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**THE MAGAZINE OF
THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS**

Issue 2 2016



**CULTIVATING A JUST PITTSBURGH:
IF WE MAKE THE EFFORT,
EVERYONE IN THE REGION CAN HAVE
THE OPPORTUNITY TO THRIVE.**

ISSUE 2 2016

INSIDE

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FEATURE: JUST PITTSBURGH

When The Heinz Endowments rolled out the concept of “Just Pittsburgh” earlier this year, it opened the door to conversations about how commitments to equity and justice can enhance the quality of life for many residents in a variety of ways. Stories in this issue of h highlight examples of what already is being done to make that happen.

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The Heinz Endowments was formed from the Howard Heinz Endowment, established in 1941, and the Vira I. Heinz Endowment, established in 1986. It is the product of a deep family commitment to community and the common good that began with H.J. Heinz, and that continues to this day.

The Endowments is based in Pittsburgh, where we use our region as a laboratory for the development of solutions to challenges that are national in scope. Although the majority of our giving is concentrated within southwestern Pennsylvania, we work wherever necessary, including statewide and nationally, to fulfill our mission.

That mission is to help our region thrive as a whole community — economically, ecologically, educationally and culturally — while advancing the state of knowledge and practice in the fields in which we work. Our fields of emphasis include philanthropy in general and the disciplines represented by our five grantmaking programs: Arts & Culture; Children, Youth & Families; Community & Economic Development; Education; and Environment.

In life, Howard Heinz and Vira I. Heinz set high expectations for their philanthropy. Today, the Endowments is committed to doing the same. Our charge is to be diligent, thoughtful and creative in continually working to set new standards of philanthropic excellence. Recognizing that none of our work would be possible without a sound financial base, we also are committed to preserving and enhancing the Endowments’ assets through prudent investment management.

h magazine is a publication of The Heinz Endowments. At the Endowments, we are committed to promoting learning in philanthropy and in the specific fields represented by our grantmaking programs. As an expression of that commitment, this publication is intended to share information about significant lessons and insights we are deriving from our work.

Editorial team Linda Braund, John Ellis, Donna Evans Sebastian, Carmen Lee, Grant Oliphant, Courtney Tolmer. Design: Landesberg Design

About the cover Essence Bey, an employee of the nonprofit Grow Pittsburgh, enjoys the fragrance of herbs while working at the Shiloh Farms garden in Pittsburgh’s Homewood neighborhood. Many urban communities have no sources for locally grown produce, however, making access to fresh food both a health and a justice issue.

Unless otherwise indicated, all photography for this issue of h was done by Scott Goldsmith. Scott has photographed feature stories for a wide variety of magazines including *Fortune*, *The National Geographic*, *LIFE*, *TIME*, and *Sports Illustrated*.



JUST HEALTH

Good health has to be nurtured, especially when resources are limited. Some Pittsburgh programs that have taken this idea to heart are expanding the availability of fresh produce through urban gardening while others are ensuring that local babies are born healthy and thrive.

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JUST COMMUNITY

It takes commitment and determination to create a diverse and welcoming community that offers everyone the opportunity to achieve. Efforts to do this in the Pittsburgh region include those supporting groups ranging from architects and ex-offenders to veterans and immigrants.

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JUST PITTSBURGH

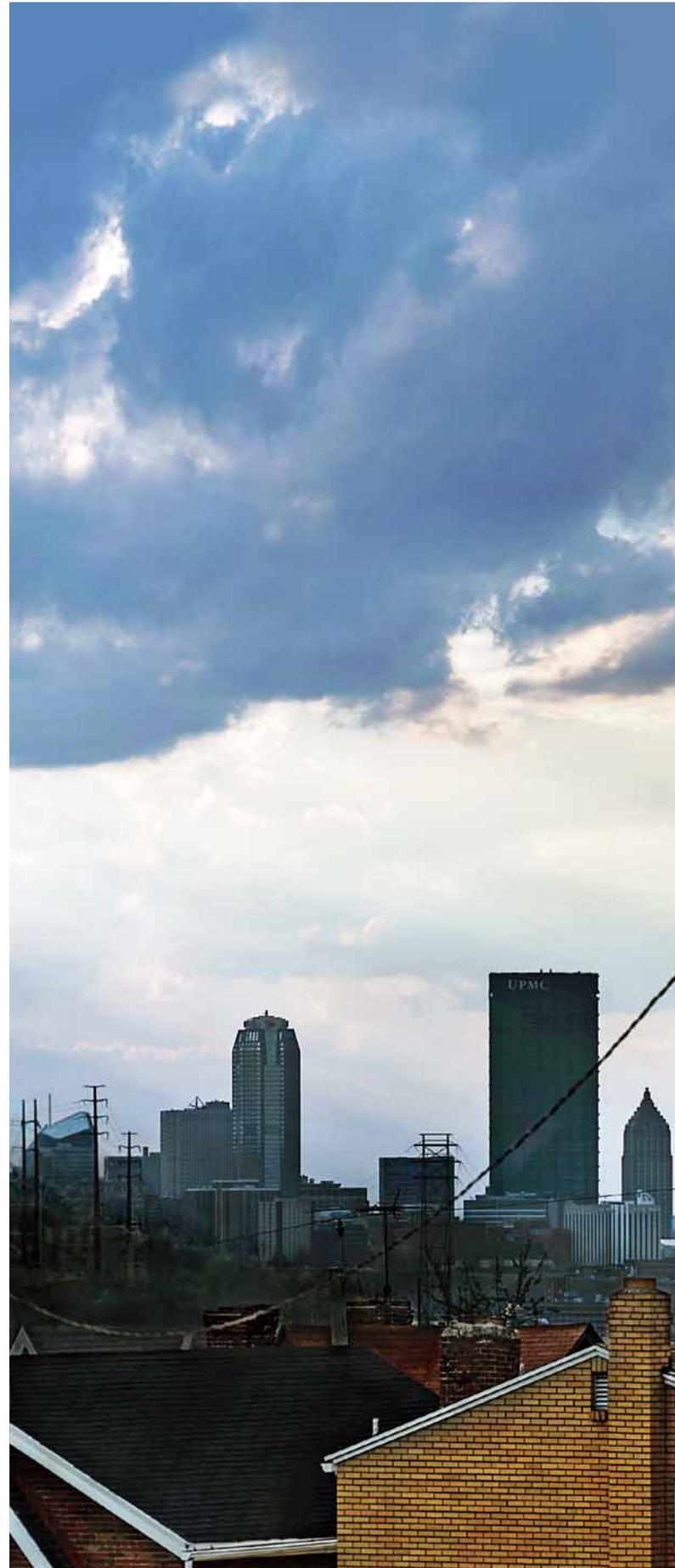
In a blog earlier this year, Heinz Endowments President Grant Oliphant introduced the term “Just Pittsburgh” to help describe what he believes are some of the major challenges and aspirations for our community. He sparked an unexpected widespread conversation about what the concept represents and our community’s hopes and ambitions for the future.

Mr. Oliphant wrote in his blog that a Just Pittsburgh would “Open its arms in a wide embrace, unafraid of difference, aware that no person and no community has ever been made less by opening their hearts and minds more . . . It would be intolerant of hiding behind one Pittsburgh celebrated in “best of” lists while letting a second Pittsburgh languish in poverty and discrimination . . . It would care about public health and how its residents are faring, black or white, rich or poor . . . It would value its creative soul . . . It would tolerate the pain and discomfort of difficult conversations with people whose emotions are raw and deep and real.”

Through social media, Mr. Oliphant and the Endowments provided opportunities for the public to brainstorm more ideas. As part of this process, advancing a Just Pittsburgh also has been integrated into the Endowments’ grantmaking as a guiding principle—though the ethics of a Just Pittsburgh have always been at the heart of the foundation’s work even if not previously expressed in this manner.

This issue of *h* magazine highlights examples of initiatives the Endowments supports that reflect a Just Pittsburgh approach to grantmaking as it continues to be refined by the foundation and defined in the community. Included is a preview of a mid-October conference on the p4 framework that the Endowments joined with city officials in publicly introducing last year. The framework seeks to address the region’s challenges and promote a more prosperous future by developing strategies that focus on people, planet, place and performance. The emphasis will be on “people” at this fall’s gathering, which will address issues of social and economic equity so that everyone benefits from the range of efforts to improve the quality of life in the region.

Other stories in this edition of *h* illustrate what philanthropic contributions to a Just Pittsburgh could involve. They do not represent an exhaustive list of the projects that are possible or already underway, but offer a glimpse of the potential that should be further developed. A Just Pittsburgh is a long-term work in progress. As Mr. Oliphant said in his blog post, “If we are willing to dream of a Just Pittsburgh, we can create it—we simply have to want to try.” **h**



In April, The Heinz Endowments hosted a #justpgh Twitter chat to help stimulate dialogue about the Just Pittsburgh concept. People were asked to respond to the question, "What does a Just Pittsburgh mean to you?" The invitation also challenged the Endowments to think more about how to make its own vision for the region better and stronger, particularly in communities seeking renewal such as Hazelwood, below, which is just a few miles from Downtown Pittsburgh. Here are some of the comments from that Twitter conversation.

@APLUSSCHOOLS A #JUSTPGH IN PRACTICE MEANS THAT STUDENTS IN OUR MOST VULNERABLE SCHOOLS BENEFIT FROM EXCELLENT TEACHING, PRINCIPALS AND MATERIALS.

@KARRISMJACKSON IN A #JUSTPGH ISSUES OF STRUCTURAL RACISM ARE "EVERYONE'S ISSUES."

@CPGHLOVE #JUSTPGH GIVES ALL EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HOUSING REGARDLESS OF INCOME OR ZIP CODE. AFFORDABLE HOUSING, LIVABLE, QUALITY, AND SAFE FOR ALL.

@COALFLDJUSTIC #JUSTPGH MUST BE A PART OF A #JUST REGION WHERE PEOPLE LIVING IN & AROUND PGH ALL HAVE HEALTHY, LIVABLE COMMUNITIES WITH VIBRANT ECONOMIES

@DAVETHECFREI JUST IS WHEN PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WILL HAVE THE SAME ACCESS TO ALL OF THE COMMUNITY #JUSTPGH.

@EECM_PITTSBURGH A #JUSTPGH MEANS JOB & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL, REGARDLESS OF ZIP CODE OR RACE.

@UPPRIZE A #JUSTPGH WOULD MEAN PITTSBURGH INSTITUTIONS AND INVESTORS WOULD SUPPORT STARTUPS THAT IMPROVE LIVES AND BUILD WEALTH HERE.

DANWOFFORDI #JUSTPGH MEANS ACCESS TO GREEN SPACE, STORES W/ HEALTHY FOOD & GOOD SCHOOLS FOR ALL FAMILIES; REQUIRES STRATEGIC INVESTMENT & PARTNERSHIPS.

@PITTSBURGHGWC A #JUSTPGH MEANS A #HEALTHY VIBRANT COMMUNITY CHAMPIONED BY ALL!



Garden fresh

Urban gardening in Pittsburgh is providing lifelong lessons in healthy nutrition and renewing interest in growing food as part of local culture. by Christine O'Toole



Planting gardens across urban neighborhoods enables people of all ages to learn about nutritional food as well as consume it. Molly McHolme, a garden educator with the nonprofit Grow Pittsburgh, discusses natural solutions for eliminating pests in Dilworth Elementary School's garden with, from left, Kai Schaeffersmith, Violet Schaeffersmith and Olivia Whatley. Below, Kai holds an edible flower, which the students were given to taste.

The elegant sepia photo in Julie Butcher Pezzino's hand captures the inspiration of her work. It depicts a white-clad group of Dilworth Elementary students harvesting the school's bumper garden crop. Growing healthy foods is the mission of Ms. Butcher Pezzino's nonprofit, Grow Pittsburgh, which has helped revive that learning tradition at Dilworth. The vintage image, now almost 100 years old, proves gardening is an old-school skill.



Today's thriving schoolyard plantings along Stanton Avenue prove that everything old is new again. After a century of growing away from its agricultural roots, western Pennsylvania is rediscovering the vital link between growers and consumers. This time, the region's sustainable food movement unites elementary education, community gardens, farmers markets and professional development for farming pros and apprentices.

