



# CRAIN'S

## CLEVELAND BUSINESS

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### FOOD HALLS OFFER A FEAST OF CHOICE

The new Van Aken Market Hall in Shaker Heights reflects a nationwide trend.

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PORTRAITS BY JASON MILLER/PIXELATE PHOTOGRAPHY FOR CRAIN'S CLEVELAND BUSINESS

### GOVERNMENT

## Selling Cleveland to the richest of the big-money investors

The city is hoping its Opportunity Zones can be a 'vehicle' to a group it usually doesn't attract

BY KIM PALMER

The city of Cleveland has issued on average \$1 billion in building permits every year for more than eight years. Development, at least recently, is not a problem for the city. But with most of that development coming from lo-

cal sources, city officials are contemplating how to broaden the pool of investors.

One approach is to pursue ultra-high-net-worth individuals who, as a result of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, can use Cleveland's many Opportunity Zones as a long-term tax shelter.

"The Opportunity Zone tax incentive provides an additional vehicle to make Cleveland investment more attractive to high-net-worth individuals, and there are about 40 such areas in the city of Cleveland," said David Ebersole, Cleveland's director of economic development.

To attract the type of entrepreneurs who could benefit from Opportunity Zone-type investment, Mayor Frank Jackson is attending Techonomy 2019, a three-day conference that started Sunday, Nov. 17, in Half Moon Bay, Calif. He is scheduled to participate in a public discus-

sion, "What one city has learned about tech," led by Techonomy editor Josh Kampel, that's described as being about "how business and tech are finding new pathways to civic renovation."

See **OPPORTUNITY** on Page 8

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NEWSPAPER

### AKRON

Girl Scouts and local companies are partnering to add to STEM workforce ranks.

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◀ **Source Lunch:** Christopher Alvarado, executive director of Slavic Village Development, says changing perceptions about Cleveland's most diverse neighborhood is a key part of his job. **PAGE 35**

# New president is aiming to take NEOMED to the next level

BY LYDIA COUTRÉ

In his first 20 days as the new president of Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED), Dr. John Langell logged nearly 3,000 miles traversing the state to meet with stakeholders.

Since starting Oct. 1, Langell has focused on getting to know the nuts and bolts of the university, engaging NEOMED's "immediate family" (its faculty, students, staff and alumni) and its "extended family" (local, regional and state government partners, academic partners, philanthropic donors and more).

"I don't want to be that person who comes in and starts to drive change without really knowing what our needs are, what our community requires of us, what the ecosystem and environment needs," Langell said. "I wanted to give our folks an opportunity to meet me to learn about me, to trust me, for me to meet them and to learn about them."

A U.S. veteran, surgeon, educator, health care leader and entrepreneur, Langell most recently served as vice dean at the School of Medicine at the University of Utah, where he also founded and served as executive director of the Center for Medical Innovation. He was tapped to lead NEOMED as its seventh president, succeeding Jay Gershen, who retired at the end of September.

Robert J. Klonk was chair of the NEOMED board during the presidential search, which he led. His term as chair ended Oct. 1, but he remains a board member.

"We made it very clear: Jay Gershen had done a remarkable job in growing NEOMED from what was NEOUCOM at the time into what

NEOMED is today," said Klonk, CEO of Oswald Cos. "We weren't looking for another Jay Gershen. We were looking for that leader who can now take what Jay had built and transform it into what we need for the next level going forward."

Langell proved to be that leader, securing a unanimous recommendation from the search advisory board, made up of community members, faculty, staff and board members, Klonk said, adding that Langell is "a visionary" who brings energy into a room, drives execution strategies and can really



—Dr. John Langell, NEOMED president

transform NEOMED as an institution.

For his part, Langell was excited by the opportunity to lead a smaller, nimble organization and its team of passionate, driven employees.

"It gives us the ability to start to look at ways to change education in health care, the delivery of health care, without being currently tied into the current reimbursement system through a tertiary care center that's really wanting to change, but at the same time having to practice within the confines of the way we do medicine now," he said.

After enlisting in the U.S. Air Force after high school, Langell received a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of California at Los Ange-

les. He went on to also earn Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Public Health and Master of Business Administration degrees. Langell completed his surgical residency at Stanford University Medical Center, as well as a residency in space and aerospace medicine at NASA/University of Texas Medical Branch.

Along his educational path, the USAF recruited him and he came back as an officer in the Air Force Reserve, a track that "really paralleled the rest of my life," he said. Ultimately, he retired from the Air Force Reserve after a total of 24 years in the service.

For the past 13 years, Langell had been with the University of Utah, where he built out the Center for Medical Innovation, a health care-focused technology commercialization and process improvement program that aimed to improve health care quality, access and the development of new technologies.

Though he's still learning the landscape at NEOMED, Langell already has ideas for its future, including building dynamic future leaders.

"From the student side, what we need to do that we're not doing well at any institution in health care education is how do we teach them to be real leaders, to be change agents?" he said. "And that includes empowering them through education that's not just focused on here's the great way for you to treat disease processes, but understand the business of the world

that you're going to be entering into."

To some extent, NEOMED is doing that well today, Langell added, noting that many of the university's graduates are in major leadership roles.

"So we've done something right, but I'm not sure anybody here knows exactly what that strength is yet. It's just been part of our fabric," he said. "Now, we're going to work on developing changes to our curriculum to push really intentional pathways of development around this and to grow whatever that secret sauce is and add to it strategically and thoughtfully."

Currently under construction on NEOMED's campus is a \$24 million office building and academic learning center. Slated to open in late 2020, the building will be the new face of NEOMED and Bio-Med Science Academy, a STEM+M high school on campus.

As for future growth of the campus, Langell said he will focus on expansion where it makes sense, emphasizing programmatic needs first.

"My biggest focus is really going to be on program development," he said. "What aren't we serving in the health care space now that we should be? Are there additional professionals that are absent or just not at the levels they need to be to deliver health care here? Should we grow new programs in those areas? How do we take the ones we have and either expand them or change them to better meet the needs of patients?"

He wants to find ways to emphasize offering equitable care in underserved areas. As a state institution, NEOMED's job is not only to build health care practitioners, but also to expand health care to areas that don't have it, he said, noting three fo-

cal areas where they want to grow health care leaders: social justice pathways, rural health pathways and urban health pathways.

He also wants to bring in his background as an entrepreneur to help advance and expand the Research, Entrepreneurship, Discovery and Innovation Zone (REDIzone) at NEOMED, which supports biotech innovators as they take their research from concept to capital. He's helped start more than 80 startup companies, with five of his own startups. He worked hard at the University of Utah to set up programs that connect students with industry and government initiatives to create an ecosystem to support and accelerate product development.

For the REDIzone, he wants to bring in more partners and build the program out.

"I've had really outstanding discussions with the leadership in our state, who understand the power of entrepreneurship, and they're starting to grow a bigger community around this. We want to be part of it," he said. "It's not about siloing yourself and saying, 'Look what I did.' It's about coming together and showing what we did."

After a varied career in health care, Langell has been drawn to the education piece for the ability to motivate, empower and engage students.

"And I think that's our role as educators: not just to share the knowledge but to teach them how to build upon our knowledge and how to take it and apply it where they can really have impact," he said. "And in health care, I can't think of a better mission for them to come out and do that work."

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# Mentor to gain multitenant office space via \$8M project

BYSTAN BULLARD

Small Brothers LLC, a real estate development company led by the Small family that owns Cleveland Construction Co., has bought land and retained an architect for a 40,000-square-foot multitenant office building it plans to build on Norton Parkway on the eastern end of Mentor.

Bud Balsom, senior vice president of Small Brothers, said the company plans to construct a "Class A" office building because it believes there is pent-up demand for office space in Lake County.

"We believe construction of a new hospital by the Cleveland Clinic on a site just east of this one on Norton Parkway will attract additional interest in the area," Balsom said. The company wants to make a statement about the maturation of the Mentor area as an office market by hiring DLR Group | Westlake Reed Leskosky of Cleveland to design the structure.

"We've told them they have a wide-open palette to show us their design ideas," Balsom added. "We will seek pre-leasing, but we plan to build this even if we don't have it."

The project has not yet been submitted to Mentor for planning approvals, but Balsom said Small Brothers has shared its ideas with the city and other Lake County officials.

Paul Siemborski, principal of DLR Group | Westlake Reed Leskosky, said in an emailed statement that the firm "looks forward to the opportunity to design a signature building for the Small Brothers, enhancing opportunities for businesses and industries to select Mentor as a home."

Kevin Malecek, Mentor director of economic development and international trade, said the city is excited about the project, which it expects to be the county's "premier Class A" office development.

"The Small Brothers project demonstrates the continued economic vitality of Mentor to accommodate state-of-the-art office space in areas where it makes the most sense," Malecek said, because of its

proximity to the interchange of state Route 615 and I-90.

Mark Rantala, executive director of the Lake County Ohio Port & Economic Development Authority, said he believes the project is needed.

"We think it's a very good idea because of what's happening at the interchange near there," Rantala said.

Activity there includes the proposed hospital as well as the headquarters of Avery Dennison's Rolled Materials Division, not to mention the many homes that have been built there over the past 10 years.

Balsom said likely tenants would be professional service firms and offices of Lake County businesses.

Jeremy Steiger, an office expert and partner at Lee & Associates of Pepper Pike, said a new rental office building would set a new high for office rents in the Mentor area, which is primarily a \$10- to \$20-per-square-foot market. He said a new building likely will demand rents of more than \$30 a square foot. Most of the office buildings in the area are under 30,000 square feet and are more than 15 years old, according to online real estate data provider CoStar.

"Deal flow there is not as fast as in other parts of the region," Steiger noted. "If they are patient, it will lease up and they'll have a good project. If they can read the market as well as Cleveland Construction can build buildings, that development will be in good hands."

Lake County is part of the east suburban office market, which Newmark Knight Frank said had a vacancy rate of almost 12%, the lowest of any segment of the region's office market, according to its most recent report as of Aug. 31. And that follows completion of new office projects in closer-in suburbs such as Chagrin Highlands III in Beachwood, offices at the Van Aken District in Shaker Heights and the Pinecrest mixed-use project in Orange Village.

Small Brothers is based in Naples, Fla., where Cleveland Construction has an office. The headquarters of the national building concern remains in Mentor.



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**REAL ESTATE**

# Lyndhurst developer crafts \$20 million apartment plan for Larchmere Blvd.

BY STAN BULLARD

At the eastern edge of the well-known Larchmere Boulevard commercial district on Cleveland's East Side, a four-story apartment building likely to cost more than \$20 million to develop is in the works.

First Interstate Properties, the Lyndhurst real estate development firm led by Mitchell Schneider, has lined up legislation from Mayor Frank Jackson's administration for a tax increment financing package for the proposed 88-suite apartment building at 12201 Larchmere. The legislation received an administrative review from the Cleveland City Planning Commission last Friday, Nov. 15, and is scheduled to be introduced at Cleveland City Council's meeting on Monday, Nov. 18.

First Interstate's most recent development was the 20-story One University Circle apartment building, a joint venture with home builder Sam Petros at that address last year in the city's health care, educational and museum district. Schneider said in an interview last Wednesday, Nov. 13, that he had been looking to pivot to another apartment development since finishing One University, a departure from the firm's primary role as a big-box shopping center developer.

"We've been looking for quite a while in the city of Cleveland to find a project that targets the middle market," Schneider said, as opposed to the luxury amenities and top-drawer rents at One University. "We plan to do first-class apartments and follow One University with something that is more workforce-oriented. Larch-



A single-story building at 12201 Larchmere Blvd. will go down if plans for an apartment building by First Interstate Properties of Lyndhurst come to fruition. | COSTAR

mere is a wonderful, walkable neighborhood for us to build in."

Schneider said he did not have a proposed rent range yet for studio and one-bedroom suites at the site, nor architectural drawings, which are still being developed. He said First Interstate hopes to begin pursuing city approvals for the development this spring. The goal is to provide a new apartment option for people who work at nearby University Circle institutions or who hope to move out of homes in the neighborhood to downsize.

The proposed site is a former charter school owned by NEO Lumen Realty of Akron, which has more than an acre of land and is occupied by a small brick building dating from 1962, according to Cuyahoga County land records. Schneider said he has optioned the site.

Councilman Blaine Griffin, whose Ward 6 includes Larchmere, said First Interstate was one of several developers he recruited to redevelop the site, adding that residents of the neighborhood were about to start a petition drive against a proposed

dollar store there when he started seeking alternatives to the owner's retreating the building.

"(Schneider) showed the best strategy for the site and met with block clubs and community leaders to sound them out about the project," Griffin said in a phone interview. "Residents were adamantly against a dollar store at the site. Providing a new apartment building for working families will be a plus for the neighborhood."

Griffin said the plan calls for installing in the building about 6,000 square feet of office space facing Larchmere, which will provide more support for shops and restaurants there. A briefing summary from the city's Department of Economic Development said the office space could house as many as 20 people.

Griffin added the city will provide a \$430,000, low-interest loan for the project through its Vacant Property Initiative.

"It's an exciting time on Larchmere," he said. "The new (Sunbeam Elementary School) is giving the street momentum (that) we're happy to keep going."

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# Food halls feed patrons hungry for good eats and community

Van Aken Market Hall, which houses 11 businesses in Shaker, reflects a nationwide trend

BY MARY VANAC

Cleveland is home to one of the nation's original market halls: the West Side Market, which opened in 1912. But a new generation of market halls, often called food halls, is emerging to feed our need for community as well as for local, artisanal food and drink.

"We're trying to showcase what is the best of Cleveland," said Megan O'Donnell, marketing manager for Van Aken District, the mixed-use retail center at Chagrin Boulevard and Warrensville Center Road in Shaker Heights that houses the Van Aken Market Hall.

Food halls are "largely divided into two basic camps: larger projects, often in historic, transit-oriented locales, or smaller, often chef-driven concepts — almost all of which were located in Manhattan and just a handful of other cities," Cushman & Wakefield, a commercial real estate services firm in Chicago, wrote in a report on food halls, published in May 2019.

Food halls reflect "not only the increasing consumer demand for authentic, healthier food options, but also an affordable real estate option for a rising tide of entrepreneurs," according to the report.

The Chicago firm wrote its first report on the food hall movement in November 2016, correctly predicting that 2019 would be the "Year of the Food Hall" in the U.S.

In late 2016, "there were roughly 120 projects around the country," according to Cushman & Wakefield's latest report. "That number is on track to nearly quadruple, with 450 food halls expected to be operational throughout the United States by the end of 2020."

Two food hall concepts recently opened in the Cleveland area: Van Aken Market Hall opened in December 2018, and Ohio City Galley on West 25th Street in Cleveland opened a couple of months earlier, in October 2018.

Ohio City Galley hosts four restaurants and is operated, at least in part, as a restaurant accelerator, offering first-time restaurant owners a low-cost, low-risk place to launch. It is managed by Galley Group Inc., a food hall development, management and advisory company in Pittsburgh.

Meanwhile, the larger Van Aken Market Hall houses 11 businesses, some food-related and some not, and most of which have other locations. The hall is in the heart of Van Aken District, the new \$100 million apartment, office and retail complex developed by RMS Investment Corp. and Shaker Heights.

The Van Aken hall is a great example of some of the food hall trends. For one, it is located at RTA's Blue Line rapid transit terminal, and two, it hosts mostly independent purveyors of local, artisanal food.

The hall also is home to Stem Handmade Soap and Spice For Life, a woman-owned social enterprise that sells spices, spice blends and related products, giving part of its proceeds to organizations that support survivors of human trafficking.

"We provide high-quality spices, many of them ground on site," said Penny Harris, spice master and one of three women who partnered to start the social enterprise. "We also give back to the community."



A massive mural frames an array of beers on tap behind the Craft Collective bar at the Van Aken Market Hall in Shaker Heights.



Spice master Penny Harris talks about her philosophy and practice of offering many spices and blends in fresh, small batches at her Spice For Life stall.

## At a glance: Van Aken Market Hall



The market hall in Shaker Heights is home to 11 businesses:

- ▶ Luster, A Gift Boutique
- ▶ Banter
- ▶ Scorpiacchiata Pasta Co.
- ▶ Spice For Life
- ▶ Stem Handmade Soap
- ▶ On the Rise Artisan Breads
- ▶ Rising Star Coffee
- ▶ Shinola (a high-end gift shop)
- ▶ Craft Collective
- ▶ Chutney B
- ▶ Brassica

Unlike food courts — which are collections of mostly chain or franchised vendors, such as McDonald's and Auntie Anne's pretzels, created by shopping malls and transportation hubs during the 1990s — food halls host mostly independent, artisanal food and drink vendors.

And while food court customers eat their food at tiny tables or bars — or out of hand as they walk to catch a plane or window-shop among retail stores — food hall customers usually sit at long rows of communal tables so they can talk to one another while they eat.

The tables buzzed with conversation during a recent Friday lunch hour at Van Aken Market Hall. A couple wheeling a toddler in a stroller bought lunch from Chutney B, an Indian masala and curry stall that is the latest food concept from chef Douglas Katz, owner of Fire Food and Drink on Shaker Square. The family settled in at the communal tables in Craft Collective, a side project of BottleHouse Brewery and Meadery, which has locations in Cleveland Heights and Lakewood.

"The Van Aken Market Hall came to be as this area in which people could congregate, really build that sense of community and spend time together," said O'Donnell, the hall's marketing manager, who uses the "market hall" name because the Van Aken hall includes nonfood retailers.

The idea of "creating a new downtown for Shaker Heights" was what attracted Matthew Stipe and his Banter Beer & Wine to the Van Aken Market Hall. Stipe co-owns the full-service Banter in Gordon Square on Cleveland's West Side. Banter is known for its craft beer, fine wine, housemade gourmet sausages and Quebec-style poutine.

When the Van Aken District was still being constructed, the project's marketers approached Stipe and his

partners about opening a Banter location in the new market hall.

"At first, we didn't think it was going to be a good fit," Stipe said.

The cultural differences between communities on the East and West sides of Cleveland were a concern for Stipe and his partners.

"The East Side ... lacks some of the local charm that the West Side offers," Stipe said.

But when the Van Aken marketers came back a year or so later with a much more locally and community-focused approach, Stipe and his partners agreed and became one of the hall's founding tenants.

"We were looking at potentially adding a second location, and the market hall was a great opportunity," Stipe said. "From a business standpoint, it allowed us to dip our toe in the water" in a new market with a 400-square-foot food stall rather than another full-service restaurant and all its related costs.

