TWO MINUTES WITH... MATT WALTER
Governing Committee Chairman shares insights

JEFFREY FUND BRINGS NEW LIFE TO FRANKLIN PARK
Accessible playground benefits community

A GENEROUS START
Rev1 Ventures launches fund to engage startups

THE POWER OF WORDS
New program empowers youth through special words
MR. BROOKS MAKES THE POINT that if you want to observe history, go to Washington, but if you want to participate in history, go to a place like Columbus. He finished his column with these words of advice: “But you only go around once in life, so if you can swing it, you might as well be where the action is.”

Somehow, we need to transcend our Midwestern humility and embrace this for what it is—high and well earned praise from a well-traveled, vastly intelligent and discerning observer of our country and of our times.

With differentiators such as our robust growth, our smart and open characteristics, and the commitment to collaboration across public and private sector leaders, we are indeed on a roll, with all signs pointing to this being an arc of progress for Columbus that can be sustained, at least in the mid-term. And folks around the world are noticing.

I recently heard a musician say that people come to cities in pursuit of bettering themselves and in hopes of becoming the best that they can become, and that those who do so are bonded in that pursuit. I can attest to that, being a small town Ohio boy who came to Columbus over thirty-two years ago to be the best I can be—and to contribute to the making of a better place in the process.

At the time, I sensed the opportunity and the potential for Columbus, and the optimism that helped make big things seem possible. It is impressive to see how all of those positive elements remain in place, undergirding and fueling an unabashed pursuit of prosperity for all.

Our job at The Columbus Foundation is to create and enlarge the contributions all of us can make to community progress. This puts us at the intersection where resources and leadership meet the needs of neighborhoods and neighbors. We have a unique role and a huge responsibility— to you, and to our community.

We take that seriously, and that is why we work so hard for you as we find and celebrate the best ideas and those that have them in our community, why we are in relentless pursuit of improvement in our services to you no matter where you prefer to direct your philanthropy, and why we are in neighborhoods and meeting rooms every day in search of ways to sustain this successful arc of progress for all in our community.

You are where the action is. The world is watching—let’s show them the Columbus Way!
A Generous Start

REV1 VENTURES LAUNCHES FUND TO ENGAGE STARTUPS

LOOKING TO HARNESS THE SPIRIT and generosity of entrepreneurs and startup companies in central Ohio for good, a local company stepped up and created a Donor Advised Fund at The Columbus Foundation that supports initiatives that are “starting up” something special in the community.

Rev1 Ventures focuses on the earliest stage of companies in the central Ohio region. In addition to capital, the company offers valuable services to companies to help them grow—from building a business plan and finding the first customer to talent acquisition.

In 2016, it provided the seed money to establish the START Fund, an opportunity for startups and entrepreneurs to collectively give back to the very community that supported their innovation. The fund has doubled since December with help from entrepreneurs’ donations and an ongoing match from Rev1.

“Everything we do at Rev1 is supported by the community,” said Tom Walker, President and CEO. “We wanted to provide a program that encourages entrepreneurs to give back to the community.”

The fund will support four targeted areas: connecting communities, STEM education, sustainable food solutions, and workforce development. An advisory board of entrepreneurs who have contributed to the fund oversees it, and will select at least four projects to support each year, according to Walker.

“We really want to make a mark on opportunities that hit those four criteria and are starting up,” Walker said.

The first grant, to Franklinton Gardens, was awarded in March and will help launch its new educational garden. The START Fund also hopes to provide opportunities for the startup ecosystem to be able to give back in ways other than financially.

Walker, who came from Oklahoma City to take the helm at Rev1 at the end of 2012, is a strong proponent of giving back, and its importance of supporting a community as a whole.

“Philanthropy is a way to solve social problems. I believe in helping people and building things that can have a sustainable impact on a community,” Walker said.

He describes Columbus as a very collaborative city.

“Everyone is very aspiring. They believe the best days of Columbus are ahead and they really aspire to greatness. That’s something that has always stuck with me and one thing that attracted me to Columbus.”

The START Fund advisory board members are Phil George, CEO & Founder MentariIQ; Mike Morgan, CEO Updox; Anthony Reynolds, Co-Founder & CMO Refill; Steve White, CEO & Founder Clarivy; Shaun Young, CEO & Founder Ardina/Millenefits; and Kristy Campbell, CMO & COO Rev1 Ventures.

