

# GREATER together

MADE IT!  
 DREAM CHASERS  
 CHASING!  
 BEST CLASS TO 12-17-15  
 THIS! DUMAR.O-G

SKY IS THE  
 LIMIT (2016)  
 Chasing

Believe  
 your S

KEEP CHASING  
 THE DREAM  
 NEVER SETTLE!

I HAVE THE POWER  
 OF CHOICE AND FREE WILL  
 TODAY I COMMIT TO A  
 POSITIVE CHANGE  
 100% OF MYSELF



**Where we stand**  
 Community builds  
 case for equity

# WHAT'S inside

Spring 2017



## 5 Where we stand

Area leaders share their vision for a greater Milwaukee.

## 23 Catalyzing change

Racial equity grant opportunities advance business growth, a “ban the box” campaign, leadership training and more.

## 29 Reversing a trend

With metro Milwaukee facing steep challenges in homeownership rates and housing affordability, the Foundation dedicates new resources to address the issue.

## 33 Make a Difference

Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra program removes barriers and provides opportunities for youth to find their musical calling.

## 37 Generosity at Work

After decades of decline, the Kinnickinnic River neighborhood on Milwaukee’s south side is making a comeback, thanks to investment and engagement by donors, residents and the Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers.

- 3 President’s message
- 27 Community approaches to helping opportunities rise
- 31 Profile in philanthropy | *Patty and John Mueller*
- 35 Partners in philanthropy | *Nonprofit Management Fund*
- 39 Giving Smarter | *James Spella*
- 41 In their own words | *Amy B. Underberg*
- 42 Fund Flashback | *Walter and Olive Stienke Fund*
- 43 Donor Snapshot | *Physics & You*

# GREATER together

A MAGAZINE FOR FRIENDS OF THE GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION  
VOLUME 2 :: ISSUE 1 :: SPRING 2017

**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

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

**CREATIVE DIRECTOR & DESIGNER**  
Paula J. Perez

**PHOTOGRAPHER**  
Jim Moy

**EDITORIAL TEAM**  
Marybeth Budisch, Fred Gutierrez,  
Will Janisch, Mary Kay Mark,  
Wendy Ponting, Lamont Smith, Pa Sponcia

**ON THE COVER:**  
Rashaad Washington, founder of Pro Trade Job Development, a pre-apprenticeship construction trade training program in Milwaukee



**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 or send an e-mail to [bmader@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org](mailto:bmader@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org).

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



©2017 Greater Milwaukee Foundation

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



President & CEO Ellen M. Gilligan chats with the cast of "Welcome to Bronzeville" following a visit in February by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation staff to see the play. The Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund supported the First Stage Children's Theater production.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cory L. Nettles, Chair  
David J. Kundert, Vice Chair  
Mary Beth Berkes  
Wendy Reed Bosworth  
Pedro Colón  
David J. Drury  
Ness Flores  
Janine P. Geske  
Cecelia Gore  
Jacqueline Herd-Barber  
Paul J. Jones  
Dale Kent  
Gregory S. Marcus  
Marie L. O'Brien  
Gregory M. Wesley

Living together in this region, we are a people connected across the invisible boundaries drawn around neighborhoods, school districts, cities and counties. We share an economy, an environment and a civil society, and for this vast ecosystem to thrive, opportunity must reach everyone.

We've grown accustomed to hearing about greater Milwaukee's challenges, but we can't afford to be numb to the need in our community. Whether directly or indirectly, disparities in academic achievement, household income, homeownership, health – any quality of life

measure you can name – stifle the vitality of our region and ultimately cost us all.

We can reverse this pattern through interventions that target the root causes of disparities, many of which affect communities of color disproportionately. By working collaboratively, we can develop solutions whose benefits extend to all people.

The Foundation is engaged in a process that will convert our generational commitment to equity and inclusion into action. With national consultants, we've examined best practices, held

community stakeholder sessions and conducted in-depth interviews with individuals from government, business, education, justice system, health, community organizing and nonprofit sectors to begin informing community strategies because this work isn't just ours. It's *all of ours*.

How our region responds will shape our future. We know through the Foundation's *Vital Signs* and *Latino Milwaukee* research that 45 percent of metro Milwaukee residents under age 25 are people of color. Our students, workforce and leaders

of tomorrow will be increasingly diverse.

There is a growing chorus in our community calling for the positive outcomes that a focus on equity can bring. Look no further than the next page to experience the passion and urgency palpable in our community as thought leaders and partners share why they believe equity matters.

Faithful to the Foundation's enduring mission of connecting philanthropists to community needs that align

with their interests, we will provide growing opportunity for donors to deepen their impact and all partners to contribute their voices, talent and support toward achieving our community's vision for a thriving greater Milwaukee.

Ellen M. Gilligan  
President & CEO  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation

# Where we STAND



Thought leaders elevate importance of equity in our region

Our community is ready for a transformation.

Many now recognize that becoming a globally competitive, 21st century region depends on equal access, opportunity and fairness for all people, so that each can reach their full potential and are no longer likely to encounter barriers or be denied benefits based on race or ethnicity. The Greater Milwaukee Foundation embraces this vision for equity, and is committed to supporting and igniting community action that advances a high quality of life for all.

No simple solution or single entity can eliminate the barriers and disparities entrenched in our region, but as the following civic and college leaders attest, a community united in common cause has the power to change its trajectory.



As disparities in our community worsen and opportunity gaps widen, our region as a whole suffers. We believe that in partnership with the community and those most affected, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation can expand and improve opportunities in the region.

JANINE GESKE  
Racial Equity & Inclusion Committee Co-chair

## STANDING TOGETHER WITH COMMUNITY

Guiding the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's role in this community intention is our recently established Racial Equity & Inclusion Committee, which is comprised of our Board leaders dedicated to strengthening people, places and opportunities.



Cory L. Nettles  
Foundation Board Chair



David J. Drury



Paul J. Jones



Janine P. Geske  
Racial Equity & Inclusion Committee Co-chair



Ness Flores



David J. Kundert



Gregory M. Wesley  
Racial Equity & Inclusion Committee Co-chair



Cecelia Gore



Gregory S. Marcus



Wendy Reed Bosworth



Jacqueline Herd-Barber

## Q & A



## NESS FLORES

*Ness Flores is a partner in the Waukesha-based Flores & Reyes Law Office. His legal career includes stints as a circuit court judge, legal services lawyer and pioneer in crafting Wisconsin's migrant farmworker laws. A Foundation Board member, he serves on its Racial Equity & Inclusion Committee.*

**Q: From your perspective, why does equity matter?**

**A:** Equity is a fundamental concept and bedrock of our democratic society and should not be allowed to erode if we truly value humanity. Although this country has not always lived up to this value, we must renew our effort to ensure equity for all.

**Q: How does it benefit all of us in the region? How can equity and inclusion move our region forward?**

**A:** Economic equity and inclusiveness can be a terrific engine for our region, state and nation as more people participate

in the labor market and advance our economy. A full labor market can stimulate home sales and can even lower the crime rate and rates of incarceration.

**Q: If we aren't all that we can be in terms of equity and inclusion, what needs to be addressed? What is missing?**

What is missing in this area is education and commitment; we must educate communities, employers, local governments, churches and citizens in general about the virtues of equity and inclusion. We must renew our individual and collective commitment to do all we can to move equity and inclusion forward, now and forever.

“Equity is a fundamental concept and bedrock of our democratic society and should not be allowed to erode if we truly value humanity. Although this country has not always lived up to this value, we must renew our effort to ensure equity for all.”

CIVIC CHANGEMAKERS



## PARDEEP KALEKA

*Pardeep Kaleka, a former Milwaukee police officer and teacher, cofounded Serve 2 Unite, an organization that brings together young people from different religious and cultural backgrounds. He is the eldest son of Satwant Singh Kaleka, one of six people murdered in 2012 at the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin.*

**Q: Fifty years ago, America saw the Voting Rights Act and Civil Rights Act passed, yet today we still see pronounced disparities - what do you see as a more effective focus for truly achieving equity in the United States?**

**A:** For far too long, our country has advertised opportunity, hope, and growth without truly delivering on these promises. For too many Americans, the Civil Rights Era is usually summed up in a 13-year period beginning with the boycotts of 1955 until the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968. To me, it is important to understand that these long-lasting systemic injustices started long before the Founding Fathers ever inked the U.S. Constitution, and continue to play a role in our society with the lack of real representation for many marginalized communities. Without this representation, these communities cannot truly flourish in any setting and will continue to suffer from the historical trauma of the past.

