

a magazine for friends of the GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION

GREATER together

SPECIAL ISSUE:

Historic campaign thinks
bigger, acts bolder to
build a Milwaukee for all



Greater Milwaukee
FOUNDATION
greater together

Volume 7 Issue 1 Summer 2022

GREATER together

A MAGAZINE FOR FRIENDS OF THE
GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION
VOLUME 7 :: ISSUE 1 :: SUMMER 2022

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.

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ON THE COVER:



Children from Yimma's Bright Beginnings Daycare, a 4-star rated center on Milwaukee's south side

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Boldness can be a matter of scale, a matter of innovation or a matter of determination. Right now, our community needs all three as we face challenges we never imagined, entangled with entrenched disparities we never solved.

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation has been a voice and an instrument for community change for well over 100 years. We have been part of some incredible efforts that have prevented suffering, provided hope and contributed to a better quality of life in this region. We also recognize that in spite of it all, too little has changed, especially for Black and Brown communities and anyone whose well-being is constrained by lack of access to resources and opportunity.

It is time to be bolder, think bigger and replace incremental change with transformational impact. And if we want new results, we need to take new actions.

Our deep history working in and with community, our experience bringing diverse stakeholders together around shared goals and our generational commitment to racial equity and inclusion has led us to this moment – and the launch of the first comprehensive, philanthropic campaign in the Foundation’s history.

The Greater Together Campaign is our invitation for everyone to join in building a Milwaukee for all. This

special edition of our magazine provides an in-depth look at our \$700 million effort, including the building blocks of a better life we are emphasizing through our campaign priorities.

Through this community-centered campaign, we are advancing the Foundation’s strategic plan in exciting and significant ways, as we leverage partnership, community engagement, advocacy and investment to realize our shared vision.

Philanthropy is for all of us, and it is going to take our collective power for greater Milwaukee to reach its full potential as a culturally vibrant, economically thriving, healthy, welcoming community for all. I am grateful for those who have already joined us, and I welcome everyone’s partnership. We are, and always will be, greater together.

We all are the catalyst we’ve been waiting for.

Ellen M. Gilligan
President & CEO
Greater Milwaukee Foundation

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GREATER TOGETHER

THE CAMPAIGN TO BUILD A MILWAUKEE FOR ALL

Moving beyond generosity to justice

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation has a long history of bringing people together to make positive change in our community. For too long, however, our region's great potential has been overshadowed by disparities that divide people from opportunity and whole communities from well-being.

Isn't it time we get at the root causes, so that we can move beyond generosity to justice? We are helping lead the way by launching the \$700 million Greater Together Campaign. The goal is to build a Milwaukee for all, and \$50 million of that total will support strategies that will address longstanding systemic issues in our region and advance racial equity on a scale greater than ever before.

In the following stories, you will learn about our five key priority areas, realize how they tie into our strategic vision and read about examples of progress in each. These examples exist thanks to our community of compassionate, committed individuals, families and organizations who care about advancing equity and building a Milwaukee for all.

"The Foundation has done research, we have partnered across the community and, most importantly, we have listened," said Jackie Herd-Barber, former Foundation Board chair. "We're able to bring people together to make an impact on a greater scale and fill a role no one else can. We need everyone to act now, because if we don't act, then who? If we don't act now, then when?"

MAKING THE CASE

Campaign co-chairs explain why now is the time for comprehensive fundraising effort

In the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's 107-year history, there has never been a project that has matched the size and scope of its \$700 million Greater Together Campaign.

But there has never been a better time to take on such an ambitious project and advocate for a significant investment in the community, according to Pete Bruce, Dave Kundert, Linda Mellowes and Cecelia Gore, the campaign co-chairs who have

contributed more than 30 years of combined service to the Foundation's Board.

As donors and longtime leaders in both the corporate and nonprofit sectors, these four ardent ambassadors have committed their time, talent, treasure and ties to advancing the campaign. Learn why they believe the Foundation is well positioned to create change and why you should become involved.

