



Greater Milwaukee
FOUNDATION
greater together



A MILWAUKEE FOR ALL

GMF'S STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2020-25



The Greater Milwaukee Foundation serves the whole community. As a partner of choice for generous donors, as a champion for our nonprofit sector, as a convener of diverse voices and ideas – we have been woven into the fabric of this region for 105 years. But our legacy together is just the beginning. We are committed to expanding our table, deepening our impact and innovating for a brighter future where everyone thrives. A new tomorrow starts today.

After decades of growth for some and disinvestment for others...
After a boom that revitalized downtown but didn't reach far enough
beyond... After a global pandemic and a mass call for racial justice...

**THE QUESTION WE FACE IS NOT HOW
WE REBUILD MILWAUKEE—BUT HOW
WE BUILD A BETTER MILWAUKEE.**

Imagine a region with truly welcoming and inclusive communities

for all people, of all races, places, identities, and backgrounds.

Imagine a region that's culturally vibrant and economically thriving,

bringing out the ideas, talents, and potential of all of us here now while drawing in new arrivals to make their home in a place our children and families never want to leave.

Imagine a region where thriving neighborhoods everywhere

make Milwaukee a better city for everyone, and a newly thriving city lifts up all of Southeast Wisconsin—creating a beacon for the entire nation.



This is our vision:

A MILWAUKEE FOR ALL.



A region that's vibrant, thriving, inclusive, and full of opportunity, prosperity, and a high quality of life for everyone is within reach. Because a community of our strengths and size – big enough to marshal significant resources and ideas, yet small enough to make change at scale – is capable of building this better Milwaukee within our lifetimes.

No matter who you are, what role you play in our community, or what personal passions drive you, there is a seat at the table and an important place for you in building a Milwaukee for all.

We have so many of the assets we need already.

Our lakefront and parks; our homegrown corporate and cultural touchstones; a thriving downtown surrounded by historic neighborhoods with their own rhythms and relationships...

Generations of families who came from near and far and helped make our region something more, with a spirit of hard work and humility and a helping hand for their neighbors...

But if we want our communities, our companies, and our conversations to benefit from the creations and contributions of all our neighbors, we must come together – in all parts of Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington counties – to finally address the deep racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities that have held our region and its residents back for far too long.

THERE'S A FAULT LINE RUNNING THROUGH EVERY SYSTEM WE'VE BUILT IN OUR COMMUNITY: RACISM.

With each new crisis – the health and economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic, a wave of police brutality that sparked a growing call for racial justice, and so much more – the disparities and pain in our communities are laid bare for all to see.

These are only the latest examples in a long history whose effects we live with every day. It's a history we can trace from the taking of land from the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Odawa, and others, to centuries of slavery followed by Jim Crow discrimination, to the redlining that prevented Black and Brown families from buying homes and building wealth, to the construction of freeways that divided communities and cut off neighborhoods of color from resources and opportunity, through deindustrialization that devastated communities of color and up to today.

Racism shapes every system we live with. It's behind disparities we all know too well. And it affects everyone: every life cut short or held back holds us all back – and prevents our region from reaching its greatest potential.

The many legacies and effects of racism represent the greatest threat to our future as a region. But if it's true that Milwaukee is America's most segregated metro area, then it's also true that no region in the country has more to gain from greater racial equity.

Building a Milwaukee for all begins with addressing our deep racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities.

Median Caucasian household income is

2.3x Median African American household income and

1.7x Median Hispanic/Latino/Latinx household income¹

14 years difference in life expectancy

between Black and white Milwaukeeans

"The chief finding of this report is sobering: Milwaukee ranks, by a clear margin, at the bottom of all metro areas examined on the composite index of African American well-being. Most disturbingly, this poor performance is consistent on almost all the indicators for which we collected data to construct the index."

AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE MKE, Index of African American Well-Being in the Nation's Largest Metropolitan Areas

**IF WE WANT TO BUILD
A MILWAUKEE FOR ALL,
WE MUST REIMAGINE
HOW PHILANTHROPY
WORKS, BRING MORE
PEOPLE TO THE TABLE
IN VOICE AND POWER,
AND CHANGE HOW
WE MAKE CHANGE
TOGETHER.**

NO ONE CAN TAKE ON A CHALLENGE LIKE THIS ALONE. AND THE GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION IS HOW MILWAUKEE WORKS TOGETHER.

Addressing our community's racial fault line and building a Milwaukee for all will take more than what any one individual, institution, or neighborhood can do. It will take all of us – and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation invites all Milwaukeeans to join in making it a reality.

For more than a century, GMF has been at the heart of Milwaukee's civic community, helping donors turn their commitments into the greatest philanthropic impact, elevating the work of changemakers in neighborhoods across our community, and bringing people and organizations together to confront the most important issues we face.

We know that what we can do together, as a region working for a common cause, is so much greater than what we can do apart.

GMF can bring all of Milwaukee and all of Milwaukee's strengths together like no one else can. Our incredible network of partners – donors and advisors, civic leaders and voices for change, landmark institutions and grassroots organizations throughout Milwaukee, Washington, Ozaukee, and Waukesha counties – makes it possible.

And after years of pursuing racial equity and inclusion as a priority, we know it must be our North Star today – guiding the next generation of our work. This is the driving purpose behind our new strategic plan for 2020-25.

OUR NORTH STAR: RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

GMF's commitment to racial equity and inclusion traces back at least two decades, growing deeper and more ambitious over time.

2000 - 2010: RETHINKING GMF'S ROLE

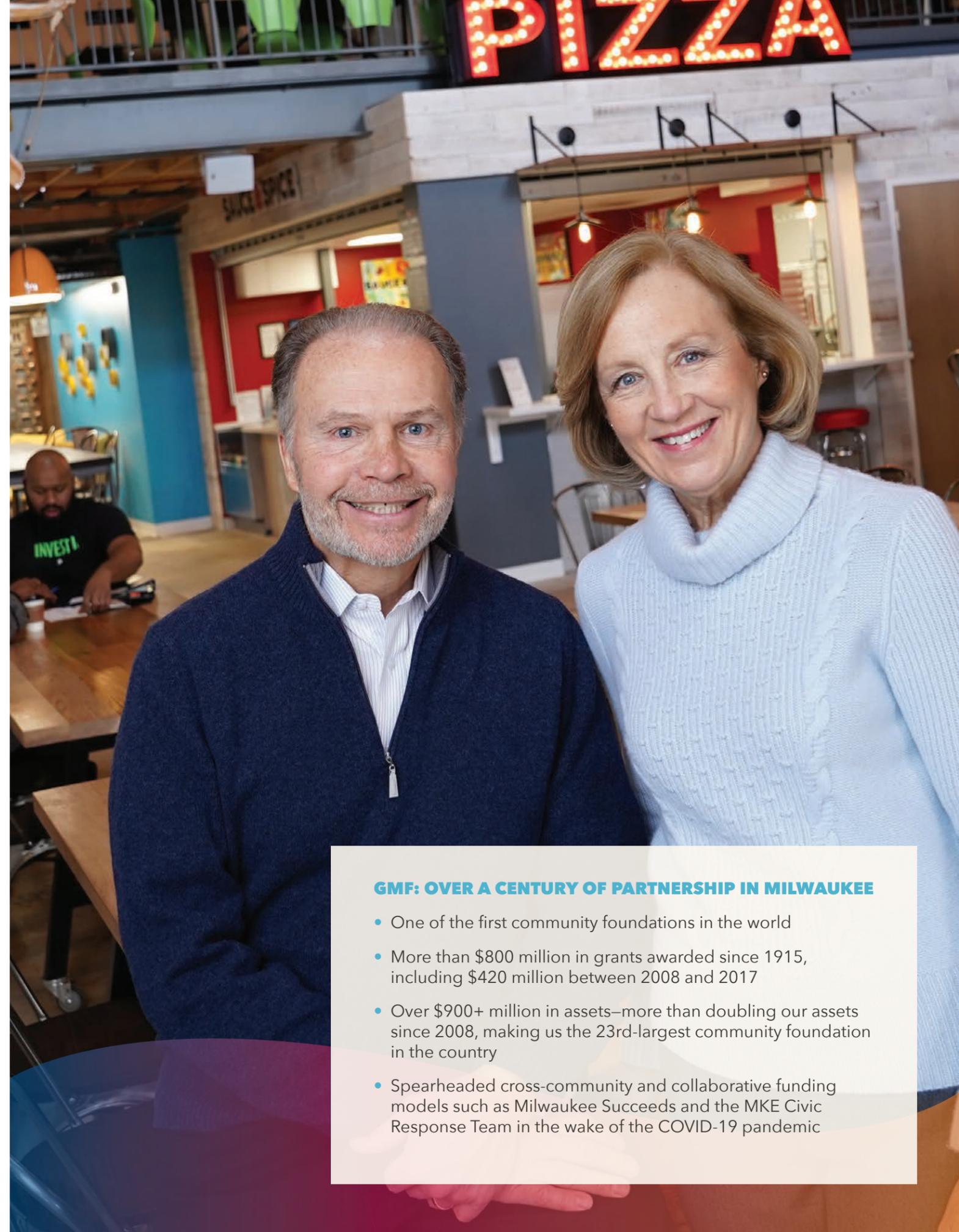
In this period, GMF came to embrace a more active grantmaking, leadership, and convening role in the community, with an increasingly clear focus on issues of poverty and growing internal dialogue around racial equity.