In three short weeks, the goal of $475,000 was exceeded, with a total of $512,579 leveraged for the effort thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Foundation donors. Funds raised will support the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County (ADAMH)’s work with local partners to invest in programs, services, and an innovative technology that will provide help to addicts and their families.

IN DECEMBER, on the heels of news that Ohio leads the nation in opiate overdose deaths, The Columbus Foundation launched a Critical Need Alert (CNA), Addressing the Opiate Epidemic, an effort to bring donors and the community together to increase prevention, awareness, and provide help to those struggling with opiate addiction, as well as support for their families.

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CNAs were created for donors and community members who want to participate in a shared investment opportunity and partner with the Foundation to address our community’s greatest needs.

To date, CNAs have leveraged more than $7 million for a wide range of initiatives including childcare, food for families, fresh food, and the arts.

If you or someone you know is experiencing addiction or is in immediate need, please call Netcare at 614/276-CARE. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

The Columbus Foundation 2017 Governing Committee

Katie Wolfe Lloyd appointed to the Governing Committee; Matthew D. Walter named Chairman

THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION announced the appointment of officers and members to serve on its Governing Committee in 2017.

The Foundation is led by a nine-member Governing Committee of volunteers who provide stewardship for the Foundation and its charitable activities.

Appointed to serve a seven-year term is Katie Wolfe Lloyd, since 1997. Wolfe Lloyd has served as Vice President of The Dispatch Printing Company. Her civic and philanthropic affiliations include The Center for Family Safety and Healing, Experience Columbus, and CHOICES Advisory Board. She attended the Columbus School for Girls and received a bachelor’s degree from Miami University.

Matthew D. Walter was named Chairman of the Governing Committee, following C. Robert Kidder who served in this role for the past two years. Walter has been a Committee member since 2011 and served as Vice Chairman from 2015–2016. Nancy Kramer, who has served on the Committee since 2014, was elected Vice Chairman.

In addition to the appointment of the officers, the following Governing Committee members are continuing to serve in 2017. David P. Blom, Joseph A. Chipaty, Michael P. Gimicher, Lisa A. Hinson, C. Robert Kidder, and Dwight E. Smith.

Finishing her term on the Committee is Barbara J. Siemer, who completed seven years of service at the end of 2016.
The organizations selected for 2017 are: Alvis, Catholic Social Services, Homeport, Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services, and Girl Scouts of Ohio’s Heartland.

5 Nonprofits to Watch debuted in 2014. It honors a group of remarkable nonprofit organizations working hard to make Columbus a better place for all.

MORE ABOUT THE 5 NONPROFITS TO WATCH IN 2017:

Alvis
Alvis’ mission is twofold—serving individuals and families who have become involved in the criminal justice system, and providing services to individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

Catholic Social Services
Catholic Social Services (CSS) helps poor and vulnerable seniors and families reach their potential. CSS serves people of all faiths and backgrounds throughout central and southern Ohio ensuring that seniors can live independently and families thrive. In May 2017, CSS opened a new and expanded Our Lady of Guadalupe Center to serve central Ohio’s growing Hispanic community.

Homeport
For 30 years, Homeport has generated home-ownership and rental housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents of central Ohio. Its 5,700 residents—families and seniors—in 33 communities have access to an array of services, from afterschool and summertime programming to emergency assistance for rent and utilities. Homeport partners also create links to food, furniture, and employment assistance, as well as physical and mental health.

Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services
Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services (ETSS) is a Columbus-based nonprofit that helps new arrivals from all countries establish roots and gain self-sufficiency in Columbus. With programs and services that encourage community integration, sustained employment, education, health, and strong families, ETSS has served clients from more than 40 countries, with the majority from Bhutan, Burma, the Middle East, and East Africa.

Girl Scouts of Ohio’s Heartland
Founded in 1912, the Girl Scouts’ membership has grown from 18 members in Savannah, Georgia, to 2.7 million members around the world. Girl Scouts of Ohio’s Heartland, open to girls ages 5–17, is proud to be a girl-centric and girl-driven environment, where a girl finds courage to explore new worlds and adventures, confidence to believe in herself and her abilities, character to stand by her values, and connections to girls from every background.