Grow Pittsburgh's Dilworth learning garden, now in its ninth season, is a model poised to expand with a \$1 million Heinz Endowments grant. The patented program, which was founded at four other Pittsburgh schools, will reach 50 more schools throughout Allegheny County over the next two years. Using a curriculum developed by Grow Pittsburgh and available on its website, the new gardens will be managed by The Kitchen Community, a nonprofit working with large school districts throughout the country to create "learning gardens."

"Grow Pittsburgh's school gardens are one of our wide range of programs, all aimed at insuring that folks at all age levels are connected to healthy foods and have access all along the way," explained Ms. Butcher Pezzino, executive director of Grow Pittsburgh since 2009. "In our minds, it really starts with the schools."

In addition to serving as an ongoing outdoor lesson in science and nutrition, gardening has become one of the skills promoted by the region's Remake Learning education innovation network. Andrew McElwaine, vice president for Sustainability and the Environment at the Endowments, a network member, said the foundation's board was excited about supporting Grow Pittsburgh in providing hands-on instruction in sustainability through school gardening and increasing its program's scale. The Hillman and Richard King Mellon foundations have agreed to award another \$1.5 million to the project.

Ms. Butcher Pezzino emphasized that the school-grown produce, planted to peak during the academic year, doesn't end up on cafeteria lunch trays because the garden is too small. The berries, garlic, cherry tomatoes, kale and collards introduce children to the science of gardening and the taste of new flavors.

"We try to plant things that kids will like," she said. The choices overcome the "yuck" factor. Nearly half of the responding parents and guardians in a recent Grow Pittsburgh survey reported that their child asked them for a new fruit or vegetable—one that their child had not asked for prior to participating in the garden program. Well over two-thirds, or about 70 percent, said their child now eats more fruits and vegetables.

And the change in eating habits affected families: More than one-third of the families reported that their child had influenced the family to eat more fruits and vegetables on a daily basis.

URBAN FARMER IN TRAINING ►

For some youngsters, the gardening bug becomes a serious interest. Grow Pittsburgh's Urban Farmer in Training program hires six to eight teens to tend community gardens through the city's Learn and Earn program each summer. A few of those gardeners continue into formal apprenticeships for those ages 18 to 24.

Rashay Evans, right, now a 20-year-old student completing her degree at Community College of Allegheny County, first grabbed a watering can at Homewood Children's Village's Kaboom! Playground summer program in 2014. "I didn't think I was going to like it. But it was interesting to put seed down, water it, and watch it grow," she recalled.

This summer she was an Urban Farmer in Training, a paid part-time post that found her in the city's Point Breeze neighborhood, shuttling between planting seedlings at The Frick greenhouse and staffing the Shiloh Farms produce stand. The work strengthened her interest in fresh foods and natural products; she hopes to pursue a business career in organic beauty products.



"As a country, we are subsidizing wheat and soy farmers, but not the produce farmers," Ms. Butcher Pezzino said. "Produce is expensive. Groups like Grow Pittsburgh and the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank are subsidized differently, by the foundation community, to provide fruits and vegetables to markets at reasonable prices."

However, a special concern for urban gardeners is land tenure: how long they're allowed to farm a leased lot. While rural land is readily available, city growers usually have limited contracts for their farms. "Farming has a big up-front investment. That's a huge risk, if you lose your lease after two seasons," Ms. Butcher Pezzino explained. "We're working with the city for longer opportunities to access land."

The next phase of a city vacant lot initiative is expected to address this issue. Meanwhile, the borough of Millvale, northeast of Pittsburgh, has reclaimed vacant lots at six scattered sites. The Gardens of Millvale, a project led by the town's business district, has been a catalyst for neighborhood cleanup and community action. Local examples reflect a growing trend in which cities such as Detroit and Cleveland have allowed local growers—including brewers—to sow hundreds of empty inner-city lots.

Also placing pressure on Pittsburgh growers is the city's resurgence. "A challenge we face is that the land that's appropriate for farming is also attractive to developers," Ms. Butcher Pezzino noted.

Public parkland has become a practical solution for community garden sites. Halfway up the city's South Side Slopes, the Bandi Schaum Community Garden thrives on a reclaimed ballfield, with 88 plots in use and a waiting list of 100. Grow Pittsburgh hopes to extend the program to county-owned parks in the future.

But such urban efforts will never grow all the fresh food a region of two million needs.

"A city the size of Pittsburgh needs a thriving rural agriculture industry to feed itself," said Franklin Egan, education director for the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture. PASA is the largest state coalition of sustainable farmers, producers and consumers in the country. Founded in 1992, its successful programs, including the highly visible "Buy Fresh, Buy Local" campaign, have been adopted across the U.S.

PASA recently received a \$100,000 grant from the Endowments to strengthen its mentoring and training efforts, aimed at ultimately expanding the region's food supply. Over the past five years, PASA participation in western Pennsylvania has grown by 30 percent, now comprising more than 800 members. Egan plans to increase that number.

"Statewide, we have a large pool of farmers with under 10 years' experience, and a large group with 20-plus years of experience," Mr. Egan explained. "But in the middle ground, a significant number don't stay in farming. They want to serve communities but don't find a business model that works."

He hopes to prevent those failures with a data-driven approach that develops best practices. "This isn't academic research," he said. "Our goal is to produce farmers who have tried something new in a rigorous, quantitative way and are prepared to talk about it with peers."

Both Grow Pittsburgh, and PASA have apprenticeship programs, but PASA's is in dairy farming. With the country's second-largest number of dairy farms, 99 percent of which are family-owned, Pennsylvania milk production is a growth industry.

Representatives of PASA and Grow Pittsburgh work together on the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council, a network that last year drafted a new agricultural code passed by City Council.

"Since the start of [Mayor William] Peduto's administration, we have been able to move faster," Ms. Butcher Pezzino said. "We want to make it easier to grow food in the city. It's a great way to bring people together and foster community action. It's still not easy, but we can get there." **h**



BUGS OF PITTSBURGH ▼

The nonprofit Grow Pittsburgh has encouraged a literal grassroots organization. The Black Urban Gardens and Farmers of Pittsburgh cooperative embraces its acronym, BUGs. Its founder, master gardener Vikki Ayanna Jones, describes BUGs as a group that is involved in social justice issues as well as food sufficiency in the black community. BUGs' Homewood Farmers Market opened for its first season in June, with Grow Pittsburgh's support. Its dues-paying members maintain a dozen gardens on vacant lots and private properties in the Hill District and Homewood—which requires keeping updated inventory, as shown below.

"BUGs and our projects bring a commitment mentality," said Ms. Jones, a grandmother of 16. "A lot of projects piggybacked off need we saw in the black community—only one of the [schoolyard] gardens is in a black school! We have senior citizens and summer campers who work in the gardens, as well as Grow Pittsburgh apprentices and a couple of young men in the horticulture program at Bidwell Training Center."



Garden variety

EBT CARDS ►

Efforts to expand access to fresh food include a program that allows families receiving public assistance programs to use their EBT (electronic benefits transfer) cards at local farmers markets. Just Harvest, a local nonprofit dedicated to preventing hunger, devised the card-swipe system that enables food stamp recipients who visit one of 18 participating markets to go to a designated tent, swipe their cards and receive tokens to purchase produce from vendors who later exchange the tokens, pictured right, for cash. Dubbed Fresh Access, the program also allows these customers to receive a bonus \$2 in produce for every \$5 they spend at the markets.

Just Harvest reported a 42 percent increase in EBT sales since the inception of the program in 2013. Last year, EBT sales represented more than \$40,000 of \$150,000 in revenues at participating markets. And in a 2014 survey, 80 percent of food stamp shoppers said their produce consumption has increased as a result of the program.

"The most difficult aspect of providing healthy foods is the price point," said Julie Butcher Pezzino, executive director of the nonprofit Grow Pittsburgh. "We often forget that when we talk about low-income individuals in our rural communities in southwestern Pennsylvania, a lot of the low-income people are farmers. They can't afford to come to low-income neighborhoods and provide produce like we do, below supermarket prices."



A close-up photograph of a newborn baby's head, held gently in the hands of a person, likely the mother. The baby's eyes are closed, and its dark hair is visible. The hands are positioned around the baby's head, with fingers resting on the forehead and temples. The background is softly blurred, showing other parts of the baby's body and medical equipment like a white bandage on the forehead.

HEAD START

Two-day-old Jeffrey Lavon Jenkins Jr. is precious treasure in the hands of his mother, Shaelyn Newton, at Pittsburgh's Magee Womens-Hospital of UPMC.

The arrival of a new baby is always good news—perhaps particularly in Pittsburgh, where younger residents remain a highly prized cohort.

And there’s particularly encouraging news from the most recent study of newborn health in the region. As more pregnant mothers obtain prenatal care and are connected to other critical resources, Allegheny County’s infant mortality rate is falling. From 2008 to 2012, the rate of deaths per 1,000 births fell from 7.4 to 6.65 percent. Also, 97 percent of the county’s mothers today receive care during their pregnancies.

But a closer look at the statistics reveals that infant deaths remain stubbornly high in a handful of neighborhoods. Most troubling is the unyielding gap between rates for whites—4.1 per 1,000—and African Americans, whose infant mortality is nearly three times higher.

To lower the infant mortality rate for black families and to push the overall rate below 6 per 1,000—a goal of the county’s Healthy Allegheny agenda—two programs have been added this year to the portfolio of local initiatives to address the issue. Health care provider Allegheny Health Network expects to reach 6,000 women through workshops to increase awareness of environmental exposures in pregnancy and early childhood. The nonprofit Three Rivers Mothers’ Milk Bank is providing lifesaving breast milk to critically ill newborns. The Heinz Endowments has made two-year grants of \$100,000 to each program.

“Infant mortality prevention is critical in our work,” said Carmen Anderson, the Endowments’ senior program officer for Children, Youth & Families. “There’s a direct correlation with the milk bank: The baby lives. The environmental effort is not as easily connected to immediate results, but exposures can make a huge difference” in health. Umbilical cord blood studies have found, for example, that pregnant women are exposed to hundreds of toxins during pregnancy: pesticides, consumer product ingredients, and waste from burning coal, gasoline and garbage. So are their babies.

The Allegheny Health Network’s outreach programs for expectant mothers provided an opportunity to add the environmental message to a receptive audience. It also found an ideal partner in Women for a Healthy Environment, a local health education initiative.

“In all of our workshops, we provide practical solutions for the environment in which people live,” explained Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis, the initiative’s executive director. “If women only have access to a dollar store, we will provide information about the best options in that store setting. If participants have concerns about a particular [condition], like asthma, we provide one-on-one information.”

The nonprofit’s presentations on healthy lifestyles and healthy products, from warnings against baby shampoo containing formaldehyde to guidance in finding chlorine-free disposable diapers, reach mothers at an inflection point. “Pregnancy is a time when women are receptive to new ideas and changes and the consequences of choices,” Ms. Anderson said. The outreach program will follow up with nutritional advice as participants’ babies reach 3 months old.

The nutritional gold standard for newborns, of course, is breast milk. The Three Rivers Mothers’ Milk Bank extends the protections of breast milk to infants unable to nurse on their own. Like a blood bank, it collects, screens and pasteurizes donations, and distributes them at \$4.15 per ounce to neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) through the region.

The first month of life is critical. Nearly three-quarters of all infant deaths occur within the first 28 days. Targeting therapies to that time period is, therefore, a major step toward reducing mortality.

Human milk can prevent necrotizing enterocolitis, an infection and inflammation of the intestines that is one of the leading causes of

NICU deaths. But until the opening of the milk bank in January, the region lacked a way to supply breast milk to critically ill infants.

“Hospitals couldn’t have an informal program, because there are strict guidelines for screening,” explained Denise O’Connor, a lactation consultant who founded the milk bank. “It’s much more rigorous than nursing your own baby.”

The local milk bank joins 20 other such programs across the country, reaching babies at 15 health facilities in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. And with more than 85,000 ounces of milk collected to date, the milk bank has far exceeded its first-year goal of 50,000 ounces.

The generous volunteer response—more than 250 donors—has a strong intellectual and emotional core. Doctors and medical professionals have been among the first to step up. Ms. O’Connor said that’s to be expected because breastfeeding tracks education levels.