**Q: From your perspective, why does equity matter?**

**A:** Equity matters because it ensures basic human dignity and value. Our organization, Serve 2 Unite, operates from the understanding that human rights concerns face a majority of the world population, and that we cannot have inclusive communities until we see the value of all humanity, and we see ourselves in the other. The recent global political climate reawakened the angst that many communities of color continue to face on a global scale, and the Sherman Park unrest solidified the need to continue working to establish equitable access to underrepresented communities much closer to home.

**Q: How can equity and inclusion benefit all of us and move our region forward?**

**A:** Inclusion is a start, but equity is more important. For me, this is simply summed up by equating inclusion to "having a seat at the table," while equity is "having a voice at that same table." Equity and inclusion need to address the social, economic and political foundations of Milwaukee

and southeastern Wisconsin. By doing this, we create a stronger and much more sustainable fabric for local and global citizens moving forward. The question that arises for me is: who owns Milwaukee? The severe underrepresentation of communities of color in ownership underscores this problem of equity, especially in our city.

**Q: If we aren't all that we can be in terms of equity and inclusion, what needs to be addressed? What is missing?**

**A:** There are glaring omissions of voices in the private, public and corporate sectors throughout our region.

Take, for example, the educational community in Milwaukee where I have worked for the past 15 years. Numerous research studies have been conducted to conclude the effectiveness of educators of color with students of color. However, we still see the severe underrepresentation of this dynamic. Without addressing this, our educational system continues to suffer because of the lack of cultural competency. Maya Angelou was quoted as saying, "How important it is for us to recognize and celebrate our heroes and she-roes." The missing component becomes the lack of real opportunity, thus the lack of role models.

“Equity and inclusion need to address the social, economic and political foundations of Milwaukee and southeastern Wisconsin. By doing this, we create a stronger and much more sustainable fabric for local and global citizens moving forward.”



Serve 2 Unite global mentor and Rwandan survivor, Dydine Umunyana, shared with students passages from her book, "Embracing Survival" which describes the suffering and growth following one of the worst genocides of our lifetime. Photo courtesy of Pardeep Kaleka



## WILLIAM MARTIN

*Foundation donor William Martin, as director of business and community engagement for the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, spearheads efforts to establish strategic alliances with corporations as well as local and national foundations interested in co-investing in innovative affordable housing projects and community development initiatives.*

**Q: Despite certain advances, why are there still pronounced disparities and lack of equity in the United States?**

**A:** Despite decades of efforts, we are still seeking to overcome segregation on a number of levels in our community. We don't know each other, and the typical ways we might – schools, the workplace and houses of worship – have proven to be as segregated as ever. We need to find new ways to become connected, to understand each other beyond racial stereotypes and generalizations and see each other as individuals. Fear of “otherness” and making assumptions about each other represents such an unnecessary loss for our community and nation. No law, however well meaning, can take the place of open and inclusive hearts and minds.

**Q: From your perspective, why does equity matter?**

**A:** Equity and inclusion matter and I am passionate about them because I know the positive impact they have had in my own life. Despite growing up poor in the South, I was encouraged to apply for a yearlong overseas cultural exchange in high school. Others saw in me potential I did not yet see in myself. With sacrifices made by my mother as well as scholarships, I took advantage of that opportunity, which literally opened the world to me. That experience connected me with Beloit College, where I met peers who later recruited me

to join Gov. Tommy Thompson's executive staff. Because of his inclusive leadership and the enormous trust he placed in me to administer a quarter of a billion dollars in reforms, I had an opportunity to realize my potential. I continue to pay forward the blessings bestowed upon me through equity and inclusion.

There are moral and religious imperatives for racial equity and inclusion and there also are cold, hard economic reasons why equity matters. Decades-long trends of chronically higher unemployment rates for people of color does not simply impact poverty within this population, it reduces this population's access to credit, and ability to buy and improve homes – the single largest asset for many families. Property values are extremely low in Milwaukee's central city neighborhoods with some homes selling for as little as \$2,500. There are well over 1,000 central city properties that have been foreclosed and transferred to city government, many more pending foreclosure and transfer to the city. The fewer properties productively on the tax rolls, the more financial pressure on homeowners. In a community in which a wide array of local services – from schools to law enforcement and firefighting – are funded primarily through property taxes, creating equity in access to capital and jobs is imperative if we hope to compete for new businesses and residents.

**Q: How can equity and inclusion benefit all of us and move our region forward?**

**A:** For far too long, we have heard young people of color declare they would move

to other markets perceived to be more welcoming. What a loss of talent that could be contributing to the future growth and prosperity of our region! Failing to create equitable opportunities for the region's residents of color to contribute their insights and gifts diminishes us all. It is an artificial and arbitrary barrier to our potential for innovation and competitiveness. Consider the real-life story of Katherine G. Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson – the African-American women whose talents were crucial to NASA's ability to launch John Glenn into orbit successfully and safely. They

participated in achieving that still awe-inspiring goal, despite having to confront on a daily basis all the artificial barriers and hurtful stereotypes and attitudes related to race and gender. How much sooner might our nation have achieved the goal if we moved beyond prejudices? How much more would our community achieve if we did so?

**Q: What is an example of a project that is advancing equity in our region?**

**A:** There are so many innovative and life-changing causes in our region, but they are not always as well known or financed as they

should be. Take, for instance, Pathways Milwaukee. It has a mission of helping low-income youth of all racial backgrounds overcome the educational achievement gap, compete successfully to enroll in college and perform on par with their peers. Pathways takes a unique approach, requiring a multi-year commitment from both students and their parents to be actively engaged in building academic and life skills. Third-party evaluations demonstrate its effectiveness in achieving its mission and helping youth reach their potential.



Pathways Milwaukee works with low-income and first-generation college students as early as the fifth grade to prepare them for the rigors of college.



# TIM SHEEHY

*As president of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce, an organization seen as the region's voice for business, Tim Sheehy believes that achieving equity will keep the metro Milwaukee area competitive as a whole.*

CIVIC CHANGEMAKERS

**Q: Why is there a renewed focus in our country on achieving equity for all?**

**A:** Equal opportunity is a cornerstone of American democracy. Any barrier, real or perceived, to an equal opportunity threatens equity. Democracy is also the lifeblood of the American economic system. We are seeing a renewed focus on equity and inclusion as our economy faces an unprecedented shift in demographics with fewer entrants to the workforce and a more diverse makeup of entrants to the workforce. In short, the threat of leaving too many people on the sidelines of the economy, beyond the moral imperative, is a bottom line challenge for business development.

**Q: From your perspective, why does equity matter?**

**A:** We are in the business of helping our members/ community move Milwaukee to a globally competitive destination defined as providing high-value, high-wage jobs that support a

vibrant quality of life for all. We can't accomplish this goal, and we can't move closer to this destination, if Milwaukee does not serve up an equitable opportunity for all its citizens.

**Q: How can equity and inclusion benefit all of us and move our region forward?**

**A:** Over the next decade, the workforce population of metro Milwaukee will decline by 6,000. At the same time, we will need to fill 100,000 job openings. And for the first time, we will also see people of color become the majority of entrants to our workforce. If we do not equitably prepare our citizens, we will all suffer the economic consequences. It is both a moral and economic imperative to prepare all of our citizens. If we do so, Milwaukee can shine as a great place to live for the wide diversity of citizens that will make up our future.

**Q: What is an example of a project that is advancing equity in our region?**

**A:** There are a number of projects and organizations that advance equity in our community. Take, for example, Pro Trade, which builds personal

character, job readiness, and arms its graduates with a skill in painting, carpentry or masonry over a 10-week program for at-risk individuals in the city. School networks with scalable models that serve low-income, minority

children, putting them on a more equitable footing by providing superior academic outcomes. As a bright spot, look at the 3,600 students at Milwaukee College Prep, Carmen and Rocketship whose academic progress far

outpaces peer institutions. We have models for success all around us, we need to scale them and expand their best practices so more will benefit. There is no single, simple answer, but progress has to come faster.



## GIVING PEOPLE A SECOND CHANCE AND A MORE SECURE FUTURE

That's what Rashaad Washington, founder and CEO of Pro Trade Job Development featured on the cover, is doing through his pre-apprenticeship construction trade training program. He is unlocking the potential among hundreds of at-risk Milwaukee residents who face barriers to employment and financial stability.

The program not only teaches technical skills, it also helps students work on personal skills such as time management and goal setting. By the end of 10 weeks' time, they no longer remain on the sidelines of Milwaukee's economy but become active participants in its workforce.

