us healthy, happy, and fulfilled. In February, in honor of National Send a Card to a Friend Day and Random Acts of Kindness Day, the Center for HumanKindness at The Columbus Foundation invited community members to strengthen their relationships and spread kindness by sending a handwritten postcard letting someone know they are valued.

Through partnerships with organizations such as Seeds of Caring, Columbus Metropolitan Library, and The Ohio State University Office of Student Life, as well as workshops with local artists, the **Center for HumanKindness distributed more than 20,000 postcards** to help members of the community express appreciation to the people in their lives.



Pictured, above: Young readers enjoy the Postcards with Purpose display at Columbus Metropolitan Library’s Whetstone Branch.



Scan the QR code to learn more about The Center for HumanKindness and sign up for the InsideKindness newsletter.



**DONOR FEATURE**

# Connecting Communities, Inspiring Exploration

Pictured above (l-r): Chris Haydocy, Vice President of the Board of Directors at the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund, Jody Dzurarinin, Executive Director of the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund, and Tom Bilcze, President of the Board of Directors at the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund.

Below: Memorial honoring Ed Honton, founder of the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund. The bronze plaque is located along the Alum Creek Trail, which is part of the Ohio to Erie Trail, in Columbus.

## The Ohio to Erie Trail offers the opportunity to experience Ohio's natural beauty

**TO TRAVEL FROM COLUMBUS** to Cleveland or Cincinnati, you may plan to take Interstate 71, a reasonably direct path connecting Ohio's largest cities. Or, if you're feeling adventurous, you could consider exploring the Ohio to Erie Trail by bike or on foot, where you'll weave through a tapestry of pastoral countryside, quiet woods, historic landmarks, charming small towns, and dynamic metropolitan areas.

The Ohio to Erie Trail is a 326-mile network of multi-use trails that links the Ohio River at Cincinnati to Lake Erie at Cleveland, mostly on land once used for railroads and canals. A place for bicyclists, bird watchers, hikers, runners, cross-country skiers, and nature lovers alike, the Ohio to Erie Trail offers scenic views and dedicated space for recreation.

For those who aren't quite ready to commit to all 326 miles of the trail, there are ample accessible trail offerings in central Ohio. The Ohio to Erie Trail connects places like Mount Vernon, Westerville, Columbus, Galloway, and London, traversing local trails including the Westerville Bikeway, Alum Creek Trail, Lower Scioto Greenway, Hilltop Connector, and Camp Chase Trail.

For Jody Dzurarinin, Executive Director of the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund—whose mission is to develop, maintain, and promote the Ohio to Erie Trail—the trail is more than a place for locals to enjoy the outdoors. It's a destination that's putting Ohio on the map.

"While a large majority of our visitors are from Ohio, we're attracting people from other states and countries," said Dzurarinin, who has been involved with the organization for more than a decade, including previously serving on its Board of Directors. "People often compare us to established trail systems and say that we really shine."

The Ohio to Erie Trail Fund hopes the trail will one day become the longest fully-connected, off-street, and paved recreational trail in Ohio. The organization is nearing that goal: 90 percent

of the Ohio to Erie Trail is now designated trail, with the remaining 10 percent connected by streets and rural roads.

The organization began its work in 1991, when avid bicyclist Ed Honton founded the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund. An engineer by trade, Honton had a vision to develop a cross-state trail that would provide year-round access to outdoor recreation. Honton passed away in 2005, but his legacy lives on through the Ohio to Erie Trail. Today, Honton is memorialized on a large bronze plaque along the Alum Creek Trail.

"Ed understood transportation, bicycling, and the rail lines, and he was able to bring those tools together in his vision," said Dzurarinin.

In the early days of the organization, the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund largely focused on providing direct funds to local organizations for the acquisition of trail right-of-way. Today, the organization's role remains that of collaboration, working with individuals, organizations, park districts, local governments, and government agencies to promote the trail.