And about 5 percent of donors are bereaved mothers whose infants died in the NICU. They find solace in monthly support-group meetings at the milk bank’s local office. All nursing mothers are invited to informal “breastfeeding cafes” at the center each month.

“We thought this was a really important community resource that was missing for the region,” said Mary Phan-Gruber of the Jefferson Regional Foundation, which serves the South Hills region and made a \$25,000 grant to the milk bank. “It was a real partnership of doctors, lactation folks and others who’d been trying to pull it together for many years. It has excellent leadership. The timing was right.” **h**

THE LATEST EFFORTS IN THE PITTSBURGH REGION TO REDUCE INFANT MORTALITY INVOLVE INCREASING ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND LIFESAVING MOTHER’S MILK. BY CHRISTINE H. O’TOOLE

TWO PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AS PART OF PITTSBURGH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ARE ALSO HELPING TO IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN SOCIAL AND RACIAL EQUITY IN THE CITY. BY JEFFERY FRASER

DESIGN INCLUSION

The marquee is an amalgam of wood panels etched and angled on scaffolding in ways that attract and fascinate visitors entering Project RE. Most haven't a clue it is made of hollow-core doors spared by imagination from ending up in landfills—or that it was conceived, designed and built by an unlikely team that pairs young architecture and design students from Carnegie Mellon University with men like Carl Meyers, who spent eight years of his youth in prison.

Mr. Meyers made two important discoveries during the long days he was imprisoned in the heart of West Virginia coal country, far from his Hill District home: a love of reading and the resolve to take a different path from the one that led to a robbery conviction at age 19.

Once released, he returned home and scratched out a living as a hotel banquet houseman before finding the Trade Institute of Pittsburgh, a chance to learn the building trades and an opportunity to work with college students exploring creative ways of turning America's unwanted materials into things of beauty, function and value.

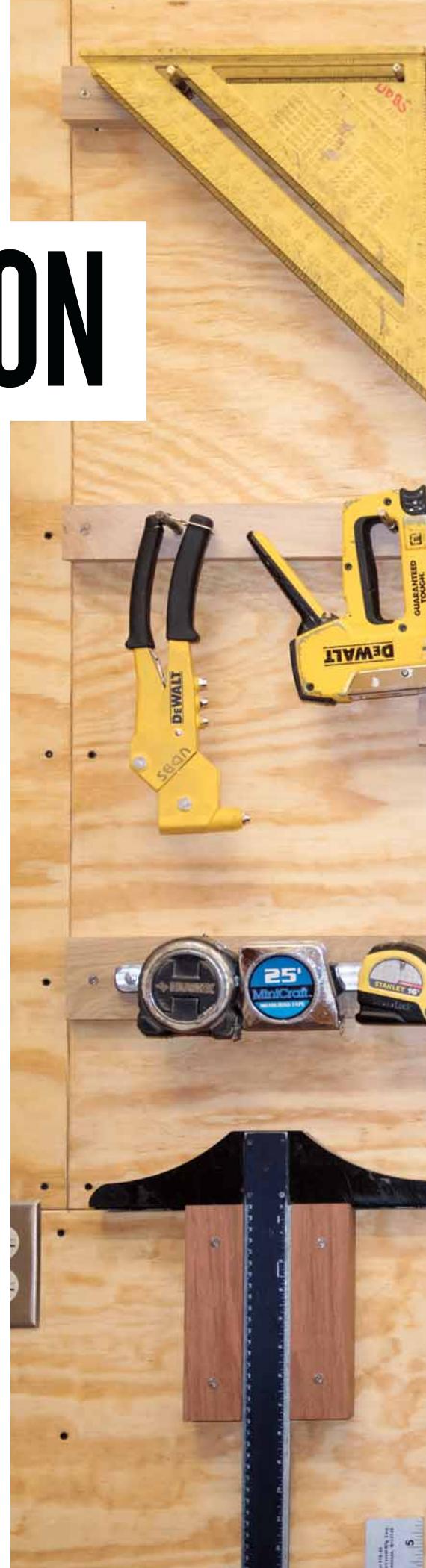
"None of this was built when I came here. So we built it," said Mr. Meyers, 32, under a ceiling of orphaned church pews sliced and arranged to diffuse lighting. This space within the cavernous Construction Junction reuse center is reserved for Project RE—and its "reuse materials, rebuild communities, restore lives" mission—where he's a carpentry apprentice in training. "I'm grateful for the opportunity. I needed something to get me on the right path."

Pittsburgh has been at the forefront of green building and sustainable design for longer than a decade. Today, initiatives such as Project RE and Urban Design Regional Employment Action for Minorities (UDream), a program aimed at growing the city's historically thin ranks of minority architects and urban designers, are demonstrating the role those fields can play in improving social and racial equity. This is a key principle of the city's p4 framework—with its emphasis on people, planet, place and performance strategies to achieve a sustainable future—and The Heinz Endowments' vision of a "Just Pittsburgh."

Architect John Folan brought the idea for Project RE to the city. He came to Carnegie Mellon in 2009 to create a design-build environment that exposes architecture and design students to everything from concept through construction to conditions in under-represented neighborhoods, while offering training and career paths in the building trades to those who find such opportunities scarce. He had started a similar project at the University of Arizona, where he had architecture students work with young men and women in the juvenile justice system on design projects and saw how both reaped life-changing benefits in doing so.

Jeff Fraser is a Pittsburgh-based freelance writer and frequent contributor to h.

His stories published in Issue 1 this year looked at sustainability efforts in Pittsburgh, including riverfront revitalization in the Strip District, energy conservation in Downtown office buildings and progress with the p4 sustainable development initiative. His other articles in this issue include a preview of this year's p4 Summit in October and an update on work to provide more support and opportunities to local veterans.



JUST
COMMUNITY



Carl Meyers has moved past the eight years he served in prison for a robbery conviction. Today, he is a carpentry apprentice in training with the Project RE sustainable design program and social enterprise. Mr. Meyers' tools of the trade, hanging behind him at the Construction Junction reuse center, reflect his new skills and opportunities to improve his life and his community.

“There was an incredible transformation in the personalities of the juvenile corrections kids,” said Mr. Folan, the T. David Fitz-Gibbon Professor of Architecture at Carnegie Mellon and director of its Urban Design Build Studio. “They no longer saw a university education as something unattainable, no longer saw themselves as not smart enough. It became evident to them that circumstance had a lot to do with where they were in life, and their confidence and self-esteem grew enormously. In my students, the level of humility escalated exponentially.”

“We’ve seen the same with Project RE, magnified to a greater degree.”



Project RE’s mission — reuse materials, rebuild communities, restore lives — is reflected in its entrance, artfully painted doors salvaged from other buildings and arranged as a structural collage in a section of the Construction Junction reuse center.

Mr. Folan also learned that collaboration with like-minded partners was necessary if the venture was to flourish. In Pittsburgh, the Endowments offered financial support and introduced him to such partners.

“People without education have fewer opportunities and are struggling,” said Rob Stephany, director of the Endowments’ Community & Economic Development Program. “They may have service sector jobs and are struggling or they may live in poverty, which has a natural undertow. We have to figure out new paths to family-sustaining work.”

Construction Junction, the largest nonprofit retail outlet for used and surplus building materials in Pittsburgh, signed on, offering space for a wood, metal and fabricating shop and a steady supply of material. So, too, did the Trade Institute of Pittsburgh run by straight-talking masonry contractor Steve Shelton who teaches the building trades to ex-offenders willing to learn, only 12 percent of whom return to prison after three years compared to 42 percent of inmates statewide.

The church pews repurposed as the Project RE community room ceiling are among materials that Construction Junction sees in volumes greater than it is able to sell. The flexible LED lighting system that the pews became was conceived by Urban Design Build Studio students, more than 100 of whom have participated in Project RE. Trade Institute carpenters cut the pews to specification, built the prototypes and installed the finished product, lending their thoughts on how to make it work along the way.

The same process led to the Project RE entry marquee of unwanted hollow-core doors, as well as the scaffolding on which they are arranged — both of which have emerged as products with retail value.

While sustainable design and green building architecture have steadily advanced in the city, the professionals doing the work have included few architects and designers of color. Victoria Acevedo, Ashley Cox and Dario McPhee are among a new wave of minority architects and urban designers who are changing that landscape.

Pittsburgh wasn’t on the radar for any of them until they heard about UDream’s program offering minority graduates in architecture and design additional training, experience working in an urban neighborhood, and internships with the hope that they will stay and work in the field.

“The only thing I knew about Pittsburgh was the Steelers,” recalled Mr. McPhee, a 31-year-old native of the Bahamas who came to Pittsburgh after earning a master’s degree in architecture from Florida A&M. Ms. Acevedo, 25, a Georgia Institute of Technology graduate from Atlanta, also knew Pittsburgh had good sports teams and chuckled as she added that, before UDream, she didn’t know where in Pennsylvania the city was located.

But today, they and Ms. Cox, a Howard University graduate from Brooklyn, have not only made their home in Pittsburgh, they also praise the UDream program for providing them with the training, support and networks that have enabled them to advance in their chosen careers.

All three work with Pittsburgh architecture firms. Mr. McPhee is a registered architect at Indovina Associates Architects, and Ms. Acevedo is an intern architect with Bohlin Cywinski Jackson. Ms. Cox, 25, is an independent consultant working on several urban design projects with evolveEA as she develops her own practice.

UDream grew from a partnership between the Endowments and the CMU School of Architecture’s Remaking Cities Institute to find ways to diversify the practice of architecture and design in Pittsburgh. When the program began in 2009, there were only 10 African American and Hispanic professionals in the city employed in those fields. Minority graduates from across the nation with degrees in architecture and design are offered full tuition, a stipend and housing to attend an 18-week program that immerses them in sustainable development and underserved neighborhoods.

Courses taught by Carnegie Mellon architecture faculty and urban design professionals range from digital fabrication to sustainable design. They even learn about real estate development to help them understand the market dynamics of the neighborhood that the program’s urban design studio places them in to work with residents on developing design concepts.

“One approach to architecture is to have the community express its needs and come up with a design that meets them and is sustainable. Too often, people get things thrust upon them and don’t have much of a voice,” says Erica Cochran, UDream director and an assistant professor at CMU. “We look for people who are dying to make the community a better place.”

UDream students also mentor high school students who attend a free two-week technology and urban design program. The internships with Pittsburgh firms round out a diversity approach that has added 25 full-time minority architects and urban designers to local payrolls. Today, the majority of African Americans and other minorities working in those fields in Pittsburgh are UDream alumni.

In addition, UDream is introducing architects and their work to neighborhoods often left out of design conversations, further advancing efforts to address social equity in the region. In Mr. McPhee's case, he worked on several projects in the city's

"As an African American, I'm aware of how the gentrification and racial issues that are everywhere have been shown in this city," she said. "But seeing the grass-roots efforts in Pittsburgh has been inspiring because so many people are willing to do something about what's going on."

Recently, the UDream studio project has focused on the Hill District. Students working with residents and the Hill Community Development Corp. created a vision of the Centre Avenue corridor that includes artist housing, live/work units, and multi-generational living among its themes. The CDC has adopted the concepts as part of what it wants to see developed

"AS AN AFRICAN AMERICAN, I'M AWARE OF HOW THE GENTRIFICATION AND RACIAL ISSUES THAT ARE EVERYWHERE HAVE BEEN SHOWN IN THIS CITY. BUT SEEING THE GRASS-ROOTS EFFORTS IN PITTSBURGH HAS BEEN INSPIRING BECAUSE SO MANY PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON."

Ashley Cox, independent architectural and urban design consultant



Larimer neighborhood, which included designing a community playground. The in-depth exposure to the neighborhood, its people and culture proved a valuable experience.

"Depending on the project you work on, you have to interact with the community," he said. "There are instances where those two worlds collide."

Ms. Cox's urban design consulting work has led to community involvement opportunities such as becoming a member of BUGs, the Black Urban Gardens and Farmers of Pittsburgh cooperative that maintains gardens on vacant lots and private properties in the Hill District and Homewood neighborhoods.

in the neighborhood. Ms. Cox also is involved with the Centre Avenue project through her work with evolveEA.