He and his partners customized their Van Aken menu a bit for the smaller space, adding some corn dogs for kids and halving the poutine servings so they could be lighter for lunch. They also developed some new ways to operate so they could get their food to customers faster.

"We were overwhelmed with the amount of business" in the new, smaller space in the Van Aken hall, Stipe said. "We were putting out two to three times more food than we had anticipated putting out."

The Van Aken hall hosts events inside and outside its space, O'Donnell said, adding that it will host the winter North Union Farmers Market beginning in January.

"I think they did a really great job of making it a community focal point and a new place that all different people in the Shaker Heights area can use," Stipe said, "not just to eat and to buy stuff, but to use as a great public space."

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# Citizens eyes untapped potential under new Ohio leader

## Rhode Island-based bank has recruited former JPMorgan Chase exec to grow its market share

BY JEREMY NOBILE

For the past several years, Rhode Island-based Citizens Bank has worked to slowly and steadily grow market share in the Midwest, where it sees a lot of untapped potential for winning new customers and wringing additional business out of existing ones, particularly when comparing prospects to even more fragmented markets like those surrounding its home base in New England.

This fall's recruitment of Jim Malz — a veteran JPMorgan Chase banker who now leads the Midwest as regional executive for Citizens, in addition to taking over as Ohio president — seems to have CEO Bruce Van Saun feeling quite bullish about achieving growth prospects. That goes not just for the Buckeye State, but also the neighboring markets in Chicago, Indiana and Michigan, which all fall under the purview of Malz, who's based in Cleveland.

"We need to cross-sell and upsell the existing book a little more, and at the same time bring in new relationships," Malz said. "That's not easy. But it's something we should be doing with a little more consistency and putting a little more cadence on. We want to penetrate deeper in customer relationships, where there is opportunity to grow market share."

Malz joined Citizens in September, leaving Chase as head of middle market banking for Ohio and western Pennsylvania. He had a pretty long career there, having previously worked for Bank One Corp., which was bought by Chase in 2004. His tenure in the market helped garner the Andover native the Crain's title of "most connected" businessperson in Cleveland in 2015, outranking executives such as KeyCorp's Beth Mooney — who in past years has been repeatedly named the most powerful woman in banking — and members of the Ratner family.

The value of those connections



Van Saun

Malz

**"I THINK WE GET CLEVELAND RIGHT FIRST. THAT'S AN EASY FIX. AND THEN WE LOOK TO THE REST OF OHIO."**

— Jim Malz, Ohio president, Citizens Bank

can't be understated for Malz, who at Chase often had to turn down local clients at midsize businesses because they were simply too small. The loans they'd want or the fees they'd bring just weren't enough to move the needle at a multinational banking behemoth like Chase; therefore, they weren't worth the attention.

That points to something Malz says excites him about his new post at Citizens, which at \$164 billion in assets is still a sizable super-regional, although a fraction of the size of Chase. There's a new swath of customers he can court now, particularly on the M&A front that's supported by Cleveland investment bank Western Reserve Partners, which Citizens acquired in 2017.

"It was frustrating to be in the market as a banker and have a great client who is looking at some kind of liquidity event, or to sell something, and you couldn't really advise them on it or bring any resources to bear, unless the deal was really large," said Malz, referring to the kinds of deals Western Reserve can work on that he wouldn't have been able to touch at Chase.

The investment banking business has been a growing focus for Citizens since breaking free from former

### More from the CEO

Citizens Bank CEO Bruce Van Saun and Ohio president Jim Malz met with Crain's recently for a free-wheeling interview. Here are some additional comments from Van Saun on different topics from that conversation.

#### ► On the acquisition of Western Reserve Partners:

"We bought a little M&A team with four people after we left RBS. But to actually grow (an M&A business) by hiring little banking team after banking team would've taken years. I like to say this acquisition helps us get down the track faster." The company also bought M&A firm Bowstring Advisors of Atlanta earlier this year.

#### ► On Western Reserve post-acquisition:

"They have doubled revenues as part of Citizens from where they were on their own. They are doing more deals and getting more flow from our bankers and engaging in larger transactions as opposed to just the smaller end of the market they were focused on before."

#### ► On competitors:

"We do good against the competition and we will win jump balls against groups like Chase and BofA. But part of that is that we are very focused on clients and maintaining relationships. And we put more effort into relationships that don't hit the radar screens of the bigger banks."

#### ► On the likelihood of an economic downturn in the near future:

"I don't think there will be a recession. People say we're in the late innings of the game (i.e. economic expansion). I don't really believe it. In Australia, they've gone 30 years without a recession. They hitched themselves to China a little bit and that natural resources economy. But I think with the right fiscal and monetary policies we can extend this and keep it going relatively nicely."

parent company The Royal Bank of Scotland in 2015. Before, that work was handled in-house through RBS, which was less effective for U.S. clients.

Malz is working to build up his regional banking team in Cleveland, an effort that soon will extend to Columbus and Cincinnati, and eventually to other nearby states. The Cleveland area is in his backyard, though — it ranks sixth in Citizens' top consumer MSAs, according to company filings — and will be the first priority.

Expect Malz to recruit from the regional banking talent pool once he's able to. That will be around next September, after expiration of the standard one-year noncompete timeframe that keeps executives from directly poaching former colleagues and the clients they serve.

The opportunity Citizens sees in the Midwest overall is further punctuated by a recent tweaking of the mid-management structure.

As Ohio president, Malz takes over a role previously held by Western Reserve founder Ralph Della Ratta, who effectively volunteered for the post shortly after his company merged into Citizens.

At the time, Citizens broke up coverage teams by geographies. The Mid-Atlantic and Northeast areas were and still are its strongest legacy markets.

But in recent years, the parent company has shifted to place renewed emphasis on its growth markets, which include the Midwest and specifically Ohio. The bank created a southern region, carved out another to focus solely on the tri-state New York area and reworked the Midwest region Malz now heads up, which encompasses Detroit and Chicago.

"(For us), the Midwest was old Charter One (which Citizens bought in 2004) territory, which was really a focus on consumer banking and not much focus on commercial banking," Van Saun said. "Over time, what we're trying to do in the Midwest is replicate

teams that have been so effective in the Mid-Atlantic and New England."

That's where Malz, who said he was simply ready to try a new gig, came into the fold for Citizens.

He said while there's a strong focus on Northeast Ohio, he's eventually going to devote more attention "downstate." Those are areas that have previously been served by coverage bankers out of Pittsburgh.

Malz wants to change that, which eventually will mean adding a couple more locally placed bankers.

"I pretty much know a lot of folks in the Central Ohio, Cincinnati and Dayton areas," he said. "I could see a more intermediate focus over time getting more folks on the ground down there. I think we get Cleveland right first. That's an easy fix. And then we look to the rest of Ohio."

Southern Michigan and Chicago will be other "hotspots" getting the same attention in time, he added.

In Ohio especially, the sense is there is low-hanging fruit to be plucked in terms of both new customers and promoting additional services to existing clients. While an obvious revenue opportunity for the bank, that focus on customer service, on the commercial side in particular — which also means promoting Citizens' more complete suite of services and growing bench of specialist bankers — means winning the relationships that should help support the growth Citizens has in mind.

"In our more mature markets, like New England, it's a slugfest between (Bank of America) and us in the corporate space," Van Saun said. "In the Mid-Atlantic, it's a slugfest with (PNC Bank). In those mature markets for us, they're the dominant firms, and it's a little harder to grow. I think the newer markets, our growth markets, since we aren't so established, we think our approach is going to gain traction and allow us to see plenty of opportunities."

## OPPORTUNITY

From Page 1

The conference, which carries a theme of "Reset and Restore: Governing Tech, Retrieving Ethics and Acting on Climate," includes well-known names in the worlds of technology and business, including Craig Newmark, the founder of Craigslist, and Jeff Weiner, the CEO of LinkedIn.

According to the Techonomy website, speaker participation costs \$6,000. That's a relative drop in the bucket considering Ebersole's department has asked Cleveland City Council to approve allocating \$300,000 to pay the technology media company and Worth, a multimedia company targeting high-net-worth individuals, for a multiyear partnership designed "to expose prospective investors to all the work that Cleveland is doing to position our economy for the future." The request was tabled by the city's Development, Planning and Sustainability committee until Ebersole's department provides more information on questions about the estimated return on investment.

The partnership, as Ebersole explained it, includes Cleveland being the host city for a 2020 conference

sponsored by Worth, the event an annual gathering of high-net-worth investors and family fund wealth managers hosted previously by Denver and Charlottesville, Va.

Ebersole said Worth reaches the top one-tenth of the 1%, a population of investors Cleveland traditionally has not attracted but that now, with the creation of Opportunity Zones and the city's success in health care, it wants to court.

Recruiting new sources of capital is an easy sell, but the price tag for this plan has some council members a bit uneasy.

For instance, Anthony Brancatelli of Ward 12, which includes Slavic Village and parts of Tremont, Brooklyn Center and Old Brooklyn, questioned the need to augment the successful efforts of groups like Destination Cleveland and the state's economic development organization, JobsOhio. He's also concerned that the attractiveness of Cleveland's Opportunity Zones for ultra-high-net-worth individuals is limited.

"These investors are more likely to go to the bigger markets for the bigger return," Brancatelli said. "When you look at what you can get per square foot here and in New York or Chicago, we are at a disadvantage because the costs to build are the same."



Councilwoman Phyllis Cleveland of Ward 5, which includes the neighborhoods of Central, Kinsman, Midtown and part of downtown, brought up another criticism of the Opportunity Zone model, which is that in some cases, there is more of a benefit for the investor than for the communities the investment is supposed to serve.

"Those types of institutions and families — are they interested in the

type of investment that we want in our communities?" Cleveland asked. "Quite frankly, when you are talking (about the) 1%, I have questions about social equity. Are these type of investors really right for what we need in the particular neighborhoods that really need investment?"

Michael Jeans, president and CEO of Growth Opportunity Partners, a business advisory and lending non-

profit, agreed that when investors weigh risk and profitability, more prosperous communities can seem more attractive. But he said anything that brings motivated investors to the city is a step in the right direction.

"I don't know if Opportunity Zones, in and of themselves, are the full solution," said Jeans, "but hopefully these high-worth individuals find other things that may attract their investments."

The effort to bring in new capital goes beyond just Opportunity Zones, Ebersole noted. The Worth event is the keystone to the city's plan to target those individuals because it means boots on the ground in Cleveland.

"It is always easier for people to make decisions on things they have touched and felt," Ebersole said.

The overall goal, whether it is the Jackson speech or the Worth event, is to bring in more "fresh capital" into the market, he added.

"Many of the investments that we see here are by Cleveland-based investors, so the ability to attract outside investors has been something the city has been working on for years," Ebersole said.

Brancatelli added, "I would argue the city has already drawn a lot of national attention. Spending money to bring in money is a delicate balance."



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## EDITORIAL

# Make it count

Next year will be critical for many reasons. Among the most important is the compiling of the Census, the once-a-decade survey that establishes population baselines to help determine how congressional seats are apportioned, and how state and federal dollars are distributed. Beyond the realm of government, businesses use Census data to determine where they're going to open stores, or build plants, or ship goods, or focus their marketing dollars on consumers.

So the stakes are high for all cities but especially for places like Cleveland, a population loser for decades. Nothing can be done to reverse that long-term trend before the 2020 Census is taken next spring, which makes it even more critical for Cleveland (and all cities in Northeast Ohio) to do everything they can to count as many people as possible.

We're heartened that Cleveland, the region's hub, appears to be taking the issue seriously and is embarking on steps to help ensure an accurate count. The city's Planning Commission director, Freddy L. Collier, last week appeared before City Council and discussed efforts underway to raise awareness about the Census and to improve response rates.

**WE'RE HEARTENED THAT CLEVELAND, THE REGION'S HUB, APPEARS TO BE TAKING THE ISSUE SERIOUSLY AND IS EMBARKING ON STEPS TO HELP ENSURE AN ACCURATE COUNT.**

As Crain's government reporter Kim Palmer wrote, a federal government-led auditing process that began in March, called Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) added more than 8,700 new Cleveland address records and removed about 500. (That's going in an encouraging direction.) The city itself formed a Complete Count Committee, consisting of an outreach team of 11 city employees from the planning and community relations departments who are responsible for working in all city neighborhoods. A citywide communication plan called "Making CLE Count!" will use traditional and new media to spread the word about the Census.

The city estimates it lost \$54 million in federal aid stem-

ming from results of the 2010 Census, so this is far more than an academic exercise. It's important to be proactive, because, as Collier said, a large swath of the city is considered "hard to count." (There are many reasons for that, ranging from language and literacy barriers to people who move frequently or don't have a permanent address.)

Despite the best efforts of government, a lot of this comes down to people taking the responsibility to make sure they're counted. Census forms will arrive at homes, as they always have, but they'll also be available online and via a mobile app. Community organizations and individuals should help spread the word about the importance of answering the Census. Make this count count.

## Leap of faith

Cleveland almost never makes major leaps in rankings of economic and social performance.

So it was noteworthy last week, when New American Economy, a bipartisan research and advocacy organization that works to strengthen immigration policies, released its index of how well the country's 100 largest cities are doing based on how they have welcomed immigrants, and Cleveland made the biggest jump of any city. It rose 50 spots — yes, 50 — to No. 14 in 2019 from No. 64 the previous year. NEA ranks cities on a 1 (worst) to 5 (best) scale in metrics including government leadership, economic empowerment, livability, inclusivity and legal support. Cleveland's composite score rose to 3.78 from 2.78 in 2018, though, you won't be surprised to learn, its lowest mark was in job opportunities.

There's a lot of work to do. And there's a lot on the line for Cleveland and other older, industrial cities, which have been losing population for years (see above) and should see attracting immigrants as a path to building more dynamic economies.

Joe Cimperman, president of the Global Cleveland nonprofit that works with stakeholders to improve economic opportunities for immigrants here, pledged to "continue to work to help more newcomers integrate more quickly in Northeast Ohio." It's a vital job, and we hope the data keep moving in the right direction.

## FROM THE EDITOR

# Celebrating rising stars, and advice for 2020 nominations

Since 1991, Crain's Cleveland Business has showcased annually 40 of Northeast Ohio's young leaders who are rising in their professions while making an impact on their communities.

With this week's issue, we proudly present the 29th installment of Crain's "40 Under 40," one of our most popular and anticipated issues of the year. We promise you won't be disappointed with the class of 2019 — they truly are exceptional.



Elizabeth McIntyre

Crain's has traditionally kicked off Thanksgiving week with the "40 Under 40" event on the Monday before the holiday. This year is no different. The twist for 2019, however, is that we are expanding the celebration of our region's rising stars by including this year's "20 in Their 20s" honorees, who we featured in the June 24 issue. That means on Monday, Nov. 25, we will be applauding 60 of our up-and-coming business leaders and community change-makers.

Selecting the winners for both classes of 2019 honorees was no simple task. This community is blessed with many individuals under the age of 40 who are making a positive impact both in their respective industries and the community at large. The winners of the 2019 "40 Under 40" and "20 in Their 20s" are standouts. They work in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. They are innovative thinkers and visionaries who made a conscious choice to build their careers and their lives in our region. They are our most important resources and their contributions to the future of Northeast Ohio are invaluable.

It's no surprise that many honorees were inspired by their parents. Several even followed in their footsteps, in health care and law. Many were born and raised in Northeast Ohio or other parts of the Buckeye State. Several of the 60 honorees, though, came long distances: Puerto Rico, Bosnia, India, Ecuador, Chile, the Netherlands and China. A couple traveled the world as part of military families. A few were first-generation college students. And several endured poverty while growing up.

I want to sincerely thank all who took the time to nominate these outstanding individuals. We couldn't host the awards — and they wouldn't get this well-deserved recognition — without you. It is our privilege to acknowledge and celebrate these young professionals with your ongoing support. And the good news is there's still time to register to join the celebration by visiting <https://bit.ly/2NKLH2v>.

There are many more deserving young people, and I encourage you to nominate them for the 2020 class of honorees. What's the best way to do that? I shared much of this advice, with some modifications, a few years ago, but I'm sharing it again because this issue of Crain's always prompts folks to think about nominating deserving individuals for next year.

So, if you are considering nominating yourself or someone else for the 2020 class, please keep in mind that we have an abundance of talented young leaders in Northeast Ohio. Even if your favorite candidate doesn't make the list, the work they do benefits us all.

OK, here's some advice on nominations:

**GET TO THE POINT:** You have a maximum of 300 words to make your case. We're not looking for writerly flourishes. The more concise you are, the better. Consider bullet points to list professional accomplishments. The more details, the better, especially those that show quantifiable results. Again, be succinct and specific.

See **MCINTYRE** on Page 11

PERSONAL VIEW

# The economy of the 1950s is greatly overrated by many

BY NOAH SMITH/BLOOMBERG OPINION

It's possible to find people on both sides of the political aisle who wax nostalgic for the 1950s. Many on the right wish for a return to the country's conservative mores and nationalist attitudes, while some on the left pine for the era's high tax rates, strong unions and lower inequality.

Despite the period's rapid economic growth, few of those who long for a return to the 1950s would actually want to live in those times. For all the rose-tinted sentimentality, standards of living were markedly lower in the '50s than they are today, and the system was riddled with vast injustice and inequality.

Women and minorities are less likely to have a wistful view of the '50s, and with good reason. Segregation was enshrined in law in much of the U.S., and de facto segregation was in force even in Northern cities. Black Americans, crowded into ghettos, were excluded from economic opportunity by pervasive racism and suffered horrendously. Even at the end of the decade, more than half of black Americans lived below the poverty line.

Women, meanwhile, were forced into a narrow set of occupations, and few had the option of pursuing fulfilling careers. This did not mean, however, that a single male breadwinner was always able to provide for an entire family. About a third of women worked in the '50s, showing that many families needed a second income.

For women who didn't work, keeping house was no picnic. Dishwashers were almost unheard of, few families had a clothes dryer, and fewer than half had a washing machine. But even beyond the pervasive racism and sexism, the 1950s wasn't a time of ease and plenty compared to the present day. For example, by the end of the decade, even after all of that robust 1950s growth, the white poverty rate was still 18.1%, more than double that of the mid-1970s.