Targeted employment strategies and solutions like Washington's program align with the Greater Milwaukee Foundations' focus on economic inclusion.



## DARIENNE DRIVER

*Darienne Driver leads Milwaukee Public Schools, the largest school district in Wisconsin. She has spent her entire career in education, starting as an elementary school teacher in Detroit Public Schools. She was MPS' first chief innovation officer before being named its first female superintendent in 2014.*

**Q: Fifty years ago, America saw the Voting Rights Act and Civil Rights Act passed, yet today we still see pronounced disparities. What do you see as a more effective focus for truly achieving equity in the United States?**

**A:** Unfortunately, we are still experiencing threats to the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act. Now more than ever, people must step up and run for public positions where they can impact change at the policy level. The only sure way to protect and expand rights for all is for a more representative body of people to make and interpret laws in our country. We cannot allow ourselves to become comfortable and must continue implementing policies that reduce disparities across the board.

**Q: From your perspective, why does equity matter?**

**A:** Every student in our city deserves a world-class

education that prepares them for college, career and life. Each student needs different things to be successful, and equity is the work of ensuring that each young person gets the specific things needed to reach their goals. Equity is not just a conversation, it's about aligning resources and strategy to create environments where all people are represented, respected and have their needs met.

**Q: What is an example of a project that is advancing equity in our region?**

**A:** My unyielding hope lies in our children because they truly are our future and hold the solutions we seek. To meet the needs of all our children, we at Milwaukee Public Schools have established an equity commission tasked with analyzing district policies and practices and proposing recommendations for resolving inequities districtwide. Through the creation of MPS C.A.R.E.S. (a program aimed at providing safe, healthy spaces for students and families outside of the

school day), we increased access points for students to participate in productive activities and academic supports outside of the school day. We're using telepresence technology to bring AP courses to more students than ever and have instituted MPS Drive, a universal driver education program, to remove barriers to attaining licenses and safely learning to drive.

We've added gender inclusion language into current discrimination policies and have developed guidance and procedures at the school and district level. These are just a few examples of initiatives within MPS, and each day we seek new ways to become more equitable for all students.

**Through MPS Twilight Centers, which are part of the district's C.A.R.E.S. initiative, students have access to programming and positive activities within safe environments during evenings and weekends.**



“Equity is not just a conversation, it's about aligning resources and strategy to create environments where all people are represented, respected and have their needs met.”



## NOU XIONG

*Nou Xiong, 18, is a second generation Hmong immigrant pursuing a nursing degree at Concordia University. She has been involved with the Hmong American Women's Association and after graduation hopes to work with victims of human sex trafficking.*

**Q: Fifty years ago, America saw the Voting Rights Act and Civil Rights Act passed, yet today we still see pronounced disparities. What do you see as a more effective focus for truly achieving equity in the United States?**

**A:** America is known as the land of the free, but there are great differences between freedom and capability. I believe that a fair education system – where students of all backgrounds can have the necessary tools to achieve and reach their goals – is the outlet for truly achieving equity in the United States.

**Q: From your perspective, why does equity matter?**

**A:** Equity is a crucial aspect to the progress of our society

economically, socially, culturally and politically that not enough people understand yet. It is nearly impossible for one to achieve the same goals as others if they are beginning from a disadvantage and do not have the necessary resources.

**Q: How can equity and inclusion benefit all of us and move our region forward?**

**A:** There are great minds that cannot reach their potential due to the simple fact of being born into disadvantageous circumstances. In order for us as a region and a community to move forward, there needs to be an elimination of unfair biases, stereotypes and barriers that limit opportunities and success.

“ It is nearly impossible for one to achieve the same goals as others if they are beginning from a disadvantage and do not have the necessary resources.



## ZECILIA ALAMILLO-ROMAN

*As a first generation Mexican-American majoring in social work and also pursuing a peacebuilding certificate, Mount Mary University student Zecilia Alamillo-Roman, 22, has first-hand experience of the barriers to and benefits of equity.*

**Q: What do you see as a more effective focus for truly achieving equity in the United States?**

**A:** The only way we'll be able to achieve equity in the United States is if we focus on where the greatest need is. Our focus can't be thinking about how everyone can be treated equally. We must first address the needs of the communities that are suffering in order to move forward.

**Q: From your perspective, why does equity matter?**

**A:** I have a lot of things against my favor. I am a first-generation college student, Mexican-American and a female. There are certain demographics, more than others, that will impact my success. As a social work student, I've had the opportunity to work with people of all ages, gender

identities, socioeconomic statuses, racial backgrounds, and physical and mental health situations. Because of those experiences, I notice why it's important to provide specific assistance that caters to each individual's need.

**Q: What is an example of a project that is advancing equity in our region?**

**A:** I've been a part of several organizations, clubs and projects that have taught me a lot about what my community needs. One of the organizations that I've gained the most skills from has been Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee. It works with professionals, both student and executive, and helps promote leadership and networking. As president of Mount Mary's chapter, I have helped other students see the importance of networking and professional

development. HPGM provides workshops and networking opportunities for not only the Hispanic community, but other communities as well. Thanks to my involvement with HPGM, I feel I am much more prepared to enter the workforce as a Latina.

**Q: If we aren't all that we can be in terms of equity and inclusion, what needs to be addressed? What is missing?**

**A:** Not only should we provide people access to resources, we need to be proactive and make sure people have a way to reach the resources. We can provide housing access, but what about the people who are still unable to reach that access? The same question can be applied to several other issues, such as employment, education and the criminal justice system.



## DIANA RUIZ

*Equity and local educational resources have propelled Marquette University freshman Diana Ruiz, 19, to pursue her interest in science, technology, engineering and math field, in which people of color are underrepresented.*

**Q: From your perspective, what should we focus on to truly achieve equity in the United States?**

**A:** The United States should put a new focus on education. It is ignorance that makes people fear and hate people they know nothing of. If all Americans – poor, rich, white, black, Latino – had access to the same quality education, the classroom would be diverse and people would be exposed to all different types of races and backgrounds. Receiving an education has empowered me and offered me access to opportunities I would otherwise not have the chance to pursue. Those who have higher levels of education tend to be politically active and participate in movements and ideas that achieve equity.

**Q: If we aren't all that we can be in terms of equity and inclusion, what needs to be addressed? What is missing?**

**A:** The needs of minorities should be addressed. The lack

of resources in schools for minorities should be a concern. These needs include: bilingual teachers, financial aid, communication between Hispanic parents and school, etc. We should investigate why these minority groups are feeling excluded and brainstorm solutions. This strategy could then continue at a larger scale: cities, states, the country, etc. If we came together and addressed these concerns, it would inspire acceptance and change.

**Q: What is an example of a project that is advancing equity in our region?**

**A:** Generation Y and Z are fearless and stand up for their beliefs. Best of all, they act. We begin conversations about equity in our educational institutions. I have a personal connection to science and math. I was introduced to engineering in middle school at Bruce Guadalupe Community School. They did not just abandon me at graduation. They continued to seek an interest in me throughout high school and provided me with resources to continue my

education. It can be discouraging seeing the lack of Hispanic women in STEM fields. However, I use this as motivation to inspire others. For example, I participate in Women and Youth Supporting Each Other, a mentorship program that

addresses issues in communities of color and seeks to provide resources to girls in order for them to make informed decisions. Issues we discuss include race, mental health, future options, etc. I used to be one of these girls in

the program when I was in middle school. Now I am at Marquette studying computer and electrical engineering. This was possible because programs like WYSE and resources at UCC exist.

**United Community Center introduced Project Lead the Way, a pre-engineering problem-based curriculum, in 2002 as a way to provide Bruce Guadalupe Middle School students with a foundation in technology and expose them to engineering concepts.**



“Equity matters because people matter, and all people deserve to be loved. However, minorities are the focus right now because although everyone deserves equality, not everyone requires the same tools to achieve success.”



## MICHAEL MCAFEE

*Through his work as president of PolicyLink, a national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity, Michael McAfee aims to give every American access to opportunities that give them a fair shot at succeeding in life.*

**Q: Fifty years ago, America saw the Voting Rights Act and Civil Rights Act passed, yet today we still see pronounced disparities. What do you see as a more effective focus for truly achieving equity in the United States?**

**A:** To truly achieve equity in the United States, we must have a transformation of our individual and collective consciousness. We must be willing to value and preserve the full spectrum of humanity in America – black, brown and white. Our newfound consciousness must be about the work of redesigning public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations and other norms that work to reinforce and perpetuate racial group inequity. This work represents the frontier of the struggle for equity – just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper and reach their full potential.