TAKING ACTION: Learn more and support these exceptional nonprofit organizations at columbusfoundation.org/takeaction.
Jeffrey Fund Brings New Life to Franklin Park

FOR MORE THAN 160 YEARS, Franklin Park, located on Columbus’ Near East Side, has been a recreational destination for visitors of all ages. Today, it’s home to Franklin Park Conservatory, the Scotts Miracle-Gro Community Garden, and the City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department’s Therapeutic Recreation Program. However, a couple of years ago the 88-acre park’s 20-year-old playground was starting to show its age, and was in need of replacement. In 2015, a $15,000 grant from the Joseph A. Jeffrey Endowment Fund supported the construction of a new, universally accessible playground at Franklin Park. With features like accessible surfaces and play features located adjacent to more challenging play features, the new playground encourages side-by-side play and interaction between playground users. "Columbus Recreation and Parks is able to provide the facilities and services to our residents because of support like this from The Columbus Foundation and the Jeffrey Endowment Fund," said Tony Collins, Director of the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department. "We appreciate the support, which helped us provide a universal playground for Franklin Park and the thousands of residents who utilize it." A Columbus banker, Jeffrey turned an inventor’s idea for undercutting coal into a booming success during the late 1870s. His company, the Jeffrey Manufacturing Company, became the world’s largest manufacturer of mining machinery in 1880. The Columbus Foundation was selected by the City of Columbus to manage the Joseph A. Jeffrey Endowment Fund. The fund, originally established in 1919 with a gift of $100,000, is used to support nonprofit organizations in Columbus and throughout Franklin County. Over the years, more than $2 million in grants has been awarded from the fund to support projects that beautify and improve Columbus.
There’s no question that Governing Committee Chairman Matt Walter, Founder and Managing Partner of Talisman Capital Partners, has a keen business insight—but he also shares a true passion for helping others. He and his family support many organizations in central Ohio and beyond through the Seanna C. and Matthew D. Walter Fund. Matt took some time to share his thoughts about the Columbus business community, philanthropy, and his work with The Columbus Foundation since he joined the Committee in 2011.

Highlights from Columbus Kindness Month included:

- $45,000 Makeover of the Dress for Success Columbus fitting rooms, thanks to a bevvy of community partners and donors
- 5,000+ Articles of clothing donated to Volunteers of America to replenish their fire-ravaged warehouse
- 3,000 Inspirational notes written and shared across the community
- 2,000 Kindness coffee cups with inspiring notes given to unsuspecting customers
- 1,000+ Products sold to benefit kindness, including Homage tees, Jeni’s Splendid Ice Creams, Candle Lab candles, and Mikey’s/Hot Chicken Takeover pizza slices
- 50 Cakes given by Tremont Goodie Shop to unsuspecting people out in the community
- 1 Harmony Project video launched, building a message of unity viewed more than 85,000 times

Hundreds of community-driven, school-driven, and individual-driven acts performed citywide

In total, Columbus Kindness Month produced more than 10,000 acts of kindness and generated more than $100,000 toward the kindness movement.

THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION kicked off 2017 with a focus on cultivating kindness. Teaming up with Besa, the Foundation launched Columbus Kindness Month in February, an effort to rally the community to generate acts of kindness while uplifting the city people are proud to call home. Several businesses and organizations partnered in the mission to connect, inspire, and advance people throughout central Ohio.

Through your businesses, you’ve had opportunities to visit cities all over the world. What do you think makes Columbus a good place to start and build a business?

We have all the resources in Columbus that are required to create leading businesses without many of the headaches and daily hassles of the larger areas. We have some structural advantages like geographic location and lower cost of living. But more importantly, we have a really good local talent base. My repeated experience when recruiting people has been that while Columbus may not be the location on the top of their list when pursuing a new opportunity, when you get people to visit and engage, they are always impressed by the whole package we have to offer. Once they are here, they are also often here forever, as they get to!

"THE SPIRIT OF COLUMBUS IS REAL AND I BELIEVE THE MOMENTUM BEHIND IT WILL SUSTAIN!"

—MATT WALTER

Your family is very generous with both time and financial support in our community. What are some of the causes and interests that are particularly meaningful to you and your family? Why?

My wife Seanna and I both have a deeply ingrained sense of responsibility to help others. It is a common interest of ours. We both saw firsthand many examples of the power of a helping hand growing up. We have been especially focused on creating educational opportunities—scholarships and financial aid programs for students both in the Columbus area and at the post-high school level.

What is most inspiring to you about The Columbus Foundation?

I am really drawn to organizations that are continually moving forward, always improving. Every time I get the chance to see the Foundation in action, whether as a donor, a GC member, or just as a member of the community, I am thoroughly impressed by the passion and the creativity I see from the Foundation team. They do such great work, in a super-efficient, thoughtful, collaborative, and humble manner. Above all else, the commitment of our team at the Foundation is just infectious—it is great to watch.