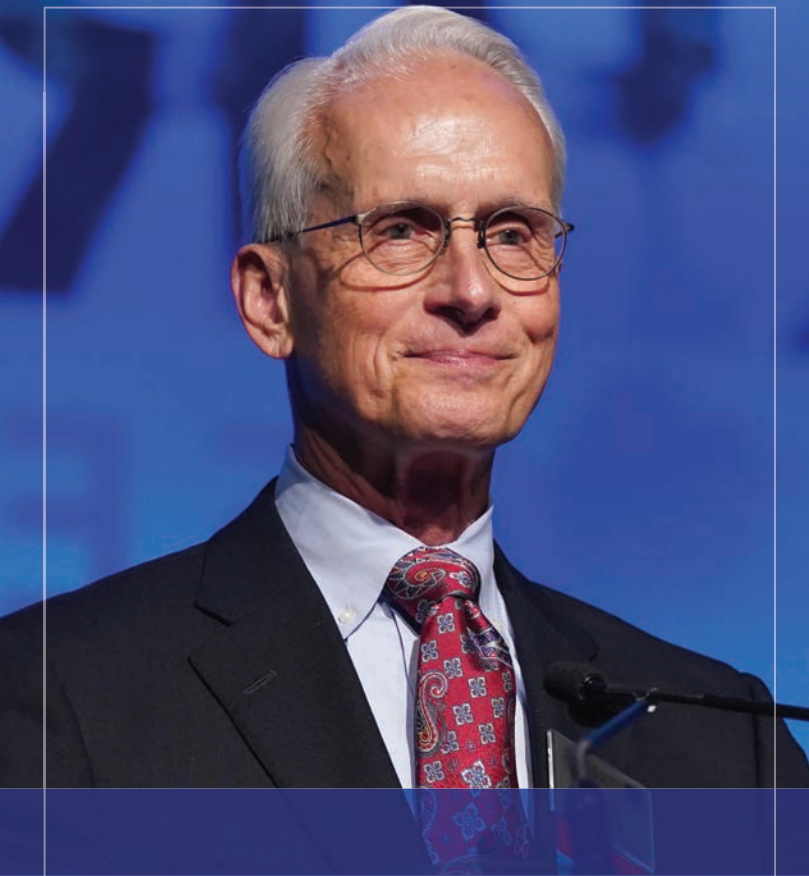


Joan and Peter Bruce



PETE BRUCE: The Foundation has the pulse of the community

The Foundation is in a unique position to observe and address the needs in our greater four-county community more so than anyone else. The fact that it is more than 100 years old and has more than \$1 billion in assets makes that point. It has a feel for where those needs are most urgent and how money would be used most efficiently. The Foundation provides a very robust vehicle for people to meet their philanthropic needs now, and the staff at the Foundation will have the pulse of our community after we are gone for years to come.



DAVE KUNDERT: A way to leverage individual impact

The Foundation has been an amazing organization to be a part of because it is such a visible force in the community. This campaign is an opportunity for all of us to find a way to be engaged. We cannot achieve our vision of a Milwaukee for all by ourselves; we need a leverage point. The Foundation serves as that leverage point and is a force that can make our dollars much more meaningful than if we tried to make individual gifts of our own. The Foundation can leverage people's abilities to make an impact given its credibility, its size and its ability to piggyback on a \$1 billion portfolio.



LINDA MELLOWES: The timing is right

The pandemic opened our eyes about things we might not have known or wanted to see. Now is the time we take care of that. There are a lot of positive efforts going on in the community, but the pandemic really made clear there are things we are missing, and we need to be better. More people believe in making our community a better place to live, and this campaign is giving them another way, or a more significant way, to help make that happen. The Foundation has done much research focusing on some of the greatest needs. It has looked at each of the sectors that had been missed or that we need to raise more awareness about. I like the fact that it is focusing \$50 million specifically on those priorities.



—

CECELIA GORE: Moving toward equity

There is not a comfort level in our community yet talking about race and racism. For too long, our community has not been willing to be aggressive and move toward equity. With the work the Foundation is doing, we are getting to a place where there is a comfort level of understanding that these systems exist, and we can do something about it. There is more of a willingness among people to just roll up our sleeves and keep working. I really love the idea of broadening the mindset around being a philanthropist. For a long time, we have left money on the table, so to speak, with this mindset that only certain people give. The Foundation has been raising money over time, but this happens to be a period where we recognize that not only can we raise money, we can really broaden the group of people who can come to the table to make a difference. We must make sure we can bring everyone along and provide opportunities for a broader group of people so we can all benefit from what we are trying to build.

CAMPAIGN GOAL

Overall goal

\$700M

Total raised

\$530M



Dollar amounts as of 5/13/2022

CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

The priority campaign investments address interrelated community issues that comprise the building blocks of a better life and demand systemic solutions. Our priorities are:

- ThriveOn Collaboration
- Early childhood care & education
- Housing
- Impact investing
- Flexible funds

Total goal for campaign priorities

\$50M

Amount raised so far toward campaign priorities

\$20M



Dollar amounts as of 5/13/2022

COMMUNITY

is in the driver's seat when it comes to catalytic collaboration



ThriveOn King could be just another headquarters for the Greater Milwaukee Foundation or a location for the Medical College of Wisconsin's community engagement programs.

For developer Royal Capital, the building could be just another real estate deal.

But the \$100 million development at 2153 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive is turning into much more thanks to collaboration with and leadership from partners like Tom Johnston and Sheila Smith.

Johnston and Smith are residents of Halyard Park and Harambee, respectively, two of the three neighborhoods surrounding ThriveOn King, and have been among the hundreds engaged over the past three years in determining the building's layout and programming. Their involvement is "the heartbeat" of the ThriveOn

Collaboration, the partnership between the Foundation, Royal Capital and MCW, according to Darlene Russell, the Foundation's director of community engagement.

"We are centering the voice of community in this work, recognizing that relationship is important," Russell said. "We didn't want to move into the neighborhood and say this is what we want. Our values are service, integrity and inclusiveness, and we have embodied those as we've been on this journey."

ThriveOn Collaboration's opportunity to be a model for change in addressing interrelated health, economic, social and racial inequities is what led the Foundation to incorporate it as one of its five campaign priorities.

Through one-on-one discussions and nearly a dozen visioning sessions and community gatherings, residents have had a hand in shaping everything from the design

Photo (from left to right): Darlene Russell, the Foundation's director of community engagement, and members of MCW's community engagement team, Sarah O'Connor and Lawrence J. Battle, along with Battle's wife, Carissa, at Milwaukee's Juneteenth Day celebration.

of the first floor to the programming that will bring the former Gimbels-Schuster's Department Store building to life once the redevelopment is complete.

