AWARDS ANNOUNCED AT CELEBRATION OF PHILANTHROPY

LOVE LIVES ON
Fund honors matriarch’s legacy of kindness

SONGS FOR THE COMMUNITY
Local musicians boost spirits through song

CENTRAL OHIO DIGITAL DIVIDE FUND
Grant benefits Learning Extension Centers

BOOKS THAT INSPIRED ME
Dr. Amy Acton shares her favorites
I just returned from voting, placing my absentee ballot in the official drop box at the Franklin County Board of Elections, at 1700 Morse Road. The atmosphere there was like a rock concert—traffic going back a half mile, lines waiting to get in the door, a palpable excitement in the air to participate in this live event. By the time you read this, Election Day will have passed. Of course, I have no idea as I type this whether or not that means the election results are clear and accepted, and we can move on from this whether or not that means the election results have passed. Of course, I have no idea as I type this what the commonality of the voting process might lie to do after such a fractious election cycle, but, in this voting process. We may have a lot of healing to do after such a fractious election cycle, but, in the festival of civic engagement at the Board of Elections. It was a story about beating the odds, and the sharing of a vivid, colorful thoughtfulness. It was a story about 91-year-old artist Bonnie Bowen, of Upper Arlington. Had I not been there. The day of my writing this article—just as heartwarming happened on this day, the day of my writing this. This one was a Dispatch story just as heartwarming as the experience of joining so many others in the nonagenarian, Bowen’s recovery (from COVID) counts now, and about the transcendent work of kindness, in science, we know the health benefits—of the sentry box of our community, we need to continue to live up to our potential and to our role of the heroine of the story, but those of the heroine of our early days experiencing the most pervasive health crisis in over 100 years, now The Columbus Foundation’s Director of Kind Columbus, Amy Acton. ‘Though the survival odds were stacked against the nanogenarian, Bowen’s recovery (from COVID) didn’t surprise Acton. ‘She’s become this unifying force in the community,’ Acton said. ‘Acts of kindness, in science, we know the health benefits—it’s good for her, it’s good for us.’ Acton said she cherishes the ‘precious’ painting Bowen did of her and her daughter and knows others had similar reactions to (the now over 200) pieces that spoke to them. ‘It’s no small thing,’ Acton said. ‘It might be all we have. Bonnie is the epitome of pulling together.’”

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Central Ohio Digital Divide Fund

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

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

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

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

According to Fullen, because remote and hybrid learning models widen equity gaps and provide fewer opportunities for students to receive support services, the need for a solution for students was great.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Renowned Stanford Workshop Goes Virtual for Central Ohio Nonprofits

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Stanford training was part the Foundation’s larger investment in our community’s social well-being. By providing an inclusive method of problem solving with, not just for, our residents, human-centered design offers organizations and leaders in our community a fresh way to understand the issues: through the eyes of those who experience them. More information at cbsfdn.org/dss.
2020 Philanthropy Awards Announced at Annual Celebration of Philanthropy

THE HARRISON M. SAYRE AWARD WINNER

Catherine Willis

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

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

See Catherine Willis’ acceptance speech at cbusfdn.org/catherinewillis.

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

—CATHERINE WILLIS

THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION AWARD WINNER

Human Service Chamber of Franklin County

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

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

Established in 2010, HSC was conceived by local leaders who realized that the human service sector needed to create an entity that would represent the sector as a whole. HSC helps facilitate collaborations to address complex, systemic issues, provide useful professional learning opportunities, and achieve economies of scale through shared services and pooled resources. Under the current leadership of Michael Corey, HSC has seen tremendous membership growth, from less than 50 to more than 90 members, and it is still growing. With close ties to governmental programs, HSC helps promote collaboration and growth in the human service sector.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, HSC has been instrumental in helping human service organizations and our community adapt, stay healthy, and meet the needs of vulnerable community members. From communicating with appointed and elected officials about COVID funding and shaping the public funding response, to helping disseminate needed PPE and educating people about the Payroll Protection Program loans/grants and other efforts to stabilize operations, HSC has been on the forefront of this pandemic response since the beginning.

See Michael Corey’s acceptance speech at cbusfdn.org/hsc.

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

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

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

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

SINCE 2016, The Big Table has brought central Ohio residents together for a day of connection and community-building, usually through in-person conversations. Over the years, thousands of people have come together at hundreds of tables to share their insights, ideas, and hopes for the future. While we couldn’t gather in person as we have in previous years, we came together through our words and actions to show the strength and resiliency of the Columbus community.

“I’m lucky enough to have an employer who allows a half day off to volunteer twice a year. When I saw my favorite volunteer organization, BESA, was working with The Columbus Foundation right near where I live in my North Linden community, I immediately signed up,” said Kristan Myers about participating in this year’s Big Table. “I volunteer to create connections—with my community and with those I come in contact with while volunteering. I’m excited to be a part of The Big Table, an event that is creating connections in my community and with those I come in contact with while volunteering. I’m participating in this year’s Big Table. “I volunteer to create connections—with North Linden community, I immediately signed up,” said Kristan Myers about was working with The Columbus Foundation right near where I live in my volunteer twice a year. When I saw my favorite volunteer organization, BESA, in our community. On October 16, BESA coordinated a volunteer opportunity at New Salem Baptist Church’s Bread of Life Food Pantry.

