

a magazine for friends of the GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION

# GREATER together

Setting our  
**LITTLEST  
LEARNERS**  
up for future  
success



Greater Milwaukee  
**FOUNDATION**  
*greater together*

Volume 5 Issue 1 Summer 2020

# WHAT'S inside

Summer 2020

## A note to our readers:

This edition was largely completed prior to COVID-19 affecting our community. We were set to print in spring, but waited to provide an update to reflect the Foundation's collaborative response to the outbreak.



## 5 From relief to recovery

The challenges brought on by the emergence of the public health crisis required that the Foundation go beyond grantmaking in addressing the impact and adapt for action like never before.

## 9 Deeper focus for Milwaukee Succeeds

The communitywide partnership is refocusing its efforts on early childhood education, building on increased interest and alignment locally to make significant changes for the city's early learners.

## 13 Equitable access to early education

Children who receive high quality early childhood education are best prepared for school and beyond. But how does our community fare in terms of making that education and care available? A Foundation-commissioned report details the current landscape.

## 25 Making a difference

Through peer counseling, community workshops and other resources, the African American Breastfeeding Network is working to address breastfeeding disparities, decrease infant mortality and build confidence in African American mothers.

## 33 Aligned funding

A south side neighborhood block club brought art to the alleyways thanks to support from the Reasons for Hope MKE Fund.

- 3 President's message
- 7 Foundation news | Foundation mobilizes cross-sector group to address impact of COVID-19
- 23 Generosity at work | Riveredge Nature Center
- 27 Donor's catalytic gift boosts UWM research capabilities
- 29 In their own words | Enrique Figueroa
- 31 Leaving a legacy | Peter Campione
- 32 Giving smarter | The impact of the SECURE Act on charitable giving

# GREATER together

A MAGAZINE FOR FRIENDS OF THE  
GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION  
VOLUME 5 :: ISSUE 1 :: SUMMER 2020

**VISION** Greater Milwaukee becomes a vibrant, economically thriving region comprised of welcoming and inclusive communities that provide opportunity, prosperity and a high quality of life for all.

**PRESIDENT & CEO**  
Ellen M. Gilligan

**VICE PRESIDENT, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS**  
Laura Porfilio Glawe

**EDITOR & WRITER**  
Becca Mader

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**  
Paula J. Perez

**PHOTOGRAPHER**  
Jim Moy

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**  
Carolyn Kott Washburne, Anita Mogaka,  
Jeremy Podolski

**EDITORIAL TEAM**  
Dave Celata, Jeannie Fenceroy, Leah Fiasca,  
Daria Hall, Janel Hines, Mary Kay Mark,  
Milika Miller, Anita Mogaka, Erin Olson,  
Aileen Rogers, Aftin Warren, Carol Wilson

**ON THE COVER:** 

A mother and her child at a Parent Café session sponsored by The Parenting Network.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Greater Together is published biannually by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Marketing and Communications Department. Please send your comments or address changes to Becca Mader at [Greater Milwaukee Foundation, 101 W. Pleasant St., Suite 210, Milwaukee, WI 53212](mailto:bmader@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org) or send an e-mail to [bmader@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org](mailto:bmader@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org).

[greatermilwaukeefoundation.org](http://greatermilwaukeefoundation.org)  
414.272.5805



©2020 Greater Milwaukee Foundation

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When 2020 began, I was filled with optimism. I was seeing engagement on a continuous upswing in our community as people challenged themselves to talk deeply about critical issues and found ways to work together on solutions that centered on the voices of those most affected by our society's failures.

Today, I am still filled with optimism, but my heart is also heavy as I consider the loss and the change that many have endured over the past months. And I suspect that by the time you read this, even more may have changed.

I feel compelled, therefore, to lift up a few key realities of the times in which we are living. Some of you may have heard me speak these words before, but they bear repeating.

We need to recognize that systemic racism is the epicenter of our community's – and our nation's – challenges. We have shaped our way of life in a manner that benefits people differently, and those differences tend to be favorable if you're white, and detrimental if you're not. We need to eliminate the flawed systems, practices and beliefs that withhold wellness and power from people of color and keep our entire region from thriving.

As the white CEO of a philanthropic organization, I must not presume to have the answers and the knowledge to lead that seismic shift alone. All of us need to do our own work to learn history, understand privilege and challenge the status quo that has led to the steep disparities we witness daily. We need to listen and follow the leadership of our communities of color to guide how we support the movement for racial equity and justice.

This is how the Greater Milwaukee Foundation can be catalytic – using our power, information and resources to support change that the community seeks and helps design.

COVID-19 erased all doubt that this approach is necessary. Even in a pandemic that has touched the life of nearly every person worldwide, we see communities of color suffer a grossly uneven share of illness and death. This is not a coincidence, which is why our response has been just as deliberate.

In this magazine, you'll read about the MKE Civic Response Team, a communitywide coalition we convened that draws on shared values and diverse expertise to identify greatest needs, align resources and coordinate pandemic relief efforts while building a path to recovery.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jacqueline Herd-Barber, Chair | Paul Jones, Vice Chair |  
Wendy Reed Bosworth | Pedro Colón | David J. Drury | Susan Ela  
Thomas W. Florsheim Jr. | Cecelia Gore | Dale Kent | David J. Kundert  
Gregory S. Marcus | Darryl D. Morin | Cory L. Nettles | Greg Oberland  
Marie L. O'Brien | Mary Ellen Stanek | Derek L. Tyus | Gregory M. Wesley

In forming this coalition, we leaned heavily on the Foundation's experience establishing and supporting the educational partnership, Milwaukee Succeeds. Understanding how cross-sector leadership and practitioners can work together for collective impact in education offered a roadmap for how to respond to COVID-19 thoughtfully and holistically.

A prime example is in early childhood education, where the Foundation was deepening investment before the coronavirus outbreak. Our research had revealed that families in Milwaukee were already facing a range of barriers to early childhood education services, including high cost, limited quality, scarcity of programs serving infants and toddlers, incompatible hours of operation and geographic distance.

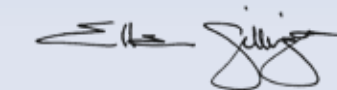
As COVID-19 severely compounded those issues, and the lives of families and providers turned upside down, we and our civic response partners mobilized resources to help stabilize the sector, particularly for providers serving communities of color and the children of essential workers. This robust civic response also helped identify needs and take immediate action – like

distributing sanitizer, food and personal protective equipment – as well as plan advocacy for long-term change on issues like educator pay.

Pandemic or not, all parents want their children to thrive in a healthy environment, where they can learn and are loved. Many working families rely on early childhood care and education providers to make this possible.

Our work in early childhood education is featured in this magazine, including the generous partnership of Foundation donors who have coinvested to help make new solutions possible.

Strengthening early childhood education is one of the clear and tangible steps we can take to undo the negative impact of systemic racism and foster a more vibrant Milwaukee. Join me in supporting the future of our children and the future of our community.



Ellen M. Gilligan  
President & CEO  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation



Foundation President and CEO Ellen Gilligan with Tamara Johnson, executive director of Malaika Early Learning Center, Malaika students and Kellie and Dennis Mueller, philanthropists and Foundation donors who founded the early childhood center in Milwaukee's Harambee neighborhood in 2013.

# Relieve. Recover. Reimagine.

Foundation's COVID-19 response builds toward a better future for MKE

"Frontline Heroes," a mural painted by artist Mauricio Ramirez in April, honors Milwaukee health care workers. The mural can be found on the eastern wall of a building at the intersection of Sixth Street and Lincoln Avenue in Milwaukee.

Faced with a historic public health and economic crisis, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation immediately mobilized resources to respond to the urgent community needs brought on by COVID-19, all the while keeping an eye on long-term recovery and making sure that it addressed systemic inequities along the way.

