



Connections

from our Home to Yours

Message from President and CEO, John Guidugli



Dave Belew Trail

In my 24 years with the Hamilton Community Foundation, among my most memorable experiences are the opportunities I've had to work with people who truly support this community. And throughout those years there has perhaps been no greater example of a community champion than Dave Belew.

I first met Dave when I interviewed for my position with the Foundation in 1999. What struck me most about his commitment to the community was how complete and sincere he was in his love of our community. Over the years I witnessed it over and over – Dave Belew giving back – serving as a community leader.

While recognition has never been a motivator for Dave, I'm pleased to say that Hamilton's City Council recently adopted a resolution to name the Great Miami Recreational Trail in Hamilton the Dave Belew Trail.

A fitting tribute considering Dave's involvement in making the bikeway a reality.

The extension of this trail was one of a series of community gifts that the Foundation made to the community in celebration of our 50th anniversary in 2001. Dave was chair of the Foundation board and chair of the 50th anniversary committee. He was the inspiration for all of the anniversary gifts and was the driving force to ensure that all the gifts came to fruition. The trail extension was a little more complicated than some of the other gifts, but Dave never wavered in his commitment to completing this project. It took longer than expected, but the result is wonderful and continues to serve as an outstanding addition to the quality of life in our community.



Dave Belew

Announcing New Investment Partner

The Hamilton Community Foundation has made it a priority to ensure that donated funds are being invested wisely to give back to the community. To that end, we are pleased to announce our new investment managers, who have been selected after an extensive interview process.

We welcome our partnership with Merrill Lynch's highly acclaimed Investment Advisors, Evelo | Singer | Sullivan | Bruegge & JEMM Global Institutional Consulting Group. With numerous accolades under their belt, including being named the #1 Team in Ohio by Forbes and ranked as a Top 100 Institutional Consulting Team by Barron's, we are confident in the expertise and guidance they will bring to our donors. Their focus on investment management,

philanthropic thought leadership, donor education, and nonprofit governance will provide our donors with consistent advice and counsel while engaging our board in fiduciary oversight. We look forward to a successful partnership and continued growth with Merrill.

With their expertise and experience, we are confident that they will help us grow our charitable funds and maximize the impact of our donations on the Hamilton community.

"We did our research and found the best team to help oversee the Foundation's investments," Jack Whalen, Chair, HCF Investment Committee.



The Sanders Family Receives 2023 David L Belew Legacy Award

Dave Belew is very well known for the substantial contributions he's made to the Hamilton community. As the inspiration for and first recipient of the David L Belew Legacy Award, He personifies giving back, lifting others up and contributing in positive ways to the community. Ever since that first award in 2010 a new person/persons are recognized at the Annual Meeting each year.

The Sanders Family is a perfect example of generational philanthropy. You can't simply choose one member of the family to recognize because they all have left their mark on the community in one way or another.

With four generations at the helm of Butler Lumber Company, the Sanders have shaped the architectural landscape of Hamilton. They have created neighborhoods that countless families are proud to call home.

But their pursuit of community betterment didn't stop at business. Herman L Sanders laid the groundwork for community leadership via City Council. The Sanders Family's service has spanned various boards and organizations with Bud, Mike, Mary Ann, Sandy and Thomas all playing significant roles in shaping our community through their diverse involvement.

Beyond their leadership, the Sanders Family is known for their generous spirit, evident in the donation of land for the creation of the Optimist Club and Sanders Park. Their legacy of giving is further exemplified by



Accepting the award at the Annual Meeting were Michael B Sanders, Mark L Sanders, Thomas A Sanders and Herman R "Sandy" Sanders.

the significant roles they've played on the Foundation Board.

The family has established multiple charitable funds with the Foundation, aimed at supporting education in the Hamilton community. These funds are a testament to the Sanders Family's devotion to making a lasting impact and ensuring the continued well-being of our community.

In honoring the Sanders Family with this award, we are not just recognizing their historic and ongoing contributions. We are celebrating a family whose dedication, service, and generosity have left an indelible mark on Hamilton. The Sanders Family exemplifies the spirit of community building, embodying a passion for making Hamilton a place of opportunity, growth, and unity.



Welcome New Board Members

The Hamilton Community Foundation is pleased to announce the addition of two new Board Members, Catherine Evans and Mitchell Vocke.



Catherine comes to the Foundation with considerable Board experience, having served on the boards of the Butler County United Way, Chambers of Commerce of Hamilton, Middletown and West Chester-Liberty and the Middletown Community Foundation.

Cathi is an attorney and Director at Millikin & Fitton Law Firm where she serves clients in the areas of business and transactional law, contracts, real estate, estate planning and probate.

Cathi and her husband Jay live in Hamilton and enjoy participating in all that Hamilton has to offer.