Johnston attended the first visioning session in 2019 with his wife and young daughter. He has lived in Halyard Park since 2018 and loves its history and character. Like his neighbors, Johnston said, "We want to see the neighborhood advance, but we don't want to see displacement."

Smith has lived in Harambee for most of her life and fondly recalls shopping at the Gimbels-Schuster's store building as a child when it was one of several anchors on the thriving MLK Drive. She is excited to see the building transform into a neighborhood hub that will harmonize with complementary ongoing development in the area.

First-floor plans reflect residents' desires to incorporate programs and services lacking in the neighborhood or complement ones already in place. Programs and services also address health and social equity. ThriveOn King will include Malaika Early Learning Center, a 5-star child care center, nonclinical healthcare partners including Versiti, several local food vendors and a community gathering space. A demonstration kitchen will be available for health and wellness programming. A business center and youth makerspace will support area entrepreneurs and youth. Community-inspired artwork will reflect Bronzeville's rich arts and cultural history.

Throughout the planning process, both Johnston and Smith said the partners have listened carefully to residents' concerns and incorporated their ideas.

"We wouldn't have made any design decision where we were in direct conflict with the community," said Terrell Walter, Royal Capital's executive vice president.

This level of community engagement is new for Royal Capital and the Foundation. And there was a lot of back-and-forth and compromise, said Russell.

"It's all about relationships and moving at the speed of trust," Russell said.

Without such community input and buy-in, Walter said, ThriveOn King "would have significantly missed the mark with truly activating such a key piece of real estate in the city of Milwaukee and, more importantly, Bronzeville."

Those involved in ThriveOn King say it can serve as a model for other community developments.

"Sometimes just having a big table that welcomes everybody no matter who they are or where they come from can just help things move forward," Johnston said. "We need more of that."

ThriveOn COLLABORATION

ThriveOn Collaboration: Goal - \$11M

A historic investment and resident-led, comprehensive vision for Halyard Park, Brewers Hill and Harambee neighborhoods.

Plans include:

- Redeveloping the former Gimbels-Schuster's Department Store into a multifaceted community hub
- Creating new community spaces designed with resident input
- Making investments in related programs and the surrounding neighborhood, all focused on social determinants of health

Immediate funding opportunity: THRIVEON COLLABORATION FUND

Your gift can support and scale interrelated strategies centered on place, program and neighborhood.

Campaign Priority | Early Childhood Care and Education

CARING *for the* CAREGIVER

The pandemic has been hard on everyone, especially on early childhood educators. Many have steadfastly served Milwaukee's families and children, but this commitment has come at a high cost, as revenue has decreased, expenses have increased and uncertainty abounds.

Yimma Davila Castro, owner of Yimma's Bright Beginnings on Milwaukee's south side, said, "I was anxious because I wasn't making enough to pay the bills. Yet many parents, especially nonessential workers, paid their children's slot to help me continue to be open even if their children didn't attend so the essential parent could have child care for their children."

"We recognized that if we didn't take care of the adults' well-being, they wouldn't be able to take care of the children."

Sara Daniel, vice president of educational services, Wellpoint Care Network

And then there was the stress on the children. Children asked why some of their little friends were no longer there. Toddlers who had been toilet trained began having accidents and had to go back to diapers. Some who were normally good natured began crying, hitting, starting fights.

Fortunately, these providers had support and resources provided through the MKE Early Childhood Education Coalition. In the wake of COVID-19, the Foundation created seven cross-sector teams to convene partners in communitywide relief work. Milwaukee Succeeds, the Foundation's education initiative, led the coalition, which first began helping providers stay open by procuring practical items such as wipes, toilet paper and cleaning supplies and later by providing stabilization grants.

Later, the coalition shifted its focus to helping providers cope with the long-term effects of the pandemic through trainings in stress management, which were requested by the providers themselves. These Foundation-funded trainings are but one example of the Foundation's deep and longstanding focus on early childhood education – including research, grantmaking and convening –

designed to improve the quality, access and affordability of early childhood education.

The goal was to help providers recognize stress responses in themselves and the children they serve; use effective regulation strategies; and work collaboratively with families to ensure a continuity of strategies between the classroom and the home.

“We recognized that if we didn’t take care of the adults’ well-being, they wouldn’t be able to take care of the children,” said Sara Daniel, vice president of educational services at Wellpoint Care Network (formerly SaintA), which conducted the trainings. Three virtual trainings for providers were held in July 2021 and one in-person training in August; a training for parents and caregivers was held in November 2021. Additional trainings were held between March and June 2022.

A key component of the trainings was practical implementation tools. All participants learned emotional regulation strategies, such as deep breathing and yoga poses, summarized in a laminated book in both English and Spanish. They also received a big plastic bin filled with equipment to use with the children. This included items like cuddle balls, sensory mats and noise cancelling headphones.

The mental health/stress management program is part of a larger effort by the coalition to reconsider how it and other parts of the early childhood education system supports its professional workforce to ensure quality as well as staff retention. Today, the coalition is more than 30 members strong, and members come together every other Friday to discuss emerging needs and opportunities for the sector.