"Our community's cooperative response to the pandemic has demonstrated that Milwaukeean believe, as we do, that we are greater together," said Ellen Gilligan, Foundation president and CEO. "We are uplifted and amazed by the generosity we are witnessing daily from residents, nonprofits and donors throughout our region."

Here are some of the ways in which the Foundation and its donors responded:

## RELIEVE

- In mid-March, the Foundation launched the MKE Responds Fund, an initiative designed to quickly deploy financial resources to nonprofits to meet the urgent needs of individuals adversely affected by COVID-19. Within three months, thanks to Foundation donors, individuals, local corporations, and local and national funders such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Arnold Ventures, the fund received more than \$4 million in contributions

- To ensure that financial and in-kind resources were directed to the areas that needed them the most, the Foundation organized a cross-sector coalition of partners. Among its results to date, the MKE Civic Response Team coordinated assembly and distribution of nearly 2 million face masks for community use; helped with distribution of meals for children and families; and facilitated stabilization grants for local early childhood education partners (see Page 7 to read more about the coalition's work)

---

## \$7 million

As of June, the Foundation's total commitment to COVID-19 relief, including Board-directed grants, donor advised fund grants and external gifts.

- A local advisory committee, with guidance from the MKE Civic Response Team, distributed rapid-response grants to more than 100 nonprofits. As of June, the Foundation's total commitment to COVID-19 relief, including Board-directed grants, donor advised fund grants and external gifts, is more than \$7 million

- In its role as a conduit between passionate philanthropists and the nonprofit sector, the Foundation compiled an urgent needs list from hundreds of local agencies within the four-county region to share on a weekly basis with donors who are inspired to give
- Both the Milwaukee Bucks and Milwaukee Brewers created emergency relief funds at the Foundation to provide financial assistance for thousands of their employees who lost work once games were canceled and seasons postponed

## RECOVER

- The Foundation awarded \$415,000 in general operating support to 23 nonprofits to help relieve the financial strain agencies were experiencing during a time of reduced revenues and increased demand for services
- With an eye on economic recovery, particularly in the small business sector, the Foundation provided \$430,000 in direct support to the Latino Entrepreneurial Network, African American Chamber of Commerce and LISC Milwaukee to assist neighborhood-based businesses and businesses owned by people of color

## REIMAGINE MKE

- The Foundation provided seed funding for a public awareness campaign specifically for Milwaukee's black and Latinx communities, two populations disproportionately affected by the virus. Called "You Matter," the campaign inspires asset-based, positive messages to motivate individuals to take the necessary steps to be safe and healthy



"The coronavirus is testing every community in every corner of the globe, and it is affecting people of every background. The only way to overcome COVID-19 is by coming together and caring for one another."



Will Martin, Foundation donor who contributed to the MKE Responds Fund

# MOBILIZING TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

As the coronavirus crisis hit Milwaukee, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation knew it needed to rally area leaders in ways that brought together the community's strengths, smarts and resources. The extraordinary challenges that arose meant developing a highly aligned way of tackling the public health crisis.

The Foundation realized that the response also needed to go beyond traditional fundraising and grantmaking. Toward that end, it mobilized the MKE Civic Response Team, a 30-plus member coalition of government, philanthropy, education,

nonprofit, health care and community representatives that is taking a collective approach to address COVID-19. With a commitment to advancing racial equity and inclusion, the team is addressing the broken systems that created the inequities in the community that were now intensified because of the pandemic.

Due to the strategic and collaborative nature of the approach, the Foundation has been recognized nationally and garnered significant financial support from funders such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

### STABILIZING EARLY CHILDHOOD SECTOR

One of the systems challenged by COVID-19, and one of the team's main priority areas, has been the early childhood education sector. With one in three Milwaukee child care providers having closed due to the pandemic, and with many more struggling to stay open, the work group is focused on stabilizing the sector by providing financial resources, arranging deliveries of personal protective equipment to keep staff and children safe and

addressing the mental health needs of children, families and providers.

"This crisis has held up a mirror to a child care system that for far too long has left families, especially black and brown families, struggling to access quality, affordable care," said Daria Hall, policy director with the Wisconsin Partnership, a collaborative of collective impact partnerships in Wisconsin including Milwaukee Succeeds. "Now with 40 percent of Wisconsin child care providers closed, more and more people are waking up to the central role that child care plays in the lives of

working parents. And more and more partners, not just in child care but in philanthropy, government, business, health, and beyond, are saying with one voice that our economy can't recover if child care doesn't recover."

With support from the MKE Responds Fund and Home Grown, a national collaborative of funders, the group provided \$350,000 in stabilization grants to 140 licensed family- and center-based providers. The providers are in five priority ZIP codes in Milwaukee County with the highest concentration of black and Latinx children, as informed by

a Foundation-commissioned report. It also distributed hand sanitizer, diapers, nonperishable food, juice and formula to 175 providers.

### INFLUENCING POLICIES

In both the short and long term, there will be an added emphasis on advocacy for additional investment in the child care sector, recognizing its importance in the overall recovery of our community.

"We want to take that opportunity to advocate for better systems and stronger policies for child care at the local, state and federal levels," Hall said.



**Going beyond traditional grantmaking:** Across seven intersecting priorities and in nimble and responsive ways that go beyond traditional grantmaking, the team is:

- Sharing information
- Identifying gaps and greatest needs
- Aligning resources and coordinating efforts to address short-term relief and long-term recovery



### Grants made from Foundation partners to support the MKE Civic Response Team's work:

- Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment - **\$4.8 million**
- Bader Philanthropies - **\$1.1 million**
- Greater Milwaukee Foundation - **\$4.2 million**
- Green Bay Packers - **\$500,000**
- Herb Kohl Philanthropies - **\$1.3 million**
- Jewish Community Foundation - **\$630,000**
- Northwestern Mutual Foundation - **\$645,000**
- United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County - **\$556,275**
- Zilber Family Foundation - **\$662,500**

*Grant amounts as of June 2020*  
 Visit our website to learn more about the partners and examples of the team's aligned efforts.

# MILWAUKEE SUCCEEDS

Transforming systems to  
better serve Milwaukee's children



Children at La Causa's Early Education and Care Center, a 5-star early child care provider on Milwaukee's south side. According to a recent study commissioned by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, only 30 percent of Milwaukee children live in a neighborhood with enough 3- to 5-star providers.

The importance of early childhood education is a priority shared by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Milwaukee Succeeds, the communitywide educational partnership launched and housed by the Foundation since 2011. Together, they are focusing investment on a common vision for Milwaukee's youngest learners – a position informed by local data, convening community across all sectors and years of experience.

Milwaukee Succeeds is also a key partner in the city of Milwaukee's Milwaukee Early Childhood Education 2025 partnership, which includes several community leaders including Executive Director Danae Davis. The partnership will ensure that the city's focus on early childhood development is aligned with that of other local and statewide partners to guarantee that all kids have access to quality care by 2025.

The Foundation's philanthropic role as a catalyst and influencer complements Milwaukee Succeeds' expertise as a connector among philanthropy, government, educators and other partners. Davis has led the charge in marshalling community partners and resources to work together on reducing the educational disparities that exist in our community. She also chairs the board for StriveTogether, a national nonprofit network of nearly 70 community partnerships. She discusses why Milwaukee's educational partnership is deepening its work around early childhood and why it's important, now more than ever, to move the work forward collaboratively.



Milwaukee **Succeeds**  
*cradle to career*

Danae Davis, Executive Director  
Milwaukee Succeeds

## Why early childhood education? What are the areas of focus?

Our prioritization of early childhood education at Milwaukee Succeeds was aimed at how to expand access to and affordability of quality child care. Using information presented in the Foundation's IFF research, we have a primary focus on black and brown communities in ZIP codes that were identified as having the greatest need. Additionally, due to COVID-19, we recognized an urgent and immediate crisis with one in three Milwaukee child care facilities closing.