"The Hamilton Community Foundation has always been the go-to for change and philanthropy in Hamilton," says Cathi, "I've been working in and serving this community for a long time, and now that I'm a resident here, this feels like a perfect way to continue that service in an impactful and tangible way, I'm ready to get to work."



Mitchell Vocke is the Chief Lending Officer at Telhio Credit Union and one of the Foundation's new Board Members. Mitch has Board experience as the previous Advisory Board Chair for the Central YMCA and as a Board Member at the Greater Miami Valley YMCA. He currently sits on the Board of the Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce.

Mitch grew up in Lindenwald and says growing up in and serving Hamilton via his career as always been extremely rewarding.

"Building a better community and leading change to improve the community have always been a passion of mine," he says.

Mitch hopes to continue to have a positive impact on the community via participation on the Hamilton Community Foundation Board.

Welcome Cathi and Mitch!



2024 Board Officers:

Cynamon Trokhan, President, Robert Long, Vice President, Andy Schuster, Treasurer, Jason Crank, Secretary



Thank You for Your Service, John and Cindy

Special thanks must go out to two retiring board members, Cynthia Parrish and John Kirsch, both of whom are leaving quite a legacy with the Foundation.



Cindy Parrish has a unique commitment to the Hamilton Community Foundation, having served both as an Executive Director of the organization and a Board Member – not at the same time of course. Cindy was employed by the Foundation during a time of tremendous growth and she worked closely with John Guidugli before she agreed to become a Board Member.

John Kirsch served in every possible officer capacity on the Hamilton Community Foundation Board during his three full terms – Treasurer, Vice Chair, Chair and lastly Secretary. John's input was invaluable in recent years as the Foundation became involved in critical economic development projects.

The personal and professional gifts that Cindy and John brought to the Board will be missed.

Funds in Action! Take a look at some photos from events and



1. Cornstand Jam 2. One City, One Book; Bonnie Carmus, author of *Lessons in Chemistry* 3. Great American Bike Rally for the Boys and Girls Club

Putting Money Back in Teachers' Pockets



According to statistics, teachers spend on average \$500 to \$900 of their own money annually for classroom needs. The Education Committee of the Hamilton Community Foundation decided to create a Fund to help address that.

The Mini Grants 4 Teachers Fund is a new initiative that alleviates some of the personal financial burden of outfitting the classroom with supplies, incentive items, sensory objects, etc.

"The districts have so many financial concerns that they can't do this for teachers," says Bob Long, HCF Board Vice Chair and member of the Education Committee. "I think the Hamilton Community Foundation is a perfect place to have a program like this."



Educators in the Hamilton City School District were encouraged to submit online grants for no more than \$300 to purchase classroom enhancement items. 110 grants were submitted, and the Foundation awarded grants to 55 teachers totaling nearly \$15,000.

"Seeing how much these grants impacted teachers makes me want to do more. I'd like to see us expand the program in years to come," says Long.

The Education Committee was able to utilize targeted donations made for this purpose. For the program to continue, and potentially expand to parochial schools in the future, the Fund is going

to have to continue to grow. For those in the community with a heart for education, the Mini Grants 4 Teachers fund might be a perfect philanthropic fit.



4.Operation Pumpkin 5.RiversEdge 6.Kat Walk for Katherine Schindler Memorial Fund

First Financial Bank Fund Focused on Hamilton

First Financial Foundation has been making grants for years in multiple communities and states. By establishing the First Financial Bank Fund they are laying the foundation for support in the local community.

“At First Financial, we believe there’s always an opportunity to help others succeed,” says Roddell McCullough, Chief Responsibility Officer for First Financial Bank. “We’re proud to be dedicated to and investing in the economic growth and stability of communities where we live and work.”

First Financial Bank has pledged \$160,000 over four years to support organizations and initiatives in Hamilton. Each year \$40,000 will be awarded to programs that fall into the categories of Neighborhood Development, Workforce Development and Education, and Culture and Arts. The grants will be administered by the Hamilton Community Foundation, utilizing the Foundation’s grant portal.

Organizations will be able to apply for the First Financial Bank Fund grants beginning January 1, 2024 through the Foundation’s online grant portal.





HIGHER Fund *Created to Support Behavioral Growth*



After years of volunteer work in the areas of health care, education, and social service, the Cohen family has been inspired to create the HIGHER Fund at the Hamilton Community Foundation. The HIGHER Fund will be mission driven to promote individual behavior growth in Honesty, Integrity, Generosity, Humility, Empathy, and Respect.

The HIGHER Fund is about encouraging integrity – doing the right thing when no one is looking, a concept that we could all certainly embrace.



“Our desire is to create an endowment that has a visionary basis of providing resources for programs that build character to achieve positive behavioral change and personal growth that will transform the quality of life in our communities,” said Neil Cohen.

