An Akron Community Foundation Magazine

IN THIS ISSUE A Continuum Of

How three local leaders in education and their organizations are working together to improve educational outcomes

Raising The Bar Why one attorney is building a case for more kindness in Greater Akron

Seen on Cedar Street

On display at Akron Community Foundation are works by talented local artists like Don Jeffrey, whose watercolor titled "Civic Theatre" can be seen in our lobby. Many of the pieces are available for purchase by contacting De Shawn Pickett at **dpickett@akroncf.org** or 330-376-8522.

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LORDING



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Cover photo by Dale Dong Pictured L to R: Marquita Mitchell, Derran Wimer and Rachel Tecca



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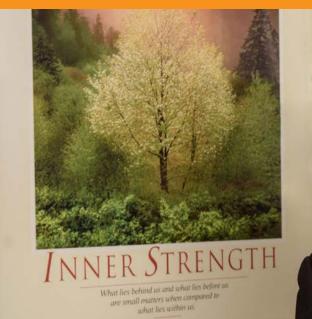
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FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO



NSPIRING CHANGE

By John T. Petures Jr.

I'm writing this letter on the afternoon of Wednesday, Oct. 3, and I can't stop talking about the inspiring conversation I participated in this morning for On the Table Greater Akron.

Across Summit and Medina counties, today and over the next week, 6,500 of our friends and neighbors will have come together to break bread (or enjoy Main Street Gourmet muffins, thanks to Steve Marks) and engage in spirited conversations around one or more of the top five concerning issues identified during last year's event.

I'd like to thank Dr. Rachel Talton, Akron Community Foundation board member and CEO of Synergy Marketing Strategy & Research Inc., for hosting our conversation this morning. She and the 14 other diverse guests at my table worked together to identify actionable solutions to problems in our community surrounding equity and social inclusion, as well as economic issues and poverty.

It struck me during our conversation that all change must begin with each one of us – one person at a time.

I recently watched the trailer for "First Man," a movie debuting this fall that tells the story of astronaut Neil Armstrong and his legendary journey to the moon nearly 50 years ago. Many of us can still recall where we were as we stared at the black-and-white television images and heard Armstrong utter those now-famous words: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." I thought of that first step this morning at Rachel's office and how it seems especially poignant now, as we attempt to address these daunting challenges in our community.

What simple steps, just one at a time, can each of us take that will lead to a stronger, more vibrant quality of life for every single person in our community? What actionable steps can we take, individually and collectively, to demonstrate that we're willing to listen, to learn and to grow? What can you do today to encourage your family, friends, colleagues or employer to broaden their thinking and enact change where we live, work and raise our families?

One immediate lesson I learned from our conversation is the importance of being present with people who don't look and think like me. And after making new friends at On the Table today, I know just where to start.

BACK&FORTH

De Shawn (Pickett), as always, you went above and beyond with the Polsky Awards! Thank you for an amazing evening and for being so dedicated to Akron Community Foundation's mission and vision. Your hard work does not go unnoticed.

Jocelyn Dougherty Peg's Foundation

The (Polsky Award) event was special because I laughed, cried, learned a few things, and saw many friends. And when it was over, I really wanted to hang out a while longer. The tremendous amount of work and effort your staff put into the evening really showed.

Steve Varrone Ancora John (Petures), just wanted to drop you a note and thank you personally for the opportunity to go to the National Center for Family Philanthropy meeting with Margaret (Medzie) last week. I learned so much about current trends in family giving and gained a whole new perspective of the work done at ACF. I told everyone I was a past board member and a donor, but now I was coming through the "employee entrance" and learning the amount of effort it takes to work with donors.

What amazed me most was listening to the community foundations talking about their initiatives. I realized ACF is light-years ahead of its counterparts, including some of the large-city foundations. I had a wonderful experience and enjoyed all the time I spent with Margaret. She is truly a gem! Thank you!

Cheryl Venarge Fundholder



ON THE TABLE

If just 10 percent of the conversations yesterday were at the level of the one we had, (Akron Community Foundation has) changed a lot of lives and perspectives this week. There is no doubt that good things for Greater Akron will happen as a result of your initiative and support... wow.

Steve Millard Greater Akron Chamber

Although I was new to (On the Table), I learned so very much and am heartened to be living in a town that not only cares but also has plans for action. Thank you.

Jo Anne Dawson Akron, OH I am happy to be a part of this initiative and to work alongside my friends and community to discuss ideas. These are big topics, but it's a good feeling to feel the momentum building! I look forward to hearing the results of this year's On the Table. I hope we will have broken the record of last year!

I'm sure you and the others at the foundation must feel so proud to see so many people take the time to brainstorm creative ways to improve our city. I love living in Akron – it truly is a special place – and I'm excited to see the revitalization taking place. Again, thanks!

Sandi Phillips Akron Zoo

Talk To Us! Do you have a note of appreciation you'd like to share? Perhaps a photo of the good work our grantees and fundholders are doing in the community? Send it to Kinsey Ury, Marketing Assistant, Akron Community Foundation, 345 W. Cedar St., Akron, OH 44307 or kury@akroncf.org. Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION In Thousands

The following is the audited financial statement for Akron Community Foundation's fiscal year ending March 31, 2018. ACF is audited on an annual basis by Sikich LLP. More information is available at **www.akroncf.org/Financials**.