"Design of public spaces, public institutions and large buildings are all opportunities for the community to have a dialogue about what they want," said Endowments President Grant Oliphant. "The key is empathetic listening. To create just design and have architecture and design contribute to a just community, we have to engage and listen to people, and incorporate what they tell us into our thinking." **h**



The second major summit to advance the p4 initiative, which aims to help transform Pittsburgh into a sustainable city, will focus on ensuring that all residents benefit from revitalization efforts. By Jeffery Fraser

PREVIEWING p4: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EQUITY

Economic and social equity advocate Angela Glover Blackwell was blunt in her message to cities, such as Pittsburgh, who've embraced sustainability as the path to the future.

"When you think about becoming a model for the nation and perhaps for the world, I suggest that if you don't get the inclusion agenda right, you don't have the model," the CEO of the national equity organization PolicyLink told a full house during the city's first p4 Summit last year.

Her message continues to resonate. In mid-October, the conference will reconvene with a particular focus on economic and social equity and justice—the core values of the "people" aspect of the p4 framework for advancing Pittsburgh as a sustainable city. The framework also includes strategies addressing planet, place and performance.

Pittsburgh has arrived at a moment in time when decisions will have profound bearing on shaping its future and the future of the region. Long-standing issues of economic and social equity remain as steep challenges to overcome if that future is to be built on the concepts of sustainability.

Local minorities, for example, hold one of the smallest shares of the workforce among U.S. metro regions. This is particularly the case for African Americans. Income disparities among races are sharp and persistent. And standing between African American men and economic opportunity are lingering structural barriers, such as social and geographic isolation, restrictive hiring and lending practices, and a low

homeownership rate, according to an Urban Institute study commissioned by The Heinz Endowments.

"The redevelopment of Pittsburgh hasn't reached all of its citizens and all of its neighborhoods," said Andrew McElwaine, the Endowments' vice president for Sustainability and the Environment. "More inclusive redevelopment is going to be a tough conversation."

The two-day summit sponsored by the city and the Endowments will feature a range of national and international experts and discussion around all aspects of the p4 framework. On the first day, for example, the Brookings Institution is scheduled to report on its study of local economic development issues, an outgrowth of last year's conference. The fruits of another product of that summit—indicators for measuring sustainability—also will be presented.

The spotlight falls more exclusively on economic and social equity during the second day of the conference. The day is seen as one of engaging the community with interactive sessions that look at issues such as what defines a just city, what constitutes justice for Pittsburgh, and how these ideas can be incorporated in plans and strategies for the region.

Solving such questions is at the core of Just Pittsburgh, a special initiative of the Endowments urging the redesign of the city and region to be open, inclusive and equitable for all.

"We can't continue to live with the 'two Pittsburghs' problem," insisted Endowments President Grant Oliphant. "We have to prosper together. The stakes are as high as they can be." **h**

THEN





TO NOW

PITTSBURGH'S IMMIGRANT STORY

HELPING IMMIGRANTS
FEEL MORE AT HOME
IN PITTSBURGH
MAY BE A MATTER OF
DEVISING THE RIGHT
WELCOME "BLUEPRINT."
BY BEN WECHT

At the turn of the last century, many immigrants in Pittsburgh were Europeans like Frank Crisanti, opposite page, who moved to Pittsburgh from Sicily in 1908 and drove his horse-drawn wagon through city streets to peddle fruits and vegetables. Current immigrants come to the city from countries across the globe, including Bashir Alghussein, this page, who arrived in 2015 from Palestine, where he was a lawyer. Having completed a master's degree in law at the University of Pittsburgh this summer, he now has an unpaid internship with the United Steelworkers, which has been "a good experience in learning how systems in this country work."

LIKE OTHER AMERICAN URBAN CENTERS, PITTSBURGH IS A CITY OF IMMIGRANTS.

From the Carnegies and Mellons and thousands of other northern Europeans who helped lay its economic foundations in the 1800s, to the Slovak and other largely eastern and southern European populations who fueled its steel mills and excavated its mines around the turn of the last century, to those of African or Asian descent and others who found their way here around the mid-1900s for reasons of both opportunity and sanctuary, this region's immigrant narrative is a familiar one—up to a point.

Whereas other cities—from major metropolitan centers like New York and Los Angeles to more comparably sized places like Buffalo and Baltimore—continued to both attract and accommodate immigrants throughout the end of the last century and into this one, Pittsburgh has experienced a long-term flattening of such trends. The result, say experts and service providers, has been not just a loss of diversity and economic possibilities, but also a corresponding decline in the ability of government and nonprofit agencies to readily provide for the needs of those immigrants who do find their way here.

Now, with refugees from Bhutan and Burma moving into communities like Jefferson Hills, and the foreign-born Latino population making a historic surge in the region, the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) and other community partners are working to ensure that those needs are met.



NAME Annette Camara **FROM** Republic of Guinea **OCCUPATION** Group home aide **PITTSBURGH ARRIVAL** 1997 **PITTSBURGH EXPERIENCE** “It’s been great living in Pittsburgh. I was able to go to school and earn a bachelor degree. I’m raising my three kids in a city that has evolved nicely in welcoming Immigrants.”

“Our region did not experience the growth in immigrant populations that other cities experienced in the ’80s because we were struggling economically with the collapse of the steel industry,” explained Barbara Murock, manager of the human services department’s Immigrants and International (I&I) Initiative, which was established in 2007 to help foreign-born residents achieve greater self-sufficiency and community integration. “So the growing diversity is new to us and challenges us to make sure our services and systems are readily accessible to people with different languages and cultures.”

The effort began in earnest in the spring of 2013, when the I&I Initiative undertook a “scan and needs assessment” of the immigrant community, using a combination of census and administrative data as well as interviews with providers to explore and document current and emerging human services needs, gaps and barriers. What that exercise reported was significant.

While the county’s population of just over 57,000 foreign-born residents, as of 2011, represented an increase—the first, in fact, since the early 20th century—it still fell behind comparable regions in number and, at less than 5 percent of the total, in proportion as well.

Also, a relatively small group of providers offers the majority of services to new immigrants, often without effective coordination. The challenges facing the international community focus on



NAME Kheir Mugwaneza **FROM** Rwanda **OCCUPATION** Director of the Refugee Resettlement Program at the Northern Area Multi Service Center **PITTSBURGH ARRIVAL** 2000 **PITTSBURGH EXPERIENCE** “It’s been great, challenging in some aspects because I came here as a student and then had to go through the process to become a citizen. But I met my wife here, and we have two sons. Pittsburgh is my home.”

language barriers and service navigation, but also include transportation, behavioral health services, employment, job training, education and more.

Building on these findings, The Heinz Endowments last June awarded \$45,000 to DHS to develop a community-wide immigrant “blueprint” for action. Together with a \$15,000 grant from the Jefferson Regional Foundation and support from other Pittsburgh-area foundations, this funding enabled 173 residents from numerous sectors, half of them immigrants themselves, to create a comprehensive strategy for the next three to five years. Publicly unveiled in September, the blueprint lays out an action plan centering on six priority areas: language access, health and well-being, education, economic development, family support, and civic engagement.

While there are several strategy steps for each of the priority areas, among the blueprint’s overall goals are enhancing the capacity of local organizations and systems to help immigrants improve their English language proficiency; providing immigrant residents with high-quality and culturally appropriate physical and behavioral health care; and enabling educators to support academic success among immigrant students, family engagement in education and lifelong learning. Other objectives include promoting career, entrepreneurial and other economic opportunities for immigrant residents; strengthening family support programs for immigrants; and developing opportunities for immigrants to participate fully in the civic life of the community.



NAME Yuyun Liang **FROM** China **OCCUPATION** Business consultant/environmental engineer **PITTSBURGH ARRIVAL** 2015 **PITTSBURGH EXPERIENCE** “I married and started a new family in Pittsburgh. Now I’m looking for an opportunity to use my skills in environmental engineering, resource management and project development.”

“The idea was to say, ‘These are the key things that need to happen for immigrants to thrive in our county,’ and to create a blueprint or map for the larger community to engage in this process and give them a guide to do so,” explained Mary Phan-Gruber, the Jefferson Regional Foundation’s executive director.

“Obviously, we can’t solve all the issues in five years, or even 10 years,” added Kheir Mugwaneza, co-chairman of the I&I Advisory Committee and a 2000 immigrant from Rwanda. “I want to see that at least we have a starting point. We want people to come to Pittsburgh and feel welcome and know where to go for services.”

DHS and its partners are looking to the future, which is expected to include an ongoing influx from Bhutan and Burma and the anticipated arrival of new immigrants from Iraq and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Having a plan for managing this shifting landscape is of incalculable benefit because a piecemeal approach will not work, explained Carmen Anderson, the Endowments’ senior program officer for Children, Youth & Families.

“How do we begin to think holistically about the needs of our immigrant community? The blueprint is the first step in doing that,” she said.

DHS Director Marc Cherna agreed. Citing the I&I Initiative’s work over the past eight years, he described the blueprint process as having presented “the opportunity to build on those efforts—engaging broad sectors of the community, and contributing to a more vibrant and diverse community where all residents can thrive.” **h**

RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH PITTSBURGH VETERANS REVEAL THAT, WHILE THEIR MILITARY SERVICE SHOULD BE APPRECIATED, THEIR CIVILIAN POTENTIAL ALSO SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED.
BY JEFFERY FRASER

HOME FRONT

In February, some 125 southwestern Pennsylvania military veterans braved the bite of winter to meet at Community College of Allegheny County campuses and share their experiences, challenges and perspectives on adjusting to civilian life. Their concerns were revealing and somewhat surprising: Many of the issues they most often brought up have received little public exposure.

“You hear a lot about veteran suicide, mental health and homelessness. When we talked with veterans, we didn’t hear much about those issues,” said Megan Andros, Economic Development program officer for The Heinz Endowments.

Instead, finding help to resolve legal problems and being underemployed in jobs that offer less-than-rewarding careers were among the common themes during the forums funded by the Endowments and sponsored by Pittsburgh’s Community Engagement Board for local vets. The group is one of 60 sanctioned by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to give veterans, service providers and other stakeholders a voice in identifying and addressing local issues.

The February sessions were part of a concerted local effort to examine how veterans are faring in southwestern Pennsylvania. Four months earlier, the most comprehensive study of the region’s veterans to date was released, adding greater depth to the profile of the local veteran population that has long lacked clarity and been complicated to understand and address.

Southwestern Pennsylvania is home to 235,000 veterans, about 37,400 of whom served after 9/11. That group is growing by an estimated 5,200 new veterans each year, according to an Endowments-supported study conducted by the Center for a New American Security, a Washington, D.C. think tank specializing in national security issues. Those numbers rank Allegheny and 11 neighboring counties among the nation’s most veteran-rich, with veterans representing 9 to 12 percent of their populations. By comparison, veterans account for 6.7 percent of the population of the average U.S. county.

Unemployment and underemployment, in particular, remain problems, according to the nearly 200 veterans who participated in a survey included in the center’s research. Some 32 percent of the veterans said they are “less economically secure” than when they left

active duty. And one-third of veterans said their civilian job requires “less skill and experience” than what they have to offer.

Younger veterans are the most likely to report economic insecurity. They also are more likely to believe that military benefits, such as those in the GI Bill, are “extremely important” to landing a job. Yet, only 6.5 percent of veterans in the Pittsburgh region use GI Bill benefits compared to 8.4 percent nationally.

Both the February forums and research by the Center for a New American Security revealed perceptions of a deep civilian–military divide. During the forums, a number of young veterans expressed detachment from civilian life in the region, and only 48 percent of those who participated in the center’s survey said they feel connected to their community, even though two-thirds of them belong to a veterans service organization.

Just 38 percent told researchers they’re satisfied with local veterans services. And overall they give local services only an average grade for providing the help they need when adjusting to civilian life. Researchers also found the desire for better coordination and collaboration among organizations serving veterans was a recurring theme in discussions with local stakeholders, community leaders and veterans.

The Center for a New American Security study, however, was completed before the October 2015 launch of PAserves–Greater Pittsburgh. The coordinated, single-point-of-entry support network for veterans has the potential to inspire wider collaboration and improve veterans’ experience with local services, said Phillip Carter, director of the center’s Military, Veterans, and Society Program.