The Ohio to Erie Trail has become increasingly popular over the years. As Chris Haydocy, Vice President of the Board of Directors at the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund, explained, this has provided economic benefits to local communities along the trail, as more and more trail-goers stop for lunch, browse local shops, or stay the night.

"A trail can often become a gateway to a community," said Haydocy. "In addition to the health benefits, trails can increase home values, boost tourism, and support local small businesses. The Ohio to Erie Trail is a very valuable resource."

As the trail inches closer to being fully



connected, the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund is looking ahead to its next chapter, particularly as awareness of and tourism to the trail grow. Tom Bilcze, President of the Board of Directors at the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund, said that the organization has its sights set on supporting communities along the trail.

"The trail is in a period of transition," explained Bilcze. "Our primary focus now is the communities connected to the trail. These trail towns want to be more welcoming to trail users, and we see ourselves as a vehicle that can assist and make that happen."

In 2019, the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund established *The Ohio to Erie Trail Foundation Fund*, an Organization Endowment Fund at The Columbus Foundation. Bilcze envisions the Endowment Fund transforming with the organization's evolving priorities, supporting grantmaking to projects that make the trail more welcoming and accessible to visitors.

When asked what aspect of the Ohio to Erie Trail he enjoys most, Bilcze said it's the people he meets.

"I love listening to people's stories," said Bilcze. "When you talk to people, you hear really interesting stories. So many people are on the trail for a challenge or to try something new. You quickly find out that our work is appreciated."



# Meet the 5 Nonprofits to Watch in 2023

**S**INCE 2014, The Columbus Foundation’s 5 Nonprofits to Watch award honors nonprofit organizations that are working to strengthen our community. In March, the newest cohort of exemplary nonprofits—which represent growing, small- to medium-sized organizations serving central Ohio—gathered at The Columbus Foundation to share more about their work and the communities they serve.

With this distinction, each nonprofit received a \$20,000 unrestricted grant. The Columbus Foundation is also offering each organization a consulting engagement with UpRys, a local strategy consulting and project-based delivery firm, to help address growth, capacity building, and sustainability. Capacity building projects will be developed by the organizations to reflect their greatest priorities. This is the second consecutive year The Columbus Foundation has worked with UpRys to offer consulting services to the 5 Nonprofits to Watch.

Thell Robinson III, Founder and CEO at Halt Violence, a 2022 5 Nonprofits to Watch honoree, described his organization’s experience with the 5 Nonprofits to Watch platform as inspiring and informative. In particular, Robinson said the consulting engagement with UpRys helped the organization improve time management through various digital software.

“Halt Violence greatly benefitted from the consultation with UpRys. They helped our organization tremendously, advising us on how to incorporate easy-to-use software to make the best use of our time and resources” explained Robinson.

“The Columbus Foundation is thrilled to recognize these incredible nonprofits and invest in their continued growth and success,” said Danielle Tong, Director of Capacity Building and Community Knowledge at The Columbus Foundation. “We look forward to working with each of these organizations to help them build capacity so that they can grow their impact sustainably and effectively.”

## THE 5 NONPROFITS TO WATCH IN 2023:



### Black Girl Rising, Inc.

offers Black girls in central Ohio an opportunity to use their voice and lived experiences to identify

issues and concerns that impact their mental and emotional health and create best practices for addressing those issues. The work of the organization’s Black Girl Think Tank provides girls with leadership skills to dialogue across barriers, think critically, and build community with girls regardless of social, economic, or educational backgrounds.

### Elevate Northland

is a Community Development Corporation that strives to lift up its diverse community and create

opportunities for those who call Northland home, including entrepreneurs, New Americans, seniors, and families. The organization provides services that incubate Northland businesses, nonprofits, and community organizations to establish the community’s foothold as a hub of culture and connection.

### Form5 Prosthetics

empowers people with limb differences to interact successfully with their world and future through 3-D

printing and provides affordable custom-application devices. Believing that the

organization’s mission is accomplished best by including the perspective and ideas of the limb difference community, Form5 offers educational programming, which brings participants, students, and industry professionals together to innovate new devices for individuals with limb differences.