To stabilize the sector in the long term, the early childhood education group that is part of the MKE Civic Response Team identified and is acting on four priorities:

1. Stabilizing the Milwaukee child care sector, prioritizing communities of color
2. Getting child care providers much-needed supplies
3. Supporting mental health for children, families and child care providers
4. Reopening child care providers and helping them recover

## Why now?

Impact. The clarity of how impact can happen has never been more revealed than seeing how broken systems operate in a crisis. When we think about the needs of the early childhood education sector, we learn how inconsistent access to resources and information to support the sector can result in unfortunate examples of destabilization of family and center-based care. That is one example that reveals what we need to work on that

could not have been identified through just metrics. We have real stories to tell, and we can bring home the issues and opportunities much clearer now than we ever could.

## Why is Milwaukee Succeeds the right organization to do this work?

We have convened and built relationships with community members, businesses, organizations, funders and government – all the major players – and those who influence the work are at our table. We have built a collective approach to early childhood education. The IFF report that the Foundation commissioned, the city of Milwaukee's Office of Early Childhood Initiatives, our partnership with Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, and the work we've done as part of the Wisconsin Partnership all give us a good shot at getting more kids, infants and toddlers in affordable child care and eliminating deserts.

## How does philanthropy impact outcomes in early childhood education?

The Foundation and Milwaukee Succeeds have shared that one of our key assets and priorities is being a community leader for delivery of short-term and long-term impact. The quick bringing together of local philanthropists during the pandemic, which resulted in the MKE Responds Fund, shows that we were able to take our expertise at convening and being results-focused to inspire others to join the effort and contribute to the solutions. The message for philanthropy is when you trust the ability of the Foundation to lead to results, your trust will be honored.

# 53206

## Early Care and Education Initiative

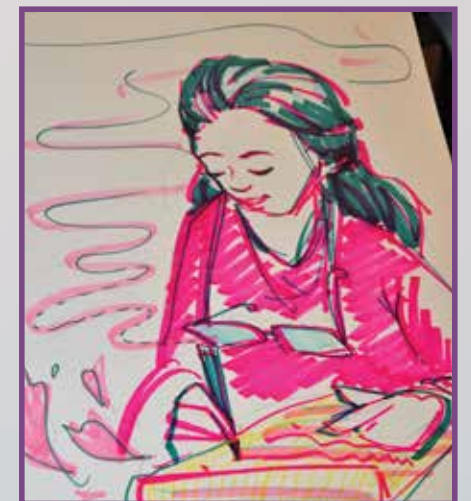
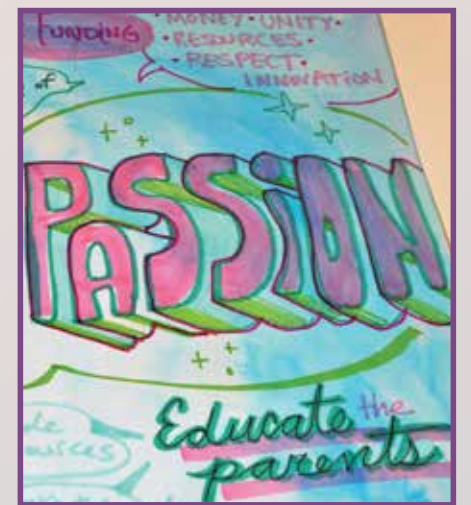
What does quality care mean to Milwaukee parents and what resources do they need to best access it for their children?

Those were two of the questions officials from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families posed to parents, caregivers, business owners and community leaders at a community visioning session in December 2019. Milwaukee Succeeds and the city of Milwaukee's Office of Early Childhood Initiatives co-convened the event, which helped inform how the state should invest \$1.4 million in Milwaukee's 53206 ZIP code around high quality early care and education.

As a result of input, the department will:

- Increase the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy rate for parents of infants and toddlers in 53206. Between February 2020 and February 2021, families using full-time child care will receive \$105 more a month, and those using part-time care will receive \$79 more a month
- Offer two early childhood education classes, in partnership with Milwaukee Area Technical College, for child care teachers in 53206 – one to support general academic skills and one on infant and toddler development
- Offer child care providers in 53206 enhanced T.E.A.C.H. scholarships, which cover class tuition and fees as well as professional development, along with meals, child care and a stipend for participation
- Offer child care providers in 53206 increased REWARD stipends, a strategy to increase compensation of early childhood professionals based on certain employment, experience and education requirements

For more information on DCF's 53206 Early Care and Education Initiative, visit: [bit.ly/53206-Initiative](https://bit.ly/53206-Initiative)



Sketch notes depicting some of the themes that emerged from the 53206 convening, which was co-sponsored by Milwaukee Succeeds and the Milwaukee Office of Early Childhood Initiatives.

Ensuring access to quality, affordable care, particularly for black and brown children, is one of Milwaukee Succeeds' new priorities.

Before the onset of the coronavirus this spring, the child care system as we knew it was fragile. When the pandemic struck, the sector was pushed further to the brink.

Perhaps now more than ever before, the nation recognizes how essential early childhood education is to families and our overall economy.

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation remains steadfast in its commitment to advocate for and invest in the sector. Read more about the longstanding issue of inequitable early education in our community in this month's cover story.

# *a* SEAT *at the* TABLE

Not every family has access to early childhood education. New research details what barriers exist and what our community can do to help.

Shanice has known since she was young that she wanted to be a teacher. Kids were her passion, and starting at age 18, that is what she did for 10 years.

Her pedagogy was focused particularly on the city's youngest learners – infants and toddlers. She was an early childhood educator at several centers, both large and small, in Milwaukee.

When it came time to have her own children, she knew how important it was to have quality care for them so she could continue her job of providing quality care for others.

It wasn't that easy.

As she and her husband both made minimum wage, they struggled financially. She put her two kids in child care, which at one point cost \$250 a week. She went part time. Her husband changed his hours to second shift and she worked first shift. They ultimately ended up paying family members to watch their children until they went to school.

When she had her third child two years ago, the couple decided she would become

a stay-at-home mom because they could not afford the cost of child care, even with subsidized help.

Those challenges Shanice faced are not uncommon scenarios in Milwaukee, particularly for families of color, according to "A Seat at the Table: Ensuring Equitable Access to Early Childhood Education in Milwaukee," a major study the Greater Milwaukee Foundation commissioned on the early childhood education landscape. The report, conducted by Chicago-based IFF, revealed several new, concerning findings. Half of all Milwaukee children ages birth to 5 lack access to high quality early childhood education due to factors such as high costs, limited hours of operation, scarcity of quality providers nearby and limited supply of programs serving infants and toddlers.

"Equitable access to early childhood education sets the foundation for improved educational, social and economic outcomes for Milwaukee's children, now and in the future," said Kathryn Dunn, the Foundation's senior vice president of community impact. "It also has huge implications for our community's workforce."



Shanice, a Milwaukee mom and volunteer with The Parenting Network.



Eighty-five percent of brain development happens within the first three years of a child's life. Giving them the very best start in life – particularly within that incredibly short time frame – reaps long-term benefits.

As the report found that the largest gaps in quality care exist for children of color birth to age 3, Dunn said the Foundation and its donors can make the system more equitable by pooling resources to improve access for that population.

The findings, coupled with growing momentum and donor interest, led the Foundation to prioritize the following strategies:

- **Invest in high quality facilities**
- **Expand workforce development and professional development options**
- **Advocate for increased access and affordability**

“Our goal is to support the incredibly important work providers are already doing to accelerate progress and the sense of urgency around addressing the gaps in access and affordability,” Dunn said. “By releasing this comprehensive data and convening experts, donors and providers around this community priority, we hope to continue the momentum and progress around the issue.”

## UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT SYSTEM

The Foundation has made a commitment to closing racial disparity gaps and investing in solutions that address those disparities, believing that by doing so, greater equity and prosperity can be achieved for the region.