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Foundation Fellowship Program Seeks Students

KNOW A COLLEGE STUDENT INTERESTED in a career helping others? The Columbus Foundation’s Summer Fellowship Program is a terrific opportunity for college students or recent graduates to participate in a full-time, paid fellowship with a nonprofit organization in Franklin County. These fellowships provide hands-on learning, where fellows serve as a part of a nonprofit’s staff, working on a specific project or goal. The 2021 fellowship will kick off on June 7, 2021 and run through August 13. Each fellow selected will receive a stipend of $6,350. Applications are due December 11.

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

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

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

PARTNERS AND PROJECTS FOR 2021:

Central Community House of Columbus, Inc.—to support the development department with strategy, research, grantwriting, marketing, fundraising, and increasing earned income.

City Year Columbus—to support the development team with donor prospecting, media, communications, and development operations.

Columbus Metropolitan Library Foundation—to create a strategic plan for the future of the stewardship program.

Economic and Community Development Institute, Inc.—to increase capacity of the staff to provide high-impact programming for the community garden, coaching, and the Food Fort.

Equitas Health Inc.—to support the planning and execution of Art for Life.

Family Mentor Foundation—to support the Buddy Box weekend food program, fundraising, and other special events.

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed—to improve website design, development opportunities, and database organization.

Grange Insurance Audubon Center—to create an ongoing process focused on engaging equitable and diverse audiences.

Hope Hollow—to assist in the development and implementation of a marketing plan to acquire corporate sponsorships and board members.

Martin de Porres Center—to serve as a creativity coach for the summer camp program.

Muslim Family Services of Ohio—to develop and launch a print and digital marketing campaign.

Netcare Access—to support marketing and fundraising activities.

Ohio Designer Craftsmen—to serve as the assistant camp coordinator for the Young Masters summer day camp.

Ruling Our Experiences (ROX)—to create and develop advocacy resources for various stakeholders.

Zora’s House—to develop an operations and employee manual.

Applications are due December 11!
To learn more, visit cbusfdn.org/students.

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

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

“Both my mom and my dad were very generous to the community when we were growing up, starting with our church and spanning out from there,” Zenios said. “My mom helped get the business off the ground and then devoted most of her time to raising us and balancing everything. She would spend all of her spare time serving others. It’s just who she was.

She volunteered in the surgery waiting area at The Ohio State University Hospital for more than 30 years.”

Born and raised in Greece, Chris Bouzonis came to the United States in 1966 to give his sister away at her wedding. While in the states he met Sue, and the two were married a short time later. They decided to make their home in Columbus, and Chris started his own print shop, Olympic Press, the name a nod to his homeland. That company eventually became Olympic Press, the name a nod to his homeland.

When the Olympic games came to Atlanta in 1996, however, the family was forced to change the name of their business when the U.S. Olympic Committee sent them legal mandates, which stated that all childcare providers that accept publicly funded childcare needed to have a one-star SUTQ rating by July 1, 2020 (which was shifted to September 1 due to COVID-19). As of September 2018, just 28.5 percent of childcare providers in Franklin County had earned a SUTQ rating.

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

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

As of September 1, 2020, 100 percent of children receiving support through publicly funded childcare in central Ohio have been connected to a quality early education program, and more than 750 providers in Franklin County have stepped up to earn at least a one-star rating!“Thanks to support from the Critical Need Alert, we can all attest that the places that our most vulnerable children are going to are that much more prepared to help those children get ready for school,” said Eric Karola, CEO of Action for Children. “All our kids deserve a strong, firm foundation and, with Step Up To Quality, you know that all programs have a minimum set of conditions that make for a better opportunity for children.” Congratulations to all who made this incredible goal a reality!
Books that Inspired Me with Dr. Amy Acton

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

Matthew Goldstein of BESA recently shared a moving Instagram clip between Dave Chappelle and Maya Angelou, following a thought-provoking conversation about the resilience of the human spirit. What a gift it would be to feel her presence and benefit from her sage soul. This year has been full of serendipity for me. What Matthew didn’t know is that, since the early days of the pandemic, I’ve been longing to talk with Dave as well. He did some small, socially distanced outdoor shows in Yellow Springs, and opened with a comedic play on social distancing issues. I’m also reading a number of children’s books in my search for kindness:

- **What book(s) are you currently reading? What’s next?**
  - **On Kindness** by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor
  - **My Grandmother’s Hands** by Resmaa Menakem
  - **The Great Influenza** by John M. Barry
  - **Looking forward to Robert Putnam’s new book, The Upswing**
  - I’m also reading a number of children’s books in my search for kindness:

- **What Do You Do With An Idea** by Kobi Yamada
- **Each Kindness** by Jacqueline Woodson
- **Eleanor: Quiet No More** by Doreen Rappaport
- **I Promise** by LeBron James

What are some books you’ve loved?

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

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

I Asked for Wonder by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel
- **Siddhartha** by Hermann Hesse
- **To Kill a Mockingbird** by Harper Lee
- **Gift from the Sea** by Anne Morrow Lindbergh
- **The Wisdom of Insecurity** by Alan Watts
- **Walden** by Henry David Thoreau
- **Man’s Search for Meaning** by Viktor E. Frankl
- **Everything Kurt Vonnegut ever wrote**
- All of my gardening books

“Songs for the CommUNITY” Created to Boost Spirits Through Song

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

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

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

- **“To Be Young, Gifted, and Black”**
  - (Donnie Hathaway)
- **“What Would Love Do”**
  - (Jeff Ciampa)
- **“Burst”**
  - (Mark Gonzalez)
UNPRECEDEMENTED FUNDING PLAN ANNOUNCED FOR 2021

Strategic Focus 21 Fund to address critical community challenges

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

—DOUGLAS F. KRIDLER, President and CEO

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