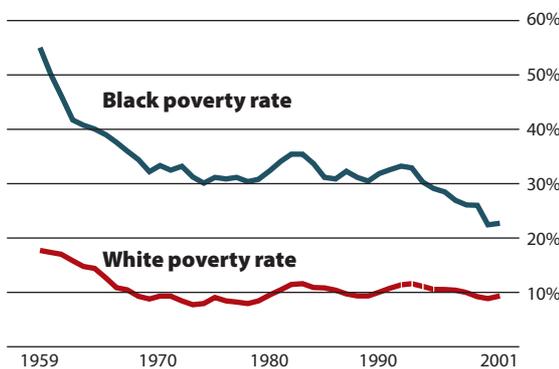
Nor did those above the poverty line enjoy the material plenty of later decades. Much of the nation's housing stock in the era was small and cramped. The average floor area of a new single-family home in 1950 was only 983 square feet.

Households also were considerably larger in the '50s, meaning that big families often had to squeeze into those tight living spaces.

And those who did work had to work significantly more hours per year. Those jobs were often difficult and dangerous. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration wasn't created until 1971. As recently as 1970, the rate of workplace injury was several times higher than now, and that number was undoubtedly even higher in the '50s. Pining for those good old factory jobs is common among those

## U.S. poverty rate, 1959-2001

Despite the robust economic growth of the decade, at the end of the 1950s more than half of black Americans and over 18% of white Americans lived below the poverty line.



SOURCE: BLOOMBERG OPINION CRAIN'S CLEVELAND BUSINESS GRAPHIC

who have never had to stand next to a blast furnace or work on an unautomated assembly line for eight hours a day.

Outside of work, the environment was in much worse shape. There was no Environmental Protection Agency, no Clean Air Act or Clean Water Act, and pollution of both air and water was horrible. Life expectancy at the end of the '50s was only 70 years, compared to more than 78 today.

So life in the 1950s, though much better than what came before, wasn't comparable to what Americans enjoyed even two decades later. In that space of time, much changed because of regulations and policies that reduced or outlawed racial and gender discrimination, while a host of government programs lowered poverty rates and cleaned up the environment.

But on top of these policy changes, the nation benefited from rapid economic growth both in the 1950s and in the decades after. Improved production techniques and the invention of new consumer products meant that there was much more wealth to go around by the 1970s. Strong unions and government programs helped spread that wealth, but growth is what created it.

So the 1950s don't deserve much of the nostalgia they receive. Though the decade has some lessons for how to make the U.S. economy more equal today, with stronger unions and better financial regulation, it wasn't an era of great equality overall. And though it was a time of huge progress and hope, the point of progress and hope is that things get better later. And by most objective measures they are much better now than they were then.

## MCINTYRE

From Page 10

**ABOVE AND BEYOND:** Think about the candidate's civic and community involvement, activities that go beyond the workday. What is the nominee doing to improve our community, beyond his or her job description?

**THE INTANGIBLES:** What is something that sets the candidate apart. Did he or she overcome an obstacle? Are they breaking new ground professionally? Are they a trailblazer?

**SINGLE NOMINATION:** Just submit one good nomination. Every year, we see a handful of campaigns to nominate a candidate. We're flooded with nominations that follow the same script. Quality matters. Quantity does not.

**RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT TIME:** Is this the candidate's year? The competition is stiff — we received more than 350 nominations combined for Crain's

"20 in Their 20s" and "40 Under 40" this year — and there are many who deserve to be honored. Make sure when you nominate yourself or someone else, the timing is right. If there is something on the horizon likely to make the candidate stand out even more, perhaps wait until that's accomplished.

**KEEP TRYING:** As I mentioned earlier, we've been doing this a long time, and we've seen a number of repeat nominees who haven't made the cut, but who were then chosen in another year. So many factors go into our decision-making each year. We strive to create a diverse class, one that reflects the broad diversity of professionals in Northeast Ohio. We try for a mix that shows the range of business and industries in our area. We also are cognizant of diversity as it relates to geography, race, culture, gender and experience. We, of course, pay a lot of attention to diversity in age, but in this case we're not striving for age diversity, other than

those between the ages of 20 and 39. Our other program, "8 in Their 80s," seeks to expand that type of diversity. (Who knows? Can "50 Over 50" be on the horizon?)

**KNOW THE BIRTHDATE:** We traditionally hold the "40 Under 40" event the Monday before Thanksgiving, which means the nominee must be under 40 the day of the event. We're strict about the title, and it can't be changed to "40 Barely 40."

**WON AND DONE:** You can only win this award once, so check out our database of past winners to see if your nominee has already been honored. OK, that's what you need to know for nominating next year's deserving young professionals. We'll open up our nominations on Crains-Cleveland.com for all of our recognition programs in January 2020.

But first, let's celebrate this year's class. Please join me in congratulating the impressive "40 Under 40" and "20 in Their 20s" honorees for 2019.

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# 40 UNDER 40

**T**hese 40 leaders offer a snapshot of all that's best about Northeast Ohio. While a mix of hometowners, transplants and immigrants, they all share a love for and commitment to our region. They are entrepreneurs and professionals, activists and creators, public servants and problem-solvers. All are engaged in helping others and bettering the community, through both their jobs and beyond, in volunteer efforts. Still shy of 40, this group has plenty of ladder available yet to climb, so watch for these top-of-their-class individuals to take on even greater responsibilities as they help shape Northeast Ohio's future.

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## Tyler Allchin, 33

Director of expansion and attraction, BioEnterprise

**B**ioEnterprise, the nonprofit charged with promoting bioscience business locally, has a big ambition: It wants Northeast Ohio to be among the country's top five health care innovation regions by 2025.

Tyler Allchin, who joined BioEnterprise in 2017, is a key player in that mission.

"I am working on behalf of the JobsOhio health care team in partnership with BioEnterprise to assist growing health care companies already in Greater Cleveland with their job-creation strategies, specifically related to incentives from the state of Ohio," explained Allchin, "as well as assist health care companies that are interested in moving into Northeast Ohio."

The Canton native started his career at the Cleveland office of G2G Consulting, a Washington lobbying firm focused on health care and nonprofit clients, after graduating with a law degree from the University of Akron. From there, he spent "about a year" embedded in a bioscience company as marketing director and general counsel for Infinite Arthroscopy Inc. (now called Indago).

G2G government affairs director Becky Watts said Allchin's professional path puts him in the unique position of understanding both the challenges of scaling a bioscience firm and how such companies can access programs and state-based incentives to help them grow.

"He has a great perspective of not only what it's like to navigate the government world but also being inside the private sector — working to try to access capital, for example, and meet other demands in order to get your product to market," Watts said.

Outside the office, Allchin is founder and chair of The Warren A. Sill Fund, a charity he started in 2013 to honor a Kent State University peer who died unexpectedly during a wildlife



trip to British Columbia. The fund initially provided scholarships to KSU students, but has more recently transitioned to enable hands-on learning opportunities to underserved Cleveland preschoolers. — *Judy Stringer*

## Henry "Champ" Burgess III, 39

Vice president for pharmacy venture operations, University Hospitals; president, UH Meds



► **2019 resolution:** Solve a Rubik's cube (he's done it!).  
► **Favorite book:** "Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs Lead and Win," by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin

**W**hen Henry "Champ" Burgess III joined University Hospitals in 2017, he was tasked with creating a best-in-class specialty pharmacy program to offer expensive medications for patients with complex diseases.

"It was a big need in our system; it's a big need for our patients, providers — and also an opportunity for additional revenue, as well," said Burgess, vice president for pharmacy venture operations for UH, and president of UH Meds, a new entity launched earlier this year that consolidates leadership for outpatient areas of retail and mail-order pharmacy, infusion and clinical activities of pharmacists in the system.

Previously, UH had only offered specialty pharmacy services on an as-needed basis, bringing in less than \$1 million in revenue. Since then, Burgess has coordinated pharmacy services and created specialty pharmacy at the system through UH Meds. Now, specialty pharmacy revenue exceeds \$200 million.

Typically, specialty pharmacy drugs are housed in national mail-order pharmacies. Before, patients would be prescribed a medication and then left to navigate the insurance and distribution process on their own. That could be a stressful pro-

cess for a patient with a newly diagnosed complex or life-threatening illness, Burgess noted.

"We try to make the process as easy as possible for our patients and our providers so that providers know that once they prescribe these meds, we will hold the patient's hand throughout the entire process to make sure they can get the medication in a timely manner," he said.

Burgess has also helped the system expand its home infusion pharmacy, began the process of adding freestanding infusion centers, encouraged pharmacists to work to the top of their license and is looking to expand the system's retail pharmacy footprint by building more retail pharmacies in the system.

"I'm excited because I realize the work we're doing has a direct positive impact on the patient care being provided in our system," he said. "We keep in mind that every frustration that we're dealing with has a patient on the other end, and we're helping them to get their medication, which will ultimately improve their quality of life or ultimately save their life." — *Lydia Coutré*

► **Old school:** Atypical for a millennial, Allchin gets a newspaper delivered daily to his Ohio City home.

► **Eyes on the prize:** "As Ohioans and Clevelanders, we collectively have an understanding that health care is a priority and is really seen as part of the path to a future economy, so I had an eye on that pretty early on."

## Vishal Bhatt, 31

Operations manager of hematology-oncology, Akron Children's Hospital

**F**or Vishal Bhatt, one guiding principle rises to the top when he's faced with career or life decisions: He just wants to be the best self he can be.

His path to his administrative career in health care was not a smooth one. Bhatt, whose ultimate goal had been dental school, entered grad school at the Ohio State University to study gross anatomy, but after a quarter he realized he just "wasn't himself."

"I was pursuing the other side of health care for the wrong reasons," he said, adding that once he started taking health care administration classes, it cleared a path for him to be true to himself.

For Bhatt, whose parents emigrated from India in the 1980s, his role at Children's means he can make a difference, and that's something that's a reflection of his upbringing.

"The values that raised me were always about the community, the family — the family that not only extends inside the house but outside the house," he explained.

At Children's, Bhatt — first as part of residency and fellowship programs then in his roles as a quality-initiative and patient-safety specialist and operations manager — found a place to be his best self and do meaningful work. And the work goes way beyond pushing pencils.

"I support anything I can do to remove any barriers so that the doctors, the nurses and the other care providers can give the best possible care to our cancer patients and our bleeding disorder patients."

As well as managerial duties and things like budget

► **Homebody:** Bhatt and his wife, Jackie, love to just hang out at home and watch movies. The couple, who have two "fur babies," love to walk the dogs, too.

► **The ties have it:** "I wear bowties; I don't wear neckties. ... It allows me to really be myself. ... (The ties are) also great as a way to reduce infection in the hospital."



oversight, he also works with his department's development and support teams that help with such things as bringing teachers to patients' bedsides so they don't fall behind in school.

Bhatt's upbringing also taught him about giving back to the community. He sits on the boards of Torchbearers and the United Way of Summit County, among other community work. At United Way, he found a friend and

colleague in CEO Jim Mullen.

To Mullen, Bhatt has added depth, leadership and perspective to United Way's work.

"The best thing I can say about Vish is that he is one of the most thoughtful people that I know," Mullen said. "He brings this level of thought and understanding into the boardroom, which is critical when you are tackling such large systemic problems." — Sue Walton



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## Susan Burnoski, 35

Principal and director of audit and assurance department, Apple Growth Partners

**W**ith a family full of number enthusiasts, Susan Burnoski recalls wanting to be an accountant since she was a kid. “Numbers just clicked. I did career assessments and they always came back finance-related.”

Burnoski, who grew up on Cleveland’s West Side, received her undergrad and master’s degrees from Case Western Reserve University. “I graduated in 2007 and secured a full-time job just before the recession,” she said.

Before coming to Apple Growth Partners, first as an intern, she took part in a summer program at NASA for five years in a row and also interned for the Defense Finance Accounting Service. “Getting the experience is great to make sure you want to do this kind of work. It’s what I look for in our recruits,” she said.

Burnoski has been at Apple Growth for 12 years, as a department head for the last five, becoming a principal this past July.

“Susan is an industry expert in employee benefit plans and designing internal controls,” said Charles Mullen, chairman of Apple Growth Partners. “She works with clients to perform audits, identify fraud and establish internal controls for both not-for-profit and for-profit companies.”

Burnoski, who lives with her family in Copley and splits time between Apple Growth’s Akron and Cleveland offices, said she most enjoys learning about the companies with which she works. “What they make, what helps them become successful, what their struggles are,” she said. “We can be a really good resource for them.”



► **Best advice:** “Give everything a try. ... I don’t say ‘no’ to a fault, which adds to some of the stress, but it has opened the doors to a lot of opportunities.”

► **Wishful thinking:** “I’m not sure how they do it, but you hear of these couples who take their kids, travel and just go experience life somewhere for a year or two. Not sure how we’d fund it, but that would be my other dream job.”

Outside the office, she strives for balance, spending time with her young children. “They like to hike a lot. This is our third year hiking with the Summit Metro Parks Fall Hiking Spree.”

Burnoski finds time for the arts as well, having just finished a seven-year term on the Akron Symphony board of trustees. “Right now, I’m on their foundation board,” she said. “I’m not musical, my husband is. We were already going to the concerts and have an appreciation for it. It’s been great to see behind the scenes, what’s needed to make a symphony run.”

She’s also a member of Torchbearers Akron, the Case Young Accountancy Advisory Board, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Ohio Society of Certified Public Accountants and the AICPA Employee Benefit Plan Audit Quality Center. — *Allison Carey*

## Shelly Cayette, 36

Senior vice president, global partnerships, Cleveland Cavaliers

**A**fter playing for Tulane University and spending a professional season in the Czech Republic, Shelly Cayette was looking to take a break from basketball.

But rather than relocating from New Orleans to Mississippi with her Harrah’s Entertainment team in 2007, the Louisiana native took a job as marketing coordinator for the New Orleans Hornets. Five years later, she was recruited to the Cavs by former chief revenue officer Brad Sims, who had met Cayette during his time as an NBA vice president.

Now, she’s in charge of a department that is among the top five in the league in partnership revenue.

Cayette is one of just three women to oversee an NBA sponsorship department, and she’s the lone African-American woman in the role.

“We’re taking baby steps to get there,” Cayette said. “Three is better than none.”

Those efforts include a leaguewide women’s leadership forum — at which Cayette has been encouraged by increased participation. She also pointed to the Dallas Mavericks hiring Cynthia Marshall as CEO, Swin Cash becoming the New Orleans Pelicans’ VP of basketball operations and the Cavs adding Lindsay Gottlieb to their coaching staff.

Cayette, who was elevated to her current role in 2018, is also setting quite an example for women in the industry. She helped found “Women of The Q,” a program designed to encourage women throughout the organization to be engaged with and support one another, and has been an integral part of some major naming-rights deals.

A “market-plus” deal with Dan Gilbert’s Rocket Mortgage produced a new title for the Cavs’ 25-year-old home, and the two-year, \$185 million renovation of Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse led to more than a dozen sections, clubs and entrances that are tied to sponsorships.

“They get to put their stamp on the building,” Cayette said. “It’s like they’re planting their flag here.”



► **New mom:** Cayette’s daughter, Ivy Grace Weston, was born Aug. 30.

► **About that hoops career:** “I haven’t touched a basketball in a long time. I don’t have the best knees,” she said.

The Cavs, via a multilayered deal with Good-year that started in 2017, also have one of the league’s most lucrative jersey patch agreements.

Nic Barlage, the Cavs’ president of business operations, said Cayette, who has been with the or-

ganization since 2012, is “a proven leader, a great revenue generator and someone who continues to innovate and create new opportunities for our team. She has succeeded at every level throughout the sports industry.” — *Kevin Kleps*



## Terry Doyle, 38

Partner, corporate and capital markets, Calfee, Halter & Griswold LLP

**F**or Terry Doyle, lawyering runs in the family. He always aspired to follow in the footsteps of his father, Bud, who worked for a local prosecutor’s office for several years before sliding into private practice.

But unlike his father and brother, who both specialize in litigation — where cases involve clear winners and losers — Terry Doyle’s affinities align more with the less contentious world of dealmaking.

“I saw both ends of the spectrum when I came to Calfee, but what I liked about M&A was helping clients get a good deal,” he said. “You negotiate on behalf of clients. And when you buy and sell a busi-

► **The boys:** He has a fraternal twin brother, Collin, and fraternal twins, Flynn and Reilly.

► **One thing he’d have done differently:** “Wish I would’ve traveled to Oakland to watch the Cavs win 2016 NBA title.”

ness, it’s typically a good result for all parties. That’s what I’ve enjoyed.”

The hours are long, but getting paid to make two parties happy after a deal is set keeps him going.

Doyle’s clearly excelled in this role. Having joined Calfee in 2007 as a summer associate fresh out of law school, he was promoted in early 2017 to partner in the firm’s corporate and capital markets practice group. A year before that, as an associate he was named co-leader of the firm’s entrepreneurial finance group when it formed in 2016 — the only associate to co-lead a practice group in the firm’s history.

Doyle also co-leads the firm’s private equity practice today. If he’s not negotiating deals, he’s probably working with one of the startups, which is often done pro-bono for those young businesses.

That’s something in which Doyle takes all the more pride, considering Cleveland’s struggles to keep such businesses in town.

For companies in the business world, it’s akin to mentoring, which is something Doyle also engages in through the nonprofit sector. He’s a co-founder of the Associated Board of Boys Hope Girls Hope and recently joined the “jobs” committee for St. Martin de Porres High School, where he works to cultivate employers for the school’s work-study program.

“Whether helping startups or PE clients, my business is typically helping with job growth and bringing jobs to Northeast Ohio,” Doyle said, highlighting his family as his daily source of motivation. “That’s rewarding.” — *Jeremy Nobile*

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## Sara Elaqad, 32

Executive director,  
Minds Matter Cleveland

**W**hether Croatian-born Sara Elaqad is running a nonprofit or a marathon, it's always her desire to help, to teach and to challenge herself and others.

Elaqad lived in Bosnia before she came to the U.S. as a 7-year-old refugee, settling in Arizona where her father had family.

At first, they lived in low-income areas with poorly performing schools. "My parents, both academics, realized that and were able to make moves to make sure I went to good public schools," recalled Elaqad. "This helped me very early on realize the inequity of educational opportunity in the U.S."

The family moved often. She attended high school in Ann Arbor and Pittsburgh, then college at Ohio State. By the time she ended up in Cleveland in 2009, to attend law school at Case Western Reserve, she'd lived in 11 cities.

Today, Elaqad, who became executive director of Minds Matter in February 2018, helps children in similar situations. Within six months of becoming a Minds Matter volunteer, she took on a volunteer leadership role and realized she belonged in educational nonprofit. "Law is a helpful degree for running a nonprofit," she said. "You learn strategic thinking, great writing skills and communication."