ACCETC	0040	2017	
ASSETS	2018	2017	
Cash and cash equivalents Accrued investment income	\$6,628	\$9,556 \$140	
	\$217 \$117	\$168 \$167	
Contributions receivable, net			
Prepaid expenses Cash surrender value of life insurance	\$83 \$20	\$87 ¢/1	
	\$38	\$61 \$011	
Note receivable	\$828	\$944	
Property and equipment, net	\$1,325	\$1,381	
Investments	\$197,699	\$177,931	
Trust accounts	\$11,500	\$10,888	
Real property held for investment	\$552	\$552	
Total Assets	\$218,987	\$201,735	
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
Liabilities:			
Grants approved for future payment	\$752	\$648	
Accounts payable and other liabilities	\$472	\$484	
Funds held as agency endowment obligations	\$24,870	\$23,330	
Total Liabilities	\$26,094	\$24,462	
Net assets:	<i>+_0,07</i>	<i>~</i> ., . <i>•</i> .	
Unrestricted	\$100,695	\$91,278	
Temporarily restricted	\$48,872	\$45,130	
Permanently restricted	\$43,326	\$40,865	
Total Net Assets	\$192,893	\$177,273	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$218,987	\$201,735	
REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT	¢14017	¢15 100	
Contributions	\$14,017	\$15,122	
Investment income	\$5,414	\$3,463 \$45,450	
Net appreciation (depreciation) on investments and trust accounts	\$14,339	\$15,450	
Less amounts for agency endowments:	(\$20.0)	(4050)	
Contributions	(\$386)	(\$253)	
Investment income	(\$565)	(\$355)	
Net (appreciation) depreciation in investments	(\$1,756)	(\$1,933)	
Total Revenues and Other Support	\$31,063	\$31,494	
EXPENSES			
Grants and other distributions	\$13,258	\$11,430	
Administrative expenses	\$2,586	\$2,382	
Investment expenses	\$767	\$753	
Less amounts for agency endowments:		·	
Grants and other distributions	(\$839)	(\$1,246)	
Administrative expenses	(\$243)	(\$230)	
Investment expenses	(\$86)	(\$78)	
Total Expenses	\$ 15,443	\$13,011	
Increase (decrease) in net assets	\$15,620	\$18,483	
Net assets, beginning of year	\$177,273	\$158,790	
Net Assets, End of Year	\$192,893	\$177,273	
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During the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018, we achieved:



(An all-time high)



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gifts totaling greater than \$14 MILLION

For a full list of donors, visit www.akroncf.org/Donors.





During the first half of fiscal year 2019 (April 1 – Sept. 30, 2018), we were pleased to welcome 18 new funds established by charitable individuals, families and organizations throughout Greater Akron.

Donor-Advised Funds

Dana Pulk Dickinson Fund IMAJIN Family Fund Frances M. James Fund Kuczynski Family Fund Kate Lieberth Lytton Education in Dance Fund Sally D. Miller Fund Preziuso Family Fund Amy Jo and Roger Sutterluety Fund

Designated Funds

Summit Metro Parks Foundation Designated Scholarship Fund

Agency Endowment Funds

Akron Art Museum Endowment Fund
Akron Zoological Park Endowment Fund
CASA Endowment Fund
Mary Jane Finley-Camp Endowment Fund
Established to support H.M. Life Opportunity Services
Bob Powell Endowment Fund for Coleman Professional Services
Summit County Sports Hall of Fame Endowment Fund
Victim Assistance Program Endowment Fund

Scholarship Funds

Summit County Sports Hall of Fame Bruce Buchholzer Scholarship Fund Established to provide postsecondary scholarships to Summit County high school senior student-athletes

Board Discretionary Funds

On the Table Impact Fund

Established to provide grants for actionable ideas that emerge from On the Table Greater Akron

Professional Advisor Partners

Thanks to the following accountants, attorneys and financial advisors for helping their clients fulfill their philanthropic vision with a fund at Akron Community Foundation from April 1 to Sept. 30, 2018:

John Adams Adams, Gut & Associates

John Rasnick Hanna Rasnick Evanchan Palmisano Hobson & Fox LLC

David Staats UBS Financial Services Inc.

Are you an advisor? Learn how we can assist you at www.akroncf.org/Advisors.



6 TYPES OF FUNDS

Donor-Advised Funds A great private foundation alternative – you choose the grants

Designated Funds Support one or more of your favorite organizations

DO IT YOURSELF

DO IT WITH HELP

Agency Endowment Funds A predictable stream of income

for your nonprofit

Scholarship Funds Fund students' education in your or a loved one's name

Field-of-Interest Funds Permanently advance a cause or causes you're passionate about

Board Discretionary Funds Meet the community's ever-changing needs

Learn more about your fund options at www.akroncf.org/FundTypes.

Ø16

How local organizations are working together to improve educational outcomes

Ø 52

A Continuum of

By Chris Miller Photos by Dale Dong Atop Akron's North Hill, in one of the school district's oldest buildings, a new and innovative education model is taking root. High school students at Akron Public Schools' North Community Learning Center — in a neighborhood represented by 26 languages and 14 different countries — are taking the first step toward careers in biomedical science, health care, early childhood education, marketing and software development, among other fields.

Over the next few years, Akron Public Schools will convert all of its high schools to College & Career Academies, offering students the ability to choose from more than 50 specialized career tracks with the goal of them leaving "enrolled, employed or enlisted."

Also known as the Ford Next Generation Learning model, the academy model takes a collaborative, community-driven approach, bringing in partners from the local business, nonprofit and education sectors to prepare students for career success in the 21st century. The model has already been incredibly successful in cities like Nashville, leading to substantial increases in graduation and retention rates, as well as a stronger talent pipeline for jobs.

"The biggest payoff is we're making sure kids have a competitive advantage when they leave Akron Public Schools with a high school diploma," said Rachel Tecca, director of the College & Career Academies.

But getting students to that diploma is just one milestone along a continuum of educational success.

WORKING BACK TO THE CRADLE

Known nationwide as the Cradle to Career Continuum, there are six specific milestones a student needs to meet during their educational career to better their chances of future success. These milestones range from reading at grade level by third grade to being prepared for high school math in eighth grade.

But due to the multitude of local agencies, organizations and schools that impact the continuum, collecting, organizing and sharing that data has proven to be a monumental task.

Enter Summit Education Initiative.



Established in 1996, SEI has spent the majority of the past decade centralizing local data pertaining to the continuum. Most importantly, SEI has put this data to use in a scientific and impactful way.

Some of the discoveries they made were found by piecing together disparate data sets, like using third-grade reading data to predict eighth-grade math success, said Derran Wimer, executive director of SEI.

The organization began working back from these milestones, leading researchers to Kindergarten Readiness Scores, and then later to preschool and the importance of early learning.

A Transition Skills Summary was created in conjunction with Summit County's First Things First Initiative, of which Akron Community Foundation is a founding partner. The summary offers a snapshot of a child's readiness for kindergarten, measuring 16 skills a preschooler needs to have learned to be successful in school.

These indicators have been on target, says Wimer. "We can ensure that all of the kids in programs aligned with SEI have these 16 skills, then turn it over to the kindergarten teachers. If you don't have these pre-academic skills, you're in trouble already," he explained. SEI has also formed Readiness Coalitions in each district to share its data with local early education providers, as well as interested community members and parents.

"We're trying to do three things: empower the kids, strengthen the adults and staff members that work with the kids, and strengthen the parents and community that support the kids," said Wimer.