“The IFF research allows us to understand the “gaps” from both a citywide perspective but also at a neighborhood level,” Dunn said. “At the center of this work – and our focus – are the families who experience the challenges in finding quality child care in an environment the parents can both afford and trust.”

The research was based on provider and population data and feedback from parent focus groups from

several diverse Milwaukee neighborhoods. While IFF had conducted similar needs assessments in cities such as St. Louis and Detroit, the Milwaukee study was unique based upon the cross-sector advisory committee's commitment to equity.

For a variety of reasons, not every family chooses to send their child to day care, but “the committee felt it was important to think about creating a system for everyone,” said Tara Townsend, IFF's vice president of research and evaluation. “The commitment in Milwaukee was very visionary to say, ‘Shouldn't we try to create a system that allows for the opportunity for families to choose to access it or not?’”

## BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO HIGH QUALITY CARE

Those in the early childhood education field view the report as a validation of what they've known and faced over the years. They say it paints a larger picture of the issues that prevent families from accessing care and provides an opportunity to educate businesses and funders to support the work underway.

“There are so many places where the IFF study identified a barrier for families to access high quality early care for their children,” said Andrea Libber, director of prevention advocacy for The Parenting Network, which organized the parent focus groups cited in the research. “In order to make high quality care a reality for all Milwaukee families, it is essential to use a collaborative approach. Hopefully this research will inspire stakeholders throughout the city to get involved and help fix the system.”

Access and affordability are two reasons why the current system in Milwaukee is not working for families. Brittney Taylor knows that first hand, as a mother and former child care teacher. She found it hard to find a center to which she was comfortable sending her daughter. Transportation, costs, quality, proximity and hours of operation were all issues. She ended up taking her daughter to three centers before she was satisfied. Taylor also ended up leaving the field so she could make more money.





Industrywide, pay is low and turnover is high. According to a 2018 workforce report by the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, the annual turnover rate was 35.3 percent. That shortage has only gotten worse over the years. Median starting wage for teachers is \$10 an hour while assistant teachers make \$8.50, according to the WECA report.

"[Child care providers] aren't paid remotely close to what they deserve to be paid," said Sarah Smith, director of early education at La Causa, which has a wait list for its program because it can't find enough staff.

The YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee also cannot find enough qualified teachers. Between three

child care sites, one of which is in Milwaukee's 53206 ZIP code, it has eight empty classrooms.

It's also difficult for nonprofit providers to offer infant and toddler care because it costs more to provide. But the need is there and their mission compels them to do so.

"It's our mission imperative," said Carrie Wall, the YMCA's president and CEO. "It's important to everything we do in this community."

Experts are hopeful the study will help galvanize the community around the issue.

"With the IFF report and the synergy in the community and across the country now around early childhood education, we will have the opportunity and possibility of

having a greater impact," said Ann Terrell, who spent more than 40 years in early childhood education including time as director of early childhood education for Milwaukee Public Schools. "The Foundation as a leader and a convener for these conversations is one of those strategies I really appreciate."

### BRIGHT SPOTS

Despite the system's challenges, providers, parents and philanthropists point to many bright spots - both locally as well as nationally.

More people are starting to understand the intentionality and importance behind high quality care and not viewing it simply as babysitting. The soft skills providers teach such as sharing,

communication skills and social interaction, are ones La Causa's Smith said are fundamental building blocks to a child's success in school and life.

"The parent is the first teacher," Shanice said. "You (as an early childhood educator) become the second teacher."

The public's perception is shifting thanks in part to the documentary "No Small Matter," which shows the science behind early brain development and strengthens the case for community investment in high quality early education. The Foundation, along with United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County and Next Door Foundation, presented a free screening at Marquette University in 2019 to more than 300 guests.

Other local organizations, such as the Milwaukee Child Care Alliance, have also shared the film with stakeholders.

Foundation donor Madonna Williams attended a screening hosted by Next Door last October. She was immediately struck by the film and wanted to share its message with her civic-minded and philanthropic peers. She decided to host her own screening, which the Foundation sponsored alongside Baird Foundation and Read Aloud, and ultimately recruited nearly 40 friends to host tables at an event that drew close to 200 people.

"It was such a compelling topic and touches every facet of our community," said Williams, who has served on Penfield Children's

## Foundation's early childhood education goals

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation is marshalling increased human, financial and reputational resources over the next five years to improve local access and affordability around early childhood education by working with government and nonprofit partners to:

- Increase the number of slots available for infants and toddlers in high quality early childhood education centers
- Increase the percentage of income-eligible children participating in Wisconsin Shares, the state's child care subsidy program for low-income families
- Increase the Wisconsin Shares subsidy
- Increase the percentage of 3-, 4- and 5-star rated centers in Milwaukee



Young scholars at Malaika Early Learning Center, a 5-star rated center in Milwaukee that serves children ages 6 weeks to 12 years.

Center's board for 20 years. "If kids are educated early on, they can get good jobs and be vibrant parts of society. It all works together."

Greater attention to the issue on the local, state and federal levels is what many say is promising. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett is making it a priority of his administration moving forward. Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers plans to invest more than \$1.4 million in 53206 over the next two years toward early childhood education. Wisconsin was awarded a \$10 million federal grant in late 2019 to improve the system through such ways as providing scholarships for early childhood teachers and expanding use of the Leading Men Fellowship, which trains young men of color in early literacy strategies and embeds them in pre-K classrooms as leaders.

Milwaukee Succeeds and the city of Milwaukee's Office of Early Childhood Initiatives hosted a visioning session in December 2019 to gather ideas and feedback from parents, providers, business owners and community leaders to inform the state's allocation in 53206. More than 125 community members, including Shanice and Taylor, participated. Many attendees shared stories of the same barriers those women faced.

"I felt it was a relief to let others know how we felt," said Shanice, who volunteers with The Parenting Network and helped recruit families to attend.

While recruiting and retaining educators remains a challenge, experts point to several programs as promising ways to build the pipeline. Seven providers,

including La Causa and the YMCA, spearheaded efforts to revive a child care teacher apprenticeship program. Students would work at a local center and be mentored by a teacher and then attend either Milwaukee Area Technical College or Waukesha County Technical College.

Scholarship and stipend programs like T.E.A.C.H. and REWARD, respectively, provide teachers financial support as they pursue additional training and credit-based coursework to advance in their careers. That in turn plays a large part in a center's overall rating according to YoungStar, Wisconsin's quality rating and improvement system.

As a field, "we're starting to figure out the resources or structures that need to be in place to help move along having highly qualified staff," said

**"If kids are educated early on, they can get good jobs and be vibrant parts of society. It all works together."**

Madonna Williams  
Foundation Donor

Tamara Johnson, executive director of Malaika Early Learning Center, a 5-star provider in Milwaukee's Harambee neighborhood.

On a national level, the National Association for the Education of Young Children has driven an effort called "Power to the Profession" to create standards for education and experience and to advocate for better compensation for early childhood educators, which will help professionalize the field, said Terrell, the organization's president elect and former director of the MPS Foundation.

## ROLE OF PHILANTHROPY IN CREATING SYSTEMS CHANGE

Milwaukee's cross-community engagement around the issue bodes well for addressing the challenges, Townsend said, and she believes philanthropy can have an impact on improving the system.

"One thing abundantly clear is that the system cannot be supported fully through public investment. Private funding has to fill in the gaps," she said. "There is work to be done to even better leverage the funding in the system already."

Foundation donors Skip and Ildy Poliner understand the importance of leveraging resources and have done that for years through their fund. The couple, who have long supported high quality providers such as the United Community Center and Next Door, say providing equal access and opportunity for all children drives their philanthropy.

"Our support for these leading organizations has been influenced by the leadership shown by several very prominent people in the Milwaukee community," said Skip Poliner, retired president of Northwestern Mutual. "We encourage others to join us in support of these outstanding nonprofits to allow them to expand and extend their reach."