### Remember Us Urban Scouts

seeks to equip youth with the skills and social capital needed to be successful in school,

work, and their personal lives. Through mentorship, in-school, afterschool, and summer programs, the organization provides a safe space for youth to naturally develop. Remember Us Urban Scouts empowers youth to create and be the change needed in their families, communities, and schools.



### Riverview International Center (RIC)

empowers New Americans by supporting individuals, strengthening families, and nurturing

community. The RIC provides numerous essential services and programs. This includes career counseling, assistance navigating benefits, and classes for learning English, computer literacy, and sewing. For children, the RIC offers homework help and a Summer Reading Program. Community-building events, women’s empowerment groups, and field trips celebrate the many cultures and groups represented in Riverview.

## A Record-Setting Year for Scholarships

### The generosity of donors provides life-changing opportunities to students

**EVERY STUDENT DESERVES** the chance to pursue their educational dreams. At The Columbus Foundation, generous donors have established hundreds of scholarships, creating opportunities for high school and college students to achieve their educational goals and prepare them for future careers.

In 2022, thanks to the incredible support of donors, The Columbus Foundation **awarded 1,664 scholarships totaling \$4,147,180**—a new single-year record.

“For many students, scholarships provide life-changing opportunities,” said Alicia Szempruch, Associate Director for Scholarships at The Columbus Foundation. “We are grateful to our generous donors for making the dream of higher education a reality for students, empowering our next generation of educators, doctors, entrepreneurs, artists, and civic leaders.”

One such scholarship recipient is Malaysha Brunner, a Columbus native who is now studying secondary math education at Alabama State University. A graduate of Linden McKinley STEM Academy, Brunner received five scholarships from The Columbus Foundation last year thanks to the *Jane Burns DeWitt Baumann Scholarship Fund*, the *James Preston Poindexter Scholarship Fund*, the *Easton Community Foundation Scholarship Fund*, the *Jayne Jakobsen Scholarship Fund*, and the *Vince Chickerella Scholarship Fund*.

“These scholarships mean a lot to me,” said Brunner. “I see a lot of my peers who are in debt and it puts a lot of stress on them. I am grateful that I can just focus on school and not worry about going into debt.”

This year, more than 1,500 students have already applied for scholarships through The Columbus Foundation’s General Scholarship Application, which houses more than 100 scholarship opportunities. Over the coming months, scholarship selection committees will review applications and award scholarships.



Pictured: The Columbus Foundation’s Scholarships team. From left: Vanessa Carey, Scholarships and Fund Assistant; Pete Aubry, Scholarship Coordinator; and Alicia Szempruch, MPA, CAP®, Associate Director for Scholarships.



To find additional scholarships with rolling deadlines, scan the QR code.

# Books that Inspired Me

with  
**Patrick Losinski**

CEO, COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN LIBRARY

Pictured: Patrick Losinski at the Main Library.



**P**ATRICK LOSINSKI has spent a lot—and we mean *a lot*—of time around books. For more than two decades, Losinski has served as CEO of Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML), where he has overseen a multi-million-dollar capital improvement plan for 20 new or remodeled library buildings. Under his leadership, CML has earned national recognition, including being named the *Library Journal's* National Library of the Year in 2010 and receiving the Institute for Museum and Library Services National Medal in 2011.

This year, as Columbus Metropolitan Library celebrates 150 years of inspiring readers and sparking imaginations, Losinski shared with The Columbus Foundation the impact that books and libraries have had on his life.

► **Was there someone who inspired you to read when you were young?**

Rather than “someone,” I believe my local public library was inspirational to me. I grew up in a rural area. Each summer, our library sponsored the “Mailbox Library.” It was kind of a Netflix for books. We received a catalog of available titles in the mail with a thumbnail of the cover and a one sentence synopsis. At the back of the catalog was a postcard. You circled the number of the requested titles and sent the postcard to the library. Within one week, the books arrived in the mail along with a postage-paid return envelope. It was pretty magical. My mother said I was reading all the time during the summer.