2010 - 2020: CENTERING RACIAL EQUITY

Among many developments in this period, GMF recognized the central role that race plays in driving issues across Milwaukee communities – and made a generational commitment in 2016 to put racial equity at the heart of all GMF efforts.

THE WORK AHEAD: TURNING COMMITMENTS INTO COMMUNITYWIDE ACTION

With this strategic plan, GMF is putting its racial equity commitments into practice on a scale that engages partners, stakeholders, and communities across the region to make historic change together.



GMF: OVER A CENTURY OF PARTNERSHIP IN MILWAUKEE

- One of the first community foundations in the world
- More than \$800 million in grants awarded since 1915, including \$420 million between 2008 and 2017
- Over \$900+ million in assets—more than doubling our assets since 2008, making us the 23rd-largest community foundation in the country
- Spearheaded cross-community and collaborative funding models such as Milwaukee Succeeds and the MKE Civic Response Team in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic

A MILWAUKEE FOR ALL: GMF'S STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2020-25

In recent years, we've been listening to and learning from hundreds of neighbors and community leaders, while also launching new projects and exploring new ways to partner with our community.

Now, it's time to transform – not tweak – how we work and what that work makes possible.



REIMAGINE PHILANTHROPY

Beginning a new era of philanthropy in our community that is more inclusive, collaborative, antiracist, and impactful

RECENTER COMMUNITIES

Putting the voices, priorities, and ideas of local residents and shared decision-making at the center of all we do so every neighborhood can thrive

REMAKE SYSTEMS

Taking on the difficult, long-term work of remaking the systems that shape life and lives in our region to deliver not just social service, but social justice



"We have a really good insight on what the issues are, how we need to bring people together to address them, and with conviction for why being focused on racial inequities is so important to making change and positive impact happen."

GREG OBERLAND, Foundation Board member
Greg and Rhonda Oberland pictured on page 7

REIMAGINING PHILANTHROPY

Through their generous philanthropy, GMF donors have made immeasurable contributions to the vitality of our region over the last century. Our long history of partnership with and service to our donors is the cornerstone on which we will build a new era of philanthropy that deepens our unified impact.

Together, our enduring support of important causes and community organizations continues to make a difference in the lives of people throughout greater Milwaukee. We have all benefited from philanthropy in some way. Still, we recognize it hasn't gone far enough to achieve racial equity in our region. For too long, philanthropy has been too narrow, too incremental, too exclusive – and so has GMF.

With racial equity as our North Star and our community by our side, we'll reimagine philanthropy for the next generation – changing how philanthropy works and how we make change together.