Using an innovative model, PAserves has connected 858 veterans and their families, so far, with the resources of 42 local nonprofits as well as the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. It links them to the appropriate resources in person, by phone and online. Veterans are offered service coordinators to help them overcome challenges ranging from resolving legal issues to finding a job suited to their abilities to obtaining care specific to their health conditions. The program also strengthens data gathering and analyzes capabilities in the region, which is important to developing best practices and improving the quality of services available to veterans.

The recent surge of once-scarce data has proven helpful to the veterans Community Engagement Board by identifying underemployment, providing legal services and bridging the military–civilian divide as some of the region’s most pressing issues. The information also offers objective evidence to rally dozens of service providers around finding solutions.

“Rather than each of us pulling from where our passions lie,” said Ms. Andros, “we now can now look at the data and work off of facts and figures.” **h**

Southwestern Pennsylvania is home to 235,000 veterans, about 37,400 of whom served after 9/11.

235,000

5,200

A study by the Washington, D.C.-based Center for a New American Security found that the population of veterans in the Pittsburgh region is growing by about 5,200 each year.

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About 32 percent of veterans surveyed by the center said they are "less economically secure" than when they left active duty. One-third said their civilian job requires "less skill and experience" than what they have to offer.

Only 48 percent of veterans who participated in the survey feel connected to their community, despite the fact that two-thirds of them belong to a veterans service organization.

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PROVIDING A PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

Veterans in the Pittsburgh region who participated in a series of recent forums or a Center for a New American Security survey indicated issues such as unemployment, underemployment and resolving legal matters were among their top concerns. Assisting them in navigating these challenges and adjusting to civilian life is PAServes — Greater Pittsburgh, a single-point-of-entry support network that provides veterans with a clear pathway to services and resources.

Just as Daviea Davis' "Neighborhood Mosaic" portrays the colorful vibrancy of many Pittsburgh neighborhoods, the new Temporary Public Art Project is expected to uncover the artistic inspiration at the heart of local communities. Ms. Davis and her assistant Rick Forman built the glass mosaic from salvaged materials and worked on it in collaboration with local students who ranged from pre-school children to high school teens.



Nathan J. Shaulis/Porter Loves Creative.



ART ON THE BLOCK

A NEW PUBLIC ART PROJECT IS SHOWING HOW THE ARTISTIC SPIRIT RUNS DEEP IN MANY PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOODS—NOT JUST THE TRENDY ONES. BY RENEE P. ALDRICH

“EVERY HUMAN IS AN ARTIST... HUMANS PERCEIVE LIFE AND TRY TO MAKE SENSE OF LIFE BY EXPRESSING WHAT WE PERCEIVE WITH WORDS, MUSIC, AND OTHER EXPRESSIONS OF ART.”

“The Circle of Fire: Inspirations and Guided Meditations for Living in Love and Happiness” by Don Miguel Ruiz

A new public art program in the Pittsburgh region will enable six local communities to develop temporary art projects that reflect their own unique legacies and artistic perspectives.

Coordinated by the nonprofit Neighborhood Allies and the Pittsburgh Office of Public Art, the Temporary Public Art Project is being piloted in the city neighborhoods of Homewood, Larimer, Hill District and Southern Hilltop, along with the boroughs of Wilkinsburg and Millvale. The program brings together community anchor organizations, residents and the artists jointly selected by the local groups to collaborate on art projects that, according to the initiative’s description, will allow the communities to “express what they perceive of life with words, music and/or other expressions of art.”

The intended outcome of the project, funded by The Heinz Endowments and the Hillman Family Foundation, is the production of a temporary art piece in each community that will become a lively focal point for residents and visitors, and accentuates the unique character of each area.

“It will serve as a way of celebrating the beauty, the potential, as well as the culture in each neighborhood,” said Terri Baltimore, director of community engagement at the Hill House Association in the Hill District.

“The public art project is premised on the basic assumption that culture lives in communities—it does not have to be brought to them,” said Janet Sarbaugh, the Endowments’ vice president of Creativity and the senior director of the Arts & Culture Program. “One of the goals of this project is to connect artists and residents to define and celebrate the unique characteristics of each neighborhood.”

Representatives from the six communities agreed that the program will provide them with the opportunity to present artistic beauty, culture and historical legacies within their neighborhoods.

“When one thinks about the legacy of art in the Hill District, you realize [culture] has always been there and has served as an integral part of who we are as a community,” said Ms. Baltimore. “A visit to the intersection of Centre Avenue and Dinwiddie Street will find a sculpture by Thad Mosley, ‘Phoenix Rising,’ and this is just one of the places where people are already gathering. What makes this effort different for the Hill District is that it is a part of a collection of neighborhoods who are doing this together, which in and of itself will call attention to the project.”

Tina Walker, president of the Millvale Community Development Corporation, described similar existing art attractions in her borough. They include the stained glass windows at St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, and the church’s murals that are internationally known.

“Maksimilijan ‘Maxo’ Vanka created these, and people come from far and wide just to see them,” she said. “The Maxo Vanka murals are a reflection of how we perceive life, and were used to make social statements about war and other social situations of that time.”

Individuals with the different local groups also noted another common denominator among the communities: Each has experienced some degree of disinvestment but is working toward revitalization. The hope is that the new art pieces will give new life to an old building, create a centralized gathering place or make each neighborhood a destination location.

“At the same time, there is the potential for internal healing necessary because of destructive behaviors like drugs and crime, and external healing necessary because of turf wars that occur when one community has been at odds with another,” said Erin Perry, executive director of the Homewood-based Legacy Arts Project, which focuses on preserving the artistic traditions of Africa and the African Diaspora.

The Temporary Public Art Project’s advisory committee, made up of the community anchor organizations, conducted a series of meetings to talk about the project’s goals and objectives, discuss the call for artists’ submissions and determine project criteria. Eight artists from Pittsburgh and other parts of the country were selected this summer. Participants said the process was involving and arduous, but they all saw it as important.



THE ARTISTS

As part of the Temporary Public Art Project, eight artists have been selected by community-based committees to work in four Pittsburgh neighborhoods and two boroughs adjacent to the city. Representing different artistic disciplines, these individuals are collaborating with community organizations and residents to develop public art that has the potential to revitalize neighborhoods.

Seyed Alavi



Jennifer Chenoweth



◀ **James Simon**
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Mr. Simon is a sculptor and mosaic artist who is working with the Hilltop Men's Group in the city's Southern Hilltop neighborhoods. His "Welcome to Uptown" glass and tile mosaic, left, stands 25 feet tall and is just beyond the border of Downtown Pittsburgh.

Njaimeh Njie
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Ms. Njie is a multimedia producer who is working with the Hill House Association in Pittsburgh's Hill District.

Daveia Davis, Jessica Rutherford and Shernise Allen
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Ms. Davis, a glass mosaic artist; Ms. Rutherford, a glass artist and jewelry designer; and Ms. Allen, a glass fusion artist, comprise the East End Art Team. They are working with the Legacy Arts Project in Pittsburgh's Homewood neighborhood.

John Peña
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Mr. Peña is a multidisciplinary artist and illustrator working with the Larimer Consensus Group in the Larimer neighborhood.

◀ **Seyed Alavi**
Oakland, Calif.
Mr. Alavi is an interdisciplinary artist who is working in Millvale Borough with the Millvale Community Development Corporation, the Society to Preserve the Maxo Vanka Murals, and the Millvale Community Library. His "Room for Hope" sculpture, left, is in Sacramento, Calif., and outlines a house made of steel I-beams, with each of the four walls forming a letter in the word "hope." A live tree stands in the center of the structure.

◀ **Jennifer Chenoweth**
Austin, Texas
Ms. Chenoweth is a painter and sculptor who is working in Wilkinsburg Borough with the Wilkinsburg Community Development Corp. and the Community Art and Civic Design Commission. Her "Four Gates," left, has been displayed in several locations. It was inspired by a chapter in Mark Helprin's novel "The Winter's Tale" that described entering a city with different gates representing attitudes such as "devotion to beauty" and "selfless love."

"This process all by itself has been exciting and interesting," said Ms. Walker. "Usually people face meetings with dread, but I believe we all look forward to these get-togethers, or gatherings, because we are molding a piece of clay, one that will turn into something beautiful—but we don't even know what it is. In the meantime, we have a unified vision that fuels the effort to keep pushing towards our destination."

Ms. Baltimore agreed. "This is an exciting process because of the newness of operating within collaboration like this—the anchor organizations, the community, the artists we select and then the residents. The fact that we are all in discovery mode together, coming to the table with clean slates, adds a very special excitement to the process."

Ms. Perry added that, as an artist, she could relate to the way the project was unfolding.

"I find that the artist selection, in particular, is extremely important," she said. "Community engagement is heightened if residents see trusted, familiar faces at the table.

"Plus, this joint effort of bringing our neighborhoods together sheds light on our ability to bond, aids in getting past any tensions we may have faced before, and helps break down what separates us creating a greater focus on our commonalities."

The project also has the potential to be an ongoing force for enhancing their neighborhoods, representatives of the different organizations said. It could help improve public safety, support local businesses and empower residents to have a significant role in determining what comes into their communities. In addition, the project is designed to become a model that can be replicated in other underserved neighborhoods through the establishment of Placemaking Academies.

Mary Taylor, a former Placemaking Fellow at Neighborhood Allies and the primary writer of the Temporary Public Art proposal, explained that a Placemaking Academy will be part workshop, design studio and training session, and its purpose will be to train and coach artists and community-based organizations about the process of implementing a temporary public art project.

The academies, Taylor said, would be one way in which "all those who live, work and play in neighborhoods where there is limited capacity can be beneficiaries of what the art can bring—and not just those in communities that have the appearance of privilege." h

Twenty-three year old Kai Roberts discovered his passion for music at an early age, participating as a youth in Carnegie Mellon University’s Arts Greenhouse project where he was able to hone his craft by learning the art of “making beats” and music production.

He went on to enroll at Carnegie Mellon as an undergraduate, but in his junior year he experienced a nervous breakdown. It was music that ultimately helped him recover and later to become an outspoken advocate for mental health issues on campuses around the country.

“I was very shy as a kid, and was not very assertive, nor was I good at meeting people. Art gave me the opportunity to speak to my side of the story,” said Mr. Roberts, who is now on staff with the Lighthouse Program, an after-school media arts initiative of the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh. “[Art] gave me the opportunity to show my social side through another character, and I could speak my frustrations through my music.”

A plan is underway to provide more Pittsburgh youth with the opportunity to explore arts as a means of expression — and possibly a source for healing on some level — by converting the Homewood neighborhood YMCA, which oversees the Lighthouse Program, into a full-service Creative Youth Center. The first phase of the project, which opens to the public this fall, includes a performance café, commercial kitchen, full recording studio, two digital media labs and a 21st Century Learning Lab. Phases 2 and 3 are projected to be completed by 2019 and will include a number of additions such as an art lab, a computer lab and a black box theater, and redesigns of the building’s exterior and surrounding property. The total renovation cost is expected to be \$6.5 million.

The idea for the center evolved from the Endowments’ Transformative Arts Process (TAP), which began in December 2012 with a convening of 23 people from many different walks of life who were seeking to answer the question, “How can the arts be transformative in the lives of youth living in African American and distressed neighborhoods?”

Investigating this idea began with Endowments-funded trips to Boston, New York and California’s Bay Area. As part of the Bay Area visit in February 2013, 10 art practitioners from across Pittsburgh, including representatives from the Lighthouse Program, toured the East Bay Performing Arts Centre, the YMCA Berkeley Teen Center and the YMCA Youth Institute in Long Beach — all facilities with creative arts programs for youth.

James Brown, program director for the Lighthouse Program, was part of that group. He had envisioned moving the program out of its current location, Pittsburgh-Westinghouse Academy 6–12, into its own dedicated space. “Being tenants in someone else’s building often created barriers to being a responsive program, making artistic spontaneity difficult,” he said.