In addition to creating an endowed fund, to which donors can contribute to support local providers, the Foundation is targeting its grantmaking cycles to address key issues facing the field. Its third cycle,

## KEY FINDINGS FROM

### "A Seat at the Table: Ensuring Equitable Access to Early Childhood Education in Milwaukee"

A 2019 Greater Milwaukee Foundation-commissioned study found that multiple barriers exist that prevent half of all Milwaukee children from being able to access high quality, affordable childhood education. The Foundation and its community partners believe we can and should do better. They are aligning resources to narrow, if not eliminate, the existing gaps in availability of seats as well as improve the number of high quality providers.

Access the full interactive report at [greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/early-childhood-education](http://greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/early-childhood-education)



### QUALITY

Only 40 percent of providers are considered proficient, as defined by YoungStar, Wisconsin's quality rating and improvement system.



### ACCESS

Half of Milwaukee children (nearly 27,000) under age 6 lack access to a provider with at least a 3-star rating. Two out of every three infants and toddlers (more than 18,000) lack access to a 3- to 5-star provider.



### AFFORDABILITY

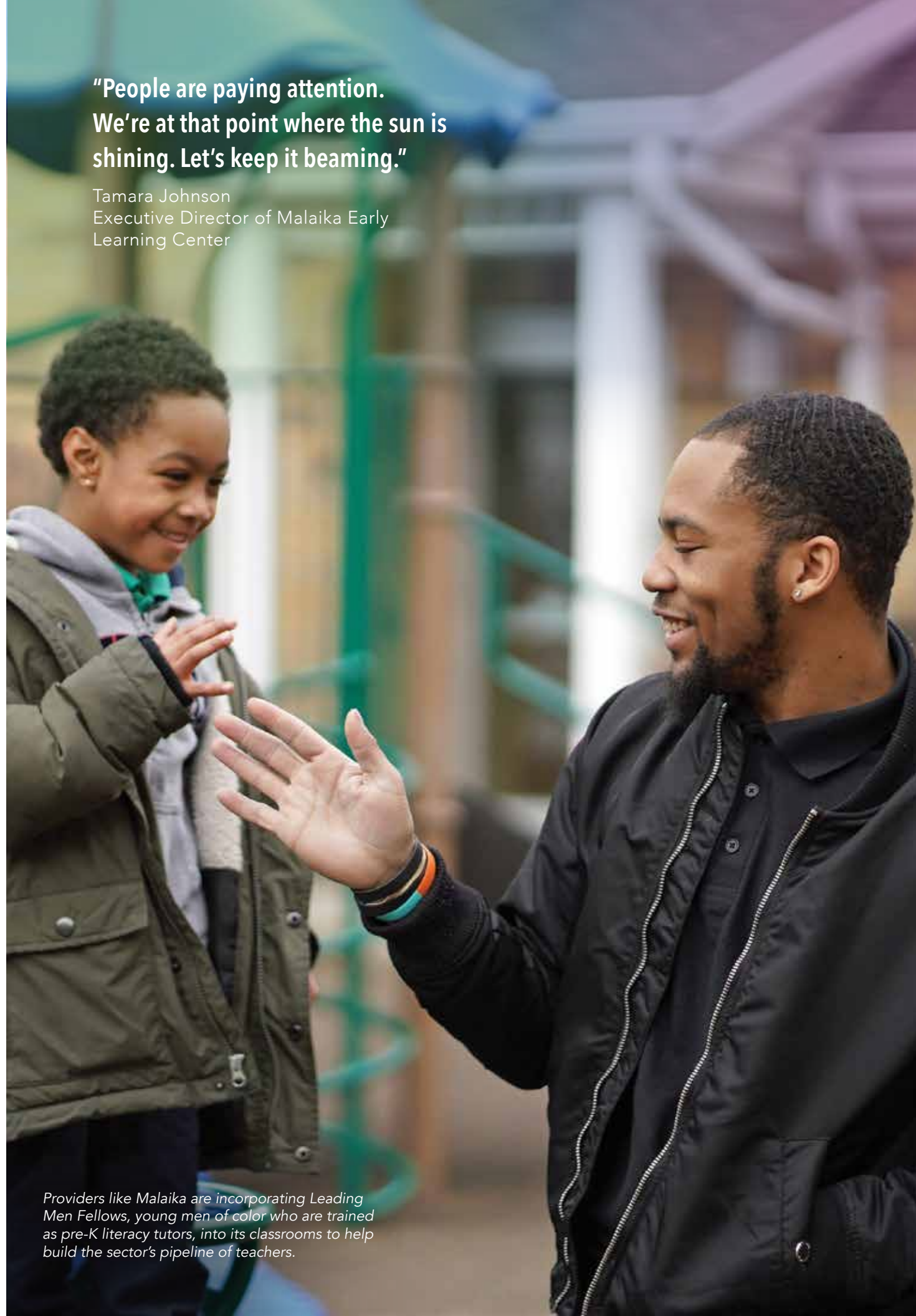
The average full-price tuition in Milwaukee is \$1,063 per month, which means a family would need to earn more than \$15,000 per month for it to be considered affordable. The average household only earns \$3,200 each month. Only 45% of income-eligible families receive financial assistance.

*Greater investment and attention is being made on the local, state and national levels with regard to early childhood care and education.*



**“People are paying attention.  
We’re at that point where the sun is  
shining. Let’s keep it beaming.”**

Tamara Johnson  
Executive Director of Malaika Early  
Learning Center



*Providers like Malaika are incorporating Leading Men Fellows, young men of color who are trained as pre-K literacy tutors, into its classrooms to help build the sector’s pipeline of teachers.*

which opens Aug. 10, supports capital requests for providers in neighborhoods where access to quality care is scarce.

Milwaukee Succeeds, the communitywide education initiative the Foundation helped create in 2011, is narrowing its focus to early childhood education as part of its new strategic plan. The Foundation will continue to leverage partnerships with it and other entities to advocate for policy changes that improve access. One such policy change proposed is to increase the reimbursement rate for Wisconsin Shares, the state’s child care subsidy program for low-income families.

Investing resources to help 2- and 3-star providers improve their ratings according to YoungStar, as they serve the highest population of children, said Malaika’s Johnson. But she said it’s also critical to continue to support 4- and 5-star providers, like Malaika, and see if those models could be replicated in other areas of the city.

Ultimately, it will take a multi-pronged approach to strengthen the system, but the Foundation has helped through the publication of the report alone.

“People are paying attention,” Johnson said. “We’re at that point where the sun is shining. Let’s keep it beaming.”

## Help us grow the promise of future generations

There is a clear societal benefit to investing in high-quality early childhood education. It’s estimated that for every \$1 invested, Milwaukee sees a \$9 return. By deepening our investment, we are helping all individuals connect with resources to imagine and achieve their dreams. You can help improve outcomes for Milwaukee’s children by partnering with the Foundation in supporting the following three funds:

### **Early Childhood Education Fund**

Increases access to quality services through capital grants to area providers and by supporting families, caregivers and educators of young children.

### **Impact Investing Fund**

Provides loans for capital costs to small businesses, including child care providers. This tool provides both a social return and a financial return to the Foundation for future reinvestment.

### **Milwaukee Succeeds Fund**

Supports the local communitywide partnership that builds a shared community vision, aligns resources and scales promising best practices to help every child succeed.

Contact a member of our development and philanthropic services team at 414.272.5705 to make a gift or a grant from a donor advised fund.



# The SWEET LIFE

Donor gift opens doors to new 'sugar shack' at Riveredge



At Riveredge Nature Center, maple sugarin' isn't just a program, it's a way of life. The center – home to a wonderful old stand of sugar maple trees – began the popular spring program in 1970 to interest schoolchildren and their families in the environment.

For the next 50 years, more than 3,000 a year have tapped the trees, collected the sap, watched it boil down . . . and then drizzled it on a pile of warm pancakes. They gathered in the center's beloved – but small and unheated – sugar shack. By 2018, the shack was nearing the end of its useful life.