**Q: How can equity and inclusion benefit all of us and move our region forward?**

**A:** Equity and inclusion accelerate connecting everyone within the region

to opportunity, providing decent, safe, and affordable housing, good jobs, transportation, good schools and grocery stores. Equity and inclusion reduce the odds that a ZIP code will be the proxy for how long or how well we live. They enable us to avoid leaving entire populations behind by following four principles of equitable development: 1) integrate strategies that focus both on people and place; 2) reduce local and regional disparities; 3) promote investments that are equitable, catalytic and coordinated; and 4) ensure meaningful community participation, leadership and ownership in change efforts.

**Q: If we aren't all that we can be in terms of equity and inclusion, what needs to be addressed? What is missing?**

**A:** We need to be a loving critic of ourselves, our institutions and their systems and policies. Critical self-reflection is an essential first step, followed by checking our privileges at the door, then humbly submitting to the equity and inclusion journey. The work is about addressing the ways in which our institutions, systems and policies are designed to strip opportunity from communities. While doing the internal work on our institutions, we must simultaneously advance inclusive frameworks and

narratives that ignite the public will to enact public policies that authentically serve the 100 million people near or in poverty.

I'm optimistic about America. At a time when many leaders are trafficking in racism, xenophobia, misogyny and protectionism, others are refusing to give into what the noted African American theologian Howard Thurman calls the three hounds of hell – fear, hypocrisy and hatred. They are choosing to be what Bayard Rustin described as angelic troublemakers.

“Equity and inclusion reduce the odds that a ZIP code will be the proxy for how long or how well we live.”

## 3 EXAMPLES OF EQUITY IN ACTION

### OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

The Oakland Army base is an \$800 million public-private venture that will transform land the size of 200 football fields into an international trade and logistics center. It is expected to create 3,000 jobs, just in the first phase – half of them permanent. A local coalition negotiated an agreement to make sure the project opened opportunities for the people who live there by doing the following:

- Paying a living wage and benefits
- Setting aside 25 percent of apprenticeship hours for veterans, ex-offenders and long-term unemployed
- Connecting residents to training, pre-apprenticeships and jobs through a city-run jobs resource center in the low-income community of color adjacent to the project, where unemployment rates run as high as 45 percent

### TENNESSEE

Gov. Bill Haslam's "Tennessee Promise" program makes two years of community or technical college free for graduating

high school seniors. Those who complete two years of community college and want to continue to a four-year school can then participate in Tennessee's transfer pathways program and start as a junior – essentially halving the cost of a four-year degree. The state's lottery earnings finance the initiative. In 2015, 57,000 students applied, which was nearly 90 percent of the state's high school graduating class.

### FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

The Fairfax County board of supervisors voted to develop a racial and social equity policy to assess the potential equity impacts of all future county decisions. According to its website, the resolution is "an intentional focus on racial and social equity that positions Fairfax County to engage, proactively and collectively, with schools and communities, including businesses, faith organizations, nonprofits and others, identify and improve policy and institutional strategies that will not just eliminate gaps, but increase success for all."

# CATALYZING CHANGE

Like many residents in Milwaukee, Barbara Smith didn't have a great understanding of how the Milwaukee Police Department works.

"We tend to think that they already have a set mind when dealing with low-income communities," said Smith, a longtime Amani resident.

But she wanted to know more.

After participating in a listening circle between police and residents, she gained a better understanding and comfortability in communicating with them, something she values, particularly in her role as leader of Amani's neighborhood association.

Through the experience, organized by the Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion, she also learned about and later attended the five-week citizen academy program, which gives Milwaukee residents a working knowledge of MPD.

"If we don't have those conversations to debunk that type of thinking, we're going to continue to think that way," Smith said.

Smith wasn't the only resident looking for that dialogue. She was one of more than 700 residents who got engaged in the circles. Greater Milwaukee Foundation funding enabled the Zeidler

Center to lay the groundwork for improved communication and understanding between the two groups in Harambee, Amani and Metcalfe Park. Zeidler Center was one of 17 organizations that received racial equity and inclusion grants in 2015 through a special request for proposals.

The programs covered five broad categories – leadership development, capacity building, community organizing, community development and research – and targeted populations ranging from Burmese refugees to central city youth, Latinos to LGBTQ.

## FRESH APPROACH

"The RFP was a chance to do something different," said Janel Hines, the Foundation's director of grant programs and strategic initiatives. "It was an effort to get an understanding of the racial equity and inclusion work underway in the community."

The Foundation looked to engage diverse communities and reduce existing barriers to equal opportunity, Hines said. It received triple the number of applications than it does in a typical quarter. Many first-time grantees, like the Zeidler Center, responded.

"We want to focus on the most difficult things for us to talk about as a community," said Katherine Wilson, the nonprofit's executive director. "People really want to have these conversations and want their community to improve. Having that specific relationship (with MPD) improve is going to benefit the community."

Unlike a town hall meeting, the nonprofit uses a structured method where one participant speaks at a time and each is given the same amount of time. A planning committee made up of police officers and adult and youth residents create questions.

Participants also may ask their own. Ultimately MPD and residents receive a comprehensive report, which Wilson said provides

a snapshot of community needs, reflects comments and provides recommendations.

The main goal, Wilson said, was to increase interactions between the two groups in non-crisis settings in order to build trust. More than 100 MPD officers and 706 residents, including 244 youth, participated.

"There have been some disagreements, which is going to require some healing on both sides," said Captain Raymond Banks, part of MPD's office of community outreach and education. "This builds a foundation and provides a transparency that the community wants."

Sherman Park resident Jermaine Alexander and his daughter, Zenia, both participated, viewing it as an opportunity to help their neighborhood. Zenia said she wanted to get a better understanding of what happens in the community and was surprised by experiences shared by both police and residents.

Jermaine found the experience healthy for both residents and officers.

"Both showed a willingness to begin taking steps toward better relations by requesting additional opportunities to come together," he said. "Participating in the circles has shown me that much is to be learned just by listening."

## Equity grants spark conversations, public art, policy changes

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation has spent the last several years studying how to advance equity in the region. In 2015, as a way to further understand the work underway in the community, it created a special opportunity to fund equity efforts that address the needs of communities of color. Through that, \$1.2 million was awarded to a variety of projects in Milwaukee County.

### CAPACITY BUILDING

**AGENCY:** African American Chamber of Commerce

**AMOUNT:** \$80,000 (over two years)

**GOAL:** To launch a partnership with Milwaukee Black Business LLC that will provide marketing tools, resources and other technical assistance to African American-owned businesses to facilitate their growth.

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

**AGENCY:** Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee

**AMOUNT:** \$100,000 (over three years)

**GOAL:** To develop a pilot program for elementary and middle school boys of color ages 9 to 12 that will strengthen their social and emotional learning skills.

**AGENCY:** Cross Lutheran Church

**AMOUNT:** \$86,100 (over three years)

**GOAL:** To develop training and educational opportunities for men of color to help them strengthen their leadership skills.

**AGENCY:** Cardinal Stritch University

**AMOUNT:** \$80,000

**GOAL:** To create an alumni program for its African American Leadership Program, a nine-month program which builds the leadership skills and potential of African American professionals from multiple sectors within the community. The grant also will help create a long-term plan for the program's future.

In communities throughout the country, the relationship between police and communities of color has become more tense. Through a series of Foundation-supported listening circles in 2015, the Zeidler Center created an opportunity for improved police and resident relations in four Milwaukee neighborhoods.



Photo courtesy of the Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion



A.W.E. is putting young adults in charge of creating art and change in their communities through its revamped artist-in-residence program.

Facilitator BilliJo Saffold could tell mind shifts began to happen, noting the “us versus them” mentality many had going in had changed.

“I think there is hope – hope that relationships are going to heal,” Banks said. “There is hope that the sides are going to be able to come together and there is hope for collaboration.”

#### COMMUNITY FIRST

Besides reaching new organizations, the Foundation wanted to place people traditionally left out of community decision-making

at the center of planning and implementation, Hines said.

Artists Working in Education embraced that opportunity wholeheartedly, viewing it as a chance to engage its main audience in a way it hadn’t done before through its artist-in-residence program. Typically, A.W.E. identifies the artist and the project before engaging young adults. With Foundation funding, it shifted that paradigm and power dynamic.

“It was an opportunity for us to take the program much further and

deeper, especially knowing we had three years to be able to learn and improve,” said Ali Carlucci, A.W.E.’s artist-in-residence program director. A.W.E. was one of eight agencies that received multi-year funding through the RFP.