Admittedly, 51 percent of children still are not enrolled in preschool, Wimer says. It's a figure that has not changed significantly over the past five years, so challenges still lie ahead.

One of those challenges is to change the culture at home. Ideally, a child's education begins with parents or caregivers, so SEI is working with strategic partners like Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority to help parents of infants become their child's first and most important teacher.

Meanwhile, toward the other end of the continuum, Akron Public Schools has started a freshman academy at its remaining high schools to prepare ninth-graders for the College & Career Academies they'll attend in grades 10 through 12.

SECOND CHANCES

The Cradle to Career Continuum, though ideal, is not always a straight path. Often, life events alter a person's education or career plans.

That's where Project Learn steps in. Stationed at Akron-Summit County Public Library's Main Library in downtown Akron, the nonprofit helps adults earn a high school equivalency diploma, teaches English as a second language, and offers citizenship programs for immigrants and refugees.





"We don't want folks to get to the adult level and not have the educational skills they need to be successful in society," said Executive Director Marquita Mitchell.

Each year, Project Learn serves approximately 1,300 students from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some have struggled with addiction and dropped out of high school, while others are gifted students looking to test out of high school so they can advance to college.

In addition, the agency also sees a growing number of refugees and immigrants who are trying to adapt to the job landscape in a new country. "We had one individual who was a pediatric surgeon in his own country, but he needed to pass the boards here," recounts Mitchell. "All he wanted to do was get into one of the hospitals. He didn't care if it was a janitor's position, because he knew if he at least got in the door and was working with us to improve his language, he could take care of the rest."

Mitchell said this scenario is more common than one may think, adding that Project Learn teaches a health care English class for resettled residents with medical backgrounds. Project Learn also encourages students to think about the next step in their journey – like attending college – since many mistakenly feel their education ends after receiving their high school equivalency.

"They don't see themselves as worthy of these opportunities, but if you get your high school equivalency, you have the same playing field as anyone else," Mitchell said.

The success stories motivate Mitchell in her work. She recalls one student who brought his skateboard to graduation as a symbol of his perseverance for riding it to class every day – a nearly two-hour trip – for six months.

"There was another student who, when I was teaching a few years back, had a photo of his family on his desk every day," says Mitchell. "I said, 'Your family must be proud of you,' and he replied, 'No, Miss Mitchell, quite the opposite.' It threw me off guard. He said, 'I chose alcohol and drugs over my family. This was the last time I've seen them.' While he was here, he got clean and helped some other students overcome their addictions."

After graduating, he reunited with his family, she adds.

AN ONGOING APPROACH

While there is positive momentum in the local education arena, attainment does continue to pose a challenge. According to a community assessment commissioned by Akron Community Foundation, about half of the adults in Akron over age 25 have no education beyond a high school diploma.

But with dozens of community partners working together toward common goals, the needle is beginning to move. **\$**



RACIAL DISPARITIES IN EDUCATION

Recent community-wide assessments commissioned by Akron Community Foundation and other local organizations show that racial disparities continue to pervade nearly every aspect of daily life, especially in education.

"Racial disparities in education are stark," states one report. "On nearly every measure, black students fall at the bottom of educational attainment. Only 15 percent of black students are career- and college-ready, compared to 45 percent of students overall." In addition, black students are half as likely as white students to read proficiently in third grade, a key indicator on the Cradle to Career Continuum, the report adds.

Racial inequity has a "dramatic impact" on education, says Derran Wimer, executive director of Summit Education Initiative. "Less than one in two African-American kids are ready for kindergarten," he said, adding many of these same students do not start on the first day of school, putting them further behind when they first walk into a kindergarten classroom.

Additionally, the majority of the top five issues that emerged in the survey results from the 2017 On the Table Greater Akron event are closely tied to racial disparity: economic issues and poverty; equity and social inclusion; education and youth development; and public safety and the judicial system.

"We expect that issues related to race and inequality will rise to the top again this year," said John Garofalo, vice president of community investment at Akron Community Foundation. "It's increasingly apparent that this is a pervasive issue in our community, and Akron Community Foundation will be discussing ways we can direct funding to combat inequality as a systemic issue in our community."



BATH COMMUNITY FUND

It's been a rewarding year for Bath Community Fund as its leaders and volunteers continue to spread the word about the fund's "For Bath, Forever" campaign to grow the fund to \$2.018 million in celebration of Bath's bicentennial in 2018. During the summer months, the campaign's co-chairs hosted soirees in their homes to introduce their friends and neighbors to Bath Community Fund. Ladies on the advisory board also hosted a Girls Night Social in September to encourage gifts to Bath Community Fund in honor of women who have made a lasting difference in Bath. To date, nearly \$730,000 has been donated by local families, businesses and organizations. To make a donation, visit www.akroncf.org/give/BCF.

Bath Community Fund will announce its third round of grants in December. For a complete list of recipients, visit www.akroncf.org/BCFgrants.

GAY COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND

This fall, the Gay Community Endowment Fund launched a new impact grant program to boost funding for initiatives that improve the health and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community. Strong preference will be given to programs that create safer environments

for LGBTQ+ youth, combat phobias of the LGBTQ+ community, and support mental health and suicide prevention programs for LGBTQ+ people. Applications for the new grant cycle are due Dec. 15, and decisions will be announced in early March. For more information and a link to apply, visit www.akroncf.org/applyGCEF.

Tickets are still available for the fund's 17th annual Sugar Plum Tour on Sunday, Dec. 2. The tour is the signature fundraiser of the Gay Community Endowment Fund and features five of the area's finest historic and contemporary homes, all decked out for the holidays. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased at www. sugarplumtour.org.

SUGAR PLUM TOUR of Holiday Homes

MEDINA COUNTY COMMUNITY FUND

The Medina County Community Fund announced grants totaling \$25,400 to local nonprofit organizations at its annual Spring into Summer event in June. This year's grants included a \$15,000 impact grant to the Children's Center of Medina County to help build and furnish additional playroom space to accommodate the recent increase in foster children due to the opiate epidemic. This is the second impact grant made to the Children's Center of Medina County by an Akron Community Foundation affiliate fund.

Earlier this year, the Medina County Women's Endowment Fund also awarded \$10,000 to support the center's new playroom. The combined \$25,000 in grants will allow the organization to double the



number of children it serves each year. For a complete list of grants awarded by the Medina County Community Fund, visit www.akroncf.org/MCCFgrants.