Enter Mal and Jill Hepburn, longtime supporters of Riveredge, a 379-acre sanctuary near the village of Newburg.

"Riveredge is a lovely story," Mal said. "It's about a group of people who believe in that sanctuary."

In 1975, Mal's brand-new business, Ozaukee Bank in Cedarburg, stood ready to provide the center with a mortgage to purchase adjacent land to expand. (Turns out, Riveredge did not need the loan, thanks to its highly successful fundraising). Jill has been volunteer coordinator for Riveredge, and their son, Jamie, now 21, was both a volunteer (at age 8) and a paid summer worker on

**Jamie Hepburn, son of donors Mal and Jill Hepburn, started volunteering at Riveredge Nature Center at age 8.**



the land maintenance crew while in high school.

"Riveredge is a place where kids get off their devices," Mal said. "They roll

up their pant legs, wade into the river with seines, look at the creatures they pull up. It's just beautiful."

In 2018, the Hepburns funded 100 percent of the cost to construct a new, yet still rustic lodge-style building. Called Sugarbush House, it includes a winterized classroom wing and was paid for by a coordinated gift from two funds at the Greater

Milwaukee Foundation: the Hepburns' "Bootstrap" Foundation and Ozaukee Bank's Gift to the Future.

Mal appreciates that the Foundation offers cost-efficient options to establish and manage both entities. The bank originally set up an educational foundation on its own, "but the accounting fees, legal charges

and investment fees were staggering," he recalled. "The Foundation is a quiet but invaluable resource for the community."

Jessica Jens, Riveredge's executive director, is thrilled with the new building, which opened in March 2018, just in time for maple sugarin' season.

"The old sugar shack was a well-loved facility, but there was no place to get warm. If March was cold, many schools would cancel because the students didn't have the right outdoor gear," she said.

Now, students come in and get warm by the wood-burning stove, then head out again. "It's a whole different experience."

She adds, "Sugarbush House sets the stage for the next 50 years – and beyond."



Riveredge's Sugarbush House offers a year-round classroom space so students and community members can take part in its educational programming, like the popular maple sugarin' program.

# AFRICAN AMERICAN BREASTFEEDING NETWORK

advances a "new norm"

When Johnna Tidwell became pregnant, she knew she wanted to breastfeed, but she had no family members to advise her – her mom, older sisters and cousins had all used formula.

"I knew breastfeeding was the best option for my baby's health, and it's free to me, compared to formula," Tidwell said, "but I didn't have any guidance."

Fortunately, Tidwell learned from her doula (a trained professional who provides support before, during and shortly after childbirth) about the African American Breastfeeding Network. Since 2008, the AABN has addressed breastfeeding disparities among women of color by increasing awareness about the benefits of nursing: babies are less likely to have ear infections, asthma and allergies, and they have less diarrhea, constipation, vomiting and colic. Breastfeeding also lowers the risk of obesity, diabetes, childhood cancer and SIDS.

And, of course, breastfeeding promotes bonding between baby and mom.

In particular, AABN's Community Lactation Support Services Project targets pregnant mothers at risk for not initiating breastfeeding in the hospital – thus are much less likely to have breastfeeding success. Families attend prenatal and postpartum classes and receive postpartum support from a lactation consultant and/or a peer counselor. A father peer advocate meets with expectant dads to provide education and support so they can best support their partners. Hospital and home visits are core components, as is a breastfeeding chat room.

"They were so encouraging," said Tidwell, whose daughter, Sunshine, was born in 2019 and is thriving. "After the birth, they provided as many home visits as I needed."

AABN's work is especially important in Milwaukee County, where only 58.9 percent of African

American women breastfeed, compared to 81.5 percent of white women.

"Breastfeeding in the African American community is considered 'not normal,'" said Dalvery Blackwell, AABN's executive director. "We're working to normalize it."

AABN has helped more than 2,000 families and reaches most clients through partnerships with community health organizations such as Women, Infants, and Children sites and Aurora Sinai Midwifery & Wellness Center.

"Some of our clients have gone to classes and really appreciate the peer support," said MaryAnne Scherer, the center's lead midwife. "They enjoy speaking with other moms who have breastfed, not just with a clinician."

Since 2016, the Foundation has provided \$178,000 in support to the nonprofit, including funds to identify mothers at risk of not breastfeeding because of complications, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, prior premature birth and planned C-section.

"We are so appreciative because (the grant) allows us to case manage those women to increase the chances of them breastfeeding successfully," Blackwell said.

Tidwell has been so inspired by AABN that she has become a "B.I.G. (Breastfeeding Is Great!) Sister" to other expectant and new mothers.

"I'm there for support," she said. "If someone is having a hard time with getting the baby to latch on or with nipple soreness or whatever, I say, 'Girl, you can do this. It's hard right now, but you've got this.'"



The African American Breastfeeding Network's goal is to normalize breastfeeding. Through monthly educational sessions for pregnant moms and new moms, it provides tips, support and encouragement for breastfeeding success. A recent class in February taught moms how to prepare, plan and pump for when they returned to work.



## FUNDING NEEDS

**\$500**  
Allows AABN to purchase social media platforms for a year to reach pregnant and new moms.

**\$3,000**  
Purchases 10 breast pumps for working mothers.

**\$10,000**  
Covers cost of purchasing three iPads for data collection during home and hospital visits by community breastfeeding peer counselors.

### INTERESTED IN INVESTING IN THIS PROJECT?

Contact your philanthropic adviser at 414.272.5805 to make a grant from your fund.



Artist rendering of Maggi Sue, the new research vessel supported in part by a \$10 million gift from an anonymous Greater Milwaukee Foundation donor.

# CATALYTIC GIFT

## provides pathway for protecting nation's priceless resource

An anonymous donor has made an investment in the future health of the Great Lakes with a \$10 million gift that will help fund a new research vessel for the School of Freshwater Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

The gift, facilitated by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and announced in November 2019, equals the largest ever received by UWM. The amount covers half of the new vessel's \$20 million cost, which includes \$15 million for construction and \$5 million to sustain its operation.

The Maggi Sue will be the most advanced research vessel on the Great Lakes and the first designed specifically for conducting sophisticated research on these unique bodies of water. The school's current research vessel, the Neeskay, is a converted Army T-boat that's more than 65 years old.

"This gift will transform UWM's efforts to protect the Great Lakes, our nation's largest freshwater resource," UWM Chancellor Mark Mone said. "Its impact extends well beyond UW-Milwaukee and, frankly, beyond Wisconsin. It strengthens our efforts to protect the Great Lakes - all of them."

"The gift not only will help drive the research enterprise at UWM, but further signals that Milwaukee is a city capable of leveraging its unique resources for economic, educational and ecological benefits," said Ellen Gilligan, Foundation president and CEO. "Our anonymous donor's commitment to freshwater science in giving UWM the leading-edge tools needed to better understand and protect our Great Lakes is remarkable."

Building on the momentum of the anonymous gift, Madison physicians Sally Wilmeth and Terry Geurkink have given \$1.5 million toward the new vessel in memory of the couple's children, Jenni and Kyle Geurkink.

"I was taught from an early age to respect nature, to take it into account in all of my actions, and to protect it," Wilmeth said. "We have a long way to go in reconciling a once-pristine image of the Great Lakes with the reality of what our interventions have wrought."

The research vessel is the principal tool for studying the lakes, said School of Freshwater Sciences Dean Val Klump, and the need for research has never been greater.

"It's our floating laboratory," Klump said. "And the real gift is to the students and scientists who will sail aboard the Maggi Sue and conduct the research we desperately need to protect this priceless resource."

Despite its age, the 71-foot Neeskay is the only research vessel that sails year-round on the Great Lakes. But it can only be used for day cruises. The new vessel will be capable of 10-day cruises as far as lakes Superior, Huron and Erie.