At any one time, Minds Matter works with about 72 high school students from lower-income families from Cleveland and the inner-ring suburbs. Students commit to attending on Saturdays for three years. They do intensive ACT prep, classroom instruction and tutoring,



► **On the run:** "I ran my first marathon, it was really hard. It wasn't about doing the actual marathon, it was about putting in the work. The challenge was the consistent training. I live in the Detroit-Shoreway neighborhood and do loops around downtown at night. I had layers of blisters and lost toenails by the end of it."

► **Her other dream job:** "I'd give bicycle tours of Cleveland, but I feel that I'm already in my dream job and it's more than a job, it's my being."

rigorous college-level writing and critical thinking classes, plus there's mentoring.

"Mentors are a little bit of the secret sauce," said Elaqad. "They are that constant adult presence. Research shows that having an adult you

are close to and who is in your corner is one of the best ways that students don't fall prey to a lot of the outside issues."

After sophomore and junior year, each student attends a summer program at a top university. "We make it possible for our students to go. It prepares them and boosts their college admission profile," she said. "Getting more low-income kids to more selective colleges can be life-transforming. For one of our students to go to schools like Harvard or Penn, they're now able to help their families, change their communities, build wealth."

Elaqad, who also serves on the Cleveland Metropolitan School District Board of Education, said all Minds Matter students attend four-year college, with a graduation rate of about 92%. — *Allison Carey*

## Theodore "Ted" Ferringer, 35

Architect, Bialosky Cleveland

**T**ed Ferringer advocates for innovative architecture and planning that serves the public good, a mindset gleaned among a family of artisans in the Upper Appalachians of Pennsylvania.

"The biggest thing my parents drilled into me was standing up for the things I believed in," said Ferringer, hired by Bialosky in 2012. "To me, there's a moral and ethical responsibility that architects should have. Wherever your community is, it's important to be engaged."

For him, doing good means supporting paid internships for budding architects or contributing to projects centered on sustainable community development. The award-winning planner led design efforts for the Edgewater Beach House, and worked pro bono with Bike Cleveland on a protected cycle-track network utilizing the city's defunct streetcar line infrastructure.

Ferringer is a founding member of Green Ribbon Coalition, a nonprofit pressing for development along Cleveland's lakefront. Proposals include a Gordon Park expansion and a land bridge connecting downtown to North Coast Harbor.

Residing with his family in a Victorian-style home near West 85th Street in Cleveland, Ferringer is inspired to boost his adopted city one project a time.

Regarding his work on Edgewater Beach House, he said, "People thought they needed to avoid a place that's become this exceptionally diverse beach experience in Cleveland. This was an underutilized asset with so much potential. Being involved in realizing it was incredible."

Bialosky principal Aaron Hill recently worked with Ferringer on renovation of Cleve-



► **On the job:** "Working on projects makes me better at business development, and my business development role has made me a better architect when working on actual projects."

► **A team effort:** "None of it would be possible without the team around me. They helped me do things that other firms would not."

land Public Library's Lorain branch, another project with a potential social impact for Cleveland.

"Ted is respected as someone who values service, volunteerism and pro-bono efforts, and has given much of his time to countless initiatives in our region," Hill said in an email.

Looking ahead, Ferringer said he plans to stay involved in the city he loves, while raising a

2-year-old daughter with his wife, Patty Edmonson.

"It's about doing what you can to make the world and your community a better place than it was before," he said. "A few years back, I wouldn't have imagined where I am today. As long as I'm contributing to the community and working on projects I'm passionate about, I'll be all right." — *Douglas J. Guth*

## Tracy Francis, 39

Partner, litigation department,  
Porter Wright Morris & Arthur LLP

**T**racy Francis has been at Porter Wright full-time for 13 years and worked there during her summers in law school before graduating from University of Akron at the top of her law class.

In school, she probably wouldn't have pictured herself as a partner in the Porter Wright's litigation department.

"I did not go to law school or start practicing with the desire to be a litigator," said Francis, who grew up in Hilliard, a suburb of Columbus, and now lives in Gates Mills. But it was a role the firm needed her to fill. "I originally feared that I was ill-suited for it," Francis admitted. "I am not bombastic or loud. But I've learned my temperament is actually effective in litigation."

"The biggest disadvantage women have as litigators is how they're perceived," she added. "If a man is forceful in examining a witness or making an argument, he is viewed as being a zealous attorney; a woman in the same situation is often just viewed as obnoxious or shrill."

Her primary practice focuses on commercial litigation. She's handled everything from intellectual property issues, environmental claims and contract disputes to fraud and product liability, arguing in state and federal courts. She also has extensive experience dealing with advertising issues and drafting endorsement agreements.

Francis is just as dedicated on the volunteer side. As a Diversity Leadership Team mentor for the Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio, she works with schools and youth to build environments that promote respect, acceptance and inclusion. She's also active in Porter Wright's Women's Leadership Initiative, as well as the Cleveland Metro Bar Association's 3R's program, which connects the legal community with high school students in Cleveland and East Cleveland schools.

"Tracy has stood out for her commitment to pro-bono legal work, taking on important and challenging cases for

## Kendra Gardiner, 39

Chief of performance officer,  
JumpStart Inc.

**K**endra Gardiner's "Aha!" moment came in 2008. She was finishing a chemical engineering degree at the University of Illinois when a friend suggested Gardiner continue on to an MBA and leverage her entrepreneurial background into a business career.

The suggestion was powerful, she said, because the value of past experiences wasn't something Gardiner had spent much time pondering. Two decades later, the significance of her personal and professional history is never far from this Avon Lake resident's mind.

"When you are someone climbing out of poverty and you are working your business, sometimes you can't see the value in that," she explained, "especially if you're just trying to feed or clothe yourself or pay your rent."

Growing up in rural poverty in central Illinois, Gardiner dropped out of college after her freshman year when funds suddenly dried up. She spent the next six years operating a construction company in two states, which she bootstrapped into a \$1 million remodeling business but ultimately had to dissolve when insurance regulation differences between Illinois and Missouri tied up cash flow.

Ever the savvy entrepreneur, Gardiner settled her debts and financed a return to college by reselling goods on eBay. Her formal "break out of poverty," however, did not come until 2010, when she completed her MBA at Gies College of Business and landed a job at PolyOne.

"It was the first time I was going to make money in a really meaningful way," she said.

Gardiner joined JumpStart in 2017 to lead a number of initiatives, including some launched after KeyBank Foundation's \$24 million investment in the Cleveland nonprofit. JumpStart president Cathy Belk said Gardiner is not afraid to tackle weighty issues, citing her leadership in projects aimed at increasing diversity inside JumpStart and fostering economic inclusion community-wide.

"Kendra has the unique ability to listen, learn, empathize and then drive into action," Belk said. — *Judy Stringer*



► **Second gen:** Francis' dad was also an attorney and she cites him as "an inspiration for me throughout my career."

► **Where she sees herself in five years:** Cheering the Browns at the Super Bowl

the good of the community," wrote Hugh McKay, partner-in-charge at Porter Wright's Cleveland office.

For six consecutive years, Ohio Super Lawyers recognized Francis as a Rising Star in business litigation, and the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland named her a Partner in Justice in 2016.

"The most challenging and most rewarding thing is probably the same thing," she said of her career. "Constantly needing to learn new things and dealing with new, interesting personalities." — *Michael von Glahn*

► **Multitasker:** As chief performance officer, Gardiner's fingerprints are on almost all the work JumpStart's staff of 75 completes.

► **On urban outreach:** "I was homeless at one point in my life. ... I do have an appreciation for what other people may have gone through or what their families may be going through."



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## Stacey Gardner-Buckshaw, 39



Assistant professor, family and community medicine and director of community engagement, Northeast Ohio Medical University

When teaching classes at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED), Stacey Gardner-Buckshaw often starts with stories, such as the real experience of one woman who struggled to find a diagnosis.

Struggled that is, until, eventually someone on her care team at a federally qualified health center connected the dots to realize she was literally allergic to where she was living.

That story and others help students understand the value of care teams, of population health, of the social determinants of health, of relationships with patients and more.

"They already know the anatomy classes are important because that's what's on the test," said Gardner-Buckshaw, assistant professor of family and community medicine and director of community engagement at NEOMED.

But what's on the test isn't all students need to know to be a good doctor, she added.

Gardner-Buckshaw's father was a physician and

► **Hidden talent:**

Dancing (she teaches zumba classes) and being able to juggle her household and her kids' extracurriculars

► **Shout-out:** She credits her husband for their partnership and his enabling her to do a lot professionally.

her mother was a nurse. As a child, she didn't really think of any other jobs. However, upon realizing that some of the science wasn't for her, she embarked on a different path to find a career in helping and healing. Ultimately, she earned her Ph.D. in urban studies and public affairs from the University of Akron, where she also earned a master of public administration.

In her three years at NEOMED, Gardner-Buckshaw has brought in more than \$3 million in grants. Most recently, she received an integrated behavioral health and primary care grant, making NEOMED one of only nine institutions in the country to receive the funding,

which awarded \$2 million over five years.

She is co-director of the grant, which will expand hours and integrate behavioral health and primary care at the student-run free clinic; support safety and wellness at work for health care providers; and establish a social justice pathway for students next fall.

All of these touch on long-held passions for Gardner-Buckshaw.

"I like that every single day is different," she said. "I am passionate about all of the projects that I'm working on. I have the best colleagues ever." — *Lydia Coutré*

## Kenya Guess, 39



President and CEO, Bonnie Speed Logistics

Kenya Guess loves to help people thrive, whether managing a flourishing middle-market company or a troop of Girl Scouts who themselves are learning to lead.

As head of Bonnie Speed Logistics — a full-service firm celebrating its 60th anniversary this year — Guess encourages collaboration across all departments.

"No matter what level you're at, your input is important," said Guess, a Willoughby Hills resident originally from Nashville. "Everyone around the table is giving input on sales, dispatching or customer care. We're truly connected as an organization, because everyone is at the same space of where we are and where we can be."

Bonnie Speed's mantra is Every Day Great Execution, or EDGE, an initiative Guess created around core values of integrity, accountability, service excellence and fun. Personal responsibility and transparency are cultural bedrocks, shaping every decision from daily freight runs to customer relations.

► **More Girl Scout love:**

"They may be in high school, but they've proven their abilities in how to lead and how they serve. Just because they're young doesn't mean they haven't made an impact or difference."

► **Game time:**

Guess's family loves board games, often playing multiday matches of Monopoly or Scrabble.

Guess's leadership identity is shaped by a long career in accounting, starting during a stint as a senior assistant at Deloitte & Touche. There, she met Viviana Torry, who taught her the importance of investing in people. Guess carried Torry's managerial teachings into subsequent positions, most recently at Newell Rubbermaid in Atlanta.

For Guess, building collaborative teams isn't limited to the corporate realm. She also leads a local Girl Scout troop, recently coordinating Scout-collected donations of stuffed animals and other items for children in stressful living situations. She said she cherishes her spirited charges, harnessing their good vibes for use back at the office.

"Their transparency and openness is refreshing, because there can be a level of skepticism when you're at

work," said Guess.

"These girls give me energy. As a leader and employer, the last thing I want to do is limit or underestimate anyone, and working with these young ladies is a constant reminder of that sentiment." — *Douglas J. Guth*

## Mark Hamer, 37

Vice president/creative director, Garage Creative Studios

Northeast Ohio in recent years has built a significant film and video production industry. Mark Hamer of Garage Creative Studios in Brecksville is part of the reason for that, and, as a Youngstown native with no taste for living on the coasts, a beneficiary of it.

"It's a sustainable industry now in Northeast Ohio," said Hamer, who has worked for more than 12 years at Garage, which blends commercial work — TV ads, corporate documentaries, branded content videos — with entertainment projects. (It provides filmmakers with services such as 4K color-grading, audio restoration and digital intermediate delivery. Feature films that have turned to Garage Create for work include "Draft Day" and "Fun Size.")

The nature of his work occasionally takes Hamer to New York or California. When he's there, "It's great. But I like being home," said Hamer, who lives in Hudson with his wife and two daughters, ages 9 and 6.

Hamer attended Ohio University. "I thought I was going to record bands," he said. Instead, he wound up working at a satellite media company



and then in the broadcast department of Cleveland's Wyse Advertising, where his passion for film and video blossomed.

He said about 80% of the commercial work at Garage, which has eight employees and uses lots

of freelancers, is for local clients. He added he appreciates the "collaborative process" of the work, as well as the variety of projects.

For instance, Hamer directed a documentary called "Healing a Community: A 150-Year Story,"

► **The write stuff:** He recently finished a script for a feature film that he hopes to start working on soon.

► **A movie omnivore:** Hamer's a fan of horror, documentaries and "anything that takes you to another place and stretches the bonds of reality."

about the history of University Hospitals. He also worked as an editor on "G Funk," a 2017 documentary about the hip-hop style that emerged out of Los Angeles in the late-'80s.

As creative director, Hamer oversees Garage's team of producers, writers, musicians, cinematographers and postproduction experts, while working closely with clients. He also mentors film students in the Tri-C media arts department.

"Mark is the rare combination of artist, tireless worker, mentor and committed family man," said David McLean, president of Garage. "In a business filled with trust-fund artists and ruthless sharks, Mark stands out as a real person from humble beginnings, passionate about his craft, but grounded in the things that are important."

Something else that's important to Hamer: Notre Dame football. As a kid, he traveled with his father every year to South Bend, Ind., to watch the Irish play. He published a book last year, "Growing Up Irish," that focuses on childhood memories, family relationships and life lessons. — *Scott Suttell*

## David Hamilton, 35

Attorney; member,  
Summit County Council

**A**kron native David Hamilton grew up watching the impact of government and law enforcement on his community, including watching his brother go to prison for a drug offense when Hamilton was just 10.

That convinced him, he said, to devote his life to the pursuit of equal and fair justice for all. A TV lawyer convinced him a law degree was the tool he needed.

"Ben Matlock..." Hamilton said. "No joke."

He knows it's funny. How many kids take their inspiration from Andy Griffith when they're growing up with LeBron James? But it's true, he insisted, and all because he spent a lot of time at his grandmother's house as a kid. She only got two channels on her television.

"You know when you hear a song on the radio and at first you don't like it, then you hear it over and over again and you start to like it? That's how 'Matlock' was for me," he recalled with a laugh. Hamilton grew up studying hard, earned a law degree, became a county prosecutor and won a seat on Summit County Council. He's been a change agent already and led reform efforts as chairman of the Summit County Jail Operations Advisory Commission.

In his latest milestone, just under two weeks ago, Hamilton was elected as an Akron Municipal Court judge.

He said his appetite for public service was fostered by his mother.

"She mortgaged the house to make sure I had a good education," he noted. "When I got to law school, ... she said, 'I think you should go into public service and use your law degree to come back and help the community.'"

Hamilton's mom passed away that same year,



▶ **Favorite book:** "The Dream Giver," by Bruce Wilkinson  
▶ **On his bucket list:** To visit Santorini, Greece

but the impact of her advice stayed with him.

"I wanted to make her proud," he said.

She likely would be. Hamilton's made his mark and is getting noticed for his courage.

"David is a strong advocate for his community and doesn't shy away from a challenge," said Summit County executive Ilene Shapiro. — *Dan Shingler*

## Dr. Dionne Hernandez-Lugo, 39

Kilopower project manager,  
NASA Glenn Research Center

**B**orn and raised in Puerto Rico, Dionne Hernandez-Lugo always harbored an interest in science. But it was only after her mother gave her a small microscope that her "eyes were open to what science could entail."

That affinity meant she was pushed toward medicine — until a class trip to the morgue in her first year of medical school led to an abrupt change of major.

Hernandez-Lugo shifted to industrial chemistry and went on to get a Ph.D. in physical chemistry at the University of Puerto Rico. During grad school, she worked on NASA-related research and was invited to intern at NASA Glenn.

"My Ph.D. work was on nanomaterials in rechargeable batteries," she explained. "At Glenn, I started in the lab doing materials development and from there got involved in other projects that kind of have evolved me professionally."

Currently, she manages the Kilopower project to develop an affordable nuclear power system to be used on the Artemis mission to the moon and eventually for trips to Mars. A multi-agency project under the space technology mission directorate, Hernandez-Lugo said Kilopower involves "a system that can help instruments and habitats have continuous power to survive what is known as the lunar night, because on the moon the lunar night is two weeks long."

Other projects she's worked on include a drone application used to detect harmful algae blooms using a Hyperspectral Imager, and an electric battery for the X-57 Maxwell all-electric plane.



▶ **NASA's reach:** "It is important for people to understand that the technologies, although focused on space, have a lot of applications to our day-to-day."

▶ **Plans for Artemis:** "Hopefully, we can be successful and land the first woman on the moon. It will be great for all of us, women in science who are actually involved in the day-to-day to develop those technologies."

Hernandez-Lugo chairs Glenn's Hispanic Advisory Group, raising awareness of Hispanics' contributions and the benefits of diversity to NASA's mission.

Outside NASA, she is a board member for Lorain's El Centro de Servicios Sociales, and works to get more kids, girls and minority students in particular, involved in STEM subjects. — *Kim Palmer*



## James Hardy, 35

Deputy mayor, Akron; chief of staff to  
Akron mayor Dan Horrigan

**J**ames Hardy's role in government fits him like a good, bespoke suit.

Akron mayor Dan Horrigan's chief of staff and, recently, deputy mayor, said he loves politics, Akron, his boss and even dealing with the bureaucracy that drives others crazy but is necessary for government to function.

The youngest child of two Akron educators, Hardy taught part-time at Kent State University while getting his master's in public health, but always knew he wanted a role in government.

"I love it," Hardy said of his life and current job.

▶ **Tribe fan:** "I still like to keep the box score when I go to a game."

▶ **Most inspired by:** Robert F. Kennedy

"Public service has been getting a bad rap for years now, but I think it's one of the noblest professions anyone can pursue."

He ran for Akron city council and lost, but soon found his calling serving as chief of staff to Horrigan, whom Hardy said he had admired since he was a teenager — Hardy, not the mayor.

Being on staff allows Hardy to focus on getting things done instead of winning the next election.

"I have my dream job right now and really enjoy what I'm doing," he said. "I never say never, but (elected office) is not something that crosses my mind on a daily basis and I really do enjoy what I'm doing now."

His boss seems happy as well.

"He's been an excellent chief of staff who has more than lived up to expectations," Horrigan said. "He's not afraid to hold others and himself accountable."

Hardy is wise beyond his years, added the mayor, who also said he purposely hired a chief of staff who is younger than most, because he's trying to tap into and develop Akron's cadre of young leaders.