The Cohens have certainly elevated that concept in their giving and their caring about community issues as their charitable contributions are too great to list.

While the HIGHER Fund is the creation of the Cohen family, and the lead gift for the Fund will be given by the Cohens, Neil, Honi, Jill, and Brian, they really don’t want the Fund to be about them. It’s about who the Fund can help. “We want the mission and focus of the Fund to inspire others to give to the initiative as well, commented Neil”

“There’s a Jewish tradition called Tzedakah, which commonly refers to charity. My grandparents and then my parents had a box on their counter where they would regularly put change or pocket money. They used the money from the box to help people in need,” said Jill.

The Hamilton Community Foundation is a perfect partner to

facilitate the grant funding. “There’s trust and relationship with the Hamilton Community Foundation. We appreciate the history of the Foundation and the footprint you’ve already created in our community. And we know that by creating an endowed Fund at the Foundation, the Fund will continue long after we are gone,” Neil continued.

“We are honored to facilitate this Fund and the grant application process,” says Katie Braswell, Vice President of the Hamilton Community Foundation. “The Cohens have been a friend to the Foundation for many years and certainly have shown their dedication and commitment to enhancing this community. I’m very excited to see what we can do together with the HIGHER Fund.”

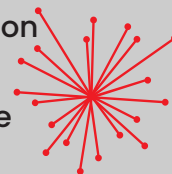
The HIGHER Fund will make grants once a year for programs, services and initiatives that align with its mission. An advisory committee will evaluate the grants and make the ultimate decision about funding. And while the Cohens are certain that existing local organizations have programming that will fit the criteria, they are also hoping that the Fund inspires new ideas, new ways to approach the issues that people face in the world and community today. Collaborative efforts will be especially valued and appreciated by the committee.

“We really hope that this Fund can help change the trajectory of lives. We want to encourage the idea that asking for help and seeking a better way is honorable. We weren’t talking about classes or grades at the dinner table,” says Jill. “We talked about what we did that day to make someone’s life better. We were taught to leave people better than where you found them.”

That commitment to community is something that runs deep in the Cohen family.

Each element of HIGHER - Honesty, Integrity, Generosity, Humility, Empathy and Respect describe the Cohen family. The Cohens have built a strong reputation as philanthropists in every sense of the word and they are now taking that mission even higher.

The grant application for the HIGHER Fund will be accessible via the Hamilton Community Foundation online grant portal. The first grant cycle will take place in 2024.





Women in Philanthropy: *L to R*; Samantha Wyatt, Sara Silva, Bethany Spaeth, Arnita Gunn, Emmy Piatt, Jennifer Clark, Catherine Rentschler, Chamina Curtis and Paige Hufford. *Not pictured*: Ann Marie Cilley



The Women Inspiring Philanthropy initiative through the Hamilton Community Foundation is the brainchild of the Foundation's Women's Fund committee. The idea began as a way to introduce more women in the community to the Foundation and to the needs of local women and girls. In addition, the Committee hopes that a natural by-product of the program is to have more women getting involved on nonprofit boards and committees.

"We are really providing a holistic look at the way philanthropy looks for a women, specifically," says Womens Fund Committee Chair Niki Motley. "We want the women who participate in our program to be inspired to engage in whatever area of community makes sense for them. We're educating and elevating busy, educated women who already love Hamilton. The next natural step is helping them plug into their passion."

Ten local, diverse women are participating in the inaugural Women in Philanthropy program: Samantha Wyatt, Sara Silva, Bethany Spaeth, Arnita Gunn, Emmy Piatt, Jennifer Clark, Catherine Rentschler, Chamina Curtis and Paige Hufford and Ann Marie Cilley. The group began meeting monthly in September with a variety of topics on the agenda, such as leadership opportunities, volunteer opportunities and networking.

"For me it has been great being intentional about being with a group of women focused on the growth of women and girls specifically," says Arnita Gunn. "I've also really enjoyed the highlight of the Women's Fund, something I didn't have a connection with at HCF."

Bethany Spaeth, a mom of twin girls, says her daughters are at the core of her motivation to participate.

"I take it personally to ensure that they, and other girls in our community, face no barriers to their success and dreams," she says. "Together we can work toward a future where all women and girls have the opportunities and support they need to thrive and succeed."

The Women's Fund was created in 1997 by Joan Witt and Karen Whalen to bring awareness to the issues facing women and girls in Hamilton. Since that time more than 30 organizations have received grants from the Women's Fund and over \$280,000 has been poured into programming for women and girls.

Today the Women's Fund Committee is comprised of Chair, Nikki Motley, Liz Hayden, Joan Witt, Nancy O'Neil and Carrie Zancan.