Applications for next year's grants are due March 1. Apply online starting Feb. 1 at www.akroncf.org/ApplyMCCF.

MEDINA COUNTY WOMEN'S ENDOWMENT FUND

This summer, the Medina County Women's Endowment Fund announced the largest grant total in its 20-year history, including its first-ever impact grant of \$10,000 to the Children's Center of Medina County. Altogether, the fund awarded \$22,200 to seven local nonprofit organizations that improve the lives of Medina County's women and children. The

grants were announced in June at the fund's new signature event, Seasons of Giving. For a complete list of grants, visit www.akroncf.org/MCWEFgrants.



"It's a milestone moment for us to be able to award our first impact grant and to present this year's round of grants as our largest yet," said Mary Isaac, president of the Medina County Women's Endowment Fund.

Applications for next year's grants are due March 1. Apply online starting Feb. 1 at www.akroncf.org/ApplyMCWEF.

MILLENNIUM FUND FOR CHILDREN

A partnership between Akron Community Foundation and the Akron Beacon Journal/Ohio.com, the Millennium Fund for Children enriches the lives of children throughout the newspaper's audience coverage area. Since 1999,

the fund has grown to more than \$1 million and invested more than \$700,000 into local children's causes. Gifts

from individual residents and corporations alike help fuel this growth, including the more than \$30,000 in gifts made during last year's campaign season. See the full list of donors at www.akroncf.org/MillenniumDonors.



Businesses that wish to publicly show their commitment to helping local children can also become a corporate sponsor of the Millennium Fund. To learn more, contact Renee Scherick, major gifts officer, at 330-436-5612 or **rscherick@akroncf.org**.

The Millennium Fund will announce its latest grants in December. For a complete list of recipients, visit www.akroncf.org/MillenniumGrants.

VERNON L. ODOM FUND

As president of the Akron Urban League for nearly 30 years, Vernon Odom spent much of his career improving the lives of Akron's minority communities through education, advocacy and mentoring.

Since 1993, the Vernon L. Odom Fund has continued his legacy by investing more than \$175,000 into local programs that promote diversity and support ethnic and racial harmony.

Applications for 2019 grants are due Dec. 15, 2018. Apply online at www.akroncf.org/ApplyOdom.

WOMEN'S ENDOWMENT FUND

As part of its strategic campaign to raise \$125,000 annually through major gifts, the Women's Endowment Fund is inviting supporters to join its new giving circle. Members of the circle are asked to give \$1,000 each year to bolster the fund's grantmaking to programs that uplift women and girls throughout Summit County. Members will also help drive the fund's targeted outreach efforts to engage new and ongoing donors. For more information about the giving circle and how to get involved, contact Renee Scherick, major gifts officer, at 330-436-5612 or

rscherick@akroncf.org.

Sponsorship opportunities are now available for the Women's Endowment Fund's 2019 "For Women, Forever" annual dinner on Tuesday, March 5, at Goodyear Hall in Akron. This year's keynote speaker will be GOJO Executive Chair Marcella Kanfer Rolnick. During the event, the fund will also honor Norma Rist, a founding mother of WEF and president of Norma J. Rist CEO Consulting Inc., with the 2019 Judith A. Read Tribute Award for Service & Advocacy for Women. Sponsorship opportunities range from \$2,500 to \$25,000 and can be secured at www.regonline.com/ForWomenForever.





RAISING THE

Thomas G. Knoll, 2018 Recipient of the Bert A. Polsky Humanitarian Award

By Tracy Burt Photos by Lew Stamp

Why one attorney is building a case for more kindness in Greater Akron

On more than one occasion, Thomas G. Knoll's name has risen to the top of the list for the region's most prestigious awards. From the Akron Bar Association's Sir Thomas More Award to the Greater Akron Chamber's H. Peter Burg Award, Tom's integrity, hard work and dedication to community service have made him a fitting choice.

On Tuesday, Oct. 16, the Stark & Knoll co-founding attorney added Akron Community Foundation's Bert A. Polsky Humanitarian Award to his already impressive list of distinctions.

While Tom appears humbled by these accolades, it seems he's most appreciative for the platform an award like this gives him to inspire even more good works in the community.

While accepting the Polsky Award in front of a crowd of nearly 500 community leaders at the Hilton Akron/Fairlawn, Tom took the opportunity to address an issue of increasing concern in our world: the loss of civility and kindness. To counter this trend, he implored the evening's attendees to perform one additional random act of kindness each day. While these individual acts may seem small, Tom said he believes the ripple effect will create lasting change in our community and beyond.

"If all of us in the room do that, it will result in

165,000 more random acts of kindness every year," he said. "And who knows, maybe those who are the beneficiaries of your acts will pay it forward and we can achieve even more."

For his part, Tom announced that he and his wife, Ginny, were establishing The Knoll Family Fund Promoting Civility and Acts of Kindness at Akron Community Foundation. The fund will be used to "support institutions in our community that promote civility, and to acknowledge in some manner individuals who deserve recognition for their special acts of kindness," Tom said during his remarks. opportunity to improve the community he's called home since 1965. But to understand his love for the Rubber City, it's important to first understand how he got here.

This, of course, is not the first time Tom has seized an

Tom was born in Flint, Michigan, in 1939 to Stanley Mathias Knoll and Virginia Knoll. The early part of his youth was spent in Michigan, where his mother was a teacher and his father owned a hardware store. But keeping a hardware store afloat in a small town was difficult, so Stanley moved Tom and his two sisters,

Judy and Susan, to Sandusky, Ohio, where he took a position at General Motors.

Interested in the sciences, Tom graduated from Sandusky High School in 1957 with a scholarship to pursue engineering at Cornell University. After studying at the Ivy League school for a year and a half, Tom decided a liberal arts program would better suit him, so he enrolled in pre-law at Miami University in Ohio.

This turn of events would ultimately shape the trajectory of not only Tom's career, but also his personal life. It was in the town of Oxford that he met his wife of 56 years, Virginia "Ginny" McPherson.

Having dated a few of Ginny's sorority sisters previously, Tom was rebuffed the first time he asked Ginny out for coffee... and the

next few times after that. Eventually, she gave him a chance, and they married shortly after Ginny graduated from college in 1962.