Over the next three years, its 5x3 project will result in 15 youth-led art installations across its five target neighborhoods – Clarke Square, Harambee, Layton Boulevard, Lindsay Heights and Washington Park.

A.W.E. is partnering with nonprofits such as Our Next Generation and

**“It’s clear the community is engaged in and committed to advancing racial equity and inclusion work.”** — Janel Hines, Foundation’s director of grant programs and strategic initiatives

Escuela Verde to recruit students, 95 percent of whom are students of color. Students choose a topic impacting their community, select the artists, pick a site and help create the design.

Staff members were impressed by the social justice issues students in the first year chose, which manifested themselves in different art forms such as large-scale murals and animated video.

“Teens are valuable contributors, but we don’t often make those spaces for them,” said Beth Haskovec, A.W.E.’s executive director. “This obviously just reinforced that idea.”

#### SHINING A LIGHT

The project gave sisters Samira, 18, and, Anisa, 16, a platform to celebrate diversity and their personal beliefs. They were part of a group who created a video called “Secret Identity of the Hijab,” to educate people about the veil worn by Muslim women and the discrimination they face.

“I don’t think the news is good in how it portrays or how it sees Muslims,” Anisa said.

“This video gives people a better understanding,” Samira added.

The projects have helped teens understand how they can become change agents, Haskovec said. Seventeen-year-old Isabel Castro, who has a strong passion for art and social justice, relished that role.

“I want to be my own advocate for change, and I feel like this is my

way of giving to my community,” said Castro, whose family is from Monterrey, Mexico. A.W.E. later hired her as an assistant artist for another mural project that summer.

She was one of about 30 Escuela Verde students who contributed to “Our Stories Share the Same Roots,” a mural under the 35th Street Viaduct in Milwaukee’s Silver City neighborhood. In talks with students and neighbors, they settled on the topic of migration. That resonated with students like Castro and the surrounding neighborhood, which is predominantly Latino. It also was personally rewarding for artist Jenie Gao, whose father was from China and mother was from Taiwan.

Whether creating dialogue or art, the programs have paved the way for new ideas and partnerships. A.W.E. is considering a teen advisory group to help shape its programming. Zeidler Center expanded the listening circles into the Clarke Square neighborhood and will add Sherman Park in 2017. The Foundation used the RFP as a model for more flexible grantmaking.

“It’s clear the community is engaged in and committed to advancing racial equity and inclusion work,” Hines said. “We’re excited to be able to help advance it through projects that identify and eliminate barriers to opportunity for communities of color in Milwaukee County.”

**AGENCY:** Southeast Asian Educational Development  
**AMOUNT:** \$80,000 (over two years)  
**GOAL:** To conduct an environmental scan of the Hmong community and create a leadership training program that will increase the community and civic engagement of Hmong refugees.

#### COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

**AGENCY:** Voces de la Frontera  
**AMOUNT:** \$80,000 (over two years)  
**GOAL:** To support a position that helps its efforts toward organizing, conducting outreach and providing assistance to immigrants with deferred action and citizenship applications.

**AGENCY:** MICAH Wisconsin  
**AMOUNT:** \$50,000  
**GOAL:** To support a full-time young adult organizer who works with young adults and participating congregations in the 53206 area to help reduce mass incarceration.

**AGENCY:** 9to5 Wisconsin  
**AMOUNT:** \$37,000  
**GOAL:** To support “Ban the Box,” a grassroots campaign designed to persuade the city of Milwaukee to remove the box on its job application form that asks if individuals have ever been convicted of a crime.

#### RESEARCH

**AGENCY:** YWCA of Southeast Wisconsin  
**AMOUNT:** \$80,000  
**GOAL:** To cover costs of a community readiness assessment that identifies new solutions for Milwaukee’s business community to employ low or unskilled job seekers.

**AGENCY:** Wisconsin Black Historical Society  
**AMOUNT:** \$70,000 (over two years)  
**GOAL:** To conduct an analysis of nonprofit social services providers that have served central city residents on Milwaukee’s north side and examine their impact on the African American community.

For a complete list of grants visit [greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/rei-grants](http://greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/rei-grants)

# COMMUNITY APPROACHES TO HELPING OPPORTUNITIES RISE



The new \$524 million Milwaukee Bucks arena, funded in part by a \$100 million gift from Foundation donor and former U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl, is at the heart of the economic development boom occurring within downtown Milwaukee.

## MKE United

The estimated \$5 billion in new economic development projected for downtown Milwaukee has the potential to cascade into surrounding neighborhoods, but not without intentional effort. MKE United, organized by the Greater Milwaukee Committee, city of Milwaukee and Milwaukee Urban League, will ultimately create recommendations to advance opportunities in housing, transportation and economic growth. As a key partner in MKE United, the Foundation is committed to not only ensuring that city residents are well represented on the workforce engaged in the development, but that the long-term benefits of this revitalization spread far beyond downtown and particularly reach communities of color. The Foundation invested \$100,000 in the planning and community engagement process. President and CEO Ellen Gilligan and Vice President of Community Investment Kathryn Dunn serve on the executive committee, and Board member Greg Wesley co-chairs the effort. *Find out more by visiting [mkeunited.com](http://mkeunited.com).*

## Fellowship in Public Service Journalism

Much has been written about Milwaukee's most urgent, yet most entrenched problems. But Milwaukee Journal Sentinel columnist James Causey is taking a personalized look through a four-part series, which he describes as "a micro view of our community's macro problems, ones that have festered and become overgrown like an untended garden." A product of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation Fellowship in Public Service Journalism, the series follows Causey's Samuel Clemens Elementary School third grade class to see where they are today. The Foundation views the fellowship as a way to increase understanding about how broad economic forces and policies have brought disproportionate harm to vulnerable communities. A talkback event May 4 will follow the series to enact meaningful community participation that leads to change efforts. *Visit [jsonline.com](http://jsonline.com) to read the series.*



Photo courtesy of Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

## Milwaukee Succeeds

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation launched and, over the past six years, has been one of the major funders of Milwaukee Succeeds, the communitywide partnership dedicated to improving educational outcomes for all children in Milwaukee, cradle to career. To ensure all children succeed, the partnership intentionally identifies racial/ethnicity and income achievement gaps and creates strategies specifically to address and eliminate these gaps. Data is disaggregated by race/ethnicity and economic status and then used to target what interventions will best ensure that all children will benefit from actions taken. *Visit [milwaukesucceeds.org](http://milwaukesucceeds.org) to learn more about its impact.*

## Justice system reform

Nationally, philanthropy has entered the discussion of justice system reform and the impact an offense has on one's life after incarceration. The Foundation hosted a four-part series, in partnership with Bader Philanthropies, to improve understanding of local justice system issues. A broad group of nonprofit advocates and public safety practitioners identified expanding access to treatment and diversion programs, formally removing criminal background disclosure from employment screening and furthering examination and evaluation of justice system practices to identify disparities and effective practices.

# FOUNDATION COMMITTED TO BOOSTING HOMEOWNERSHIP

What's one of the best ways to increase personal prosperity and access to opportunity in communities throughout our region?

The answer can be found at home. Homeownership and housing affordability are seen as significant indicators of prosperity for residents in a metropolitan area. In metro Milwaukee, however, challenges remain as Milwaukee continues to rank last in homeownership overall, and for communities of color in particular.

Milwaukee ranks in the middle in terms of owner housing affordability compared to 15 other metro regions, according to the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's 2015 *Vital Signs: Benchmarking Metro Milwaukee* report. It falls in the middle in terms of foreclosures. The region falls in the bottom tier with rental housing affordability, which the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development describes as when households spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent and utilities.

The Foundation continues to advocate for advancement in that area, viewing it as a key element

within its overall efforts to strengthen the region and provide opportunities for all.

"Affordable housing is a key component in our region's future economic health," said Marcus White, vice president of civic engagement. "Through grantmaking, convenings and research and public policy work, we are working on broad-based, longer-term efforts to address this issue."

## GRANTMAKING

The Foundation has supported the work of a variety of nonprofits that are tackling the issue of access to affordable housing – whether providing individuals with resources to remain in their homes, increasing the housing supply available to low-income residents or helping remove barriers to housing. Here are a few examples from 2016:

- The Foundation invested \$150,000 in the home modification and emergency repair work that Revitalize Milwaukee provides to help low-income older adults, veterans and people with disabilities to remain in their homes.