The trip fueled Mr. Brown’s vision and etched his intent in stone. “I was blown away by the energy I witnessed in those spaces,” he said. “They were all jam-packed with students, lots of hustle and bustle. Performance and innovative creation was happening — transformation

THE ART OF EXPRESSION



A FORMER NEIGHBORHOOD YMCA'S TRANSFORMATION INTO PITTSBURGH'S NEW CREATIVE YOUTH CENTER MEANS CITY STUDENTS HAVE A DEDICATED SPACE TO EXPLORE THE ARTS AND EXPAND THEIR HORIZONS. BY RENEE ALDRICH



Even though the finishing touches haven't been completed on the first phase of the Creative Youth Center, some local students are getting a feel for the place. From left, Giordan Dixon and Lighthouse Program staffer Ja'Sonta Deen watch as Keely Kendrick and Destinee McCallister try out a new whiteboard. Quelyn Holt takes advantage of the unfurnished space to turn a cartwheel. Below, Robert Rose-Thompson, left foreground, tests the sound in the center's unfinished recording studio.

literally seemed to fill the air. All the things I knew we could do with our own space. It was like watching my dream play out right in front of my eyes.”

Mr. Brown made an appeal to the Endowments to establish a youth arts center in Pittsburgh similar to those he had seen. While there was interest from the foundation's board, he knew that he also had to get the buy-in of YMCA leadership. A year later, the Endowments funded a return trip to the Bay Area for him, his chief operating officer and two members of the Lighthouse staff so they could get their own view of Mr. Brown's vision.

“I couldn't just tell them what it would look like for our youth to have such a space to create,” he said. “They had to see for themselves.”

The result was a \$1.5 million dollar commitment from the Endowments to help transform the Homewood Y.

“TAP was our way of looking for answers about out-of-school-time arts and knowing we needed to find answers with those who actually would be doing the work once we started grantmaking,” explained Justin Laing, the foundation's senior Arts & Culture program officer. “That's why we convened that initial group, and the Creative Youth Center shows that idea coming to fruition.”

Mr. Laing added that he was doubtful that the project would have happened had the Endowments relied on traditional grantmaking processes, “which tend to either come through defined grants programs, our larger grantees or executive directors with whom we have established relationships.”

“This project represents a divergence from those tracks,” he said. “The Lighthouse Program was already making a tremendous impact in the community and had done its homework. There was already an established building, and the idea cut across more than just art.”

The renovations are expected to not only expand the artistic opportunity and capacity for talented students in a challenged neighborhood, but also promise even more transformative results—like those experienced by Kai Roberts.

“It is through the creation of art that young people experience that ‘aha’ moment,” said Mr. Brown, “when the art gives voice to their struggle and their story.” **h**

Braddock Carnegie Library was an integral part of the borough's landscape before the Transformazium arts collective arrived on the scene. Constructed in 1888, the historic building, opposite page, was the first Carnegie Library in the United States.



**COMMUNITY
"TRANSFORMAZIUM"**

THE ARTS TEAM TRANSFORMAZIUM
 CREATES PARTNERSHIPS IN BRADDOCK
 BOROUGH THAT OFFER INNOVATIVE
 OPPORTUNITIES TO THE ECONOMICALLY
 STRUGGLING COMMUNITY.
 BY CRISTINA ROUVALIS

Malique Dees, a soft-spoken 20-year-old, is out to make his mark on the fashion industry. As the creator of his own clothing and accessories, he's on his way to transforming his vision into a wearable reality. His first clothing designs come out of an unlikely workplace—a public library.

Inside the print shop of the Braddock Carnegie Library, he sketches intricate graphic patterns with the words “Edge Life” on them—the logo of his brand that he silkscreens onto his t-shirts, sweatshirts and other clothes. From only word-of-mouth, he's creating a buzz in Braddock Borough, southeast of Pittsburgh, where his friends snap up his original designs.

When he's not printing his clothing, the entrepreneur teaches other youth how to print posters, shirts and other items in a program called Youth Autonomous Art Zone or YAAZ. “Anyone can come here and express themselves and not be judged,” said Mr. Dees, who works for YAAZ on Wednesday evenings.

The youth program is just one way that Transformazium, a collective of three women who met in New York, has teamed up with residents and groups in this economically disadvantaged steel town to create community-based art programs. Embedded in the historic and cavernous Braddock Carnegie Library, they have set up the print shop, an Art Lending Collection, artist residencies, a family portrait series and other projects.

The trio — Dana Bishop-Root, Ruthie Stringer and Leslie Stem — has been working behind the scenes in this underserved community for eight years. Going in, they found a steel town with empty stores and boarded-up windows and a population that had dwindled from nearly

16,500 in the 1950s to about 2,000 today. They had an idea, but one that didn't involve foisting their suggestions onto reluctant residents.

Instead, the women walked door to door and asked people about their needs and the kinds of arts programs they wanted in their community. And when resources became available—like donated screen printing equipment—they hired locally, choosing, for example, to have Mr. Dees show his peers his techniques rather than have a professional teach silk-screening classes.

“I often think of Transformazium as a shape shifter,” said Janet Sarbaugh, vice president of creativity and senior Arts & Culture program director at The Heinz Endowments. “I think they prefer to be part of the DNA of the community rather than be recognized as a traditional arts organization.

“They are not an arts program represented by the formality of purchasing a ticket or entering a formal gallery. They represent a philosophy that culture and cultural experiences are everywhere, and they belong to everyone.”

That philosophy is why the Endowments has supported Transformazium's efforts for the past several years, most recently with a grant awarded to the library last fall of \$160,000 over two years. One of the projects the money is funding is the continued operation of the Art Lending Collection, which Transformazium started in 2013—just in time to submit it as a community project for the 2013 Carnegie International at the Carnegie Museum of Art. The connection eventually led to artists who participated in the International donating some of their work to the



Ellis Michaels, PA GenWeb, Allegheny County

lending program. Among the famous artists whose pieces can be “checked out” at the library are Pedro Reyes and Sadie Benning. The Carnegie Museum of Art collaborates with the Art Lending Collection.

The Endowments grant also covers the full-time salaries of two art facilitators, Mary Carey and Jonathan Reyes.

“I love my job. It pays my bills and it opens my mind,” said Ms. Carey as she flipped through racks of paintings and posters hanging on the first floor of the library. She has regular customers, including groups of teachers and a woman who comes in every three weeks to change up the artwork that fills an empty space on her wall at home.

To carry the message of Transformazium into the community, Ms. Carey circulates the art inside public spaces such as the borough building, the post office, the unemployment training center and high-rise apartments. Each month, she arrives with her arms full of canvasses. Passersby call out to her: “Hey, you changing the artwork today?”

New talent has been added to the collection through the Prison Project, which displays the work of artists incarcerated at the State Correctional Institution–Fayette. “I call them artists, not inmates,” said Ms. Carey, who managed the project.

The collective also supports artists by giving them space and resources. Jacob Ciocci, a visual artist and musician from neighboring North Braddock, held an opening as part of the “artist in library” series. He also provided an interactive demonstration of his work through a collage that he made available to the community by asking people to add to his piece. “It gave them a sense of being artists too,” Ms. Carey said.

When it comes to making connections between the community and art, Ms. Carey’s mind bursts with one idea after another, a torrent of words chasing her exuberant thoughts about how she can reach people in yet another way. She sent youth on a treasure hunt to research artwork hung in local businesses. She set out a notebook in the library that allows people to write or sketch. She talked about creating YouTube videos about art. Whatever she has suggested, the women in Transformazium have embraced.

“I call them Charlie’s Angels,” she said, laughing. “Those ladies—I love them. I have never heard them say no. If you have an idea, they will help you bring it to life.”



Ms. Stringer believes that Mr. Reyes, who often talks to residents of Braddock about social justice issues, and Ms. Carey are the reason the art lending library is widely used, with every piece of art—each given the arbitrary value of \$100—returned.

“The arts and culture facilitators are from this neighborhood,” Ms. Stringer said. “They are hired for their exceptional communication skills, their intelligence and the way they connect the artwork to the neighborhood. Being rooted here, they make programming that makes the collection meaningful.”

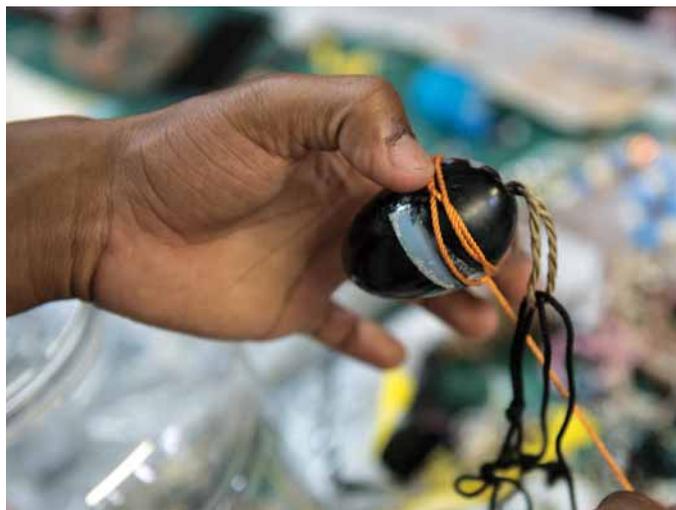
Over the years, the Transformazium members have changed their plans in response to community input and changing circumstances.

For example, when they first came to town, they planned to renovate an abandoned church and open an arts center there. But faced with the millions in renovation costs, they decided it would make more sense to embed themselves in the library, and all three women now work there. Ms. Stringer is the circulation manager; Ms. Stem is the print shop manager; and Ms. Bishop-Root is the program manager who wrote grants that enabled the library to hire staff to run programs, instead of relying on volunteers.

When Dipcraft Manufacturing donated the silk screen equipment in 2009, they approached the library about creating a screen printing studio. Vicki Vargo, Braddock Library’s executive director, was taken

"THEY ARE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR THE COMMUNITY AND THE LIBRARY. THEY IMMERSSED THEMSELVES, GOT TO KNOW THE RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY."

Vicki Vargo, Braddock Library executive director



aback at first. A print shop in the library? What would she tell her board? "That was a different idea for us," she said. But then it hit her. Why not? The space on the upper floor had not been occupied.

At first, few people came. "No one asked for a screen printing shop," Ms. Bishop-Root said. But when they told people it was a way for them to "get their thoughts out of their heads and onto the streets," people streamed in to create posters that talked about social injustices and other themes.

The paid art facilitator positions have enabled the library to offer a consistent schedule for silk screening, the ceramics studios and other programs.

The women of Transformazium are "a breath of fresh air for the community and the library," Ms. Vargo said. "They immersed themselves, got to know the residents and community, in both Braddock and North Braddock, and then suggested programming."

And they aren't done yet. A grant the library received from the Eden Hall Foundation funded GBBN Architects to develop a master plan for the library, with a priority list of projects, such as renovating an unused theater into an education center.

Transformazium also has made all the difference to Mr. Dees and his fashion dream. "This is what I want to do," he said as he sketches. "There is nothing better than doing what you want to do." **h**

Arts programs are now woven into the fabric of daily activity at Braddock Carnegie Library, with encouragement and support from Transformazium arts collective founders Dana Bishop-Root, Ruthie Stringer and Leslie Stem. Opposite page above, Ms. Bishop-Root helps a student put on a necklace she made during Ms. Bishop-Root's mixed media art class. Below, Ms. Stringer helps Jonathan Reyes, one of the library's art facilitators, organize the Art Lending Collection.

Clockwise above, Ms. Stem places paper under a silk screen printer while teaching the silk screening process. A student holds part of a modern art project created in Ms. Bishop-Root's mixed media class, and a painting by artist Natiq Jali is checked out of the lending collection.

Since the Pittsburgh Promise scholarship program began almost 10 years ago, it has faced some challenges in helping more city students pursue postsecondary education. But the Promise has continued and so have the opportunities that it provides. By Eleanor Chute

KEEPING THE PROMISE

Pittsburgh Promise Executive Director Saleem Ghubril still has the Dec. 14, 2006, newspaper clipping that reported the school district superintendent

and mayor had unveiled a higher education scholarship program for city public high school graduates. The two officials made the announcement without any money behind the vision they called the Pittsburgh Promise.

Even so, Mr. Ghubril, who in 2006 was head of The Pittsburgh Project, a nonprofit community development organization, saw the scholarship program's potential. He described how, in a coffee shop that morning, he melodramatically lifted the newspaper showing the photograph of then-Superintendent Mark Roosevelt and then-Mayor Luke Ravenstahl over his head and said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is the most important article we have seen in the Post-Gazette in a very long time.'