Tom went on to get his law degree at The Ohio State University and soon accepted a position at a firm in downtown Akron. He worked for a few different law firms over the years, including Roetzel & Andress, Akron's oldest, before opening his own firm with friend and partner Mike Stark. Founded in 1985, Stark & Knoll started with just four attorneys and has grown to a team of 26 today.

This turn the trajec also his pe Oxford th Virginia "d Having da



As his professional life flourished, so did Tom's involvement in his new community. Upon arriving in Akron, he quickly joined the Jaycees, a leadership program for young men. It was the entry to community service he had been looking for. There, Tom met Ben Ammons, a senior vice president at Firestone Tire & Rubber Company, and the two later became co-founders of the local chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters, a national youth mentoring organization.

"I became aware of Big Brothers when I was in Columbus at law school. It just seemed like it was a place to make a difference in the lives of young boys who needed a male influence," said Tom. "It soon became evident to me that Akron was in need of this program, so Ben and I just decided we'd start one here." Today, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Summit, Medina and Stark Counties serves over 350 children each year, matching them with caring adult mentors who invest in their future.

As the father of three sons, Tom is wellversed in being a role model. Even as a busy lawyer and dedicated community volunteer, he has always put his family first.

"Being the father of three boys who were involved in many activities, he was there for everything," said Tom's son Brad. "Watching us play soccer... countless hours watching my brother Andy play golf... he was always there. He even coached all three of us in baseball."

Tom later used his passion for sports to start a new golf charity for area youth. In 1999, he co-founded The First Tee of Greater Akron, an educational youth development program that teaches kids life skills alongside the game of golf.

This was another program that Tom founded, in part, thanks to the Jaycees. The Jaycees were the founding sponsor of the Rubber City Open at Firestone Country Club, where a PGA tournament is hosted every year, so Tom had volunteered to pound stakes and string rope.

Over time, he became increasingly involved in the tournament, even presenting the \$100,000 purse to Jack Nicklaus in 1976. Tom eventually became secretary of the PGA Tour Tournament Association, where he learned about the national First Tee organization and became interested in starting a local chapter.



"Everybody thinks of golf as a game where integrity is important," Tom said. "So yes, this teaches kids about golf, but it really teaches them the importance of social values like integrity and honesty."

In the years since, Tom's humanitarian efforts have included co-chairing several charity campaigns, including the 2018 Summa Health Sapphire Ball and Habitat for Humanity's "A Home of Our Own" capital campaign, which raised more than \$2 million to purchase a new facility in Akron. He was also instrumental in the creation of Leadership Akron's N.E.X.T. program, which engages retired executives in key community leadership roles.

"I've had some incredible, life-altering and heartwarming experiences in doing the work I've done," Tom reflected. "That's the thing about giving back. You're going to make a difference in the community and in people's lives, but you're also going to come away a better person."





OF AKRON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Each year, Akron Community Foundation presents the Bert A. Polsky Humanitarian Award to the individual or couple who best exemplifies Bert Polsky's selfless dedication to humanitarian causes in Akron.

A committee of past Polsky Humanitarian Award honorees reviews nominations from the community annually, using the following criteria to choose the honoree(s):

- Exceptional volunteer service and commitment to the Greater Akron community
- Tireless efforts to improve the community's quality of life
- Outstanding personal commitment that inspires others
- Leadership and local community service that goes well beyond professional or employment responsibilities

For more information about the Bert A. Polsky Humanitarian Award, or to see a full list of honorees, visit **www.akroncf.org/Polsky**.

51st POLSKY AWARD PHOTOS







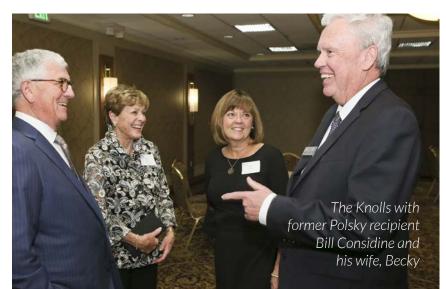
Cindy Johnson, Tom Knoll and Karyn Sullivan











An Ode to Tom Knoll

By John T. Petures Jr.

The tradition continues as we gather tonight To applaud this dear native son To celebrate and reflect on the life he has lived With an honor that's second to none

We look back on your life and remember today With these words and verses that rhyme 'Humanitarian' seems fitting as we describe your works Capturing memories and the passage of time

Professionally you've labored for 50 years Serving clients both large and, yes, small Devoting your life to this honorable profession Always ready to make the right call

Giving back seems so simple to many But to do so as a leader with grace The character embodied by this Polsky Award For all that you've done in this place

Our community is richer, you see, for your service Touching lives, lifting spirits, mending hearts From Goodwill and Summa to Big Brothers Big Sisters You've given children and families new starts

Golfing, of course, is just one of his passions Bringing Bridgestone to Akron his mission The mark of this tourney is too great to measure As it's lifted our human condition

And we cannot forget Tom's precious Ginny And the family of sons that they've raised A lifetime of faith, devotion to neighbors It's fitting that we offer our praise

For those that were there when Tom learned of this honor With a reputation of strength through the years We'll never forget the emotion he showed Humbly reflecting, accepting with tears

Thank you for selflessly giving back in this place Your efforts continue to inspire We're better, you see, to have followed your lead God bless you, Thomas G. Knoll, Esquire

Congratulations, Mr. Knoll, for this deserved recognition As past honorees can certainly attest You were selected to join true legends in town You, sir, are one of our best



NEW IDEAS BROUGHT TO THE TABLE

In October, Akron Community Foundation hosted the second annual On the Table Greater Akron event, bringing together thousands of residents from all walks of life to share a meal and discuss meaningful ideas to strengthen our community. Akron Community Foundation was selected by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to host this national initiative in Summit County, with approximately 6,500 community members participating in 2018. This year, participants were asked to focus on one of the top five concerning issues that emerged from last year's conversations, including economic issues and poverty, equity and social inclusion, drugs and addiction, education and youth development, and public safety and the judicial system.

Conversations took place from sunup to sundown, in multiple counties and in several different languages, including Spanish, Nepali, Swahili and Arabic. More than 30 local businesses, schools and nonprofits joined On the Table as Super Hosts, with each one hosting more than a dozen conversations. This year, Akron Public Schools, Revere Local Schools and Summit Education Initiative helped us reach an important and often overlooked voice in our community: youth. Other conversations also focused on bringing students to the table, including ones hosted at several branches of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. New to On the Table Greater Akron this year was the addition of the On the Table Community Impact Awards. This new grant cycle will award at least \$50,000 in grants – up to \$2,000 per grant – to bring to life the best ideas generated during On the Table. These grants will be announced in March 2019.