OUR PRIORITIES

- **Bringing together more and different kinds of voices** so we can all shape the direction of philanthropy in our community—extending initiatives such as On the Table MKE.
- **Engaging and serving** more racially diverse donors.
- **Mobilizing more philanthropy across our community** – with an emphasis on flexible funds that enable us to continuously adapt and meet community needs and priorities – so we can build the capacity for transformational, regionwide change.
- **Engaging donors in new approaches such as collaborative philanthropy and impact investing** (including funds that create jobs and wealth by investing in small businesses, real estate, and other community enterprises) to strengthen our collective impact and enhance donors' sense of results and efficacy, and collaboration.
- **Leading by example in making philanthropy more inclusive and antiracist.** We will critically examine GMF's own antiracist practices and internal diversity while embedding racial equity and inclusion in all we do – from policies and practices to performance management and professional development – and bringing more community voices into Board and staff decision-making.

"For organizations like America's Black Holocaust Museum, GMF is a true partner in what feels like an authentic peer-to-peer collaborative relationship. The amount of resources that the Foundation has invested in and helped connect the Museum with has the potential to be catalytic, not only for the museum but the surrounding whole neighborhood and community."

BRAD PRUITT, Community Engagement Consultant, America's Black Holocaust Museum, Agency Endowment Partner



RECENTERING COMMUNITIES

Where a person lives affects *how* a person lives – and we want every neighborhood to thrive.

As a trusted partner and honest broker, we can convene and connect Milwaukeeans across neighborhoods to tackle the important issues we face. Our focus and investment will follow the voices, priorities, and ideas of neighbors on the ground as we share decision-making power and create a new future together.

By introducing our resources, connections, and partners directly to communities while bringing neighbors together to lead the way, we can put thriving, vibrant communities at the center of our work – and at the center of a Milwaukee for all.

OUR PRIORITIES

- **Launching a landmark new initiative** – the ThriveOn Collaboration – in partnership with the Medical College of Wisconsin and Royal Capital Group, working for a vibrant King Drive corridor and connected neighborhoods. This includes building a shared home for the collaboration in the old Gimbel-Schuster’s Department Store building. Far more than an economic catalyst, this historic redevelopment, which includes GMF’s new headquarters, will serve as a community hub – a welcoming and inclusive home with resources, programs, and a first-floor space for neighbors from Brewers Hill, Halyard Park, and Harambee to come together and work on community issues.
- **Building deep, responsive, and respectful community partnerships** in several neighborhoods, with an emphasis on those facing the greatest disinvestment and discrimination.
- **Ramping up convening efforts and supporting residents** in our priority neighborhoods as they develop neighborhood plans that identify priorities, opportunities, challenges, and solutions – not only for themselves, but also for outside funders who want to join their efforts.
- **Facilitating Community Advisory Councils composed of local residents, business owners, and nonprofit leaders in each priority neighborhood** to engage their neighbors, make decisions about dispersing funding, and in doing so, mobilize their communities for effective action.

“Young people have fresh energy. Young leaders want to see people in leadership who reflect who we are. We want leadership we can connect to and what we see ourselves and our values reflected in.”

MALIYA LOR, Neighborhood Fellow, Greater Milwaukee Foundation



REMAKING SYSTEMS

Across our history, we've supported worthy causes, but we haven't done enough to support whole communities, and we've too often focused on treating symptoms rather than changing systems. That must change.

Alongside neighbors across Milwaukee, and with the engagement of public, private, and philanthropic partners, we will commit to the difficult, long-term work of remaking the systems that shape life and lives in our region – from education and housing to health and economic opportunity.

By leveraging our leadership and research, raising our voice on the most critical community issues, deepening grassroots collaboration and community-wide partnerships in support of shared visions and unified actions, and driving major investments and collaborative philanthropy, we can support policy changes that deliver not just social service, but social justice.