Today, approaching a decade later, the Promise has raised \$185.4 million and has given \$85 million in scholarships to 6,574 students at 119 schools—trade and career schools as well as colleges and universities—since it awarded its first scholarships to members of the Class of 2008. The funds can be used only at postsecondary institutions within Pennsylvania. As of late August, the Promise tallied 1,539 graduates of higher education.

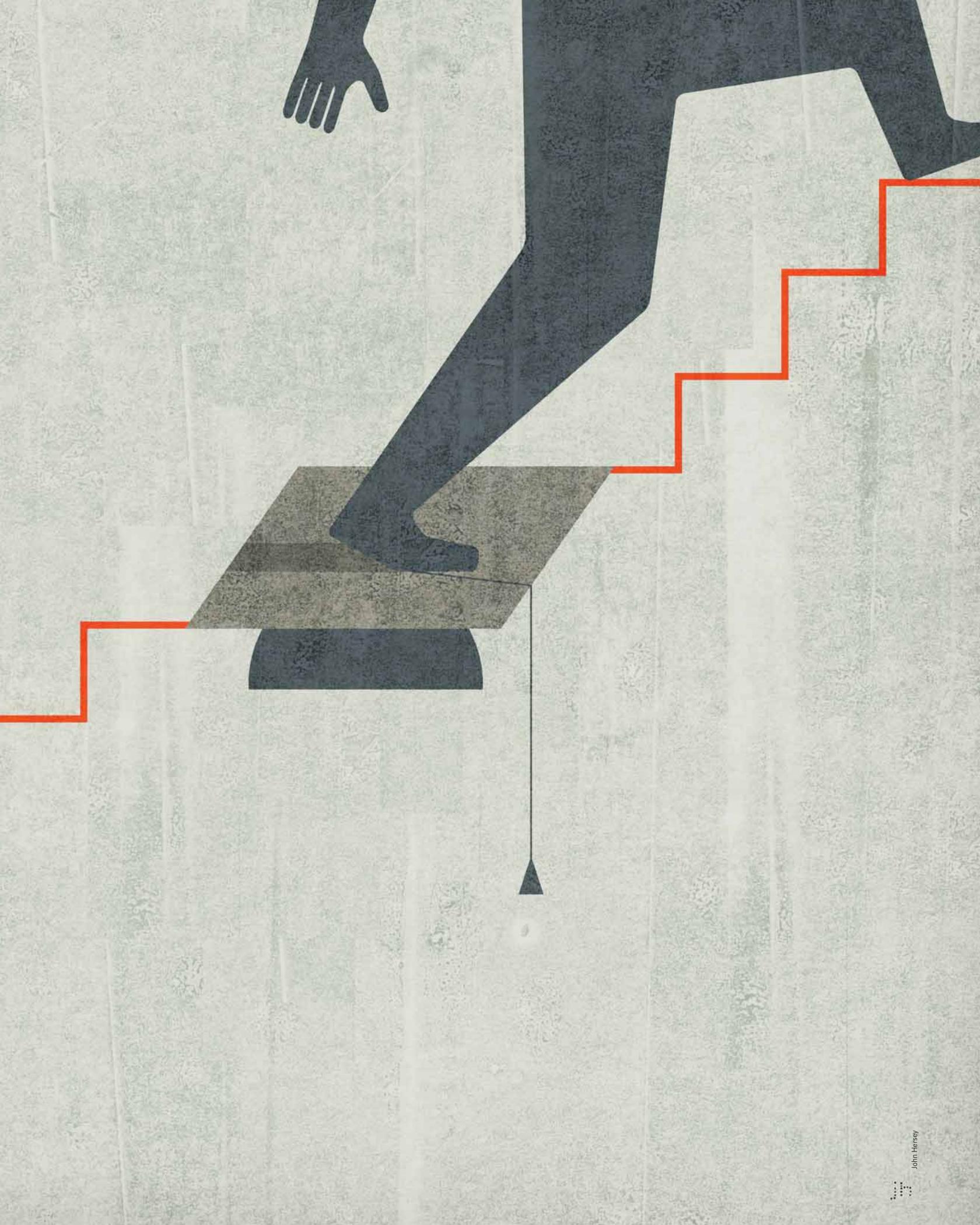
And since the Promise started, the district's high school graduation rate rose from 63 percent in 2007 to 70 percent in 2015—with higher rates in some intervening years—an increase some attribute at least in part to the Promise.

Mayor Bill Peduto, a city councilman in 2006, was among those who questioned whether the Promise would ever be funded. Now he thinks the Promise has had a "positive impact" on the city. Mr. Peduto said the Promise "helps to create that bridge to post-secondary education," addressing access to equitable education, which he called a critical area "to break the cycle of poverty within our city."

Linda Lane, superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools from January 2011 through June of this year, considers the scholarship program "the best gift the community ever gave its children."

The Pittsburgh Promise took some time to gain traction. Only the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers contributed at first, with a \$10,000 donation. Nearly a year passed after the initial announcement before a game-changing gift was made.

Pittsburgh Foundation President and CEO Maxwell King, who was president of The Heinz Endowments from 1999 to 2008, said that



the big break came when he and Mr. Roosevelt met with Jeffrey Romoff, UPMC president and CEO. The health care giant pledged \$100 million over 10 years, with a match of \$150 million to come from other donors. The Promise reached its fundraising match only the first year, but UPMC remained committed to contributing \$10 million a year regardless of whether the matching amount was met. The final installment is due July 2017. Susan Manko, the organization's senior director of media relations, said UPMC is not ready to speculate about any donations beyond that.

Mr. King explained that Mr. Roosevelt was inspired by the Kalamazoo Promise, a scholarship program that began in 2006 in Michigan. Today, there are about 80 place-based scholarship programs across the country with varying criteria, according to the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research in Kalamazoo.

After the UPMC donation, Mr. King said, foundations and others came on board. The three foundations that contributed the most are the Endowments, \$18 million; The Grable Foundation, \$10 million; and The Pittsburgh Foundation, which is the Promise's fiscal agent, \$10 million.

The Promise has received other gifts large and small. It counts 18 donors who gave \$1 million or more each and 4,538 donors who gave less than \$1,000 each. Mr. Ghubril hopes the Promise's first gala in November can raise \$1.5 million.

Mark Laskow, an investment adviser on both the UPMC and the Promise boards, said the UPMC gift has served the community and organization's "institutional interests," noting the importance of strong public schools to attract employees and the need for an educated workforce.

"There are significant gaps in opportunity for young people, and eliminating the financial challenge to college evens the playing field," said D'Ann Swanson, senior program officer for The Grable Foundation.

Among the first scholarship recipients was Vanessa Thompson of Swissvale, a borough east of Pittsburgh. She previously lived in the city's Lincoln neighborhood and graduated from Pittsburgh Westinghouse in Homewood. Ms. Thompson earned a bachelor's degree from Chatham University in 2012 and is the grant and community outreach manager for Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania.

"The Pittsburgh Promise filled in the gap for us," she said. "They made it just and fair for anyone to go."

The Promise has become well-known throughout the district, with signs in schools encouraging students to follow the "Pathway to the Promise." The

THE PROMISE TO DATE

The scholarship maximum total will drop this school year to \$30,000, with an annual contribution of \$7,500. Those funds can be spent only on tuition and fees not covered by other scholarships.

6,474

STUDENTS

119

SCHOOLS

\$85

MILLION IN SCHOLARSHIPS

scholarships initially offered each recipient a total maximum of \$20,000 for tuition and fees, with an annual contribution of up to \$5,000. In the second year, the Promise began allowing the money to be spent on room, board and books. Then in 2012, the amount grew to a total maximum of \$40,000, with an annual allocation of up to \$10,000.

But the added benefits proved to be too costly. The scholarship maximum total will drop this school year to \$30,000, with an annual contribution of \$7,500. The latest change permits the scholarships to be spent only on tuition and fees not covered by other scholarships.

The most recent adjustments, while criticized by some in the community, were made to ensure that Promise money will be available for those in kindergarten last year—the future Class of 2028. The Promise still has \$64.6 million to raise to meet its \$250 million goal to pay for those scholarships. If there are scholarships beyond that class, it will take even more fundraising.

To qualify for the Promise, a student must have been a city resident continuously and attended a city district or charter school since at least ninth grade. The scholarship amount is prorated based on the number of years a student has been enrolled in public schools in Pittsburgh.

A student must have at least a 2.5 GPA and a 90 percent attendance rate in high school to receive the "core" Promise scholarship to any accredited college, university or trade and technical school in the state. If the student has a GPA between 2.0 and 2.49, the student can receive an "extension" scholarship to be used only at Community College of Allegheny County, effectively giving the student another chance to demonstrate readiness—or increase readiness—for a postsecondary institution. If the student earns at least a 2.0 GPA in the first year at CCAC, then

the student can receive up to three years of the “core” Promise scholarship at another school the student chooses.

Some have criticized the GPA and attendance requirements, arguing that such standards contribute to lower participation by African American male students. Through late September, 29 percent of the core and extension scholarships awarded went to African American/multiracial females, 17 percent to African American/multiracial males, 28 percent to white females and 23 percent to white males.

Mr. Ghubril maintains that the standards are important. “There’s a ton of research that verifies that there’s not a better indicator of college readiness and college success than GPA,” he said, noting that lowering the standard would be “setting the kid up for failure.”

Emmanuel “Manny” Walker agrees. Currently a Wilksburg resident, Mr. Walker previously lived in East Liberty, graduated last year from Pittsburgh Obama 6-12 and attended CCAC under the Promise extension. He transferred this fall to Point Park University with a core Promise scholarship.

“If you have a goal you want to reach, you can’t just beat around the bush,” he said. “You actually have to commit to it. That’s what the Promise instills in us.”

While 42 percent of the 5,814 recipients of core Promise scholarships are African American or multiracial, 73 percent of the 760 recipients of extension funds are African American or multiracial.

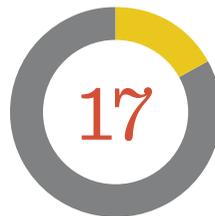
Mr. Ghubril considers the extension to be one of the ways the Promise tries to expand opportunities. To help students do well at CCAC, the Promise pays for extra assistance, including success coaches and a one-week program to help students acclimate to campus and get to know their counselors before each semester. Mr. Walker, who met regularly with a success coach, described the experience as particularly helpful.



AFRICAN AMERICAN/
MULTIRACIAL FEMALES



WHITE FEMALES



AFRICAN AMERICAN/
MULTIRACIAL MALES



WHITE MALES

One effort to reduce racial disparity among scholarship recipients is the “We Promise” program for male African American high school students, which began in 2013 and has received \$450,000 from the Endowments. As part of the program, students who need to improve their GPAs to qualify for the core Promise are paired with African American male mentors and attend districtwide summits.

Since We Promise began, the percentage of African American males qualifying for the core Promise rose from 18 percent in 2012 to 39 percent in 2015, according to the school district.

“In the work I’ve done as an educator, there’s nothing I feel better about than [the We Promise] program,” said Dr. Lane.

At a We Promise luncheon in May honoring 75 graduates who participated in the program, Stanley Thompson, the Endowments’ Education Program director, was among those encouraging the young men. He said that in addition to providing access to higher education, the Pittsburgh Promise helps to keep families in the city and provide an educated workforce.

PROMISE DEMOGRAPHICS

Young women, overall, have been the most frequent recipients of Pittsburgh Promise scholarships so far, with African American/multiracial females receiving the highest percentage.

“By creating an intentional pathway for students across the city, especially from distressed neighborhoods, the Promise is not only building its community’s intellectual and leadership capital but ensuring the region’s future economic growth,” Dr. Thompson said.

Since the Promise started in 2008, the city population has stabilized, fluctuating less than in the past, Mr. Ghubril said, attributing the trend at least in part to the Promise. He also noted a 2011 RAND study that reported district enrollment as being more stable since the inception of the Promise. Other findings included that parents of students in grades six, seven, eight and nine who were new to district or city charter schools in 2007 to 2009 listed the Promise as the top influence in their decision.

Promise officials continue to seek ways to heighten the scholarship program’s outreach and impact.