On the Table Greater Akron will return again on Thursday, Oct. 3, 2019. Our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in this year's event, especially sponsors Huntington Bank, FirstEnergy Foundation and Main Street Gourmet. We're grateful for your time, your ideas and your commitment to creating a better community for everyone.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Family plays an important role in all aspects of life – even in philanthropy. That's why Akron Community Foundation is



creating The Center for Family Philanthropy, a resource center for contributors, donor-advised fundholders and private family foundations. The first of its kind in Greater Akron, The Center for Family Philanthropy will specialize in helping families create a charitable legacy that can be passed down to future generations. The official launch of the center will take place in May 2019, when we'll welcome Peter Buffett, son of business magnate and philanthropist Warren Buffett, for an exclusive performance in Akron.

Peter, an Emmy Award-winning composer and producer, will trace the evolution of his career, philanthropy and foundation through music and storytelling.

To learn more about The Center for Family Philanthropy, visit www.akronfamily.org or contact Donna Coury, director, at 330-436-5640 or dcoury@akroncf.org.

ACF HIRES ACCOUNTANT

Akron Community Foundation recently hired Angela Ledley as a part-time accountant. Angela will be responsible for assisting our finance department with accounts payable, gift entry, deposits, and donor and gift reporting. Please join us in welcoming her to the team!

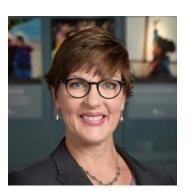
ACF STAFF SELECTED FOR ESTEEMED BOARD ROLES

Laura Fink, Akron Community Foundation's director of development and professional advisor relations, was recently appointed president of the Akron Tax

and Estate Planning Council. In her new role, Laura will provide professional development and educational opportunities for attorneys, accountants and financial advisors in the Akron area.

In September, Teresa LeGrair, our director of community investment, was elected to serve on the board of directors for the Akron Art Museum. A proponent of the arts, Teresa will be a valuable member of the museum's board.

Congratulations, Laura and Teresa!





We Love Good News! Have some good news about one of our staff or board members, past committee members, fundholders or grantees? Send your noteworthy news to kury@akroncf.org.

EVENTS

SUGAR PLUM TOUR OF HOLIDAY HOMES Sunday, Dec. 2, 2018

The Sugar Plum Tour is Akron's premier holiday home tour and the signature fundraiser of the Gay Community Endowment Fund. Since 2001, thousands of tourgoers have experienced the twinkling lights, roaring fires, sparkling trees and extraordinary holiday decorations of homes throughout Greater Akron. This year's tour will showcase five exquisitely decorated homes in Fairlawn, Norton and Bath. Sponsors will also be invited to a private party at an exclusive sixth residence in Fairlawn Heights. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.sugarplumtour.org.

FOR WOMEN, FOREVER Tuesday, March 5, 2019 | Goodyear Hall

Join the Women's Endowment Fund for its annual dinner celebrating women and girls in our community. This year's keynote speaker is GOJO Executive Chair Marcella Kanfer Rolnick. During the event, Norma Rist, a founding mother of the fund and president of Norma J. Rist CEO Consulting Inc., will be honored with the Judith A. Read Tribute Award for Service & Advocacy for Women. This event has sold out for the last three years, so reserve your seats now by becoming a sponsor. For more information, visit **www.regonline.com/ForWomenForever** or contact Pam Valentine at 330-690-7613 or **pvalentine@gsneo.org**. General admission tickets will go on sale in January. Register for the fund's e-news to receive an invitation: **www.akroncf.org/WEFnews**.

CONCERT & CONVERSATION WITH PETER BUFFETT Thursday, May 16, 2019 | E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall

The Center for Family Philanthropy is welcoming Emmy Award-winning composer and producer Peter Buffett for a fascinating evening of exceptional musicianship and powerful storytelling. The concert will explore concepts of privilege and the notion that real wealth is found in a loving and nurturing family and community. The concert is presented by the NoVo Foundation, established by Peter and his wife, Jennifer, to propel and encourage giving in perpetuity. For more information or to ensure you receive an invitation in early 2019, contact Donna Coury at 330-436-5640 or **dcoury@akroncf.org**.

MEMORIAL GIFTS TO:

Akron Community Foundation for:

Jean Axiotis by Cathy Agresta Jim & Melanie (Harris) Burian Mary N. Halvis **Bee Keriotis** Michael & Laurie Keriotis Lee & Diane Rowland The Sibberson Family Steve Baach by Chris Dunning Jim & Pat Proffitt Charles E. Booth by Kathryn Booth Don Brighenti by Roberta E. Aber Anonymous Michael Billion Michael Evans **Cindy Grennon** Judith Humbert Norma J. Humbert Ryan Humbert Joanne K. Murray Katie Widness H. Peter Burg by Eileen Burg Michael & Janet Pera Mary Quinn Fred & Sandy Ziegler Jennifer Ziegler Michael Ziegler **Chris Chenoweth by** Ann & David Brennan Nick & Maureen Katanic Ilene Shapiro Fred Chopko by Barbara Ann Hudak Willie Culp by Bruce & Sandy Bailey Betty Dalton by Ham & Beth Amer Bruce & Sandy Bailey Ann & David Brennan Rob & Alyssa Briggs Dave Brockman, Rick Kavenagh and all the Akron Sikich Partners and Staff Eileen Burg Mary Beth Carroll **Diggers and Weeders Garden Club** Don & Lorraine Fair Tim & Pam Fitzwater Ann Hubiak & Milissa Wikman Barbara Ann Hudak Richard & Teresa Kavenagh Mike & Sheila Lewis Margot & Ron Schroder Russell & Anne Taub Sylvia Trundle **Bonnie Damerow by** Bruce & Sandy Bailey Doc Giltner by Barbara Ann Hudak Steven J. Gorek by Bruce & Sandy Bailey