"Eventually, they're all going to have to take over the institutions in the city, ... so that's by design to get them more engaged now," Horrigan explained. "He's been a great choice." — *Dan Shingler*

## Erin Huber Rosen, 37

Executive director and founder, Drink Local. Drink Tap.

After Steve Chipchase joined the board of directors at Drink Local. Drink Tap., he made sure that Erin Huber Rosen, the nonprofit's executive director and founder, was getting paid.

"We hadn't been paying her consistently," Chipchase said.

He later found out that the first check Huber Rosen had received "in a while" was given to a family whose unsafe living conditions she had seen during a recent trip to Uganda.

Huber Rosen visits the African country several times per year, a practice that started after she met a teacher from Uganda as part of Drink Local. Drink Tap.'s school outreach program.

The nonprofit's Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH) projects have helped 25,000 Ugandans gain access to clean water. DLDT has five core employees in the country, plus about 35 masons, plumbers, drillers and other workers.

Locally, DLDT — its name stems from the impact that plastic has on waterways — hosts about 10 beach cleanups a year, including one on Earth Day that drew 350 people. Huber Rosen said the organization has also reached 15,000 kids via its Wavemaker program, and the group hosts an annual run and walk in Cleveland.

When she was 18, Huber Rosen started Covering Cleveland, an organization that helped the homeless. That lasted eight years.

"Eventually, at one point I realized that water connected all of the problems that I cared about," she said.

Chipchase, a former Swagelok director, met Huber Rosen while he was searching for a nonprofit where he could make an impact.



► **Extra, extra:** She is in the process of completing her third documentary, "The Last Drop," which will focus on climate change and water stress in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania.

► **Home cooking:** She said her husband, attorney Adam Rosen, is an excellent vegan chef.

"As soon as I met Erin, it was the most impactful first meeting with anyone I've ever had in my life," he said.

Huber Rosen, he explained, "gets people to want to go above and beyond," something

Chipchase does as he flies to Northeast Ohio from his current job in Utah for board meetings.

DLDT will celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2020, and Huber Rosen said she has some "pretty big plans" that will be unveiled soon.

She doesn't believe the world's water crisis will ever be solved, but "what I do think is, in the developed world, we have technology to do water way better than we're doing it. We're wasting a ton of water and we're not managing our land properly to filter water naturally before it goes into our waterways." — *Kevin Kleps*

## Poonam Jain, 38

Director of business financial operations, Athersys Inc.

Poonam Jain describes her career progression over the last decade or so as a journey into the human body.

Jain joined Steris Corp. in 2007, just two years after moving to Northeast Ohio from India, and advanced to lead financial analyst during a six-year tenure with the Mentor-based manufacturer of sterilizers, surgical tables, lights and other hospital equipment.

After Steris — where she twice earned recognition as Employee of the Year — Jain rose from senior productivity manager to operations controller at Philips Medical Systems' Highland Heights medical imaging plant. There, she won Philips' North America Game Changer Award in 2016 for overseeing the disposition of \$50 million worth of obsolete inventory.

Today, the Macedonia resident is "further inside the body," as a financial operations director at Athersys Inc., which is developing stem-cell therapies for stroke and other critical care conditions.

"I've always been fascinated with how new medicines are developed, especially in areas of unmet medical needs," Jain said, "so I was excited to join the cause."

At the Cleveland-based biotechnology firm, Jain is charged with managing the financial side of operations, including multimillion-dollar business partnerships and contracts. The position, she said, builds on her "earlier experiences in finance, operations and supply-chain management at Steris and Philips," but is fundamentally different in that Athersys doesn't have a product in the market yet.

Laura Campbell, senior vice president of finance at Athersys, said Jain has a direct impact on the company's bottom line "by reviewing



► **Pingpong anyone?** Jain was a state champion table-tennis player in 1997 in her hometown state of Madhya Pradesh in India.

► **CLE love:** "I love it here. The people are friendly and supportive like you would find in a small town, but it has all the cultural and education and business strengths of a large city. It's a nice balance."

operations contracts and activities and providing strategic recommendations to top-level management."

She added that Jain's work supports operational, legal and regulatory activities that reach

well beyond Greater Cleveland.

"She functions in an ever-changing, complex, cross-functional environment where vendors, customers and partners are spread across the globe," Campbell said. — *Judy Stringer*

## Edwin L. Hubbard Jr., 34

Senior director of funder relations, the Akron Urban League

Edwin L. Hubbard Jr. believes in the power of relationships. His ability to form relationship with others, in addition to his own hard work, has helped lead him to success in his career in the nonprofit realm and with his work in the community.

"It goes back to those relationships every time," Hubbard said.

The Cleveland State graduate began his studies with the idea of being a special-education teacher, but soon realized he could have a wider reach and greater impact in the realm of nonprofit administration.

Hubbard's outgoing nature led him to make connections early on to get his first job with the Children's Defense Fund. After working with the Boy Scouts of America, he then found his way to Akron and a job with the American Heart Association.

Working in Akron was one thing, but Hubbard knew he wanted more. To really be part of the community and establish connections, he started working with the young professional group Torchbearers. That opened doors to more community engagement on boards, such as AccessPointe Community Health Center, and finally as a member of Leadership Akron's 2018 Signature Class, which elected him class president.

"(Hubbard) is beginning to establish himself as a unique voice on local committees and boards," said Robert DeJournett, vice president of opportunity and inclusion for the Greater Akron Chamber, someone Hubbard described as a mentor. "Our community is in need of more African-American men who will lead with integrity, candor and the willingness to serve with a positive impact, and Edwin fits that criteria."

Relationships take center stage with Hubbard's current work at the Akron Urban League, too.

"I enjoy the opportunity to build relationships and to advocate. It's easy to fund-raise when you believe in what you're working for," he said.

## Mark Kalina Jr., 30

Senior analyst, Community Trauma Institute, MetroHealth

On the night he lost his legs, Mark Kalina Jr. went by himself to downtown Columbus to meet a friend. He was wearing "the thickest flannel" he owned, and his sleeves, after being rolled up earlier, were down because he was cold.

Instead of being with a group of friends, as was his custom, he walked home by himself, and instead of taking a longer route, he walked next to a stopped train, before falling, snagging his sleeve on the corner of a coal hopper and getting injured once it began to move.

And instead of lamenting his life-altering injury, Kalina vowed to make the best of an unfortunate situation.

"I was so sure I was going to die," he said of the October 2012 accident, which occurred while he was an engineering student at Ohio State University. "When I woke up the next day and found out I was missing just a few pieces, I was very happy I was still alive. The way I was injured, there was no one to blame but myself."

After the accident, a life in engineering no longer appealed to Kalina. He worked with Operation Lifesaver, for whom he was a national spokesperson for rail safety education, started a foundation that helps amputees pay for prosthetics and other equipment, and he volunteered for MetroHealth's Trauma Survivors Network.

"I thought, 'This is where I want to be,'" he said.

He has since transitioned to a full-time analyst role at MetroHealth. There, he serves as the "data guru" for the health system's Community Trauma Institute and is playing a key role in Metro's strategic plan, said Sarah Hendrickson, the director of the trauma institute.

"I don't know if Mark sees things as a challenge," Hendrickson said. "He sees things as ways in which he can contribute. It's a bit of an anomaly. Mark does not exist in many spaces in this world. You're not going to find a whole lot of Marks."

Kalina said support from family, friends and co-workers helped him persevere. He doesn't interact with as many



► **Personal motto:** "Show up every day like you mean it."

► **Leading by example:** Hubbard and his wife, Siobhan, have two sons. "If I limit myself, then my children will feel limited," he said. "I just want to be a great representation for them. I tell my oldest son you're not allowed to say can't. It's either, 'I don't know yet,' or 'I'm working on it,' but you are not allowed to say what you cannot do."

"Attitude is everything in life," he said, adding that he hopes that way of thinking leads to his next career milestone with EH Inspires, his own firm in which he works as an inspirational/motivational speaker and consultant. He's set his sights on someday being an executive director or CEO.

"Every day for me is on purpose, whether it's a good day, bad day or indifferent," he said. "Your day is won or lost based on the preparation." — Sue Walton



► **Family of four:** Kalina and his wife, Natalie, have a 3-year-old son, Bennett, and 3-month-old daughter, Adaline.

► **Advice for trauma patients:** Kalina tells them they're not going to be who they used to be. Plus, everyone's recovery methods are different. Also important: "You're allowed to have bad days."

trauma patients now as he did when he was a volunteer, but he welcomes the chance to meet with those who are struggling with a new reality.

"I can walk into someone's room wearing long pants and they just see a limp," Kalina said. "Then, I show them a prosthetic leg and they think, 'If this guy can do it, so can I.'" — Kevin Kleps

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## John Kane, 36

Senior vice president, Family  
Wealth Advisors, Ancora

**J**ohn Kane may have a background in finance, but he's more of a people person than a number-cruncher.

Kane said he was never that inspired by sitting at a computer all day, but helping people is another story. That's why he feels he's found his calling as a family wealth adviser with Ancora, where he spends more time talking with families than doing math.

"It can be a challenge, because you have to learn the nuances of each one of your clients and be able to act as a psychiatrist as well as a friend," he said. "Working closely with (CEO Fred DiSanto), I've learned how to understand what people are looking for, even if they don't ask it."

The key to his success is relatively simple and something that can apply to excelling in almost any job: being a good, open-minded listener.

It's worked well for him so far. Kane has been with Ancora now for 14 years. The firm has five times as many people today as when he started.

Some things have certainly fallen in Kane's favor. DiSanto, who was his eighth-grade basketball coach, ended up offering him a job when he returned to Cleveland after wrapping up his studies in Cincinnati.

**▶ If not in this field, what would he be doing?** "I couldn't see myself doing anything else."

**▶ Advice for others:** "Put down the phone, be present where you are and don't let distractions get the better of you."

Kane likes to pay it forward, using his own network nowadays to connect and help others. As when aiding a family in its financial planning, he's driven by having a positive impact on other people.

"If you can use that network to help make someone's life a little better," he said, "I think that's just one of the most rewarding and satisfying things."

That passion translates to the non-profit world as well. One organization personally important to him is Claire's Crusade, a charity that supports children and families battling the rare neurological disorder Rett syndrome — like his niece, the namesake Claire.

Professionally speaking, one of the greatest rewards for Kane is scoring a referral from a happy customer.

"When I earn someone's vote of confidence," he said, "that's just a really proud moment." — *Jeremy Nobile*



## Sean Kennedy, 39

President, TRG

**C**reativity and tenacity are common traits among successful business owners, but John Tookman said Sean Kennedy has another quality that elevates his leadership prowess.

"He's very good with people," said Tookman, vice president of MRK Technologies, one of five operating companies under a Westlake holding company, TruWest Cos., owned by Kennedy and his older brother, Matthew.

In 2002, Kennedy was a recent Ohio University communications graduate selling enterprise security solutions for MRK, his father's company, when he saw an opportunity to help organizations manage the mobile equipment they use in remote data collection. He launched TRG — a.k.a. Technology Re-

**▶ Go long:** He was a wide receiver for the Syracuse Orangemen and the Ohio University Bobcats.

**▶ Brothers in firms:** "It's truly a blessing to be in business with family. It has a lot of positives and a few negatives, but I would not have it any other way."

source Group — with his brother, assuming command of day-to-day operations.

The company grew as data demands extended beyond traditional corporate walls into oil and gas fields, warehouses, tarmacs and retail stores. With customers like Nike, Energizer and Delta Airlines and more than \$100 million in annual revenue, TRG employs 278 people at its Westlake campus.

Tookman specifically cited Kennedy's international expansion as an important pivot point for TRG.

"The way that Sean assembled the

teams, got office space, worked closely with customers and made that international presence a reality was a strong testament of his leadership and understanding of the market needs," Tookman said.

TRG has the only global footprint in its space, with service centers in the Netherlands and Canada, according to Kennedy.

"A lot of our customers are looking for global support and that is what we are providing and that is what I think has helped sustain our growth," he said.

Along with TRG and MRK, the Rocky River native shares ownership with his brother in River Capital, which finances IT equipment leases; debt fund River SaaS Capital; and Sibling Revelry, a craft brewing company.

He also is a board member of the Rocky River Marooners, a nonprofit that promotes amateur tackle football. — *Judy Stringer*



## Ricardo León, 27

Managing director, Metro West Community Development Organization

**R**icardo León looks the part of a community development staffer as the bearded young man often wears flannel shirts and bluejeans. He also holds a master's degree in urban studies from Cleveland State University, but his background might be more suited to a corporate job or tech startup.

He has worked for Ridge Tool Inc. in Elyria as a sales planning analyst and as a consultant for Silverlode Consulting, an economic development concern that's now part of GBX Cos. of Cleveland. Both fit an undergraduate degree in economics from Baldwin Wallace University and a master's in urban studies from Cleveland State's Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, but León altered course when he saw a chance to help foster change on the West Side.

"It's cool to work in the neighborhood you're from," explained León, who was born in Puerto Rico, came to Cleveland at age 3 and grew up with five siblings in a house on the 6900 block of Clark Avenue. The prevailing mentality in the neighborhood was to go to college to get a good job and get out.

"Now, I feel that I'm blessed because I can work as a professional and change that story in a community where I have roots," he said. "It's still high crime and



► **Favorite high school class:** American History in the 1950s

► **Pastime:** "I used to be a gamer. Now, I read. I'm currently reading bell hooks and 'An African American and LatinX History of the United States.'"

high poverty, but it's starting to be seen in a new light as it stands on the edge of a huge influx of investment."

León left Silverlode for the nonprofit Metro West Community Development Organization in April 2017, initially working to rehabilitate abandoned homes. Within months, he began handling grants, then tackling larger development projects.

Midway through 2018, although the most junior person on staff, he was named the organization's managing director. Since then, he's taken Metro West independent, so it's no longer an arm of the Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization. León heads a staff that will soon grow to 15 and which undertakes tasks as varied as economic de-

velopment, community engagement, safety and diversity.

Dr. Akram Boutros, MetroHealth president and CEO, said León's passion distinguishes him.

"Some people have ambition to succeed in a profession or in a business," Boutros noted. "León has ambition to see his neighborhood succeed." — Stan Bullard



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► **Her other dream job:** "If I could do any other job, I would be a movie critic. ... I love all genres, even horror. I love to be scared enough that afterwards I'm afraid to open my eyes in a darkened room. I love the thrill."

► **In her spare time:** She serves on the board of the YWCA and is a chair of the associate board of Boys Hope Girls Hope, a nonprofit that provides after-school programming and residential support for high academic achievers with challenging circumstances from sixth grade through their senior year.

## Erin Luke, 36

Partner, Thompson Hine LLP

**H**aving worked on such large projects as the renovation of Public Square, the mixed-use highrise One University Circle, the Hilton Cleveland Downtown and the Akron sewer renovation project, attorney Erin Luke isn't intimidated by any aspect of an expensive, high-profile construction project. The partner in Thompson Hine LLP's construction group even keeps a hardhat ready in her car's trunk.

A self-described U.S. Air Force brat, she spent her early days moving from Washington, D.C., to Iceland, then to Pennsylvania and Arkansas. Luke said she loves getting older. "I feel like I didn't know enough as a kid. I gain wisdom, insight and confidence as I age and have more experience."

She attended Westminster College in Fulton, Mo., earning degrees in philosophy and political science. It's the place where Winston Churchill gave his famous Iron Curtain speech in 1946 and where Luke met her husband. They both attended St. Louis University School of Law. She graduated in 2008 and worked in St. Louis where, through her first job, she discovered construction law before moving to Cleveland and joining Thompson Hine in 2014.

"They were doing sophisticated transactional construction work representing owners and that was the niche I wanted to focus on," she explained. "I applied, it was a match and I moved. I never felt tied to one location — it was always about the opportunity." Her husband followed a year later.

"Erin is hands-down one of the most accomplished and dynamic female leaders of her generation" said colleague Kip Bollin, Cleveland office partner-in-charge at Thompson Hine. "She is a star in her field, serving as project counsel for billions of dollars worth of construction projects each year."

Luke's early career dreams weren't in construction law but in becoming a writer. "With a philosophy degree, you can either teach or go to law school," she said. "I wanted to learn the rules of our society to help others navigate it."

As for choosing a practice field that toward which not many women gravitate, she said, "I feel comfortable in challenging situations and construction was an area where I could thrive. I always felt that being a woman in construction was a great differentiator." — Allison Carey

## Heather Link, 39

Chief of staff,  
Cleveland State University

**H**eather Link said she believes education can change lives. It's more than just the economic benefits; she sees how it can imbue a life with meaning and affect the generations that follow.

"That's what brings me to work every day," said Link, chief of staff at Cleveland State University.

And that's part of why she wanted to join CSU, an urban school with many first-generation college students. Link, who attended The Ohio State University, also was a first-generation college student, coming from a small town where going to college wasn't the norm.

"When I look at them, I see myself," she said.

Link was on the path to earn a doctorate in pharmaceuticals when she decided a career in a lab wasn't for her. She loved science, but not the isolated environment research can create.

After earning her master's degree, she took a job at Ohio State managing a lab, which broadened her focus to the business side of research, such as writing grants and working with faculty. That job led her up the ranks in research at Ohio State, before taking on a role with the university's board of trustees.

She went to Kent State University to work in the president's office in 2017 and then, this past July, joined Cleveland State.

As chief of staff, Link manages the president's office and serves in a support role to CSU president Harlan Sands, who said Link has "hit the ground running."

"In our business, when we are trying to manage a large institution and touch a lot of people, I think the way we interact with people is critical," Sands said. "And it's the first thing that strikes you about Heather is her ability to make an instant connection." — *Rachel Abbey McCafferty*



► **Cross-country goals:** Link wants to run at least a half-marathon in all 50 states; she's up to 11 so far. "Running is my saving grace, I think. These jobs aren't easy," she said.

► **Sharing a love of science:** She works with the Science Olympiad team in Hudson, where her daughter goes to school.

## Kristen Lucas, 39

Chief marketing officer,  
Fairport Asset Management/  
Luma Wealth Advisors

**K**risten Lucas says she has always loved stories and storytelling. As a child, she'd get in trouble for reading under the covers when she was supposed to be asleep.

A bachelor's in English was "the most natural choice" for the Euclid native, but since graduating from Allegheny College, her career has taken an unexpected turn. Or perhaps a curve into marketing was also natural.

"Marketing is essentially storytelling," noted Lucas. "And in professional services, you're 'selling' a relationship, so you've got to be equipped with compelling stories about how you've helped inspire a family, a widow, a business owner — how you helped them solve a problem or get through a tough time."