What are some things you enjoy doing in your free time?

We have three children and they are in a great and busy stage of life right now, and so we are very focused on soaking in as much of that goodness as we can. But I am a very avid golfer. My whole family is also huge Buckeye sports fans! Go Buckeyes!

What does The Spirit of Columbus mean to you?

Columbus is a very special place, not just for those of us who grew up here, but newcomers feel it as well. I think there is abundant energy and commitment to move our businesses and community forward. There is also a great tradition here of our leaders—both private and public—working together for the greater good.
The Power of Words

FOR FIFTEEN YEARS, Columbus Foundation donor and Governing Committee member Dwight Smith has lived by his own special word. A word that reminds him of who he is, and who he is striving to be. His word? SOLD.

"I never hide my faith and therefore I often share that I am sold out to Christ," Smith explained. "S stands for silence (be careful with the words that you use), the O stands for Obedience as I desire to be obedient to Christ, the L stands for Leverage—to whom much is given much is required—and the D stands for Discipline."

With this as a premise, he created My Special Word, a nonprofit program that focuses on inspiring youth through powerful words that help illustrate their worth. Used in schools, camps, and afterschool and summer youth programs, My Special Word gives children the opportunity to participate in My Special Word during summer programs offered throughout central Ohio this year.

"Positive words are the result of having positive values and self-esteem," explained Smith. "Imagine a world in which the very words that we use to communicate with others— including how we describe ourselves—are inspiring and uplifting. We all choose our words. Let’s use them as rays of sunshine to light up our world and to uplift others."

Smith has visited local schools to share the program, and is always moved by the excitement the children share when they choose their words. It is this excitement, and positive feeling of the kids’ empowerment that he hopes will grow as the program does. The My Special Word Fund was established at the Foundation in 2016 and is used to help youth-serving organizations throughout central Ohio cover the cost of the program. Through the fund, qualifying organizations can receive a grant of up to $2,000 to fund the implementation of their My Special Word program.

"Given my love for children, my hope is that the My Special Word program will allow our great nation to have a conversation, a positive and wonderful conversation, one that encourages our children to express and appreciate their individuality by answering the question, ‘what is your special word?’" Smith said. "With this simple question and answer, we have the opportunity to share more about our values and to commit in a public way, with personal accountability, our desire to grow as a person."

In May, a picture book, My Special Word, and the first in a series of chapter books, What’s My Word, will be released. Copies of both will be available at myspecialword.com. What’s My Word will also be available at amazon.com.

More than 300 children at KIPP Columbus are engaged with the My Special Word program, an initiative developed by Columbus Foundation donor and Governing Committee member Dwight Smith.

TAKE ACTION: To learn more about My Special Word, visit myspecialword.com.
The Spirit of Columbus Award, affectionately known as “The Jerries” in honor of aviatrix Jerrie Mock, was established in 2013 and recognizes individuals who have exhibited exemplary community spirit through their accomplishments.

On April 17, Michelle Alexander was named the 2017 winner of The Spirit of Columbus Award. She was presented with a bronze maquette of the Jerrie Mock sculpture on permanent display at John Glenn Columbus International Airport. In addition, she received a $5,000 grant to support the nonprofit of her choice.

A legal scholar, advocate, civil rights attorney, and author of the groundbreaking book, The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, Alexander was presented the award for her work in drawing national attention to the issues of mass incarceration of African American youth and men in the United States, and for igniting a movement that is inspiring organizations and individuals to take constructive action on criminal justice reform.

Mock was named the first recipient of The Spirit of Columbus Award in 2013. Past recipients of the award are Jeni Britton Bauer, David Brown, Denny Griffith, Mayor Michael B. Coleman, Jane Grote Abell, and Tanny Crane. Mock was the first woman to fly solo around the world, in her 11-year-old Cessna airplane with “Spirit of Columbus” emblazoned on its side. The 38-year-old Bexley housewife and mother of three took off from Port Columbus on March 19, 1964. She landed safely back in Columbus on April 17 after 29 days, 21 stops, and more than 23,000 miles.

“Yearning for a deeper connection and a sense of purpose in our lives is what being human is all about. In my own view, it’s our refusal to deal openly and honestly with race that leads us to keep repeating these cycles of exclusion and division, and rebirthing a caste-like system that we claim we’ve left behind.” —MICHELLE ALEXANDER