OUR PRIORITIES

- **Ensuring all children can access high-quality, critically important early childhood educational opportunities.** This includes increasing the availability of programs for infants and toddlers (0-2), the amount of support provided by WI Shares as well as the percentage of income-eligible children in the program, the number of high-quality child care providers, and the scholarship support available to ensure more high-quality early childhood educators enter and remain in the field.
- **Providing all young people with the educational opportunities they need and deserve for success in life.**
- **Working for all our families to have homes they can depend on and invest in.** We will target increases in safe, affordable housing options and home ownership rates, as well as a decrease in eviction rates in our priority neighborhoods.
- **Supporting local businesses and economic vibrancy and working to increase employment rates in Milwaukee.**

"We're working toward a community that allows each person to be their best self—and everyone has something to give. Neither the public nor private sector can achieve that vision alone, and if we all try to do it ourselves, we'll fail. GMF is the force-multiplier that allows us to achieve it together."

WILL MARTIN, CEO, Wisconsin Diversified Investments, LLC, Foundation Donor





A MILWAUKEE FOR ALL TAKES ALL OF MILWAUKEE.

The future we envision is clear: a vibrant, economically thriving region, comprised of welcoming and inclusive communities that provide opportunity, prosperity, and a high quality of life for all.

And it's within reach. But only if we refuse to accept Milwaukee as America's most segregated and inequitable metro area, and instead challenge ourselves to become the region that shows the nation what's possible for our future.

We must address the fault line of racism if we want our communities to thrive – and this generational, regionwide work has already begun. But our pace must be faster, our resolve must be sharper, and our urgency must be greater.

Whoever you are, whatever issues you care about most, and however you're able to contribute, we invite you to join us in the work ahead:

Learn more about the most important issues in our community with GMF's growing range of resources and research.

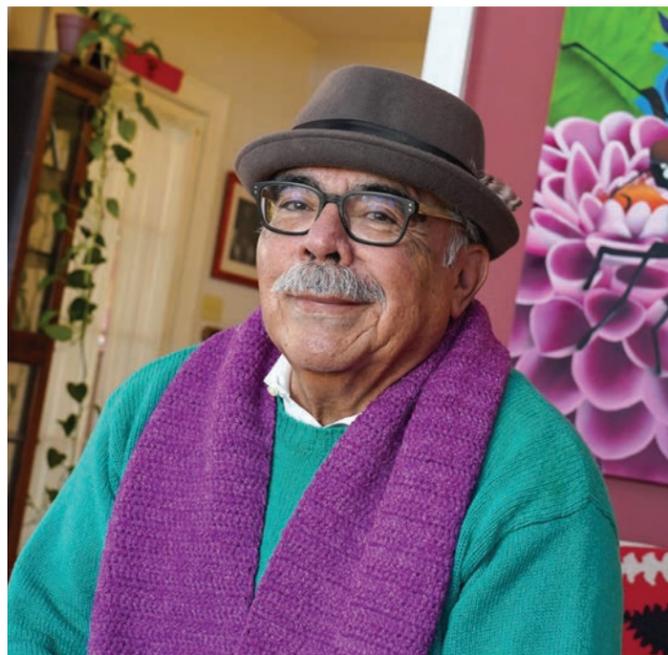
Bring your voice to GMF-facilitated discussions that engage our whole community in the questions that shape our shared future.

Give and volunteer to advance causes and lift up communities across Milwaukee, with GMF as your expert partner in making the greatest impact.

A Milwaukee for all is only possible with all of us working together – and including you.

"I'm extremely excited about the collaborative work going on in the community. I believe people are exceptionally focused and optimistic about the future of Milwaukee. As long as we can band together—together we go forward."

KEVIN NEWELL, ThriveOn Collaboration partner, President and CEO, Royal Capital Group





MILWAUKEE HAS BEEN
TOO SEPARATE FOR
TOO LONG.

**LET'S SHOW WHAT
WE CAN DO TOGETHER.**

A Milwaukee for all takes all of Milwaukee

Whoever you are and whatever issues you care about most, **there is an important role** for you to play in building a Milwaukee for all—by learning more, sharing your voice, giving and volunteering.

greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/strategic-plan



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