“We child care providers have to wear many different hats, and it can be overwhelming,” said Davila Castro. “Trainings like these, and the other help we get from the coalition, will help people stay in this field.”

Early childhood education:

Goal – \$6M

A plan to transform early childhood care and education so every child in Milwaukee is prepared to enter school.

Plans include:

- Expanding access to quality early childhood care and education in neighborhoods where it is most needed
- Increasing recruitment, retention and professionalization of the workforce
- Establishing a new, high-quality early childhood care and education center in ThriveOn King

Immediate funding opportunity: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FUND

Your gift can fuel the work of the MKE ECE Coalition – comprised of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Milwaukee Succeeds and dozens of local experts, practitioners and parents – as we advocate for increased public investment, equity-advancing policies and systems change for all of Milwaukee.



Founding-funded training in stress management enabled area child care providers, like Yimma Davila Castro, to cope with the long-term effects of the pandemic.

TAKING BUSINESS to the **NEXT LEVEL**

\$1.54M loan sets JCP Construction up for growth

It is not easy for Black-owned general contractors to break into the construction industry.

The industry is highly competitive, built on relationship referrals and largely consists of white-owned firms. Those companies that have broken through have typically not lasted longer than a decade, lacking the business networks, consistent workload and access to capital to be successful.

Over the past 13 years, JCP Construction has defied the odds and made a name for itself in Milwaukee. Started by brothers James, Clifton and Jalin Phelps, JCP originally focused on residential renovations but has grown steadily and expanded into commercial, health care and larger



corporate projects. In recent years JCP has contributed to projects that have dramatically changed Milwaukee's built environment (Northwestern Mutual's downtown tower and Fiserv Forum) while also helping improve the Harambee neighborhood in which the brothers grew up (Bader Philanthropies and Pete's Fruit Market).

The past two years have been trying for JCP, but the brothers are ready to take their business to the next level, thanks in part to a \$1.54 million loan from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's impact investing program. The program provides loans and equity investments that generate both a financial and social return; it is designed to help build stronger equitable economic opportunities in Milwaukee.

Investing in the future

"It allows us to put more money into the business as opposed to paying the bank," said James Phelps, JCP's president. The company was in conversations with a bank, but Phelps said the Foundation's offer was more attractive, given the interest rate and amortization schedule. The brothers closed on the loan, which has a fixed rate of 2 percent, in March.

The Foundation chose impact investing as one of its main campaign priorities knowing that while our community is brimming with talent and assets, in too many places, the lack of capital holds back economic opportunity.

That working capital is key for a firm like JCP, which the brothers started by pooling together \$50,000 from their individual 401ks. While they have built up equity over time, external capital investment is important to sustain and grow their business, especially when community conditions change. In 2020, JCP won the general contracting bid for the Democratic National Convention, which eventually ended up becoming a largely virtual event. The firm had several projects planned in 2021 that did not materialize due in part to the pandemic.

JCP has more than \$22 million in projects projected for 2022, including a role in ThriveOn King, the Foundation's new headquarters at 2153 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, and hopes to expand its reach outside of Milwaukee. In addition to building capacity by hiring additional office staff and field workers, JCP will use the loan to finance equipment for concrete projects, which make up 40 percent of its business.

"This loan gives us the opportunity to operate from a position of strength," said JCP co-owner Clifton Phelps. "It allows us to sharpen our talent pool in the office and increase our capacity – which equals more jobs, which equals more paycheck dollars going to disenfranchised folks in the city of Milwaukee through our Black and Brown workforce."

JCP's track record, plans for growth and dedication to developing a workforce that reflects the community it serves were key motivators for the Foundation, said Kermiath McClendon, impact investment manager.

And while it is one of the Foundation's largest loans, McClendon says the potential for impact far outweighs any risk.

"There are a lot of challenges for minority-owned companies to grow because lack of access to capital and systemic racism. JCP has the potential of being one of the largest minority-owned companies, not just in Milwaukee but in the Midwest," McClendon said. "We need to make more risk-type deals than average financial institutions in order to make the impact we want to see."

Impact investing

Goal – \$10M

A new wave of funding for people, neighborhoods and enterprises in places where investments have been scarce.

Plans include:

- Investing in more than 50 projects over the next five years, with a focus on equitable economic opportunity, early childhood education and housing
- Leveraging additional private and public investment for an even greater impact
- Reinvesting financial returns generated into new projects that make a difference

Immediate funding opportunity: IMPACT INVESTING FUND

Your gift will invest in promising opportunities throughout our city to create both social and financial returns, bolstering a revolving pool that will create jobs, support families, grow thriving businesses and create generational wealth.

COLLABORATIVE CENTER

WORKS TO STEM THE TIDE OF EVICTIONS IN MKE

“Housing is absolutely essential to human flourishing. Without stable shelter, it all falls apart.”