- ACTS Housing, through a two-year \$100,000 grant, will continue its work with interested homeowners to reclaim once-vacant, city-owned tax-foreclosed properties through homebuyer counseling, rehab management and microlending.
- The Foundation partnered with Wells Fargo on a targeted housing preservation strategy that provided matching grants to low-income homeowners in three targeted Milwaukee neighborhoods – Capitol Heights, Havenwoods and Lincoln Village – to complete minor exterior home improvement and curb appeal projects. Forty-eight projects were completed in 2016 for a total of \$121,336. An estimated 40 projects are planned for 2017.
- A \$25,000 grant to Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council enables it to further its efforts to address and mitigate fraudulent and discriminatory activities through its Fair Lending Rights Program.

## CONVENINGS

In the wake of the release of Matt Desmond's Book "Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City," which centered on the impact of

## MILWAUKEE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

74.3%

OWNER HOUSING AFFORDABILITY | PERCENTAGE HOUSING AFFORDABLE TO MEDIAN INCOME BUYER

48.2%

RENTAL HOUSING AFFORDABILITY | PERCENTAGE OF RENTERS SPENDING MORE THAN 30% OF INCOME ON HOUSING

*Data from 2015 Vital Signs: Benchmarking Metro Milwaukee*

evictions on eight Milwaukee residents, the Foundation hosted two convenings to examine regional perspectives on affordable housing. In mid-October, Antonio Riley, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Midwest regional administrator, led a discussion with local experts about the efforts of their organizations in addressing regional housing needs. Then-HUD Secretary Julian Castro was the featured speaker at a Foundation-sponsored event in early December where the main topic was access to opportunity and how the entire Milwaukee region can benefit from the stability that affordable housing creates. Both events stressed the importance of public/private partnerships to address the issue.

## RESEARCH/PUBLIC POLICY

Legal Action of Wisconsin will analyze models from communities across the country that show promise in reducing barriers to housing, employment and economic stability for ex-offenders and those who are subject to municipal fines, thanks to a \$5,000 grant from the Foundation's Research and Convening Fund. The research also will examine barriers to quality affordable housing as well as transit planning and trends.



Visit [greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/vs](http://greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/vs) for the full report. To schedule a briefing for your organization, contact **Marcus White**, vice president of Civic Engagement, at 414.336.7026 or [mwhite@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org](mailto:mwhite@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org).

# ENTREPRENEURIAL COUPLE SEEK NEW VENTURE: PHILANTHROPY

What if?

That hypothetical question was one that Merton residents Patty and John Mueller would often ask each other as they owned and operated a number of successful startups over the past 20 years.

What if we did this or tried that? How would it solve a problem?

That inquisitiveness drove their business, Idea Factory Inc., and now it is driving their philanthropy.

“That question has a whole new kind of significance,” Patty said. “Now it is about the ‘what if?’ of our gifts and the legacy we’ll leave.”

This fall, the Muellers will celebrate the third anniversary of their donor advised fund, aptly named the What If? Fund, but Patty’s knowledge of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation stretches back more than 30 years. Her father was president of Journal/Sentinel Inc. and senior vice president of Journal

Communications. He also was one of 33 Journal Communications employees in 1986 who donated company stock to create funds in the Foundation to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Journal Employees Stock Trust Agreement, which provided for employee ownership of the company. Following his death in 1995, Patty became the successor adviser to the Journal Foundation/William and Jeanne Share Fund.

“I had 30 years of seeing great management of my parents’ fund,” Patty said. “I’ve seen their fund appreciate probably four fold. But what’s really exciting is seeing the amount of grants that have resulted from that initial gift. Seeing that was the greatest gift because it showed me I could do the same thing.”

Over the years, Patty would share quarterly fund statements with John and he suggested they start their own fund. He liked the idea of giving back, a concept he witnessed growing up through his family’s business, Mueller Food Service, as it regularly held fundraisers for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

“We’ve been blessed, and it’s a great thing to know that we can pass along some of our blessings,” John said. “If we can help one person, they can pay it forward also.”

The high school sweethearts launched their fund thanks to the sale of Idea Factory, the second business they had created over the years. The first was Stall Tactics, an indoor billboard advertising company they started in 1990. They opened a second office in Clearwater, Florida, before selling the business in 1996. In both ventures, John was the “idea guy” and Patty was “the factory,” or the person who helped bring the ideas to fruition.

When it comes to their philanthropy, the two are co-CPOs: chief philanthropic officers. They share interests in supporting education, domestic violence prevention, animal welfare and disadvantaged youth. Overall, they are committed to building up the community they have long called home.

“Milwaukee has its share of challenges, and we hope to be a part of helping alleviate some of those or helping in some small way,” John said.

A mutual passion project is Camp Whitcomb/Mason, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee’s camp located along Lake Keesus, the same lake on which the Muellers live.

For the past two summers, the Muellers have taken campers tubing, an experience John said has been a great source of fun and inspiration. Patty serves on the camp’s advisory board and is its volunteer coordinator, a volunteer role through which she has helped incorporate new activities and introduced new individuals to the camp, said Sarah Resch, the camp’s executive director.

“Patty and John both have such a passion for the transformation that camp can offer,” Resch said. “In



Spending time with kids at Camp Whitcomb Mason has been one of the Muellers’ favorite summer activities over the past couple of years.

just a few years, they have helped thousands of people fulfill their desire to make a difference through volunteering.”

The Muellers enjoy channeling their passions through the Foundation, particularly since it is built to last.

“By giving to a community foundation, we’ve established a fund that will live in perpetuity,” Patty said. “Together the What If? Fund with other smaller funds can make a big impact. It’s not just our one little fund that is scratching away at it but all of us together can make a greater impact solving some of the problems in the Milwaukee area.”



“What’s really exciting is seeing the amount of grants that have resulted from that initial gift. Seeing that was the greatest gift because it showed me I could do the same thing.” - Patty Mueller

Contact Philanthropic Adviser **Marybeth Budisch** at 414.336.7068 or [mbudisch@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org](mailto:mbudisch@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org) to discuss ways in which you can give back to support your community.



Patty and John Mueller

# MYSO INSTRUMENTAL

## for area youth

If Malik Johnson's dreams come true, the music-loving public will one day be applauding his performance of hip hop cello at a major concert venue – and it will be one of his own compositions.

Hip hop cello?

"I feel that the upcoming generation is not going to sit down and listen to Beethoven in real time," said Malik, a senior at Pius XI High School who lives in Milwaukee's Capitol Heights neighborhood. "We have to add something cool, something modern, to classical instruments."

Malik can speak with authority about the future of music because he has received a solid grounding in music theory and practice through Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, in particular its Community Partnership Programs. These innovative programs, founded in 2003, make music training available to urban students who face barriers to that training, usually financial. They serve approximately one-third of MYSO's 1,000 students through classical, jazz, Latin and steel pan ensembles.

Community Partnership students develop their musical talents through thrice-weekly lessons and rehearsals at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center. They also develop critical life skills.

"I've seen Malik develop his leadership and communication skills as well as his musical skills," said his mother, Antoinette Vaughn. "He has communicated his gift to the community."

Beginning with the Progressions Program in the third grade, Malik has steadily progressed through MYSO programs, moving up through several orchestras to Senior Symphony, where he is a section leader. He auditioned for and participates

in the All Honors Chamber Music program with violinist Frank Almond. He performs throughout the community on behalf of MYSO as well as plays in the formal concerts staged by the Senior Symphony.

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation has invested more than \$200,000 into MYSO's program. Among longtime MYSO supporters are Foundation donors Margarete and David Harvey. One of their children participated in MYSO and Margarete served on its board, including as chair. They support scholarships for students to use in their post-MYSO years.

"When you meet some of the kids in their junior or senior year who've stayed with MYSO continuously since starting in Progressions, that's a big achievement and investment they've made," said Margarete, who, along with David, finds joy in meeting the students and their parents. "We want to recognize that."

The impact of even a small investment can be life changing. At camp at the Brevard Music Center in North Carolina, Malik played music for eight hours a day. Last summer, he was selected to attend the Sphinx Performance Academy for black and Latino string players in Oberlin, Ohio – one of only 32 students chosen nationwide.

"Seeing other people who look like me and play really well was very inspiring," he said.

Another highlight was traveling to the White House to accept the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award on behalf of MYSO from former First Lady Michelle Obama.

"I want to thank MYSO for all they've done," said Johnson, who hopes to become a sound engineer and music producer. "They've changed the trajectory of my life."