► **What authors do you admire?**

That is a bit like asking which child is my favorite or which library branch I like best! I’ve enjoyed every book written by Candice Millard. She has skillfully brought to life some previously unknown stories about key historical figures such as Teddy Roosevelt, James Garfield, and Winston Churchill. But who doesn’t love David McCullough? I had the privilege of meeting Mr. McCullough twice at our library-hosted author events. He was a masterful storyteller who was so amazingly authentic, accessible, and relatable. On the fiction side, I’ve enjoyed Richard Ford and David Rhodes. Both capture the mundane and ordinary aspects of life with compelling observations.

► **What books are you currently reading? What’s next?**

I just finished *When Breath Becomes Air*. Now I’m reading *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*. Next up is *When the Rivers Run Dry*. I have eclectic reading tastes.

► **Columbus Metropolitan Library is celebrating 150 years of bringing the joy of reading to people throughout our community. What does this milestone mean to you?**

I can’t begin to tell you how extraordinary this milestone is. Generations of library staff have worked to build and improve this library. Along with our incredibly dedicated and passionate employees, I am extremely humbled to be here at this momentous occasion. Ever since our founding, we have been Open to All. One of my all-time favorite library quotes is that we are democracy’s best kept promise. Columbus Metropolitan Library is so highly regarded by our community and it has been a great honor to be the CEO these last 20 years. Finally, I’m not sure our society reflects often enough on the fact that reading is an essential life skill. We help to foster a community of readers.

## PARTNERING FOR COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

Last year, The Columbus Foundation partnered with Columbus Metropolitan Library to use human-centered design as a tool to better understand and solve community challenges. Human-centered design is a problem-solving approach that incorporates the perspectives and insights of those who experience the problem throughout the process of solving it.

Through this partnership, The Columbus Foundation and CML have focused on co-creating solutions with community members on topics ranging from digital equity for seniors and New Americans to out-of-school support for caregivers of young children. Additionally, 30 CML employees were trained in human-centered design methodology, empowering CML staff to work alongside community members to identify challenges and co-design solutions that create equitable, lasting change.

## Championing a More Diverse Small Business Ecosystem

**SMALL BUSINESSES** are an integral part of our economy, creating jobs, spurring innovation, and fostering community. In fact, small businesses represent 98 percent of all businesses in Franklin County. When it comes to establishing and growing a small business, however, not all entrepreneurs have equitable access to resources, including capital.

Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs have long faced systemic exclusion and disproportionate challenges in accessing capital. According to data compiled by Next Street—a national firm that mobilizes capital, customers, and capabilities to small businesses and entrepreneurs that have been systemically held back—White entrepreneurs attract 17 times more equity capital than Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, Black business owners are approved for financing at one-third the rate of White business owners.

Recognizing the importance of supporting diverse entrepreneurship, The Columbus Foundation partnered with Next Street to develop and implement its small business strategy, culminating in the creation of the Equitable Small Business Fund. Launched in 2022, the Equitable Small Business Fund is an effort to help close the racial wealth gap in the region by increasing access to capital and services for entrepreneurs of color. A committee of small business champions oversees the evaluation and decision making for investments.

“A more diverse small business ecosystem benefits us all, leading to more collaboration, innovation, and economic growth,” said Doug McCollough, CEO of Color Coded Labs and Chair of the Equitable Small Business Fund committee. “In order to unlock their full potential, it’s imperative that entrepreneurs of color have equitable access to the resources needed to build and accelerate their business.”



Pictured: Anne Richie, Founder and Managing Director of The Mezzanine Fund. Photo courtesy of Anne Richie.