Her trajectory has been steep since starting at Fairport in 2003, from receptionist all the way up to CMO, her roles at different levels along the way giving her a deeper understanding of how the company works. She sees her client service experience especially differentiating her as a marketer.

"I have a firsthand relationship with our clients and know the frequently asked questions: what they want, don't want, what annoys them or makes them mad, what delights and surprises them, what they are grateful for and what they truly value. It's a study in empathy — 'getting into their shoes' — that would make my social-worker parents proud."

Her top accomplishment to date has been the conceptualization and launch of Luma Wealth. "We basically got out a blank sheet of paper and made a blueprint of how women should be treated as clients," she explained. "How they should be communicated to, how they could learn and be empowered in the way that they wanted. Luma al-



► **Not born for financial services:** Lucas doesn't like math and only took a single econ class in college, pass-fail, in her last semester.

► **Best advice she's gotten:** "Don't sweat the haters."

lows women to learn, connect and celebrate on their own terms."

"Kristen is an exemplary leader in our organization who has taken every job and promotion as a chance to learn and grow," said Heather Ettinger, Fairport managing partner and Luma founder. "Her positive attitude is contagious and she is sought out for her thoughtful and creative insights on how to make the client experience and the work community the best it can be."

A self-described "champion for diabetes research" (her dad lived with Type 1 diabetes from age 7 until his death at 62), Lucas held her first fundraiser in third grade. In addition to captaining a walk team every year through the American Diabetes Association or JDRE, she created Fairport Community Beacon at work to focus time, visibility and dollars on one charity a year. — *Michael von Glahn*



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## Kayleen McDowell, 36



Broker and CEO, McDowell Homes Real Estate Services and McDowell Homes LLC

► **First job:** Salad-bar girl at age 13  
► **Favorite vacation:** World travel

Having the first of her three children was life-changing for Kayleen McDowell, professionally as well as personally. Confined to bed rest, she watched HGTV nonstop, especially the “Flip or Flop” show about a couple who flip houses in California.

“I said, ‘Wow. I could really do this,’” she recalled. She also realized that it would probably give her greater control over her time than her job at the time, in 2009, as a senior account manager at Bank of America’s Beachwood office.

McDowell began buying and renovating houses for resale herself, and her company, McDowell Homes LLC, has handled as many as 10 annually ever since.

Shortly after starting the business, her agent suggested she become an agent herself. After three years with Howard Hanna, McDowell launched her own brokerage in 2015 under the McDowell Homes name with her ex-husband, Chaz McDowell, as her partner. Today, the firm has 60 agents with offices in Mentor, Solon and Ashtabula. Sales volume in 2018 surpassed \$110 million. This year, the company’s

pace was even better, with \$75 million in closed business by June.

That rapid expansion, which accompanied a good period in residential real estate, was due, she said, to building an agency that emphasizes the formation of teams and what she describes as a supportive family culture.

While McDowell never imagined herself as a real estate agent while growing up, she did envision herself as a business owner, something she credits to having parents and grandparents who owned their own businesses.

She’s president of the Lake & Geauga Area Association of Realtors and chair of its Bylaws Committee. She has also served on several nonprofit and community boards, including the Children’s Museum of Cleveland, Seidman Cancer Center Leadership Council, Case Western Reserve President’s Circle and the board of directors for ideastream-WCPN.

Seth Task, the Task Team leader at Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Professional Realty’s Solon office, knows McDowell as a fellow agent and in his role as treasurer for the Ohio Realtors Inc. association. “She’s energetic, dynamic and progressive,” Task said. “She and her company are having a lot of well-deserved growth.” — *Stan Bullard*

## Michael McGivney, 37



Partner-in-charge, tax, Cohen & Co.

► **All in the family:** McGivney and his wife, Debra, have three boys, ages 2, 4 and 7.  
► **Running man:** An avid runner, McGivney has competed in two marathons, with outdoor time these days spent with his children at the Rocky River Metroparks.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act resulted in the most significant set of changes to the U.S. tax code in decades, requiring CPA firms to re-educate their corporate clients. In leading the tax department at Cohen & Co., Michael McGivney hires advisers with both financial and technical expertise, while understanding that automated practices can never fully replace human interaction.

“We’re looking at ways to leverage machine learning to operate at a value-add level,” McGivney said. “On the operations side, I’m passionate about our people. We’ve got a terrific group at Cohen.”

As McGivney doesn’t have a technology background, he’s still learning the language of electronic vendor bill data entry and expense reporting. The Bay Village native has also played a critical role in growing Cohen into a \$100 million firm that’s added nearly 600 employees since his arrival in 2005.

McGivney runs a tax department comprising

more than 200 professionals across seven states, implementing massive tax reform modifications alongside game-changing new tech processes. Cohen CEO Randall Myeroff said his colleague of 14 years inspires others with his thoughtful approach to communication.

“Mike embodies a powerful combination of knowledge and trust,” Myeroff said in an email. “He also has remarkable vision for process and automation, and how they can be used to create efficiencies and improve quality. He is definitely a top-tier, multitool performer.”

McGivney said the tax department is merely one facet of a company able to swiftly adapt to ever-developing client needs. Nor has Cohen’s growth made it unwieldy or risk-averse, he added.

“I thought I’d wash out of a big public accounting firm,” he said. “But at Cohen, there’s always opportunities to do something else. I’ve been able to evolve in my job and be somewhere that’s interested in pushing the envelope.” — *Douglas J. Guth*

## Kevin Nowak, 38

Executive director, CHN Housing Partners

Kevin Nowak grew up in Detroit as part of a literally blue-collar family, as his dad was a police officer (his mother taught in a Catholic grade school).

“My parents sacrificed a lot to put me through school,” he said. That upbringing instilled in him the importance of home, “both in terms of being a stable environment for us but also in terms of being an asset that my family was then able to utilize to help send my sister and I to college.”

The first person in his family to attend college, Nowak studied political science and history at the University of Michigan. “I thought I was gonna be the mayor of Detroit, maybe the governor of Michigan at some point in time,” he said. “That clearly is not happening.”

He’d planned a 10-year military career, then work in government or the nonprofit sector, but was medically disqualified from ROTC in college. As Plan B, he went on to law school, still at U of M. That led him to a job in Cleveland as an associate in the commercial real estate practice of Thompson Hine LLP.

“When Kevin was an up-and-coming lawyer at



Thompson Hine, everyone could see he was special: a rare combination of brilliant and big-hearted,” recalled Robyn Minter Smyers, a partner at the firm. “I helped recruit him to join CHN’s board because I saw a match made in heaven.”

Serving on CHN’s board reinforced Nowak’s passion for community-building. He left law to devote himself to affordable housing development as national equity investment manager for Key Community Development Corp., a KeyBank subsidiary fo-

► **Deep roots:** His involvement with affordable housing dates back to age 18, when he first swung a hammer as a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity.

► **Build it:** He constructed an “American Ninja Warrior” course in his back yard for his two sons (and himself).

cused on affordable housing and community development. Then, in 2016, he left Key to deepen his involvement with CHN Housing Partners by becoming its general counsel and director of strategic initiatives. He took on the executive director role at CHN on July 1 of this year, heading a staff of 175.

While he’s seen growth over the years of a broader understanding and acceptance of the need for affordable housing, Nowak noted that “you still see NIMBYism and you still people who are resistant to having affordable housing in their community, thinking that it will decrease their property values. But if you actually look at the data, the data supports that it actually stabilizes and increases the property values within the communities that it serves.”

He’s also a firm believer in partnerships. “In the nonprofit world in particular, we’re in a limited-resource environment, and the best way to achieve maximum impact is through collaboration vs. being territorial.” — *Michael von Glahn*

## Marianella Napolitano, 39

Chief program officer,  
The Centers for Families and Children  
and Circle Health Services

**A**s an 8-year-old growing up in Ecuador, Marianella Napolitano volunteered alongside her parents at clinics offering medical care to underserved, uninsured communities. She'd set up tents, help people fill out forms or take them to get fitted for eyeglasses.

So it's perhaps no surprise that after an initial career in information technology, she found herself in the health care industry once again, where she considers herself lucky to get paid to do something she loves.

Today, as chief of health care programs for The Centers for Families and Children and Circle Health Services, Napolitano is responsible for the strategic direction of the organization's behavioral health services and primary care services, as well as any programs aimed at integrating the two or integrating them with early learning and workforce development programs.



► **Secret skill:**  
She's trilingual: Spanish (her native language), English and Italian

► **Favorite spot in Northeast Ohio:** The east side of the Flats

"We should be looking at mental health and physical health in a holistic manner and not just in isolation," Napolitano said. "You cannot just treat the mental health piece without addressing also the physical aspect."

The Centers for Families and Children and Circle Health Services affiliated in 2017. Though they maintain distinct legal identities, the two organizations effectively operate as one entity, sharing a leadership team and operational and administrative infrastructure. Napolitano's work today also includes continuing to facilitate that integration.

In her spare time, Napolitano still volunteers, serving as vice chair of the Greater Cleveland Volunteer Leadership Council of the American Cancer Society. She volunteers in a national health equity workgroup led by the American Cancer Society to help identify strategies to increase volunteer awareness, education and actions around health equity. She also volunteers with the cancer society on a health equity project sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that aims to develop an action plan to address health inequities in the East Cleveland community.

"That I get to make a difference in our communities, in people's lives, is what wakes me up in the morning," Napolitano said. — Lydia Coutré

## Ramya Ramadurai, 36



Global program manager,  
Rockwell Automation

**R**amya Ramadurai wants her children to have a safe and secure world in which to grow up.

"One of the ways that I can use my skills and my abilities to contribute to that is to make sure that we aren't making ourselves vulnerable through the technology that is so useful to us," she said.

As a global program manager at Rockwell Automation, she helps the company take network and cybersecurity into its manufacturing customers' facilities.

Ramadurai, who grew up in India, has always been drawn to the sciences, earning a bachelor's degree in electronics engineering from the University of Pune and then opting to move to the U.S. for her master's.

She said she draws a lot of inspiration from her family. Her mother, who had a passion for books, went through a career change to become a librarian after her children were born, not letting her background hold her back from pursuing her passion.

That's part of why Ramadurai felt comfortable studying operational oceanography at Rutgers University for her master's, which gave her a different way

► **Fiction fan:**

She likes science fiction and fantasy novels, but her favorite book is Joseph Heller's "Catch-22."

► **The voice:**

She's a trained singer of Indian classical music.

to study electronics and sensors. It was that opportunity to pursue more interdisciplinary work that led her to the U.S., as the master's options in India would have been more specialized.

Ramadurai continued that varied approach to technology after graduation, taking on jobs at companies ranging from Bayer to HBO. After moving to Northeast Ohio in 2013, she worked at Case Western Reserve University and Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. before landing in her current role at Rockwell.

One of Ramadurai's strengths is that she doesn't hesitate to highlight areas for improvement, said Angela Rapko, global portfolio director at Rockwell. And whenever she does, she's armed with recommendations for how to improve and works to move those improvements forward.

"She has a drive for excellence that many people do not have," Rapko said. "She's never happy with the status quo." — Rachel Abbey McCafferty

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**Name:** Tom Scharf

**Years in accounting:** 44

**Years with Rea:** 44

**Areas of specialty:** Business valuations, mergers & acquisitions, litigation support and the private club and manufacturing industries

**Hometown:** Independence

**Unique hobby:** Golfing and singing, and I love working so much that I consider it a hobby, too

**Pets:** 2 dogs. Millie is a puppy and Charlie is 11 years old

**Favorite late night snack:** Cookies

**Best part of my job:** I love helping my clients

**Favorite lunch spot:** Johnny's Bar

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## Isaac Robb, 33

Director of urban projects,  
Western Reserve Conservancy

In 2015, the Western Reserve Conservancy was given a mandate to survey every parcel of land in the city of Cleveland to determine the number of abandoned buildings and vacant housing.

Isaac Robb was part of the team of 16 who walked Cleveland's streets and cataloged the status of more than 158,000 properties across the city.

"I learned in a hurry the different dynamics in each of the neighborhoods," Robb recalled. "What is great about Cleveland is that things are so different on a block-to-block basis, not even neighborhood to neighborhood."

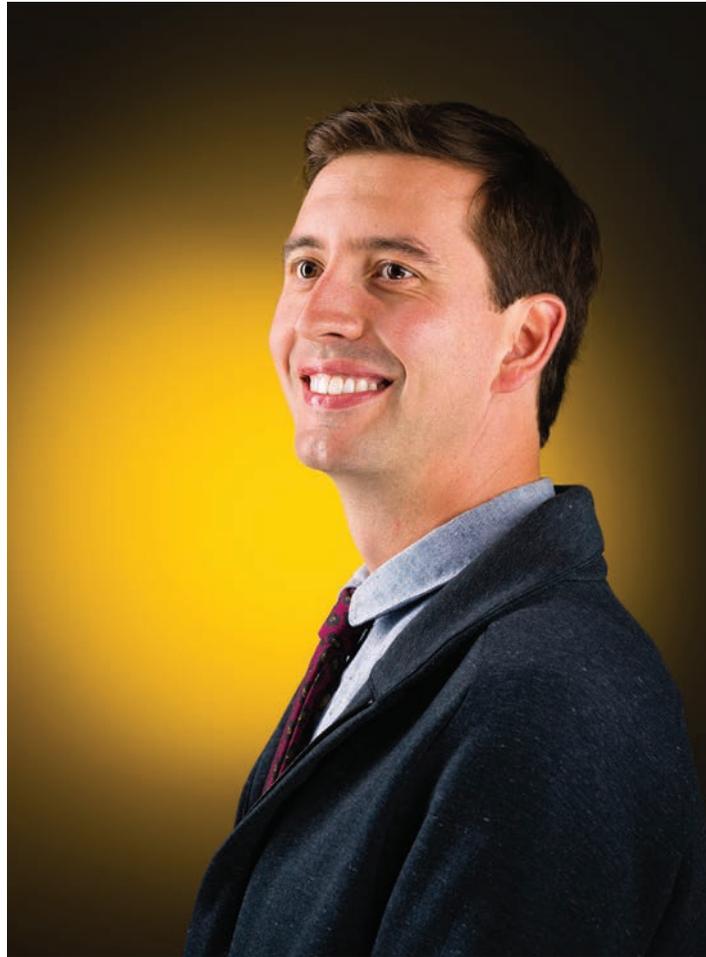
He'd moved to Cleveland from Oregon in June that year for a three-month internship working with his now-boss, Jim Rokakis, who Robb calls the "godfather of landbanks."

The internship turned into a one-year grant-funded position, which then became a full-time job. "At that point, I found my people and I found my place in Cleveland," said Robb. "Now, I've lived here longer than any place besides my hometown."

As an urbanist, Robb came to Cleveland to work in a city hit hard by the foreclosure crisis but that has recently been part of an urban reforestation plan.

"I've always been interested in the nexus between urban and rural, and the natural environment versus the built environment," he said. Last Arbor Day, Robb was part of a program that distributed 100 trees approved by the Cleveland Tree Plan to residents of Slavic Village to plant on private property.

When not walking or planting, Robb volunteers his time coaching: T-ball, basketball or



► **Taking it to the street:** "With my background in planning, (the survey) was sort of a planner's dream. It was a good lesson on how to interact with people because you are coming up in your bright-colored shirt with an iPad, taking photos, and people are very curious about what your intention is."

► **On being a Clevelander:** "I can be here for the rest of my life and I don't know if I get to deserve the moniker 'Clevelander.'"

soccer for kids ages 5-11 with Near West Recreation.

"Moving here not knowing anyone — it was easy for an outsider to plug into," he said. "They were looking for basketball coaches and that was what I played a lot of growing up." Near

West teams are sponsored by West Side companies such as Mitchell's Ice Cream, Momocho restaurant and Progressive Urban Real Estate.

"Some of the team names are easier than others for the game-day chants," Robb noted. — *Kim Palmer*

## Autumn R. Russell, 34

Executive director, Early College  
Early Career, MAGNET

As executive director of Early College Early Career at MAGNET, the Manufacturing Advocacy & Growth Network, Autumn R. Russell helps bridge the gap between educators and manufacturers.

Her goal is to show educators that manufacturing offers viable career options for their students and to show industry professionals that working with students can help close the skills gap.

Early College Early Career is a pre-apprenticeship program that provides high school students with pathways into manufacturing careers through paid internships and college-credit courses.

"So it's really an opportunity for them to get a head start in their college journey and in their careers," Russell said.

She started her career in higher education before joining the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, where she was responsible for creating initiatives to boost the graduation rate of at-risk student populations. The program she oversaw, Closing the Achievement Gap, began as a state-wide program, but Cleveland's success helped the district get funding to continue the work beyond its initial scope, which Russell counts among the proudest moments of her career.

She later worked at the state level, as a consultant with the Ohio Department of Education's academic distress commission.

In April 2018, Russell joined Magnet to work in the Early College Early Career program, taking on the executive director role a few months later. The work gave her the chance to have a "larger impact," she said. She's still able to pursue her passion of creating programs for students, while also helping coordinate conversations between educators and industry partners



► **Musically inclined:** She attended Central State University on a singing scholarship.

► **Career advice:** "Be your authentic self."

that wouldn't have happened in the past.

"It gave me an opportunity to be a change agent, and I saw opportunity for me to grow professionally," Russell said.

She has helped shape the program, which started in the fall of 2017, in its early years, tak-

ing the "learnings and challenges and successes" it's seen so far and refining the model, said Ethan Karp, CEO and president of Magnet.

The program currently works with about 70 students across three counties, with plans to grow next year. — *Rachel Abbey McCafferty*

## Tiffany Scruggs, 38

Director of benefits outreach and client  
services, Greater Cleveland Food Bank

Tiffany Scruggs knows about food insecurity, and not just because it's her job. As a student at the University of Toledo, Scruggs subsisted using food stamps from an area family services organization.

"I heard about food stamps, but I didn't know how to access them," she recalled. "It's a light at the end of the tunnel for people, because they may not always be reliant on those benefits."

Today, Scruggs is busy maximizing access to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and other options for residents in the Greater Cleveland Food Bank's six-county service area. Supporting 26 full-time staff, she seeks to increase the food bank's visibility as a regular fixture within a regional support network. Empathy is key in communicating with a population that believes the system has treated them unfairly.

"I'm breaking the ice by sharing personal testimony, because we're providing different advocacy than on the state level or in D.C., where you have policymakers removed from reality," said Scruggs. "We don't have a picture of a poor minority taking advantage of the system. I tell my story to demonstrate how public benefits can support long-term sustainability."