---

*"We value the donor's trust in the Foundation as a conduit to carry out philanthropic passions and make an impact for generations to come. We remain grateful for our donor's generosity and foresight and hope it will inspire others to participate."*

*Kristen Mekemson, Foundation vice president of development and philanthropic services*

---

Measuring 120 feet in length, the new vessel also will be the first dynamically positioned boat on the Great Lakes, a feature that allows the vessel to stay in one place despite the current, wind and waves. Other technology includes a complement of sensors that collect real-time data, interchangeable lab "pods," and space to give whole classes of students the opportunity to learn together at sea.

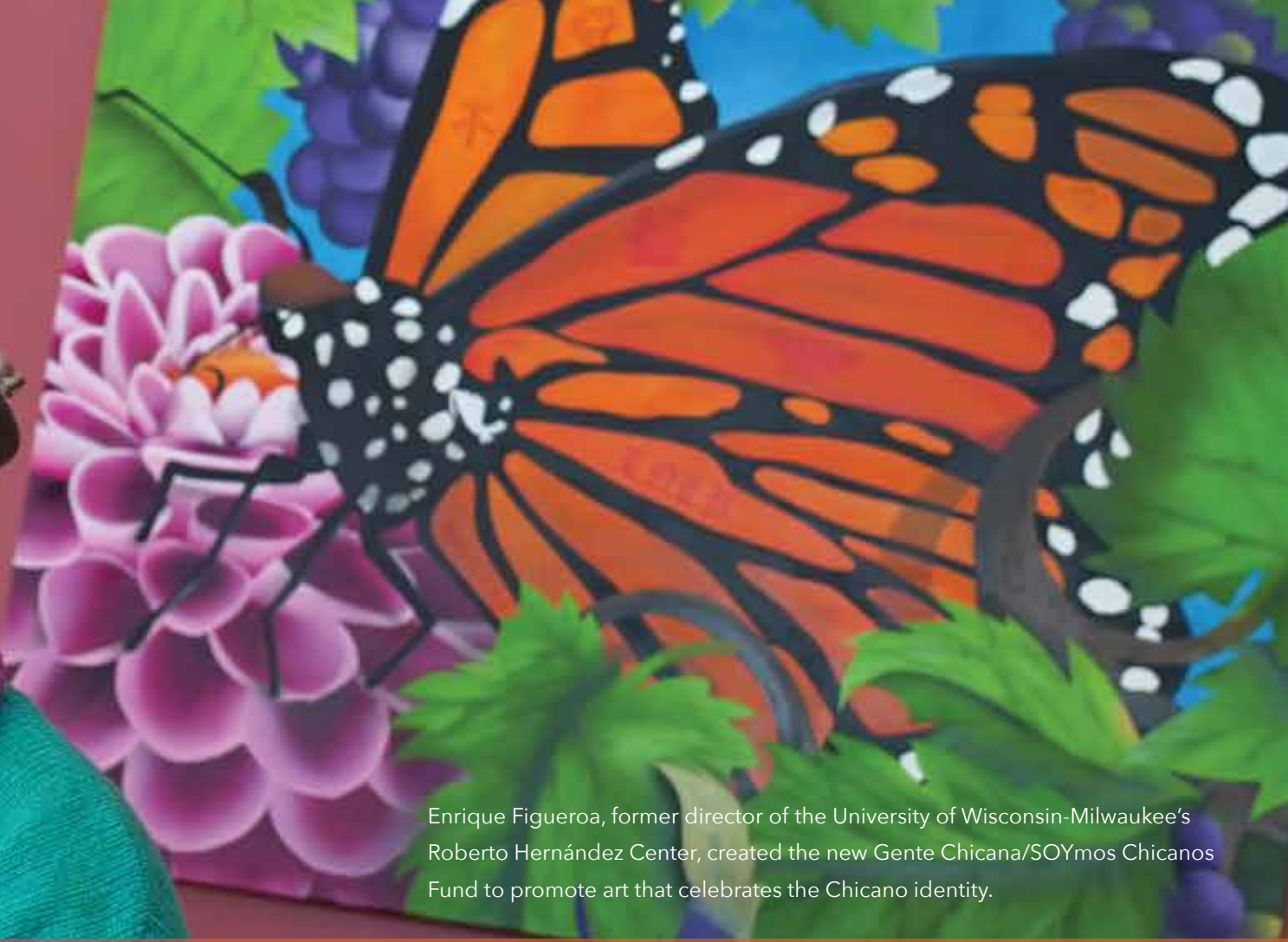
Once fundraising is complete, it will take 12 to 18 months to construct the vessel.

*For those interested in contributing to the project, please contact your philanthropic adviser.*



University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences Dean Val Klump aboard the Neeskay, the school's current research vessel.

# Celebrating the ART of CHICANO identity



Enrique Figueroa, former director of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Roberto Hernández Center, created the new Gente Chicana/SOYmos Chicanos Fund to promote art that celebrates the Chicano identity.

In the 1960s, Mexican Americans, or Chicanos, mobilized to fight against discrimination and fight for greater understanding, respect and representation of their culture in the United States. At the same time, a cultural renaissance reflecting their heritage and history took shape. Posters, murals, theater and other art forms empowered Chicanos to advocate for greater social change.



The new Gente Chicana/SOYmos Chicanos Fund at the Greater

Milwaukee Foundation aims to tap into contemporary interest around the movement as well as further promote the understanding, appreciation and practice of the art itself. Later this year, the Smithsonian American Art Museum will host an exhibition of Chicano graphics. In 2021, a museum will open in California featuring the private Chicano art collection of actor/comedian Cheech Marin.

The advised fund is the brainchild of Enrique Figueroa, a Mexican American who was a

member of the advisory committee that informed the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's "Latino Milwaukee: A Statistical Portrait" study. With seed funding from the Jeffrey C. Kasch Foundation, Figueroa turned to the Greater Milwaukee Foundation to bring his vision to life. He was friends with the late Kasch, a business leader and avid art collector.

**It seems like there is a resurgence behind the movement. Why do you think that is?**

A lot of us involved went on to develop our professional careers

and now we are retiring and saying, "What am I going to do now?" Young kids are more interested because some are in the same situation we were in. They are not really Mexicans because they never lived in Mexico, but if they are undocumented, they are not really Americans. There is the bubbling sentiment out there – who am I and why am I?

**What do you want people to understand and appreciate about Chicano art?**

The diversity of the voices, capabilities and talents that are out

there and have been out there. The uniqueness of this art is heavily identified with by a significant portion of our American population and really depicts the experience of us in this country.

**What kind of impact do you hope the fund will have?**

I've always felt that I needed to do something to establish some recognition of what that experience – particularly art – has done for our country. The fund is a vehicle for folks who haven't had the resources to carry out their artistic vision.

The first round of grants will be awarded later this year. To contribute to the fund, visit [greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/give-online](http://greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/give-online).

(top) Created by Milwaukee artist Ben Stark, this untitled painting hanging in Enrique Figueroa's Shorewood home symbolizes the peregrination of Chicanos between the United States and Mexico.

(Pg. 29) Aztec Calendar, a mural created by artists Ben Stark, Fred Kaems and Natalio Lopez III, located at 3240 W. Vliet St. in Milwaukee.



## Legacy gift out of the blue, but not out of character



Peter Campione

Peter Campione's generous \$1.8 million legacy gift to the Greater Milwaukee Foundation was a surprise both to the Foundation and to his family. Yet his quiet generosity was not out of character.

Campione died Dec. 5, 2018, in Naples, Florida, at age 79. Born in San Cipirello, Sicily, a small town outside of Palermo, he immigrated with his mother to Brooklyn, New York, in 1945, and the rest of the family soon followed. In 1960, he settled in Milwaukee, where he discovered his passion for baking as a young apprentice working at Meurer's Bakery.