To date, the Equitable Small Business Fund has awarded more than \$3 million in Program Related Investments (PRIs) to six Black-owned and Black-led businesses serving central Ohio. The six businesses are: Aventi Enterprises LLC, Embedded

Services, Freedom Equity Inc., The Mezzanine Fund, Our Hospitality Group LLC, and Prospera Advisory Group.

To Anne Richie, Founder and Managing Director of The Mezzanine Fund, the Equitable Small Business Fund represents an important shift in the way capital is deployed to diverse businesses.

“For me, it’s the investment in systems change. The accessibility, intentionality, and transparency of the Equitable Small Business Fund is huge for me,” explained Richie. “I’ve talked to a ton of nonprofits, for-profits, and investors, and the approach of The Columbus Foundation is very different. It is very targeted and very intentional.”

# Celebrating Central Ohio's Nonprofit Leaders

**CENTRAL OHIO'S NONPROFIT SECTOR** is full of creative, dedicated, and forward-thinking individuals who are committed to ensuring our region is a place where everyone can flourish. Whether empowering local youth, providing support to seniors, addressing housing affordability, promoting the arts, fighting injustice, or encouraging environmental stewardship, nonprofits have the power to make a big difference in the lives of individuals and families.

"Nonprofits are on the frontlines of some of our region's most pressing and complex challenges. These organizations play a fundamental role in building a more just, equitable, and thriving central Ohio," said Dan Sharpe, Vice President for Community Research and Grants Management at The Columbus Foundation. "Nonprofit staff, executives, and board members are the lifeblood of this important work, turning their passion and expertise into programs and services that improve our community."

Recently, civic leaders representing several Columbus Foundation grantees and nonprofit partners, as well as former Columbus Foundation Governing Committee Chairperson Nancy Kramer, were recognized for their outstanding contributions and service to central Ohio. Through their inspiring work and community-minded spirit, these individuals are improving our region for generations to come.

## 2023 CENTRAL OHIO PILLAR AWARDS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Developed by *Smart Business* and Medical Mutual, The Pillar Awards for Community Service honor businesses and individuals dedicated to making central Ohio a better place to live.

### NONPROFIT BOARD EXECUTIVES OF THE YEAR AWARD

- John P. Brody**, Directions for Youth & Families
- Donald Brown**, United Way of Central Ohio
- Nancy Kramer**, The Columbus Foundation
- Erin Shannon**, LifeCare Alliance

### NONPROFIT EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF THE YEAR AWARD

- Frederic Bertley**, PhD, Center of Science and Industry (COSI)
- Nichole E. Dunn**, Flying Horse Farms
- Matthew Goldstein**, Besa

### PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR AWARD

- Zerqa Abid**, MY Project USA

## COLUMBUS CEO'S CEO OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Each year, *Columbus CEO* recognizes the most-admired CEOs and other top executives in central Ohio.

### 2022 CEO OF THE YEAR, LARGE NONPROFIT

- Bo Chilton**, IMPACT Community Action

### 2022 CEO OF THE YEAR, SMALL NONPROFIT

- Michael Corey**, Human Services Chamber of Franklin County

Congratulations to each of these leaders and organizations! We at The Columbus Foundation extend our deepest gratitude for your service to our community.

# The Columbus Foundation Names 2023 Governing Committee



JANE GROTE ABELL



B.J. HICKS, MD

The Columbus Foundation has appointed two new members to the Governing Committee: **Jane Grote Abell**, Executive Chairwoman of the Board for Donatos Pizza & Jane's Dough Premium Foods, and **B.J. Hicks, MD**, President of the Medical Staff at Riverside Methodist Hospital and President of the Midwest Affiliate Board of Directors of the American Heart Association.

**AS A BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADER**, Grote Abell has dedicated herself to supporting organizations that lift people out of poverty. Grote Abell is co-founder and Secretary of the Board of Trustees of The Reeb Center, whose mission is to transform lives through education, job training, and local job growth. In 2022, Grote Abell spearheaded the launch of the Donatos Family Foundation.