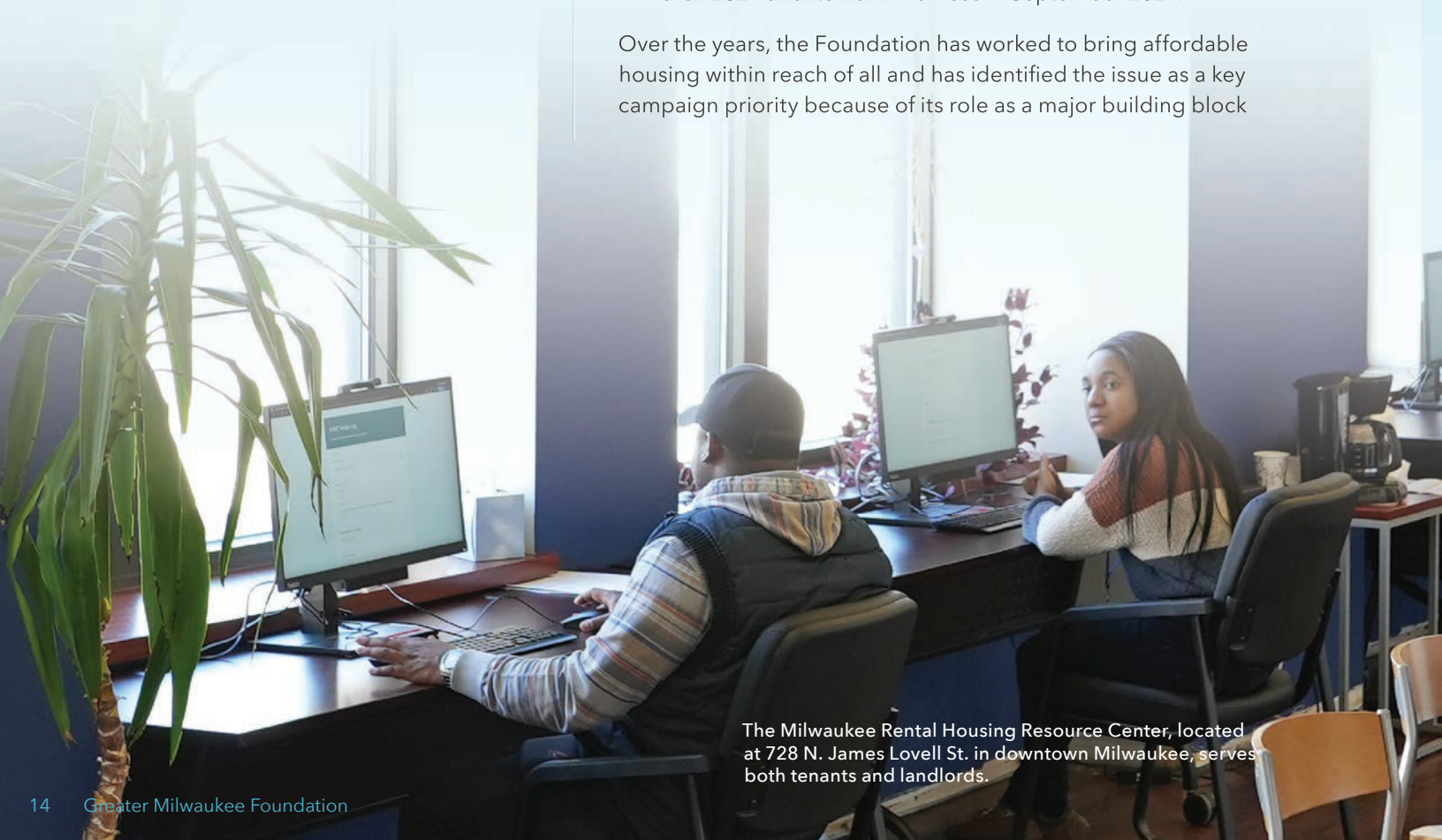
– Matthew Desmond, author of “Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City”

The publication in 2016 of Desmond’s prize-winning book brought to light a longstanding problem in Milwaukee, where the book is set. In Milwaukee County each year, nearly 16,000 adults and children are evicted from 6,000 rental units. Eviction rates are seven times higher for Black and Latino adults than for white adults.

“Eviction is associated with a wide range of harms to physical and mental health as well as educational achievement,” said Aisha Ware, paralegal and triage specialist at the Milwaukee Rental Housing Resource Center. The center, a collaborative initiative supported by the Urban Economic Development Association, operates out of the offices of Community Advocates in downtown Milwaukee.

The center was created in 2020 after two years of planning by the Milwaukee Eviction Prevention Task Force, which formed in 2018 in response to Desmond’s book. The center’s website went live in March 2021 and its walk-in offices in September 2021.

Over the years, the Foundation has worked to bring affordable housing within reach of all and has identified the issue as a key campaign priority because of its role as a major building block



The Milwaukee Rental Housing Resource Center, located at 728 N. James Lovell St. in downtown Milwaukee, serves both tenants and landlords.

of life, health and wealth. It is a founding member and funding partner of the Community Development Alliance, which last year created Milwaukee's first-ever collective affordable housing plan. In addition to supporting programs that advance affordable housing and increase homeownership, the Foundation has invested discretionary funds in eviction prevention strategies and programs, such as the center, which it supported with \$150,000 in 2021.

The center is a comprehensive referral network connecting people – both tenants and landlords – to resources, education and services that help households prevent eviction and maintain safe and stable housing.

"Milwaukee has never had a tenant-landlord resources center," said Kristi Luzar, UEDA's executive director. "Landlords and tenants are usually adversarial. We want to create a space where both can connect to resources they can trust."

The center provides tenants in crisis with information about legal services, temporary rent assistance and mediation services. It also helps landlords who want to help tenants who are struggling financially but are unsure how to do so.