With a less than ninth grade education and coming from very meager beginnings, Campione understood the value of hard work. In the early '70s, he bought his own bakery business in Cedar Grove. He moved his wife and family to the small Wisconsin town of less than 2,000 where he set out to make his dream a reality. Over a six-year period, he grew the business to include three bakeries and a traditional Italian restaurant called the Village Inn.

The family lived above the bakery and Ann Campione recalled her father working many long hours. In order to spend more time with him, she and her

two brothers would venture downstairs to watch him work.

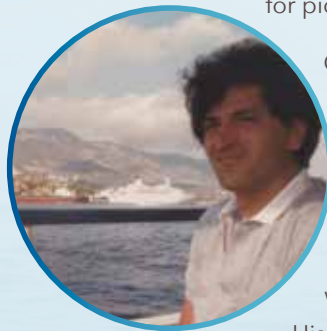
"We'd talk, laugh and even help bake," she said. "Often, you'd see one of us riding along with Dad while he made his deliveries to local restaurants and grocery stores on Saturday mornings."

Campione instilled his strong work ethic, positive attitude and entrepreneurial spirit early in his children's lives.

"He used to say, 'It's okay to fail, but you still have to keep trying,'" Ann said.

A turning point in his life came in the spring of 1978 when his bakery delivery truck was struck by another vehicle on a country road. The accident left him a paraplegic at age 39; he was married with children ages 15, 13 and 9.

"Over the years, he came to terms with his accident and was determined to make the best life he could," said his youngest child, Steve. "Even though he was very reliant on others in many aspects to help him, I never once heard him complain about being in a wheelchair."



He had a love of the water and didn't let his disability deter him. He took up boating and became an experienced yachtsman, traveling throughout Lake Michigan, along the western coast of Florida and to the Bahamas and Florida Keys. Campione summured in Oostburg, Wisconsin and spent winters in Marco Island and Naples, Florida for 30 years.

During the 1980s, he became particularly interested in the financial markets. He followed the markets daily and was an astute investor with a knack for picking stocks.

Campione's gift to the Foundation came as a surprise to his children, but not a complete surprise – both Steve and Ann said their dad was a very private person.

His legacy has three different components: a designated fund that supports Milwaukee PBS; a field of interest fund that supports cancer and spinal cord injury research; and a field of interest fund that supports veterans' organizations.

Campione impacted many during his life, his children said, and through his fund will reach so many more.

## RETIREMENT PLANNING AND CHARITABLE GIVING: THE IMPACT OF THE SECURE ACT



By Shannon Braun, attorney at Godfrey & Kahn and a member of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation Young Professional Adviser Council.

Recent legislation may impact your tax and charitable planning. The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (SECURE) Act, which took effect Jan. 1, 2020, expands benefits associated with IRA, 401(k) and other qualified retirement plans. Most notably, the law shifts when account owners must begin taking required minimum distributions. However, RMDs are suspended in 2020 under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which was signed into law March 27, 2020.

Previously, individuals were required to take RMDs after reaching age 70½ and were not allowed to make contributions to a retirement plan after that age. Under the SECURE Act, and following the 2020 suspension, the requirement shifts to an account owner reaching age 72, and the prohibition of making contributions after the age of 70½ was removed.

For a donor age 70½ or over, a qualified charitable distribution

(QCD) of up to \$100,000 per year is still available under the SECURE Act and will not increase the donor's taxable income, provided that the distribution is made directly from the IRA to a qualified charity. Distributions to donor advised funds, private foundations and supporting organizations are not eligible for QCD treatment. Upon turning 72, the donor's QCDs will offset his or her RMDs.

The CARES Act adds another layer of analysis for charitable planning in 2020. The law eliminates the adjusted gross income limitation for individual cash charitable contributions made during 2020 and provides a \$300 above-the-line charitable deduction for individual taxpayers who take the standard deduction (\$600 for a married couple). These new rules apply only to cash contributions made directly to qualified charities, which, like the QCD rules described above, do not include donor advised funds, private foundations and supporting organizations.

### Benefits of a qualified charitable distribution

While Sherry and Norm Malmon had named the Greater Milwaukee Foundation in their estate plan, they had not yet created a fund. With the government requirement to take distributions from her IRA, Sherry became aware that she could make a tax-free gift from her IRA to a designated fund at the Foundation. As Norm explained, "We saw a perfect opportunity to start funding our charitable plan and begin seeing our goals come to fruition within our lifetime."



Sherry and Norm Malmon

Still wondering if a charitable IRA rollover gift makes sense for you? Contact Mary Kay Mark, senior director of gift planning, at [mkmark@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org](mailto:mkmark@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org) or 414.336.7066 to discuss your specifics.

South side neighborhood block club creates

# URBAN ALLEYWAY art gallery



Artist: Zakia Wells



Artist: Rozalia Singh



Artist: Erick Ledesma



Artist: Maura McBride



On Milwaukee’s south side, a cluster of six Frank Lloyd Wright homes on Burnham Street has long been a pride point within the Burnham Point neighborhood.

Thanks to two neighborhood block clubs, there are a dozen new gems that residents can now point to – ones they had a hand in creating themselves.

In two alleyways south of West Orchard Street, stretching between the 1500 and 1600 blocks of South

31st and 32nd streets, is an urban art gallery of sorts. Garage doors ranging between 9 to 16 feet wide and 8 feet tall serve as canvases for murals that were designed in collaboration between residents and 10 Milwaukee artists.

With help from Artists Working in Education, residents selected the artist of their choosing to help curate and carry out the theme of scenic landscapes. One garage door featured a Puerto Rican scene,

with hibiscus flowers, a cerulean-colored gazebo and a field of agave plants. Yet another mimicked Vincent van Gogh’s iconic “Starry Night.”

Elizabeth Mercado has lived in Burnham Park with her husband for 14 years. She worked with artist Rozalia Singh to incorporate elements in their mural such as vibrant colors and native birds to remind them of their home countries of Nicaragua and Mexico.

The alleyways are a main hangout for residents, especially in the summertime, Mercado said. The new art, as well as 15 motion lights and several speed limit signs, have transformed them into welcoming, unique and safer spaces, especially for children.

“It’s calm and relaxing – it’s like going to a museum,” Mercado said.

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation’s Reasons for Hope


MKE Fund supported the project with a \$4,000 grant. The fund was created in 2016 to support community activities that encourage social connections, promote peace and build community cohesion.

This marks the fourth improvement project that the block club has completed over the past four years and its largest to date. Past projects have included address plaques, light posts and neighborhood identity flags.

In addition to creating new symbols of pride, the project also fostered new leadership. Three new block leaders emerged and both block clubs are working together to determine their next collaboration.

“It took a lot of effort with the neighbors but if you work together, we can make everything happen,” Mercado said.

[GreaterMilwaukeeFoundation.com](http://GreaterMilwaukeeFoundation.com)

 [facebook.com/GreaterMilwaukeeFoundation](https://facebook.com/GreaterMilwaukeeFoundation)

 [twitter.com/GrMkeFdn](https://twitter.com/GrMkeFdn)

 [youtube.com/GrMkeFdn](https://youtube.com/GrMkeFdn)

 [instagram.com/GrMkeFdn](https://instagram.com/GrMkeFdn)

# MONUMENTS

## to Milwaukee's manufacturing history

In the Menomonee Valley today, no vestiges of its storied railroad manufacturing history remain.

Long gone are the smokestacks that once towered over the area, powerful elements of the Milwaukee Road, once one of Milwaukee's largest employers. The company was active from 1878 to 1985 and at one point employed nearly 3,000 workers.

The Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail installed a permanent piece of artwork called "People of the Road" to serve as a monument to that important part of the valley's history. Five 9-foot-tall steel pieces stand in the footprint of those original chimneys. Designed by Milwaukee artist Richard Taylor, they model the silhouettes of the workers that were gleaned from archived photos.

Eighty-five donors, including the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund, contributed to the \$250,000 project.