Harry T. Wilks Hamilton Celebrates Education Event Honors Educators



L to R: Katy Cook, Kelsey Brooks, Elijah Balsbaugh, Gaby Tagliamonte, Emily Fontaine, Laura McFarland, Colleen Brewer, Michele Campbell, Eryn McNabb, Amy Butterfield, Brandi Taulbee, Christina French, Sarah Graf, Steve Heckman, Debbie Gleason, Steve Connaughton, Roberta Smiley, Jim Platt. *Not pictured*: Tina Mazzeo

Twenty-one years ago Harry T. Wilks had a conversation with Foundation President and CEO John Guidugli. Wilks wanted to do something to honor local educators and Guidugli suggested what is now the Harry T. Wilks Hamilton Celebrates Education event, now in its 21st year. While Mr. Wilks is no longer here to continue the tradition, his family makes sure that his vision continues by supporting this event each year.

Nineteen local educators were recognized at the 21st annual Harry T. Wilks Hamilton Celebrates Education event at the Marriott downtown with a \$1,000 grant for the school/classroom and a personal gift created by Inspiration Studio artists. This event draws not only the honorees and their families, but also the peers, co-workers and administrators who come to applaud their schools' recipient.

"It's a fun and lively evening of celebration," says Katie Braswell, Vice President of the Hamilton Community Foundation. "In that room, on that night, everyone is united in appreciation for educators making a difference."



319 N. Third Street
Hamilton, OH 45011
513.863.1717
hamiltonfoundation.org



Address correction requested

Up and Coming

Scholarship applications open **December 8 to January 7.**

2024 Scholarship Reception will take place in **May.**

Unrestricted Community Grant Applications due **January 2.**

'Tis the Season to Give

The end of the year is near! Don't forget that your gift made by December 31 will count toward your 2023 taxes. Year end gifts to your community are the best kind of gift!



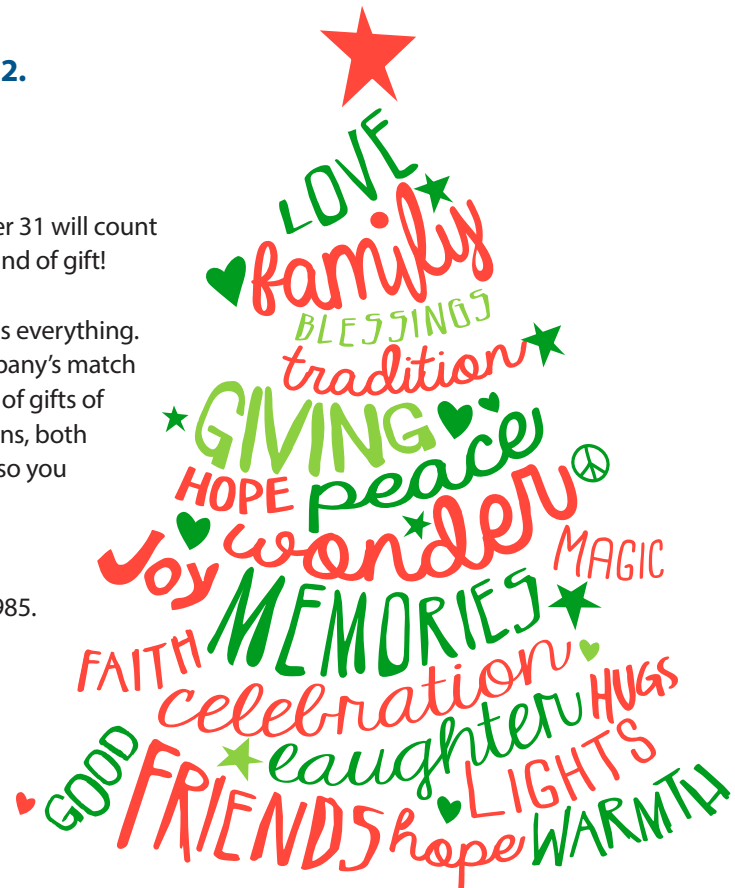
Gifts of charity are great gifts for the person who has everything. It's also a great time to take advantage of a company's match program. Just remember that the transactions of gifts of appreciated stock or gifts from retirement plans, both very attractive options, may take a little time so you won't want to wait for those.

To start your end of year charitable gift to the Foundation call Jacob Stone-Welch at 513-341-6985.

Holiday Office Hours

The Hamilton Community Foundation will be staffed during normal business hours Monday through Friday 8 am to 5 pm through December 30 EXCEPT for the following dates

Closed Monday, December 26 & Monday, January 1



Foundation Mission Statement

"Building a better community through creative philanthropy, vision and leadership."

Foundation Vision Statement

"Continue to be the trusted resource for growing philanthropy and leading change to improve our community."