Jennifer Hendryx by Laura Schrank Harkev Edwin Schrank Frances James by Linda Bennett Mary Lou Bennett Ken Buckwalter & Marcia Haddox Joann Leong Madeline Lepidi-Carino Marcia L. Luecke Leslie, Bill, Dani & Ari McDevitt Clarita & Charles Rader Pamela Strachan & Linda Sell Henry Jameson by Martha Jameson Henry & Dorothy Jameson by Martha Jameson John Kelley by Barbara Ann Hudak Mary Jane Koly by Anonymous Bob & Susan Berk Elizabeth L. Buchanan Karen & Ennis Hadley The Jansky Family David & Nancy Koly Krugliak, Wilkins, Griffiths & Dougherty Co. LPA Michael & Debra Lavelle The Lehner Family Foundation Wayne & Vanessa Lesniak Mr. & Mrs. Louis A. Maglione Margaret Medzie Kim & David Nott The Orendorf Family Martha & Bobby Peyak Ron & Diane Schumaker The Partners and Staff of Akron Sikich LLP Robert Smith & Jan Lesniak Kate Lieberth Lytton by Akron Community Foundation's **Discretionary Fund** Akron Marathon Charitable Corporation Sophie Albrecht Mark & Michele Allio Michael & Laura Allio Anonymous Pat & Lee Ashbrook Tom B. Babcox Jr. Melanie Baird & Eric Benjamin Molly Barber Holly Barkdoll & Dennis O'Connell Jennifer Becka Kathy Bertsch Elizabeth Blystone Mike & Wendy Bolas Jane Bond Wayne & Evelyn Bosau Lauren Bradley Ann & David Brennan The Mary B. Brett Family Rob and Alyssa Briggs Topher Brough Patty Burdon Eileen Burg Caitlyn Cade Judith Campbell Halle Jones Capers

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GCEF Scholarship Fund for: Cindy Christman by Svlvia Trundle

Amelia Newberry

Humane Society Endowment Fund for: Humane Society of Summit County by Melina & Dan Boyce

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Suzanne Allen by Donae Ceja Carol Allio by Mark Allio Laura Allio by Mark Allio **Michele Allio by** Mark Allio Danielle Anderson by Suzanne Rinehart Monica Andress by Jonathan Turney Cynthia Auburn by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Mary Elizabeth Auburn Mary Elizabeth Auburn by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn **Ruby Chittenden** Nora Auburn by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Rebecca Auburn by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Dr. Sandra Auburn by **Ruby Chittenden** Dr. Jocelyn Swigger Lisa A. Aurilio by Bernett L. Williams Louise Aurilio by Lisa A. Aurilio Cathy Baer by Laurie Zuckerman Sandra Bailey by Culp Family Sally Bamer by Sally Bamer Linda Banasiak by Diane Bray Elizabeth B. Saraceno Julie Barnett by Jill A. Smith Mindy Bartholomae by Elizabeth Dalton Jude Barton by Linda H. Nida Elizabeth Bartz by Ilene Shapiro Joan Bauders by Ann Congeni Celia Grace Bentrott by Jim Nilsen Sandee & Gryphon Beyerle by Theresa Beyerle, Ph.D. Susan Beverle by Theresa Beyerle, Ph.D. Theresa Beyerle by Donae Ceia **Elizabeth Bisheimer by** Therese Chadbourne Wendy Bolas by Dr. Suzanne Allen Donae Ceja Elizabeth B. Saraceno Martha Booth by Mary Beth Van Winkle Kyra Bosnik by **Bonnie Estep** Tina Bower by Stephanie Torok Sue Bowman by Christina Hodgkinson Lisa Boykin by Roxia Boykin **Roxia Boykin by**

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Karen Bozzelli by Culp Family **Rose Brauer by** Marilvn K. Jacob Heather Braun by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Ann Brennan by Christine C. Yuhasz Marie Brilmyer by Amanda Saylor Maddie Brown by Tamera Brown Tammy Brown by Laurie Dunn **Emily Browning by** Marie Covington Jackie McDermott Mary Margaret Browning by Cindy Browning Lvnn Budnick by Dr. Suzanne Allen Donae Ceja Eileen Burg by Culp Family Toby Gorant Renee L. Calhoun by Jennie Tinney Marjorie Cantine by Dr. Lois Margaret Nora Nancy Cantine by Dr. Lois Margaret Nora Cynthia Capers by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Donae Ceja Grandma Carolyn by Jamie Hannen Mary Beth Carroll by Toby Gorant Tanya Carter by Tracy Carter **Theresa Carter by** Roxia Boykin Culp Family Laurie Zuckerman Tracy Carter by Roxia Bovkin Donae Ceja by Dr. Suzanne Allen Christine C. Yuhasz **Chapter FL PEO Sisters by** Melissa Sponseller **Bonnie Childs by** Ann Congeni Katie Chipps by Evelyn Unger Dr. Julie Chittenden by **Ruby Chittenden Ruby Chittenden by** Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Jennifer Clack by Ruby Chittenden Judith Clapsaddle by Kay Hine Deborah A. Clark by Demetria Clark Jane Clark by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Janice Clark by Deborah Venesy, M.D.

Katie Clark by Deborah Venesy, M.D. Sara Clark by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Samantha Coldwell by Christine C. Yuhasz Ann Congeni by Diane Bray Jennifer Connolly by Steven McGarrity **Becky Considine by** Christine C. Yuhasz William Considine by Ilene Shapiro Marge Cook by Marti Cowden Marie Covington by Donae Ceja Culp Family Peter & Bonnie Hughes Pamela Kiltau Margaret McDowell Lloyd Laurie Zuckerman Margaux Cowden by Marti Cowden Marti Cowden by Diane Bray Meredith Cowden by Marti Cowden Steve Cox by Ilene Shapiro Laura Culp by Laurie Zuckerman **Robyn Cutler by** Cinda Dehner **Trina Cutter by** Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Amy Dalton by Elizabeth Dalton **Betty Dalton by** Mindy Bartholomae Amy Dalton Mark Dalton Cami Dalton by Elizabeth Dalton Lvnn Davis bv Demetria Clark Thelma Davis by Anita Davis Lisa Dean by The Selzer Family **Olivia Demas by** Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn **Rosemary Dickerson by** Caroline Parry **Michelle Dickstein by** Laurie Zuckerman Joan DiCola by James DiCola Laura DiCola by Pamela Kiltau Abby Kulwicki Lisa Dietrich by **Bonnie Estep** Pam Dietrich by Stephanie Torok Margaret Dietz by Phyllis Boerner Nancy DiGirolamo by Tonilinn Moretuzzo