Grote Abell has made a lasting impact in the community through her dedicated service to numerous organizations, including Action for Children, the Columbus Partnership, Experience Columbus, and Goodwill Columbus. In 2016, Grote Abell, along with Reeb Center co-founder Tanny Crane, received *The Spirit of Columbus Award* from The Columbus Foundation.

Dr. Hicks is a vascular neurologist with a passion for elevating awareness around stroke prevention and warning signs. As President of the Medical Staff at Riverside Methodist Hospital and President of the Midwest Affiliate Board of Directors of the American Heart Association, Dr. Hicks is a strong advocate for stroke care. He's been a key leader for the OhioHealth Stroke Network, bringing stroke expertise to roughly 30 hospitals and emergency rooms throughout Ohio.

Dr. Hicks also pours his passion into clinical research and volunteering for equitable health-related public service. As a result of his work, he's been named *Columbus Business First's* "40 Under 40", along with the inaugural class of *Columbus CEO's* "Future 50".



Clark Kellogg

**Clark Kellogg**, a member of the Governing Committee since 2020, was elected to serve as Chairperson. **Jeffrey W. Edwards** was elected to serve as Vice Chairperson.

Governing Committee Members continuing to serve in 2023 are **George S. Barrett**, **Lisa Ingram**, **Katie Wolfe Lloyd**, **Marchelle E. Moore**, and **Matthew A. Scantland**.

Retiring from the Committee are **Nancy Kramer**, Chief Evangelist for IBM Consulting and founder and former CEO of Resource/Ammirati, who completed nine years of service, including

a two-year term as Chairperson, and **Michael P. Glimcher**, former Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of WP GLIMCHER, who completed eight years of service.

"The Governing Committee is comprised of extraordinary and inspiring leaders with a deep and multi-generational understanding of our community and commitment to its progress," said Douglas F. Kridler, President and CEO of The Columbus Foundation. "As The Columbus Foundation looks forward, we welcome Jane Grote Abell and Dr. B.J. Hicks and extend our most sincere gratitude to Nancy Kramer and Michael P. Glimcher for their many years of exemplary service."

Photos courtesy of Jane Grote Abell, B.J. Hicks, MD, and Clark Kellogg, respectively.

★  
**2023 SPIRIT OF  
 COLUMBUS AWARD  
 HONOREE**

Frederic Bertley, PhD,  
 President and CEO of COSI



Pictured: Dr. Frederic Bertley after being named the 2023 *Spirit of Columbus Award* honoree.



**On April 17,** The Columbus Foundation announced Dr. Frederic Bertley, President and CEO of the Center of Science and Industry (COSI), as the 2023 honoree of *The Spirit of Columbus Award*, also known as the Jerries®. Created

in 2013 in honor of Jerrie Mock, the first woman to fly solo around the world, the award celebrates those in our community who exhibit bravery, determination, and boldness through their actions.

Dr. Bertley was selected in recognition of his deep commitment to the central Ohio region in the areas of science literacy, education equity, and the workforce pipeline. Through his leadership, Dr. Bertley has inspired people of all ages to be curious about the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), forged new partnerships with human services organizations, and elevated COSI to national

recognition as the #1 Science Museum in the country for four consecutive years by *USA Today's* 10Best Readers' Choice Poll. During the pandemic, Dr. Bertley also used his voice and expertise as an immunologist to inform the community about vaccines and the disproportionate negative impact of COVID-19 on underserved communities.

“Like Jerrie Mock, Dr. Bertley exemplifies community spirit, innovation, and leadership in action,” said Douglas F. Kridler, President and CEO of The Columbus Foundation. “His boundless creativity, unwavering resolve, and generous acts of service have inspired youth and families in our community and beyond to dream big about the future.”

**Congratulations Dr. Frederic Bertley!**



To learn more about 2023 *Spirit of Columbus Award* honoree Dr. Frederic Bertley, scan the QR code.