Scruggs remains humble in her work, be it extending re-entry opportunities for the formerly incarcerated or serving on the food bank's diversity, equity and inclusion committee. Through steadfast leadership, she has cultivated relationships with hospital systems and a host of other stakeholders keen to combat local food insecurity.

Leading a fast-paced nonprofit doesn't stop the Beachwood resident from enjoying other activities. A team member of nonprofit consulting firm Janus Small Associates, Scruggs is working with founder Janus Small on a project to preserve African-American cinema.

"Tiffany's understanding of community needs throughout the region — and of various resources available to meet those needs — has made her a very welcome addition to

## Alicia Stone, 37

Senior vice president and IT director,  
KeyBank

Alicia Stone's career was set in motion back in high school.

Always interested in teaching but curious about computers, Stone recalled breezing through an exercise writing code for an ATM in computer club. She taught fellow students after picking it all up so quickly, feeling inspired by the sense of accomplishment that came from solving a complex problem and the satisfaction of helping others learn.

It would become a defining moment of her future career.

Today, Stone is a senior vice president with KeyBank, where she manages an IT team of about 60 that builds, implements and tweaks a number of digital platforms that weave into everything from underwriting processes to sales systems.

If not engineering a solution herself, she's serving as the liaison between programmers and developers and the executives who want something done.

Such a complex job takes a level a technical acumen as well as a knack for communication — something at which she excels despite some still-lingering anxieties regarding public speaking (which, as a successful woman in a STEM field, she does quite a bit).

"You have to have the ability to learn quickly, the desire to solve problems and the willingness to approach it from different angles," Stone said. "I think a lot of times, people go into computers thinking they'll be in a backroom coding all day. There are roles like that, but it's changing. You do need to have good communication skills."

Stone herself is a case study in excelling after pushing beyond one's comfort zone.

A teacher at heart, she said one of her proudest moments was leading GE Girls in STEM while at General Electric, a program designed to inspire young women to pursue STEM careers, something that's become a bit of a personal



► **Fun in the sun:** Scruggs will join 42 family members on a vacation to Cancun later this year.

► **Food for thought:** "Our mission is aspirational to ensure everyone has the nutritional foods they need. This allows us to be innovative in working with a range of nonprofit and for-profit organizations."

the Janus Small Associates team," Small said in an email. An active volunteer at her children's schools, Scruggs also connects students to volunteer and career prospects, with a particular focus on girls just beginning their own journey through life.

"I'm like an auntie and mom to these kids," she said. "I love to give back and help our young ladies conduct themselves positively." — *Douglas J. Guth*



► **Entrepreneurial endeavors:** Owns the Kutting Stone Barber-shop in Richmond Heights (her husband's a barber).

► **Words of wisdom:** "Trust your instincts and never hesitate to speak up."

mission regardless of what company she works for. "I think it's important to just give women the confidence and the vision to understand they can be in any field, tech being one of them, because it's not one most women go in to," Stone said. "I want to show them they can be successful in this." — *Jeremy Nobile*

## NOT MEETINGS.

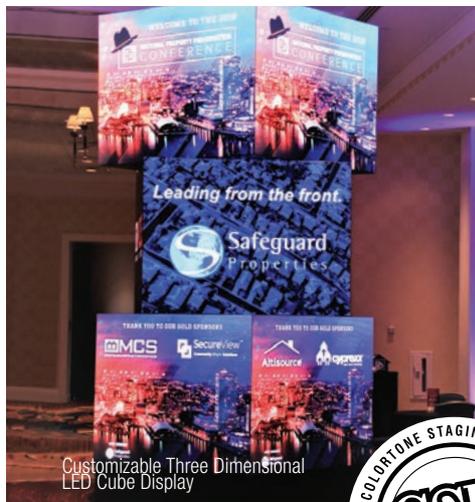
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## Danielle Sydnor, 37

Executive director, Economic Community Development Institute

**D**anielle Sydnor's impressive career in finance includes positions at Bank of America MBNA, Merrill Lynch and PNC.

But during her stretch in retail banking, she found she was spending more time educating prospective clients about finance and financial products than selling those products.

"I thought, 'Why do I continue to do this if my passion is really to educate people to make better financial choices and decisions?'" she recalled. "I just did not feel that my job was honoring who I was as a person."

Now, as executive director at the Economic Community Development Institute, Sydnor spends her time assisting underserved people and communities to assess their credit and acquire funds, in the

► **First job:** "When I got my first job at MBNA and I walked in and they showed me my headset and cubicle, I had to call my mom about it. My parents always had an office, so I had a false perception what it meant to have a job."

► **On being a Bridge Builder:** "What I think you get out of (the program) is a greater awareness of community and the things that are happening. It was an opportunity for me to meet more folks across different sectors of Cleveland, and to get ideas about why there are sometimes disconnects between corporate and nonprofit, and black and white, and older and younger."

form of microloans ranging from \$750 to \$350,000.

"You should be willing to take risks and that is why I have continued to move in my career," said Sydnor, who grew up working in the family-owned printshop. "My dad was never afraid to take a chance and that was instilled in all of us."

Her entrepreneurial drive is matched by her community involvement. Sydnor chairs the board for Eliza Bryant Village and is president of the Cleveland chapter of the NAACP, where she has pushed to foster better intergenerational communication and build stronger relationships in the community.

Working on the nonprofit side of the financial industry, allows her to "effect change in the lives of individuals I care about," she said. "ECDI does not feel like a job sometimes because I'm meeting with people I know. This is my network." — *Kim Palmer*

## Paul Tesar, 38

Professor, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine; co-founder, Convelo Therapeutics

**P**aul Tesar is a scientific triple threat, finding success in the field as a researcher, academic and entrepreneur.

A Cleveland native and University of Oxford graduate, Tesar is a professor in the department of genetics and genome sciences at Case Western Reserve. Through his research findings, he also co-founded Convelo Therapeutics, a company developing a new class of medicines to unlock the regenerative capacity of the central nervous system. This summer, Convelo partnered with biotech giant Genentech on the development of therapeutic drugs for patients suffering from multiple sclerosis and other neurological disorders.

Cleveland Foundation president and CEO Ronn Richard, a member of Convelo's board, called Tesar a regional advocate committed to both life-saving research and his hometown's financial health.

"Paul is one of Cleveland's world-class, brilliant minds," Richard said in the nomination. "His work in the biotech space will benefit the sector, Cleveland and MS patients for years to come. He is one of the kindest, most humble leaders in this space that I know."

Tesar said he's excited to spin out research unlocking the nervous system's capacity to regenerate new cells from stem cells. Ideally, this process will identify druglike molecules with the ability to stimulate production of myelin, a protective coating around nerve cells in the central nervous system and a primary target for MS.

"The partnership with Genentech validates the science we've done here at the lab, and affords the opportunity to accelerate research forward onto patients," he said.

While Tesar is proud of his team's ongoing



► **Looking ahead:** Tesar wants his work tested on MS and pediatric disorder patients within the next five years.

► **A few accolades:** Among other honors, Tesar has received the International Society for Stem Cell Research Outstanding Young Investigator Award, the New York Stem Foundation–Robertson Stem Cell Prize, and the Diekhoff Award for Graduate Student Mentoring.

work, he's equally thrilled to mentor the next generation of CWRU scientists. During his career, the multifaceted educator has passed on hard-earned knowledge to students, who themselves have graduated into key scientific positions.

"We provide an environment where we're doing cutting-edge science and everyone is pushing their limits," said Tesar. "Our trainees are exposed to all of the relevant things they'll need for the rest of their careers." — *Douglas J. Guth*

## Howard Washington II, 34

Founder, director and lead choreographer, Elevated Dance Headquarters

**T**here is way more to dance than dancing for Howard Washington II and his students. The founder, director and lead choreographer of Elevated Dance Headquarters in Independence teaches lessons of life, respect, determination and responsibility. To his students, who range in age from 11 to 23, he's a mentor, friend, life coach, brother and support system.

In turn, it's clear that their accomplishments are what bring him the most joy. In 2018, his team of hip-hop dancers won first place in the nation and fifth place internationally at the World of Dance Championship.

Washington's passion and dedication derive from his own discoveries. He had great athletic talent as a kid, but that didn't deter the bullies. The Akron native discovered freedom in dance in the seventh grade while listening to Usher in his kitchen with friends. They taught him how to glide in socks. He then watched VHS tapes of Mr. Wiggles and learned some moves. He found time around his intense sports schedule to teach himself the rest and to rise above the bullies.

After a college career in sports and a degree in choreography from Lake Erie College, with stints as a physical education and entrepreneurship teacher and principal, Washington now focuses on dance full-time.

He started Elevated LLC in 2015 as a traveling dance company, opening Elevated Dance Headquarters in 2018. As it happened, a dance group already existed, and Elevated was born when they sought guidance and found Washington. The name honors the memory of a dedicated dance mom and comes from a desire to rise above obstacles and self-doubt.

"Our mission is to elevate dancers' skills and



► **His hopes:** "I live respectfully for my eulogy. I want to leave a legacy laced with creativity."

► **His plans:** "I'm working on getting my energy back into schools and sharing the lessons I've learned. I'm hopeful for a better place so people can live out who they're supposed to be. I hope I'm impacting the next Steve Jobs or the person who discovers the cure for cancer."

ability to pursue dance as a career and foster a better life," said Washington.

"Howard believes that hip-hop dance should serve as a creative and expressive platform that unites all people," observed dance parent and friend Susan Gordon.

As for staying in Cleveland, Washington said, "You can be a small fish in a big pond or a big fish in a small pond. I traveled, went to L.A., learned how they're moving out there, and I brought the best practices to Northeast Ohio, where we teach everything from studio-level to professional competition." — *Allison Carey*



► **We are family:** "My siblings and I are spread out so we get together a few times a year. We take trips or convene back in Toledo."  
 ► **Extracurricular:** For several years, she's been on the board of directors of City Year Cleveland, which puts near-peer mentors into Cleveland public schools to help the students.

## Julia Tosi, 39

Partner, Squire Patton Boggs

**H**er years in ballet may have taught Julia Tosi the literal meaning of being on her toes, but it's her career as an attorney at Squire Patton Boggs that keeps her on them figuratively.

The Toledo native joined the firm and moved to Cleveland in 2005. Her corporate practice focuses on securities and capital markets, a field that she's found interesting since her first job out of law school. A math and economics major at the University of Dayton, she chose to attend The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law over getting her MBA.

"I was more driven to the prospect of what I would learn in law school and the kinds of opportunities I might have," she explained.

Most of Tosi's clients are large public companies. "I'm passionate about helping them achieve their objectives," she said.

"Julia has been a corporate partner at Squire Patton Boggs for five years and has advised clients

on complex capital raises of approximately \$20 billion," said Michele Connell, managing partner in the firm's Cleveland office. "She is a leading securities and capital markets lawyer, trusted by clients to assist them navigating the U.S. public markets in offerings and SEC compliance."

Tosi, who lives in Bay Village with her husband and two children, credits her years of dance for her current ability to juggle a career and a busy family.

"I didn't want to be a professional dancer as a career, but it was a huge part of who I was," she said. "It was one of the reasons I chose University of Dayton. I auditioned for Dayton Ballet II, a secondary preprofessional company affiliated with the Dayton Ballet." She was there six days a week for classes and rehearsals on top of her college studies. "I just wanted the opportunity to perform in professional productions without taking time off from school," she explained.

"I'm a spectator now; I don't dance," she added. "I was on the board of DANCECleveland for several years. One of the reasons I joined was to reconnect with that side of my younger self. I love to go and watch." — *Allison Carey*



► **Superpower:** "I am known for being able to handle anything chaotic. I think that's because I am able to bring people together."  
 ► **Diversity in accounting:** "When you look around, you still don't see a lot of diversity in this field, especially in smaller cities like Akron. That is something we are looking into how we can change as a firm."

## Kendra Williams, 37

Senior manager, assurance services department, Meaden & Moore LLP

**B**rain drain is a top concern among economic development leaders, who for the last few decades have been working to keep young minds in the region.

Kendra Williams could be the poster child for "brain gain."

Williams grew up in Dayton, the only child of a military father and social worker mother. An accounting class in high school piqued her interest in the field, and she zeroed in on the University of Akron for its accounting acumen and "because that was the farthest my parents would allow me to go."

Greater Akron has been her home — and passion project — ever since.

Williams joined Meaden & Moore's Akron office as an intern shortly after graduation and has worked there for 15 years. She currently oversees the firm's auditing services for manufacturing clients in the re-

gion and leads its nonprofit practice in Akron.

However, her Rubber City reach extends well beyond the office. Williams is president of the Women's Endowment Fund of the Akron Community Foundation, a nonprofit she has worked with for more than six years.

"The fund has seen phenomenal growth in recent years, to where we are giving \$180,000 in grants out each year, specifically geared toward women and girls in the Akron community," she said.

Williams is also treasurer of ArtsNow, a nonprofit focused on Summit County's creative community, and a current member of the women's leadership group ATHENA Akron. In addition, she was corporate chair of this year's Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Northeast Ohio September Light the Night Akron, an event that helps her honor her father, who died from leukemia.

ArtsNow director Nicole Mullet called Williams "one of Akron's most beloved leaders."

"From advocating for women to walking the walk when it comes to supporting arts and culture, Kendra is the kind of leader we watch and marvel at her energy and endless passion," Mullet said. — *Judy Stringer*

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# Girl Scouts, local companies partner to add to STEM workforce

## Organization is raising funds to build \$3M education center in Peninsula

BY KAREN FARKAS

Companies that want to encourage more females to choose careers in science, technology, engineering and math have found an unlikely, yet apt, partner: the Girl Scouts.

The realization that they need to target younger girls on the value of a STEM career has dovetailed with an initiative by the Girl Scouts to develop curriculum and badges focusing on STEM.

The Girl Scouts of North East Ohio is ready to lead the way by seeking grants, partnering with businesses and raising funds to build a \$3 million STEM Center at Camp Ledgewood in

Peninsula for Girl Scouts and middle-school students.

"Girls need STEM confidence early in life," said Jane Christyson, chief executive officer of the council, which is located in Macedonia and serves 18 counties. "Companies want to work with youths and do not need to develop the curriculum."

Companies are learning the Girl Scouts are more than cookies, said Toni Neary, who works with educators in 14 states to promote manufacturing careers for students.

When she was approached by a Girl Scout official at a local manufacturing forum, she said her first reaction was, "I love your cookies, but am not sure



Kyocera SGS Precision Tools in Munroe Falls will bring in Girl Scouts to tour its factory. Gary Miller, director of training and occupational development at the firm, is developing a program for second- and third-grade girls to earn a robotics badge at the site. | CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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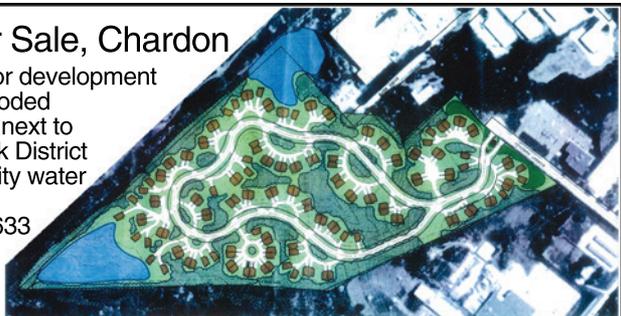
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what we can do together."

"I had no clue how much the Girl Scouts were doing to empower female leaders and create career awareness," she added.

Here's an overview of what the Girl Scouts in Northeast Ohio are doing to encourage STEM careers.

### STEM pledge

According to research, women comprise more than 47% of the workforce but hold fewer than 28% of jobs in STEM fields. While schools have long promoted STEM careers for females and formed affiliations with companies and colleges, studies have shown that by third grade girls have formed their "STEM identity" — whether they are someone who can learn about, use and contribute to science.

The Girl Scouts recently adopted a national STEM pledge to give 2.5 million girls significant STEM experiences by 2025.

The organization in the past two years developed curriculum in STEM fields and awards more than 70 badges related to STEM, including for robotics, mechanical engineering, cybersecurity and coding.

### FirstEnergy Foundation partnership

The Akron foundation in September awarded a \$50,000 grant to engage 4,000 Girl Scouts over the next year.

The company will create a "Girl Power" patch and lead small-group and large events for students that will include hands-on activities and experiments such as making electric currents, harnessing the wind for energy and using the strength of the sun to generate power. Girls also will learn about energy terminology, electric safety, energy conservation and STEM careers by using safety equipment and seeing a bucket truck in action.

"It is really novel and something we can't do on our own," Christyson said. "They will show girls tools they use every day."

Amanda Richardson, engineering manager for Ohio Edison, developed a troop-level curriculum for third- to fifth-grade girls on where power comes from.

"They are a perfect partner with FirstEnergy," she said of the Girl Scouts. "They are building STEM activities into the curriculum, and we are trying to expand our diversity. The earlier you can get them excited and

their minds open to it (careers in the electric utility industry), the better."

Richardson had no problem recruiting female volunteers to work with about 400 girls at an October activity day at Camp Ledgewood.

"A lot of folks who worked for FirstEnergy were Girl Scouts," she noted.

### Hands-on factory work

Gary Miller, director of training and occupational development at Kyocera SGS Precision Tools in Munroe Falls, called Christyson this summer after learning at an organization for educators that the Girl Scouts were involved with STEM.

"I was ecstatic," he said. "It's very hard to get women interested in manufacturing, and if we get them involved when

**"WE NEED TO HELP FILL THE SKILLS GAP, AND THE GIRL SCOUTS HAVE ACCESS TO AN AUDIENCE WE COULD GET IN TOUCH WITH."**

— Toni Neary, director of education for the Haas Division at Morris Group Inc.

they are younger it is a great thing."

Miller is using the Girl Scouts' curriculum to develop a program for second- and third-grade girls to earn a robotics badge at his factory.

Today's factories are clean and manufacturing involves computers and skilled workers, he said.

"If you make it exciting for younger people, they will see the attraction of it," he added. "There are so many different careers out there. We are doing this to promote manufacturing. And even if they don't come to work for us, if they find manufacturing intriguing our job is done."

### Advanced manufacturing

Toni Neary is director of education for the Haas Division at Morris Group Inc., advocating manufacturing careers to students at the local, district and state level in 14 states.

She promotes careers in computer numerical control (CNC) machining, a manufacturing process in which preprogrammed computer software dictates the movement of tools and machinery, including grinders, lathes and routers.

Neary, of Cleveland, and Christyson began meeting about a year ago

to see how they could increase awareness and change perceptions of careers in manufacturing.