The Foundation's funding specifically supported Ware's position and provided support for other implementation co-partners that are dedicating time and staff to the effort.

The center convenes nine co-partners, ranging from the city of Milwaukee Department of Neighborhood Services to Hope House, a homeless shelter. A key co-partner on the landlord side is the Apartment Association of Southeastern Wisconsin, the region's largest trade organization for landlords.

"Collaboration is hard work, but it is effective," said Deborah Heffner, housing strategy director at Community Advocates. Since March 2021, the center has helped promote and facilitate the distribution of more than \$100 million in temporary rent assistance funds to more than 5,900 households in partnership with Community Advocates and Social Development Commission. Its triage team has served more than 3,700 tenants and landlords with information and resources.

The center is also looking to create longer-term housing stability through systems change, addressing the chronic shortage of affordable housing in Milwaukee.

"Milwaukee housing prices aren't extraordinarily high," said Luzar. "It's just that people don't make enough money."



One of the Foundation's campaign goals is to bring safe, affordable housing within reach of all. Pictured is the former 37th Street School near Washington Park, an affordable housing development featuring 49 units for adults 55 years and older.

Housing: Goal – \$2M

Bringing safe, affordable housing within reach of all.

Plans include:

- Preventing displacement as historically Black and Brown neighborhoods grow and develop
- Increasing affordability for renters
- Increasing homeownership for Black and Brown families

Immediate funding opportunity: HOUSING FUND

Your gift will support a citywide housing strategy, guided by the Community Development Alliance, with a specific focus on increasing the availability and affordability of housing options, preventing displacement and eviction, and increasing homeownership and home improvement opportunities for families across Milwaukee.

Shyrida Lane, SDC's career services manager, at its food pantry at 9155 N. 76th St. in Milwaukee.



Insert cutline here

Campaign Priority | Flexible Funds

FLEXIBLE FUNDS

Help meet current needs and prepare for future challenges

For more than 50 years, the Social Development Commission has provided people in Milwaukee County with the resources they need to move beyond poverty.

Several years ago, staff saw a need emerge for an emergency food pantry, particularly in the existing food desert on Milwaukee's northwest side. When the pandemic hit, SDC felt compelled to act.

A \$50,000 grant from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's MKE Responds Fund, a relief fund created one week after COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, enabled SDC to get the pantry up and running. SDC was one of more than 200 agencies that has received \$5.1 million from the fund since 2020.

"We have to address the immediate need and also move toward transformational change," said Chantell Sain, marketing supervisor, about the pantry. Open five days a week, the site not only addresses an emergency crisis, but it also serves as a new hub for SDC to provide case management and other wraparound services.

Because of the generosity of donors in creating unrestricted funds or contributing to the MKE Responds Fund and Community Grant Fund, a longstanding general flexible fund, the Foundation has been able to respond to emerging needs while also investing in deeper systemic changes needed to shape a stronger region.

“We don’t know what the future holds, whether it’s the next 25 years or the next week,” said Cecelia Gore, Foundation Board member, campaign co-chair and chair of the Foundation’s Community Impact Committee. “I love having flexible dollars available so we can address immediate needs in a way that is robust and collaborative.”

In the Foundation’s early years, funding focused on the community’s greatest needs of that era, such as treatment for tuberculosis and housing for orphans. Over time, the challenges have changed, and the Foundation has pooled flexible funds to best meet them. In the past 50 years alone, it has met needs brought on by the AIDS epidemic, the Great Recession and a global pandemic.

Flexible funds, given during life or established through legacy gifts, have enabled the Foundation to be nimble enough to deal with the unexpected while also proactively investing in long-term solutions that are driven by

partnerships and community insight. This is one of the reasons why flexible funds is one of the five campaign priority areas.

In 2016, following the unrest in Milwaukee’s Sherman Park neighborhood, the Foundation created the Reasons for Hope MKE Fund to address immediate needs in the area and advance resident-led, neighborhood improvement efforts across Milwaukee. It has granted nearly \$400,000, thanks to the generosity of individuals such as Christa Marlowe. As a Milwaukee resident, Marlowe felt compelled to give and liked the fund’s grassroots approach.

“It allows the population the most affected to be creative, be responsive and do what they feel is best,” she said.

That creativity is what continues to inspire donors Tom and Katie Heinen. The Heinens contributed to both the Reasons for Hope and MKE Responds funds through their family fund.

“One of the things we’ve been impressed with as the years have gone by is the creation of new ways to address the issues to help make this a better community for everyone,” said Tom Heinen. “Even people who aren’t exceptionally wealthy like us can make a difference at the right moment.”

Flexible funds

Goal – \$21M

Building the capacity to work with neighbors and address issues, needs and opportunities as they arise.

Plans include:

- Supporting the campaign’s strategic priorities
- Responding to emerging opportunities and needs as they arise
- Building endowed funds to sustain and advance the Foundation’s work across the region

Immediate funding opportunity: COMMUNITY GRANT FUND

Your gift allows the Foundation to respond to challenges, fund important initiatives and build collaborative solutions.



Tom and Katie Heinen donated to the Reasons for Hope and MKE Responds funds through their donor advised fund.



GERTRUDE PAYTON:

A servant of God, community and humanity

"The best lived life is to have spent it doing God's will through your thoughts, words, deeds and modeling of positive examples that can live on."