**"They've changed the trajectory of my life."** Malik Johnson

Check out Malik's musical talent through his performance at the 33rd Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. [bit.ly/MYSOMalik](http://bit.ly/MYSOMalik)

- FUNDING NEEDS:** **\$1,500** helps students with professional coaching
- \$3,000** allows a MYSO ensemble to provide free educational and musical performances for area children with limited access to music education
- \$10,000** gives MYSO musicians the opportunity to perform at Uihlein Hall of the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts

Contact **Marybeth Budisch** at [mbudisch@greatermilwaukeeefoundation.org](mailto:mbudisch@greatermilwaukeeefoundation.org) or 414.336.7068 to make a gift.

# FUNDING COLLABORATIVE

fuels nonprofit innovation, supports infrastructure needs

When it first opened in a one-room house in Waukesha, Wildlife in Need Center took in a small number of orphaned animals and helped those with only minor injuries. Fast forward 23 years, and it provides 150 education programs for area groups, answers more than 10,000 phone calls and cares for more than 3,000 patients annually, from white-footed mice to eagles, operating 365 days a year on its fundraising efforts.

All of this is done with more than 100 volunteers, a staff of six and no government funding.

“As anybody who works for a nonprofit, you believe so much in the mission but you just don’t have the resources,” said Kim Banach, board president. “For small nonprofits and to the Wildlife in Need Center, the Nonprofit Management Fund is an invaluable resource.”



## Nonprofit Management Fund

**2016  
BY THE  
NUMBERS**

**7**  
funding  
partners

**56**  
grants  
awarded

**\$5,000**  
average  
grant size

**\$302,705**  
awarded to area  
nonprofits

Thanks to support from the Nonprofit Management Fund, the small nonprofit looks forward to soaring to new heights – and making sure the raptors, birds and other wildlife it cares for – can as well. An \$8,500 grant enabled it to hire a consultant to work with staff on a new fundraising plan, which the nonprofit already has begun to implement.

The Greater Milwaukee, Faye McBeath and Helen Bader foundations launched the funder’s collaborative – the first of its kind in Wisconsin – in 1994 to address challenges facing nonprofits like Wildlife in Need Center that prevented them from most effectively serving the community.

Since that time, the fund has invested more than \$7.1 million in agencies in the four-county area; attracted such funders as Northwestern Mutual Foundation, Rockwell Automation, Bradley Foundation and Daniel Soref Charitable Trust to contribute; and paved the way for other collaboratives including the United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County’s Teen Pregnancy Prevention Campaign. Other cities have replicated the fund’s capacity-building model.

The nonprofit sector has faced its share of challenges and change over the past 20 years, from increased demand for services and decreased philanthropic resources to the departure of long-time executives and emergence of social media. The fund has been there along the way, uniting corporate and private foundations and donors to support the good work of nonprofits by strengthening such areas as planning, fundraising, board development, technology and marketing.

While it was designed to build capacity of small- and mid-sized nonprofits largely through grantmaking, the fund’s impact can be felt in other ways. It’s built up the cadre of area nonprofit consultants by offering special training on board governance and diagnostic clinics. It has incubated a number of initiatives including ENTECH, which provides nonprofits with technology support, and Jobs That Serve, an online resource for nonprofit job and volunteer opportunities.

Through planning grants, the fund served as a catalyst in the creation of the Milwaukee Artists Resource Network and Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, among other



Chase the Striped Skunk helps educate individuals about its role in our ecosystem in Wisconsin.

nonprofits. In some cases it allowed a number of nonprofits to keep their doors open. In others, it assisted organizations with merging or closing.

Ultimately, it has strengthened the capacity of the sector, enabling nonprofits to provide better service to the community, said Denise Patton, the fund’s adviser, and it will continue to do so.

“The fund has done the work of building their boards, leadership or staff to the extent they could work better or smarter or more efficiently and effectively,” Patton said.

Wildlife in Need Center relies on a small core group of staff and hundreds of volunteers to carry out its mission.

For more information about the Nonprofit Management Fund, contact **Denise Patton**, fund adviser, at 414.271.4869 or [dpattson@bdpandassociates.com](mailto:dpattson@bdpandassociates.com).

# Cleaning the environment, a bedrock of public health

Rose bushes and a pear tree welcome visitors to the Diaz family's front yard on Milwaukee's south side. More rose bushes and an apple tree grace the back yard, as do cheery marigolds, which are later dried for their Day of the Dead altar. During the summer, the family enjoys home-grown tomatoes and corn.

Plus hot chili peppers.

"My dad and younger brother have to have their chilies!" said Leslie Padilla, 18, the oldest of the four Diaz children, currently a student at Cardinal Stritch University.

The Diaz dwelling on South 13th Street is located in the Kinnickinnic River neighborhood, one of the participating areas in the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative that is on the cusp of a physical transformation after decades of economic, housing and environmental decline. This transformation is, in large part, thanks to the work of the Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers' Department of Environmental Health. The department was established in 1997 to extend the nonprofit's reach beyond the walls of its clinical facilities.

"Personal and community health is heavily influenced by the environments our clients live in," said Alejandra (Alex) Hernandez, SSCHC's environmental projects coordinator. "Our role is to advocate for community members so they can participate in making changes that are relevant to the quality of their lives."

Among the many initiatives available to neighborhood residents is the department's Lead Outreach Program. Its components include childhood lead poisoning prevention, lead abatement activities, and the Growing Healthy Soil for Healthy Communities

program. The latter helped the Diaz family reduce concentrations of lead in their garden by providing them with fish bone meal (to capture lead and encapsulate it), sulfur (to reduce acidity) and organic compost.

Even little Dannillo, 20 months, enjoys working in the garden.

"The niño takes scissors and cuts the grass," said his mom, Candida, with a smile.

The family also has taken advantage of the many workshops and events sponsored by Environmental Health. They attended a "Fishing for Dinner" workshop, where they learned how to catch the salmon that are once again spawning in the KK and how to filet and cook them. They also participate in the annual spring river cleanup, and the three oldest canoed it last summer.

**"It's really wonderful to see the breadth of Sixteenth Street's work, including taking the time and capacity to work on the environmental health of the surrounding area."**

*-Tim McCollow, Foundation successor adviser*

"It was our first time, and I didn't know how to steer properly," Leslie laughed. "We bumped into a lot of branches, but we didn't tip over."

One big factor in the transformation of the KK neighborhood has been the \$100 million Kinnickinnic River Flood Management Project of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District. Its goals include gradually replacing the river's concrete banks with a wider, more natural channel. This will both lower flood risks and enhance the river's aquatic and terrestrial environment.

"We have many houses close to the river, and when it floods, water fills basements and spills onto the roads. It's dangerous," Hernandez said. SSCHC provides homeowners with rain barrels to capture rainwater and keep it out of the sewer system. The project's green infrastructure plans include permeable pavement, rain gardens, and bioswales that reduce runoff and pollutants before they reach the river.

Another initiative is the restoration of the Kinnickinnic River Watershed, which is the smallest and most densely populated within the Milwaukee River Basin. It drains 25 square miles of urban landscape in the heart of metropolitan Milwaukee. And at an SSCHC-designed green infrastructure demo site in Pulaski Park, children learn about the impact of native plantings to minimize stormwater runoff.

Since 2001, the Foundation has supported nearly \$800,000 worth of SSCHC projects, \$525,000 of which has supported the KK River Neighborhood transformation. The Foundation's Fund for Lake Michigan also has invested in the project. Another Foundation fund is the Journal Foundation/Thomas and Yvonne McCollow Fund, advised by Tim McCollow and two siblings. McCollow is a program manager with the HOME GR/OWN initiative in City of Milwaukee's Environmental Collaboration Office, so with his "city hat" on, he has witnessed the transformative work of the SSCHC and in particular the Department of Environmental Health.

"It's really wonderful to see the breadth of Sixteenth Street's work," he said, "including taking the time and capacity to work on the environmental health of the surrounding area."

Also getting attention is the restoration of the 26-acre Pulaski Park, including its 100-year-old pavilion and native habitat. The goal is to create a welcoming gathering space and community hub, which is already in progress. "We like going to the park in the summertime because we often see families we've met at workshops or events," Candida said. "It's fun interacting with other people in the community."

The Diaz family (pictured below) is among hundreds on Milwaukee's south side who have benefited from the work that the Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers has been doing in improving the health of the KK River Neighborhood.



The Foundation has invested **\$525,000** into KK River Neighborhood transformation since 2001

# Spella a ‘quiet force’ in strengthening West Bend’s charitable community



James Spella

In his job as a partner and attorney at Schloemer Law Firm in downtown West Bend, James Spella devotes about half of his practice toward estate planning.