"We need to help fill the skills gap, and the Girl Scouts have access to an audience we could get in touch with," Neary said.

She has invited Christyson to speak to educators, manufacturers and economic development directors.

Neary plans to work with Northeast Ohio companies and groups to engage the Girl Scouts in programs to earn badges. She hopes to expand the efforts into other states.

"North East (Council) is our trailblazer," she said. "Girl Scouts are entrepreneurs, self-starters and leaders."

### Welcoming Scouts

Park Place Technologies in Mayfield Heights hosts fourth- and fifth-grade Junior Girl Scouts, who earn their cybersecurity badge. The girls tour the global headquarters, see data center hardware and learn how to safeguard themselves from common cybersecurity threats.

Huntington Bank in Akron also has hosted Junior Girl Scouts to learn about online safety and privacy, and to earn cybersecurity badges.

Hyland Software in Westlake hosts Girl Scouts, who learn about coding to earn a patch.

### STEM center

Christyson recently walked the halls of the Ohio Statehouse, pushing a cart of cookies, to seek the support of legislators for \$500,000 in capital funds for the proposed \$3 million STEM Center of Excellence at Camp Ledgewood. The center would serve Girl Scouts and the more than 60,000 middle-school students within a 30-minute drive, Christyson said. It would include a computer lab/makerspace and an engineering testing and space lab. It would also include rain barrels, a vegetative roof and telescopes.

Groundbreaking is planned for 2021, and the center would open in 2022.

State funding would be through a joint-use agreement in which the state passes capital improvement money through a college to a nonprofit, requiring in return that the partners form an agreement that benefits the college.

The Girl Scouts' partner is Kent State University, which strongly supports the effort and would have many uses for the center, Christyson said.

## REAL ESTATE

# New road could mean significant new development in Jackson

## Fitzpatrick Enterprises finally has access to site that could become office or mixed-use campus

BY DAN SHINGLER

A new street built in July could mean a significant new development in Jackson Township — if its proposed developer can find buyers or tenants.

Scott Fitzpatrick, owner of Fitzpatrick Enterprises in Canton and a longtime developer around Belden Village Mall and other parts of town, has been trying to get Strip Avenue near I-77 extended since at least 2013. Now that it's in, he says he's hoping to turn an approximately 50-acre site into an office or mixed-use campus.

Given its size, that it's one minute from I-77 and close to the airport and the burgeoning Professional Football Hall of Fame and Village, not to mention a rebounding Canton, many think the site has great potential. Fitzpatrick and those hoping to sell and design the project predict it will become one of the most significant developments the area has seen in years — in a relatively bucolic natural setting to boot, they promise.

What's going to be built there is an open question. Fitzpatrick said he's talked to and is still talking to interested parties that range from big-box stores and major grocers expanding in the area to traditional office-space us-

ers like medical and other professional service providers.

Fitzpatrick added he hopes to continue to own the property and build it out to suit tenants that commit to leasing office or retail space.

"That's my first choice ... but I'll either lease the ground or sell the ground and build to suit. I've learned in these times you have to keep yourself open," Fitzpatrick said.

That includes even selling the land in whole or in part. The property's listing by NAI Spring real estate in Canton includes a price of \$250,000 to \$350,000 per acre for the land.

NAI Spring president Dan Spring conceded that's a number Fitzpatrick was cajoled into including.

"A real estate guy has to know the price," Spring said, but added he knows an outright total sale is not what Fitzpatrick is hoping happens to the land.

It's a prime site, said both Fitzpatrick and John Dodovich, a former director of Fairlawn's Welty Building Co. who now works as Canton's chief building official and is Fitzpatrick Enterprises' chief architect for the site in Jackson.

Dodovich said he loves the site because it's not a "20 acres of pool-table-flat land" like many parcels that become available in the region. It's a



— Scott Fitzpatrick, owner of Fitzpatrick Enterprises

**"I'LL EITHER LEASE THE GROUND OR SELL THE GROUND AND BUILD TO SUIT. I'VE LEARNED IN THESE TIMES YOU HAVE TO KEEP YOURSELF OPEN."**

rare, larger site with sharp contours, a creek and a natural wetland that Dodovich said presents an architect with opportunities to create buildings with natural framing and a sense of seclusion.

"It has tremendous visual interest. ... We can create identity and a sense of place," Dodovich said.

Fitzpatrick has been sitting on the site for about 10 years, waiting for an opportunity to market and develop it. That opportunity came this summer, when Jackson extended Strip Avenue between Portage and Applegrove streets, giving the site the access road it needs, according to Spring.

Jackson reportedly spent \$2 million on the project: \$1.5 million to build the road and another \$500,000 to move a natural gas pipeline on the site. And township officials reportedly intend to recover that money and more from tax-

es on development at the site.

Since then, Fitzpatrick and Dodovich have been preparing the site. That includes some excavation, tree planting and preparations for a walking path through the campus

that will feature habitat for challenged species like the monarch butterfly, Dodovich said.

"The way we plan to develop it is to capitalize on the natural domain — and there's a sizable wetland already there," he said.

They've also built the site's storm-water ponds across the street, meaning anything built on the campus won't have to deal with managing runoff water on site, Dodovich added.

While the project depends on Spring and Fitzpatrick finding tenants or buyers willing to make a commitment, Spring said there's reason to have some faith that Fitzpatrick knows what he's doing. The developer has had many successful projects in the Belden Village area and other parts of town, including the nearby Home Depot and BJ's Wholesale Club big-box stores, along with other retail developments in Jackson.

Fitzpatrick said he's been transitioning away from area around Belden Village mall to spots like Creekside.

"I've held over a million square feet in the Belden Village area, and I'm selling a lot off now," he said.

He's hoping to build about 100,000 square feet of office space on four sites of the Strip Avenue campus to start and is looking for tenants now. If he finds them, Fitzpatrick said he'll likely also try to find retail, restaurant and other lifestyle tenants for the buildings' first floors.

That would take up a little less than half the site. Much of the rest would likely best serve a larger user, with about 200,000 square feet of space for either retail or office, Fitzpatrick noted.

The big question may be whether he tries to put in any residential units, such as apartments.

"We may look at putting some residential apartments in there, but it would have to be rezoned," he said.

That would give Jackson some new luxury apartments that it currently lacks and which are often difficult to site in such single-home-oriented communities. Spring said he thinks township officials are amenable to spot-zoning Fitzpatrick's site to allow it, but that's not been requested from township officials so far.

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## ENGINEERING & CONSULTING

### American Structurepoint

American Structurepoint, the 2018 ENR Midwest Design Firm of Year, announces the opening of its Cleveland design center, headed by Regional Services Director **Ed Kagel**.



Kagel

With 24 years of experience, Ed is adept at helping ODOT districts, local public agencies, and communities of all sizes solve complex challenges in transportation, utility infrastructure, and construction solutions.

### Andy Clemens

Andy Clemens joins the firm as Director of Project Development in our Investigative Group. Andy brings over 20 years of investigative and structural design experience to the Ohio market. He specializes in structural analysis, historic preservation, property condition assessments, failure investigations, and roofing and building envelope evaluations.



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## ENGINEERING & CONSULTING

### USA Firmware

**Rick Benson** joins USA Firmware as an Advisory Board Member. In this role, he will counsel the company on its management and growth objectives as the organization leverages its expertise in Firmware and IoT to turn smart ideas into smart products. Rick combines 37 years of experience in design and engineering management, earned from his former role as president of AVID Technologies, a successful design services firm. Rick is currently an Independent Consultant based in Hilton Head Island, SC.



## HEALTH CARE

### The MetroHealth Foundation

**Jason R. Bristol** has joined the Board of Directors of The MetroHealth Foundation, which raises philanthropic support for The MetroHealth System. Jason is a partner in the law firm of Cohen Rosenthal & Kramer LLP, which he joined in 2004. He also is an adjunct professor at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law.



## HEALTH CARE

### The MetroHealth Foundation

**Heidi Petz** also has joined the Board of Directors of The MetroHealth Foundation. Heidi is president and general manager, consumer brands group North America at Sherwin-Williams. Prior to moving to Cleveland in 2018, she served as senior vice president, marketing at Sherwin-Williams in Chicago.



## HEALTH CARE

### NOMS Healthcare

NOMS promotes **Holly Tyson** to VP of population health. She has 27 years' healthcare experience including 10 years at NOMS as director of care management. Holly will oversee all population health programs & initiatives for the rapidly expanding organization & ACO (Accountable Care Organization). She will also be integrally involved with the introduction & incorporation of NOMS' progressive Advanced Medical Home care delivery model during the merger and/or acquisition of new primary care practices.



## HUMAN RESOURCES

### ERC

ERC, the human resource organization that provides training, coaching, consulting, research, and HR support services, is pleased to announce that **Alison Brunsdon** has joined the company as Director, Coaching & Assessment Services. Alison is a strategic, global talent leader with over 30 years of experience in executive coaching, assessments, organizational change, and transformation. Most recently, she was Global Director of Talent Management for The Lubrizol Corporation. Visit [www.yourERC.com](http://www.yourERC.com).



## INSURANCE & FINANCIAL SERVICES

### First American Title National Commercial Services

**Joy (Thomas) Eifrid** joined the Cleveland office of First American Title's National Commercial Services division earlier this year as a Sales Executive. Joy relocated from Chicago bringing with her 5 years of title examining and business development experience. Growing up and earning her law degree in NE Ohio, Joy's transition back has been seamless as well as productive. Joy will be serving the Greater Cleveland area, while also allocating a portion of her time and effort to our Toledo office.



## INSURANCE & FINANCIAL SERVICES

### First American Title National Commercial Services

First American Title National Commercial Services is pleased to announce Erin Chelune and Sue Sampsel have joined our Cleveland team. Natives of Northeast Ohio, our newest team members bring a wealth of experience to our valued Ohio customers. **Erin Chelune**, Esq. has experience reviewing title exams, analyzing organizational and transactional documents, responding to title objections and endorsement requests. Native to Northeast Ohio, Erin obtained her law degree at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law.



Chelune

### Sue Sampsel

Sue Sampsel, who serves as Underwriting Manager, joined the Cleveland team to support our growing underwriting department. Sue is Cleveland-area born and raised, with real estate law and title industry experience dating back to 1987.



Sampsel



## LEGAL

### Avalon

Avalon is thrilled to announce that **Larry Kotterman** joined our team as the new vice president of Managed Office Services (MOS). A Columbus native, who will be stationed at our Cleveland office, Larry brings more than 25 years of MOS experience to Avalon, as well as a wealth of knowledge, professionalism, and an unparalleled commitment to both his team and his clients. We look forward to Larry's assistance in leading Avalon into the future.



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## NONPROFITS

### Cleveland Foundation

The Cleveland Foundation is pleased to welcome **Dave Stokley** as a Gift Planning Advisor. In this role, Dave will work with other Advancement team colleagues to provide outstanding service to professional advisors and wealth management professionals and their clients seeking to establish new funds and planned gifts that help achieve each donor's philanthropic goals. Dave was recently elected as the President of the Board of Trustees for the Northern Ohio Planned Giving Council.



## NONPROFITS

### Cleveland Foundation

The Cleveland Foundation is pleased to welcome **Kristen Grabenstein** as a Philanthropy Officer. In this role, Kristen provides strategic advisement and support to a portfolio of donors and corporations, ensuring their charitable giving is aligned with their long-term goals. She brings more than 15 years' experience in corporate citizenship, client service and fund development to the foundation. Kristen is an alumnus of Cleveland Bridge Builders and has served on the board of Dobama Theatre.



## TECHNOLOGY

### TrellisPoint

**Jay Valerian** has joined Ohio-based TrellisPoint, a Microsoft partner, as a Solutions Consultant spearheading its new Virtual Loan Assistant solution for commercial banking. As former Senior Vice President of Liberty Bank N.A., headquartered in NE Ohio, Jay brings over 15 years of leadership experience in banking revenue growth, relationship sales management and Microsoft Dynamics 365 (CRM) software implementation and configuration experience.



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# Christopher Alvarado

Christopher Alvarado, executive director of Slavic Village Development, began his work with the nonprofit community development corporation in 2014, three days after getting married. He was offered the job after going to a meeting to advise the outgoing executive director on the search for a replacement. Development for Slavic Village, the community known as ground zero in the foreclosure crisis between 2007 and 2010, is all about changing perceptions, Alvarado said. "I joke that when I took this job five years ago, my assumption was that the full name of the neighborhood was Slavic Village: Epicenter of the Foreclosure Crisis," he said. — *Kim Palmer*



**"MUCH OF WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO IS REBUILD STABILITY AND WEALTH IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD. WEALTH CAN BE MEASURED IN TERMS OF HOMEOWNERSHIP AND THE VALUES THAT WE HAVE IN OUR HOMES."**

► **How did the foreclosure crisis change Slavic Village?**

This neighborhood in the past was mainly Czech, Polish, Eastern and Central European. If you look at the 1990 Census, it was 98% white. Fast-forward to today and it is 55% African American, with a smaller percentage of Latinos. There has been a huge transition that has taken place over the last 30 years. The foreclosure crisis, coming when it did, affected not just housing vacancy rates in this neighborhood — there was a population loss. We were in the mid-30,000s in 1990 and now we are down to about 22,000 residents. It severely affected folks that moved here between 1990 and 2009, and most of those folks were African American and most of those folks were first-time homebuyers. It was the first home that they bought and often the first-time homeowners in their entire families. The loss of wealth, the loss of equity that took place because of that hurt household stability and informs the work that we do as a community development organization today.

► **What would it look like if you could change the way that people perceive Slavic Village?**

I'm trying to think of a pithy and brief way of saying it. This is the most diverse neighborhood in Cleveland, where anybody can build their lives, can enjoy affordably a high quality of life and build generational wealth. There is no quick way of saying that. This is a charming neighborhood with really good people, and it is the most diverse neighborhood in the city. Nobody knows that. I think we can model what a diverse, working-class neighborhood

should look like — one that has quality schools, one where you do not need a car to move around and one where you can have a racially diverse and an economically diverse population, and do so without concerns about gentrification, being priced out.

► **What is the state of housing in Slavic Village?**

The work that we have been doing with Slavic Village is to take vacant and abandoned homes and rehab them in a partnership with Cleveland Neighborhood Progress. So many of the vacancies were walk-aways. Then we sell them on the open market to folks who get conventional 30-year mortgages. It is about rebuilding the housing market in Slavic Village. Much of what we are trying to do is

rebuild stability and wealth in this neighborhood. Wealth can be measured in terms of homeownership and the values that we have in our homes.

► **Let's talk a little bit about Cleveland Rising.**

I was there because it was important to represent neighborhoods like ours that can benefit from a stronger and more diverse, equitable economy. To be able not to just say that this is about increasing gross domestic product of Northeast Ohio but be able to help folks in neighborhoods like ours, to achieve wealth and recognizing there is a lot of untapped potential, not just in the physical structure of the neighborhoods, but with the folks who live here. From Cleveland Rising there is a roadmap, but it is going to be dependent on how much follow-through we have.

There is a responsibility for those who may have a stronger grip on the levers of power — more than a CDC director — to be able to advocate for a strategy that creates economic wealth. I think a lot more people need to come to the table and make commitments. There will always be one or three neighborhoods or communities that are doing well. Those communities change over time, but if we don't make the pie bigger, we are always going to be fighting over the same few small slices.

► **What are you working on right now that you are excited about?**

Slavic Village has not had a master plan since before the foreclosure crisis. Five years ago, we started a strategic plan. We got hundreds of responses to our surveys and hundreds of data points about what people wanted from Slavic Village. And then we looked at the respondents and 20% were African American in a neighborhood that is more than 50% African American. Now, we are training 22 neighborhood stewards that we recruited. These are people that are not just traditional leaders of block clubs but people we came across in one of our public meetings. We have 12 African American, 10 white residents representing the entire breadth of the neighborhood. We are paying them stipends, which gives the job weight and values expertise. These are the people that are going to reach out to their neighbors to ask what they want and need. This is going to be a multiyear project. I don't know what the plan is going to look like: The stewards are going to drive the process, and they will be able to stand on equal footing with the traditional community leaders.

**THE ALVARADO FILE**

**Cleveland transplant**  
Born and raised in San Antonio, he's a fifth-generation Texan. His dad, who is Mexican-American and worked for the State Department, met his mom, who is Vietnamese and worked for the Catholic Church, in Vietnam because they were both working on refugee issues.

**How he came to Cleveland**  
Alvarado relocated after graduating from Notre Dame and managed a home for intellectually disabled adults for six years.

**LUNCH SPOT**



**Red Chimney Restaurant**  
6501 Fleet Ave., Cleveland  
216-441-0053

**The meal**  
One had a cheeseburger platter with fries and water; the other had a Reuben with fries, Thousand Island on the side (natch) and water.

**The vibe**  
It's the definition of an old-school community hangout with a consistent stream of business, construction workers and families. It only takes cash.

**The bill**  
\$18.60 with tip

**THE WEEK**

**HISTORIC GIFT:** Cleveland Clinic received a \$261 million gift — the largest in its history — from the Lord Foundation. The distribution was made possible by the sale of LORD Corp., a manufacturer based in Cary, N.C., that recently was sold to Parker Hannifin for \$3.675 billion, triggering a distribution of proceeds to four institutions. Also receiving gifts of similar amounts were Duke University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Southern California.

**CHANGE AT THE TOP:** Geoffrey Gund, 77, president of the board of trustees at The George Gund Foundation for the last 25 years and a member for 43 years, retired on Nov. 14. His niece, Catherine Gund, 53, became board president. During Geoffrey Gund's tenure as president, the foundation



**Cleveland Clinic received the largest gift in its history — \$261 million from the Lord Foundation.** | STAN BULLARD

said it made more than \$584 million in grants, mostly in Cleveland, for programs in the arts, community/economic development, education, the environment and human services.

Catherine Gund founded Aubin Pictures, a nonprofit documentary film company that focuses primarily on social justice issues. She is the granddaughter of George Gund II and the

daughter of Agnes Gund, Geoffrey Gund's sister.

**OPPORTUNITY ZONE:** The city of Cleveland announced that a 10-acre property in the Kinsman neighborhood was selected as the site for a new campus-style police headquarters. City officials have searched for a new police site after selling the downtown headquarters to Cuyahoga County in 2018 for \$9.25 million and leasing back the space for \$1.5 million a year. Construction on the proposed site at East 75th Street and Grand Avenue could begin as early as 2021, around the same time the buildout of the Opportunity Corridor is completed. A cost estimate for the project hasn't been finalized, but the city will use \$60 million in bond funds raised previously for the relocation.

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