These words guided Gertrude Payton (née Price) throughout her long and productive life. She died peacefully in her sleep on Feb. 16, her 95th birthday.

Gertrude's active involvement with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation began in 2002, when she and her husband, Mack, and children, Shelia and Renato, established the Payton-Price Family Fund. Its purpose was to offer financial assistance to students of Black African ancestry who attend historically Black colleges and universities.

"Looking out for others is in our family's DNA," said Shelia. Her parents had already set up a scholarship at their alma mater, Alcorn State University in Lorman, Miss., so they were not unaccustomed to the idea of giving.

Gertrude did not just give her "treasure" to causes she cared about. She also gave her time and talent. She participated regularly in donor focus groups as part of the Foundation's strategic planning.

"At the Foundation, we always welcomed Gertrude's voice," said Andrea Ogden, the Paytons' philanthropic adviser. "I learned from her that it takes all of us to build community."

Gertrude was among the first Black educators Milwaukee Public Schools hired to teach above elementary school. Between 1953 and 1999, she taught home economics, served as Title 1 Coordinator, guidance counselor and guidance director. As guidance director at West Division High School, she helped transition it into the Milwaukee High School of the Arts. She also served on curriculum projects at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where she had earned a master's in educational psychology.

"Mrs. Payton always put her students first," said Mary Henry, Gertrude's colleague at MPS. "She would patiently move around the home ec lab, helping students who were having trouble putting in a zipper or sewing on a button."

Henry said Gertrude worked with students other guidance counselors had said "weren't college material." She would coach them through their application process and securing financial aid.

"Many of them graduated from college and have become highly successful," Henry said.

The Paytons' fund is also structured to respond to emerging issues in the African American community. Among its areas of focus are economic self-sufficiency, health, programs that improve educational outcomes for students of Black African ancestry and efforts that showcase arts and culture and other contributions made by people of Black African ancestry.

Payton was an active member of St. Mark AME Church, serving in such positions as a vacation bible school director and a member of the Christian Social Action Forum, which hosted meetings where issues impacting the community and possible solutions were discussed.

Her philanthropy inspired other members – all donors of color – to establish five Foundation funds as well.

"People at our church looked at the fund mom helped establish and thought, 'She's not Oprah and she's doing it, so maybe I can,'" Shelia said.

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Shelia Payton, Gertrude Payton's daughter



Shelia and Gertrude Payton



Bronzeville's beacon of hope, healing

America's Black Holocaust Museum reemerges after 14-year hiatus with Foundation support

In 2008, America's Black Holocaust Museum closed its brick-and-mortar location on North Fourth Street. Despite 20 years in existence, it was in danger of being wiped off the map for good.

In 2022, the museum reopened and was mentioned in The New York Times as one of the main reasons why people should visit Milwaukee's Bronzeville neighborhood.

A small but tenacious group of volunteers, support from an African American legacy group and a couple of catalytic philanthropic investments by an anonymous Foundation donor led to its revival. America's lingering

disparities and racial reckoning have made the cultural cornerstone even more relevant and necessary.

"Our mission is to shed light on the disparities that still exist and have been caused by colonization, slavery and Jim Crow," said Dr. Robert "Bert" Davis, ABHM's president and CEO. "That history must be told. It cannot be denied."

ABHM is dedicated to the legacy of Dr. James Cameron, the only publicly known lynching survivor. Inspired by a visit to Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem, Cameron founded ABHM in 1988 to explore under-told stories of the Black experience from pre-captivity to the present day in order to bring about racial repair and reconciliation.

"He thought we needed that here in Milwaukee, to teach the history of what's going on, because it wasn't taught in schools," said his son, Virgil Cameron. "If you know the history, you have a chance of not repeating it."

In 2008, following Cameron's death and the Great Recession, the museum closed. But in 2010, it began its long road to recovery. In 2012, volunteers launched the museum's virtual presence, which now has more than 3,300 pages of content. Interest in the museum continued to grow organically, thanks to the website and community programming held in churches, libraries and community organizations. However, it was a \$750,000 grant from an anonymous Foundation donor in 2017 that "changed the whole equation," providing much needed resources and momentum to revive the physical space, said Brad Pruitt, ABHM's former executive director and one of the original volunteers to relaunch the museum.

"It sent a message to the world that this is a viable pursuit," Pruitt said. "Who makes a \$750,000 contribution to something unless they have some confidence in its ability to manifest its vision?"

The donor wanted to ensure that the museum's role in sharing the story of Black Americans in U.S. history would be available for Milwaukee and beyond, said Kristen Mekemson, the Foundation's vice president of development and philanthropic services. That generational work aligns with the Foundation's vision of building a Milwaukee for all. The donor also has invested in the Wisconsin Black Historical Society, which has documented and preserved the historical heritage of people of African descent in Wisconsin, serving as a community and educational hub for 35 years.

Over the years, the donor's support of ABHM grew. In 2019 the donor's \$1 million gift helped ABHM start an endowment. In 2021, ABHM received a \$10 million commitment, which in part has allowed it to acquire



Dr. James Cameron, the only publicly known lynching survivor.

another building, hire staff, finish exhibits, hold a reopening ceremony and develop programming.