Spella, much like his father, is a natural salesman. Yet while his father spent more than four decades selling paper, Spella has spent nearly the same amount of time conveying the concept of charitable giving, specifically through a community foundation, to clients.

In doing so, in a straightforward yet non-pressured sort of way, he not only has helped his clients leave a legacy but he has indirectly crafted his own – that of building up West Bend’s charitable community where he has lived, worked and raised a family of six.

“This community has always had a big heart,” Spella said. “When you are surrounded by people who are so committed and so self-giving and have that value system, it kind of rubs off on you.”

Spella was on the ground floor in helping craft a successful philanthropic concept in 1999 that has become a trailblazer for other southeastern Wisconsin communities. He was an attorney for the founders of the West Bend Community Foundation, one of its initial board members and has helped many clients over the past 18 years to start funds there. It now stands as the largest of three partner foundations – in terms of assets, funds and grants – affiliated with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation.

“He is a quiet force,” said Sharon Ziegler, former West Bend Community Foundation president. She and her late husband, Doug, and Cliff and Betty Nelson each contributed \$1 million in unrestricted funds to launch WBCF. “He’s been an absolutely invaluable and passionate supporter and advocate.”

Spella has spent the large portion of his nearly 45-year law career in West Bend, but his formative years

“I think when you are part of something good happening for others, that’s the reward.” James Spella

were spent in Milwaukee. He lived for several years in Milwaukee’s Third Ward and his father, Rosario, was one of the founders of the Italian Community Center. His family later moved to Milwaukee’s northwest side.

He attended Marquette University High School and continued his education a little farther down Wisconsin Avenue at Marquette University, where he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in accounting, and then Marquette University Law School. In 1973, after spending two years at the accounting firm of Arthur Andersen, he joined Schloemer Law, where he also concentrates on business law, taxation and real estate.

He first learned of the concept of a community foundation – specifically the Greater Milwaukee Foundation – through his cousin. She had created a fund in honor of her parents – Charles and Mary Maglio – and suggested contributions as a way to honor their 60th wedding anniversary.

When Cliff Nelson and Doug Ziegler asked him to become involved in the West Bend Community Foundation, Spella viewed it as an honor and duty he couldn’t pass up.

While there are many tools attorneys can suggest as ways for people to give, Spella is especially enamored with the donor advised fund.

“It’s just an easy way for people to participate if they have that philanthropic intent,” Spella said.

Spella is heavily invested in West Bend, through participation on such organizations as the West Bend Noon Rotary Club, St. Frances Cabrini School Board and West Bend Economic Development Corporation Board. Yet he seems to gravitate more so toward charitable foundations. In addition to serving 10 years on West Bend Community Foundation’s board, including three as its president, he spent nine years on The Threshold Foundation board and three years on Westbury Bank’s foundation board.

Professional advisers like Spella are crucial to the growth of a community foundation, said Tim Larson, vice president of philanthropic services.

“By virtue of his role as that trusted, knowledgeable resource, Jim has played an instrumental role in extending the reach of philanthropy within the region,” Larson said.

Nelson and Ziegler both credit Spella’s integrity, sincerity, reputation and commitment to the community as key factors in drawing in new donors.

Ask Spella exactly how many individuals he has directed to

WBCF over the years, though, and he doesn’t have a clear answer. He doesn’t keep track. It’s not about the numbers.

“I think when you are part of something good happening for others, that’s the reward,” Spella said. “What’s satisfying is you help somebody help somebody else.”

*Spella will be honored May 18, 2017, as Professional Adviser of the Year at the Greater Milwaukee Foundation’s annual Herbert J. Mueller Society luncheon. The recognition society acknowledges the efforts of professional advisers who are committed to their clients, philanthropy and the community.*

To learn more about how the Greater Milwaukee Foundation can be a resource to you and your clients, contact Mary Kay Mark, director of gift planning, at 414.336.7066 or [mkmark@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org](mailto:mkmark@greatermilwaukeefoundation.org).



# In the driver's seat

## Amy B. Underberg Fund

After 30 years spent behind the wheel as a UPS driver, Amy Underberg now is creating a whole new daily route – that of philanthropist.

The Bay View resident has long dedicated her life to paying it forward through simple acts of kindness, such as shoveling snow for her 92-year-old twin neighbors. Now, thanks to her donor advised fund that she started in May 2016, she is hoping to impact the community through larger acts of generosity.

### What areas are you most passionate about and how do you approach your grantmaking?

Basic needs, animals and education. Sometimes Sarah (Berg, her partner) and I will be reading the paper and we think "Hey, that's kind of a cool idea that we're interested in," and then we'll go to experts at the Foundation to find out more about it. The

Foundation has shown us what's out there and what's possible.

### What attracted you to the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and why did you create a fund when you did?

I knew about it through Sarah. Sarah has a fund (the Sarah Kim Berg Fund) and her mom has a fund (the Insoo Kim Berg and Steve de Shazer Fund). It was based on their experience that I learned about all the ins and outs of the Foundation. I had wanted to do it for a few years and actually had been thinking about starting a fund. When the family business – Manawa Telephone Company, a 116-year-old telecommunications provider started by my grandpa, was sold – I was in a position to start my own fund.

### What do you find most beneficial about having a fund at the Foundation?

Many people might not know how strategic you can be about

your charitable giving. That is something that I've learned through the Foundation. Sometimes it is impossible for the average person to find out if a nonprofit is a reliable group or a fly-by-night group because what you can find online is sort of minimal. For larger organizations, there is Charity Navigator. But to find out about all that is happening in the community, especially with smaller, local nonprofits, the Foundation is the trusted resource.

### What are you most excited about being a donor?

I just want to help out. Sometimes I feel like the doors are all shutting on people. People need to know there is someone who cares about what they do and who they are and who will help them. I'm excited that I'm actually in a position to be that person.



Thanks to a \$75,000 grant from the Stiemke Fund, Easter Seals renovated its Workforce Center in Waukesha. It added a handicapped accessible, commercial catering kitchen for its employment training program to train more individuals annually. Ninety percent of the trainees are people with disabilities.

# Stiemke name synonymous with strengthening buildings and spaces

## Walter and Olive Stiemke Fund

Walter Stiemke, an engineer and industrialist, built three successful engineering companies during his lifetime. The fund he started with his wife, Olive, has garnered a reputation over the past 30-plus years of building up the nonprofit sector by investing in hundreds of capital projects in the greater Milwaukee area.

The Stiemke name can be found all throughout Milwaukee – adorning such spaces as the Milwaukee Repertory Theater's Stiemke Studio, Mount Mary University's Stiemke Memorial Hall

or the Boy Scouts of America Three Harbors Council's Stiemke Scout Service Center. Yet hundreds more nonprofits throughout the region owe their growth or existence to the Stiemke's generosity.

Investing in capital projects was one of the main intents of their fund, which the couple created in 1984 after transferring their \$8.7 million private foundation to the then Milwaukee Foundation. Their generosity brought the Foundation's total assets to more than \$40 million and was the largest of its 119 funds at the

time. To this day, with \$26.4 million in assets, the fund remains the largest of the Foundation's 1,300 funds.

Over the years, there has been no shortage of capital needs among area nonprofits and the fund has responded, investing more than \$22.5 million in capital improvements and other special projects. Beyond simple bricks and mortar, the fund also has enabled nonprofits to purchase dental equipment, resurface playgrounds, renovate kitchens and repair rooftops.

The first grant Amy Underberg made from her fund supported basic needs, one of three areas she is most passionate about. The funding supported Capuchin Community Services' efforts to transform a former hospital into housing for the homeless.



**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)

DONOR SNAPSHOT

# Physics and You

Explaining gravity, aerodynamics and electromagnetism to children, much less adults, may seem overwhelming. But when done in a loud, fast and fun way, you'll hardly realize you are learning!

"Physics & You," a new hands-on exhibit at Discovery World, sponsored by a \$100,000 grant from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Walter and Olive Stiemke Fund and the Greater Milwaukee Science and Engineering Fund, does just that. Through six interactive stations, visitors learn by doing - whether that is launching rings using an electromagnetic pulse, sending up their own vertical flyer or building circuits.

In its debut weekend in October 2016 - the same weekend the Foundation sponsored free admission to the museum through its Gifts to the Community program - 6,000 children and families were exposed to the learning opportunity.

Catch a glimpse here: [bit.ly/GTCMKE2016](https://bit.ly/GTCMKE2016)