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Linda Fuline by Christina Hodgkinson Kathy Garber by Marilvn & R.D. Hansen **Ruthie George by** Susie Cohen Florence Kranitz **Pearl Weinstein** Sheri Glauberman by Laurie Zuckerman Meghan Goetz by Donae Ceja Susan Golden by Laurie Zuckerman Bonnie Golz by Suzanne Rinehart **Toby Gorant by** Margaret McDowell Lloyd Tonilinn Moretuzzo Ellen Gordon by Mary Beth Carroll Suzanne Graham by Donae Ceja Shelley Green by Bonnie Estep Barb Greene by Paula Cutillo Tracy Emrick Jackie McDermott Cindy Greyson by Caroline Parry Laura McAllister Hall by Marie Covington Jane Haney by Patti & Dale DiSanto Grandma Hannen by Jamie Hannen Hedy Hanselman by Barbara A. Hanselman Ashley Harple by Ann Congeni Katherine Hartman by Adele Looney Marcia Hartman by Adele Looney Megan Hartman by Adele Looney Iris E. Harvey by Sonya Y. Williams Janell Harvey by Louise Kuhns Harvey Louise Kuhns Harvey by Cynthia Snider Megan Harvey by Louise Kuhns Harvey Shannon Sipes Harvey by Louise Kuhns Harvey Heather Haws-Babb by Beverly L. Haws **Rev. Maria Hayden by** Rev. Dr. Sandra Selby Mom Heckman by Anonymous Paula Henderson by Rev. Dr. Sandra Selby **Brenna Herman by** Anthony O'Leary **Carrie Herman by** Marie Covington Culp Family

Jov Herman Paul R. Miller Laurie Zuckerman Melanice Hicks by Alicia Huffman Christina Hodgkinson by Anthony O'Leary Hallie Kay Hofherr by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Kate Hofherr by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Marcia Holcomb by Bryan & Susan Kinnamon Kim Huff by Kendra Williams Laura Hunsicker by Culp Family Jennifer, Katie, Maggie & Becca by **Phyllis Boerner** Clementine Johnson by Cheryl Grant **Rita Johnson by** Laurie Zuckerman **Elora Jones by Gizelle Jones** Molly Joyce by Judy Joyce Pam Kanfer by Charles Chudakoff Joseph & Pamela Kanfer Michael & Bobby Sacks Elie Zigdon Ketti Rose Zigdon Maureen Katanic by Culp Family Karen Krino Karyn Katz by Dr. Suzanne Allen Leslie Katz by Leanne Graham Anne Kaufmann by Pat Kaufmann Patty Kaufmann by Anne Kaufmann Ann Keller by Ann Congeni Jackie Keller by Ann Congeni Tammy Kennedy by **Bonnie Estep** Mimi Kent by **Ruthie George** Pearl Weinstein Andrea Kerzner by Gail Kerzner Amy Ketchum by Dr. Lois Margaret Nora Pam Kiltau by Laurie Zuckerman Laura King by Stephanie Torok **Diane Koltnow by** Dana Zedak Kate Koziol by Marie Covington **Connie Krauss by** Jennifer Neforos Sue Lacy by Donae Ceja

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Becky L. Wortman by Jennie Tinney Pam Wright by Culp Family Shane Wynn by Drs. Mark & Sandy Auburn Lvnn Yanke bv **Bonnie Estep** Susan Yingling by Marti Cowden Mary Yoder by Diane Bray Kimberly Young by Christopher Faircloth Lashawrida Fellows Shirley Smith Kendra Williams Chris Yuhasz by Donae Ceja Brvan & Susan Kinnamon Anthony O'Leary Richelle & Cristina Susan Zak by Gail Kerzner Ketti Rose Zigdon by Svlvia Lewis Laurie Zuckerman by Dr. Suzanne Allen Culp Family Pamela Kiltau Stephanie Torok Marilyn Zuckerman by Laurie Zuckerman Melissa Zuckerman by Laurie Zuckerman

IMPORTANT YEAR-END GIVING DATES

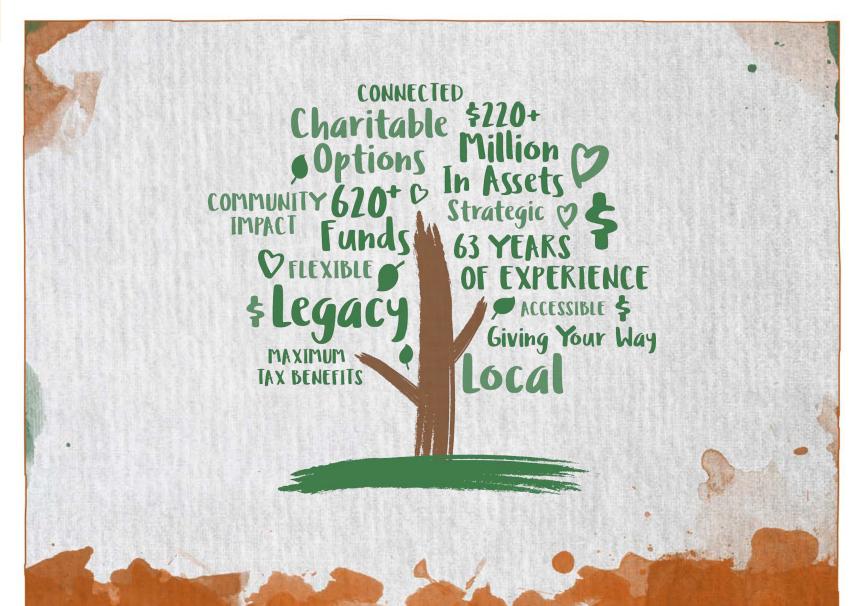
Friday, Dec. 14: Date recommended for stock transfer initiation to meet the Dec. 31 deadline. Discuss with your broker and call Steve Schloenbach for our stock transfer instructions at 330-436-5621.

Monday, Dec. 17: Last day to initiate donor-advised fund grant recommendations. Contact Melina Boyce for more information at mboyce@akroncf.org or 330-436-5616.

Friday, Dec. 28: Last day to establish a fund or drop off a check or cash.

Monday, Dec. 31: Last day to make an online donation or mail a check. Visit www.akroncf.org/GiveNow to see our list of funds you can donate to.

Questions? Call us at 330-376-8522.



Money DOES Grow On Trees

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Receive The Signal by mail: Contact Kinsey Ury at kury@akroncf.org or 330-436-5617

Thank you to the 6,500 community members throughout the region who participated in On the Table Greater Akron on Oct. 3 We look forward to sharing the results of your surveys with you in early 2019!