"There are all kinds of individuals who feel the way I did about my father and what he believed in," said Virgil Cameron. "He hoped everyone was listening. And evidently, they were."

"Our mission is to shed light on the disparities that still exist and have been caused by colonization, slavery and Jim Crow. That history must be told. It cannot be denied."

Dr. Robert "Bert" Davis, ABHM president and CEO

The donor wanted the gift to serve as a springboard for donations, exposure and collaborations, Davis said, both locally and nationally. That wish is already coming to fruition. The museum has received calls from all over the United States and from as far away as London. Close to 900 people visited on its opening day in February 2022, and ABHM averages several hundred weekday visitors.

Museums are being looked upon by the community to be change agents, Davis said, and ABHM's programming and partnerships will help make that happen in a powerful way. It plans to hire three part-time and eight full-time employees within the next 18 months. It purchased a building across the street, 324 W. North Ave., where it will build classrooms, office space, an auditorium and additional exhibit space.

Even before reopening, ABHM has been a catalyst in helping transform the Bronzeville area. Planned area projects include an artist housing cluster, the Foundation's ThriveOn King headquarters and a new Bronzeville Center for the Arts.

"When you think of arts and culture, entertainment and economic development, areas like Bronzeville were epicenters for this – and there is no reason why we shouldn't have them reemerge," Davis said. "It makes total sense that a museum that has chronicled our history would be the cornerstone of doing that."

DONOR'S GIFT OPENS DOOR *for other donors of color*



Donor Danae Davis (second from left) and the three women instrumental in her gift (from left to right): Former Foundation Board Chair Jackie Herd-Barber, her professional adviser, Jennifer Imediagwu, and Fiesha Lynn Bell, the Foundation's associate director of major gifts.

Danae Davis' journey to philanthropy began as a grantee, when she left the corporate sector to become CEO of PEARLS for Teen Girls, which promotes leadership development for adolescent girls. Today, she is executive director of Milwaukee Succeeds, an initiative within the Greater Milwaukee Foundation that advances education equity in Milwaukee.

And now, she is on the grantor side of the table, having recently decided to include the Foundation in her estate plans.

"Since I've been with the Foundation, I've learned to respect how catalytic being a grantor can be for things you care about in the community," Davis said. "I know and trust that my wishes and my passions will outlast my life because I have invested through the Foundation. It is tenacious and sincere with respect to honoring donor intentions. I'm in good hands."

Three African American women were key partners in helping Davis set up her legacy gift. One is Jennifer Imediegwu, an associate attorney with Moertl, Wilkins & Campbell and a Foundation volunteer who helped Davis structure her estate plan and establish the gift.

"The centerpiece of Danae's estate plan is her family," Imediegwu said, "but beyond that, she wanted her long history of advocacy for Black and Brown youth in Milwaukee to continue beyond her life. Creating a revocable living trust that incorporates a significant gift to the Foundation will allow her to do that for generations to come."

While right now Davis said she is not restricting her fund to any particular organizations, she will support groups that help change the success trajectory of the African American community in Milwaukee.

Fiesha Lynn Bell, the Foundation's associate director of major gifts, said Davis' gift comes at a pivotal time, when the Foundation is making a concerted effort to welcome more donors of color. "Philanthropy has existed in communities of color for generations – through the church, through family scholarships," Bell said. "We don't often see ourselves as philanthropists,

but if we're offering our time, talent, treasure and ties, we are! And we need to have those discussions around the dinner table."

The other key partner in Davis' gift was Jackie Herd-Barber, the Foundation's former Board chair. Barber and Davis are also longtime family friends, so over the years, Barber has witnessed Davis' ongoing efforts to make a difference in others' lives.

"In the past, people of color may not have given because they want to give to somebody who looks like them. What Danae has done is open a door, showing that it's okay to participate in a community foundation," Herd-Barber said.

Davis said her son, Kwesi Gordon, 34, a schoolteacher in Houston, is "over-the-moon excited" that his mother is investing a significant sum in something he has always believed in as well.


She also said she wanted to time her gift while Herd-Barber was Foundation Board chair.

"It's wonderful to see four Black women responsible for this legacy," she said. "I don't think this has ever happened before."

"Since I've been with the Foundation, I've learned to respect how catalytic being a grantor can be for things you care about in the community. The Foundation is tenacious and sincere with respect to honoring donor intentions. I'm in good hands."

Danae Davis
Foundation donor
Executive Director, Milwaukee Succeeds

GreaterMilwaukeeFoundation.org

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Support violence prevention, healing through MKE Responds Fund

With escalating violence threatening the well-being of people across Milwaukee, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation has launched a direct response that includes both immediate support and long-term collaborative efforts.

Through flexible funds, the Foundation is making an initial investment of \$1 million, which will go toward the Violence Prevention Fund, grassroots organizations, funeral services support, youth-identified programming, mental health support and more. But the support cannot stop there. The Foundation is inviting individuals and institutions to contribute to the MKE Responds Fund. Gifts at any level make a difference.

The fund was tailored to respond to the community's most pressing needs and originally provided relief to individuals and organizations adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. All new donations made to the fund will support violence prevention efforts. Later this summer, the Foundation will convene other funders, donors and community leaders to better address the root causes of violence and support sustained, community-centered solutions.

Visit greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/mkeresponds to make a gift.