It already helps some students get internships and conducts “career launch” sessions for recipients to meet employers. A pilot program with about 70 students allows high schoolers to use Promise money for training in health careers, culinary arts and HVAC. An October seminar is aimed at encouraging colleges to improve their graduation rates.

Keshawn Brooks, of Homewood, a We Promise participant and a 2016 graduate of Pittsburgh Westinghouse, is using his Promise money this fall to attend Cheyney University of Pennsylvania.

“I probably wouldn’t have gone to college without the Promise,” he said. **h**

SLB Radio Productions offers students in the Pittsburgh region opportunities to have hands-on experience with operating studio equipment and developing programming. Above, Executive Director Larry Berger shows 14-year-old Dinasia, a Big Brothers Big Sisters participant whose last name could not be released, how to operate sound equipment and allows her to fade music during a live broadcast. Below, Mr. Berger conducts a live, on-air conversation with Venture Outdoors youth program director Lo Hutelmyer, center foreground, and children in the Center that CARES after-school program about the importance of outdoor activities. Students' family members look on in the background.

AIR TIME

THE NEARLY FOUR-DECADES-OLD SATURDAY LIGHT BRIGADE RADIO PROGRAM NOT ONLY PRODUCES SHOWS THAT APPEAL TO CHILDREN AND TEENS BUT ALSO HELPS STUDENTS LEARN MEDIA SKILLS — SOMETIMES RECEIVING NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR THEIR WORK. BY MALIK VINCENT

Tucked away in the rear of the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh's basement theater is a radio studio, complete with sound operating boards, microphones and monitors that industry pros use.

And sometimes running almost all of the equipment—in fact, mastering almost all of the equipment—are local youth, with several producing award-winning programs that have been heard in communities across the country.

Guiding the work of these budding radio journalists and personalities is the staff of SLB Radio Productions. Founded in 1978, SLB produces “The Saturday Light Brigade” radio program, which includes acoustic music, interviews, performances, puzzles and on-air call-in conversations that taken together have yielded unique youth radio programming for nearly four decades.

SLB also develops and conducts off-air workshops for schools, scout and youth groups, and after-school programs. As one of the longest-running public radio programs in the country, it serves about 8,000 youth per year and has a listening audience of about 60,000 families in 15 Pennsylvania counties, portions of Ohio and worldwide through www.slbradio.org.

Support from the broadcast industry, foundations, corporations and individual donors enabled SLB to open a \$250,000 broadcast studio and training complex in the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh in 2004. Today, SLB provides museum visitors with the opportunity to observe and take part in live broadcasts.

“It was really groundbreaking stuff for us,” said SLB Executive Director Larry Berger about the museum location. “The move gave us more physical space to be able to expand the amount of equipment we had and to do more with our programs.”

The Heinz Endowments began partnering with SLB on youth radio projects in 2009, starting with the production of radio documentaries as part of the foundation's Summer Youth Philanthropy Internship Program. Held annually, the internship program allows recent high school graduates from across the region to learn about philanthropy, make recommendations for grants, and offer a teen perspective on the Endowments' grantmaking practices.

Mr. Berger and Wayne Jones, senior impact officer for the Endowments and former head of the foundation's internship program, came up with the idea for the youth philanthropy radio project after meeting in 2008 at a children's media conference at Saint Vincent



College in Latrobe, Pa. The next year, SLB received a \$13,000 grant to produce original radio podcasts with the youth philanthropy interns.

“We wanted to find more creative ways to incorporate the voices of our youth interns,” Mr. Jones said. “There was a two-to-three-week gap in the [interns’] grantwriting process that Larry and I wanted to fill with media production that would complement the students’ grantmaking.”

While the summer radio project has been successful in terms of engaging students, the program’s achievements reached new heights with the national recognitions that the work of several of last year’s interns received. First, the radio documentary “#BlackGirlsMatter: The Criminalization of Black Girls” by former youth philanthropy interns Marna Owens and Amma Ababio was selected for broadcast on two national public radio programs: “51%,” a 30-minute program devoted to women’s issues, and

adults. “An Unlikely Oasis in Johnstown, PA: Tranquility Gardens” highlighted a unique and secluded park in the small town east of Pittsburgh where the combination of nature, art and inscriptions of wisdom from noted philosophers has created a premier destination for youth mentoring sessions and retreats.

“The field of journalism and media is evolving every day,” Mr. Jones said. “When mapping this out, Larry and I wanted to be innovative in the way that students got their messages out there.

“We knew at the time that podcasts were becoming popular. The emerging technology helped shape our approach to telling the interns’ stories.”

The other youth radio program that began as an Endowments–SLB partnership and has expanded to include other supporters is the Crossing Fences oral history project, which was launched in 2012 as part of the foundation’s African American Men and Boys Initiative. Crossing Fences’ main objective is to assist black male youth in identifying and getting to know adult role models in their communities while learning how to use digital media to tell the men’s stories. So far, the project has trained more than 130 youth in nine neighborhoods to record and present oral histories of more than 140 African American men.

“We’ve sent out youth as young as 10 and as old as the late teen years for five or six days to get the stories,” Mr. Berger said of the Crossing Fences participants.

“WHEN MAPPING THIS OUT, LARRY AND I WANTED TO BE INNOVATIVE IN THE WAY THAT STUDENTS GOT THEIR MESSAGES OUT THERE. WE KNEW AT THE TIME THAT PODCASTS WERE BECOMING POPULAR. THE EMERGING TECHNOLOGY HELPED SHAPE OUR APPROACH TO TELLING THE INTERNS’ STORIES.”

Wayne Jones, Heinz Endowments senior impact officer

“PRX Remix,” a nationally curated compilation of the year’s best new public radio work. The students’ radio feature investigated why and how the socioeconomic challenges, behavior norms and trauma that some African American girls experience have caused them to be penalized in school systems rather than receive the support they need.

“It was truly an honor and a privilege to be able to be a part of something that would reach so many,” said Ms. Owens, a sophomore at Penn State Behrend. “Living it was the sole motivator of wanting to expose these issues, but it was beyond my expectations that it would end up being so powerful.”

Two other youth philanthropy radio projects from last year garnered the Best Youth-Made Radio of 2015 designation from the Public Radio Exchange (PRX). “Recognizing Refugees: Pittsburgh’s Somali Bantu Students” provided vital details on the assimilation and independence of local Somali teens and young

adults. “It has been a really good way to get the boys to identify and acknowledge men of all different walks of life... Throughout the process, we do our best to train the young men on how to use the equipment, edit the audio and everything that is needed to complete their projects.”

Neighborhoodvoices.org houses all of the Crossing Fences programs as well as interactive slideshows with photos of the students at work. Full-gloss, full-color booklets are produced as part of the project and contain written stories of these neighborhood heroes. Audio CDs also are enclosed as part of the packets. This year, the students’ radio interviews also have been made available nationally through PRX, with some already featured in cities like Seattle.

The annual public release of the Crossing Fences oral histories has included a citywide reception recognizing the students’ work and smaller gatherings in the individual communities where the interviews took place. Local dignitaries and other community stakeholders have taken part in the larger event in past years.

“SLB has effectively used the participants’ voices for a number of community-engagement opportunities,” said Carmen Anderson, senior officer for the Endowments’ Children, Youth, & Families Program and head of the foundation’s African American Men and Boys Initiative. “The opportunity for the youth to hear life stories and perspectives from community elders while gaining the technical skills involved with capturing the experience will prove valuable to their development moving forward.” **h**



RADIO HEAD

BY MALIK VINCENT

In 1976, the Pittsburgh Community Broadcasting Corporation's WYEP-FM, an independently owned and run station, had only been in operation just over two years, but it would soon give birth to a local radio icon.

It wasn't certain that Larry Berger, then 14, knew that a successful and decades-long career in public radio was to come. But he realized that there was something missing from the station's programming.

"There was a lack of active voices from youth on the radio," Mr. Berger said. "Also, there wasn't a whole lot of interesting content on Saturdays. Many times, stations didn't seek premier talent to work on Saturday mornings, with the assumption that everyone was sleeping in."

As an intern at the time, Mr. Berger developed a passion for broadcast radio. He used his opportunity at the station to learn the ins and outs of what would, eventually, become his dream career.

"I had a great interest in the equipment," he said. "The electrical components and all of the things that made a broadcast were awesome. Just the imagination that's needed in listening to the radio was something that really drove me."

Using a problem solver's approach, he analyzed his concerns about what he wanted and created "The Saturday Light Brigade" (SLB) radio program just one year before his 1979 graduation from then-Churchill High School, now known as Woodland Hills High School. But his life wasn't completely geared toward radio — yet.

With his love of science, Mr. Berger enrolled in Carnegie Mellon University, where he graduated with a degree in chemical engineering. And he somehow found ways to juggle college classes, further develop professional radio skills, and expand and maintain SLB over the years.

"One of the things that worked best for the SLB program was that many types of youth were consuming it," Mr. Berger said. "Kids actually woke up on Saturdays and caught it getting ready for and on their way to their football games, for example. It was something unique, and people started to embrace it."

Aside from working tirelessly to produce "The Saturday Light Brigade's" award-winning content, he enjoys listening to jazz and reading non-fiction. His favorite? "The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less," a 2004 book written by acclaimed psychologist Barry Schwartz that examines consumerism in America.

Mr. Berger and his wife of 27 years, Rikki, live in Avalon, a Pittsburgh suburb less than 10 miles north of Downtown. "My wife does a lot of the behind-the-scenes work with SLB," Mr. Berger noted. "She screens phone calls for the hosts and does a lot of the things that go unnoticed by our audience."

Veteran local television and radio host Chris Moore described SLB programming as "interesting. It makes you think, and it's positive." He had a similar assessment of Mr. Berger.

"He's got the same gentle manner as [Fred] Rogers," Mr. Moore said. "His programming brings a wide variety of knowledge to his audience, no matter what the topic is." Once a longtime colleague of the late children's television paragon at the public station WQED-TV, Mr. Moore has on several occasions referred to Mr. Berger as the "Mister Rogers of radio."

"He has had a tremendous amount of success and has a really large following, just like Mister Rogers did," Mr. Moore said. "Just like Mister Rogers, Larry is a kind soul. He doesn't draw attention to himself with any type of guns, violence or negativity, which is very uncommon in today's world."

here&there

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Leading Legacy

The Heinz Endowments commemorated Chairman Teresa Heinz's 25 years at the helm of the foundation with an Oct. 5 celebration of the impact her leadership has had on the region. The occasion also marked Mrs. Heinz handing over the Endowments' reins to her three sons, each of whom will serve as chairman in four-year rotations beginning with André Heinz.

Mrs. Heinz became chairman of the Howard Heinz Endowment in late April 1991 and a trustee of the Vira I. Heinz Endowment later that year, soon leading the merger of the two into The Heinz Endowments, which became official in January 2007. During her tenure as Endowments chairman, the foundation created its grantmaking program addressing environmental issues; sharpened its focus on early childhood, which contributed to making Pittsburgh a national model for commitment to early childhood education; helped launch and orchestrate the stunning revival of the city's riverfronts; and positioned Pittsburgh as a national leader in sustainable design and green building. Mrs. Heinz has received more than 40 major national, international and regional awards, recognizing and celebrating her work with the Endowments. Recent honors for her environmental contributions include the Mary Schenley Medal for Parks Stewardship from the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and recognition from the Women for a Healthy Environment for her commitment to women's health that led to the creation of the nonprofit.

25

Michael Artman



**UP
NEXT:**

The tribute to Mrs. Teresa Heinz and her leadership of The Heinz Endowments will be featured in the next h. The issue also will include an update on the Almondo development, a major project aimed at modeling how to put sustainability into practice.



Staff Appointments

Michelle Figlar has been named the Endowments vice president for Learning, a new position overseeing the Endowments' grantmaking focus on education, family support and related programs. A Pittsburgh native,

Ms. Figlar joins the Endowments from Pennsylvania's Department of Human Services and Education where she served as deputy secretary for the Office of Child Development and Early Learning. She also has served as executive director of the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children (PAEYC), a local regional affiliate of the national association, where she led the organization through significant development and growth.

In addition to appointing Ms. Figlar as vice president for Learning, the Endowments has named Janet Sarbaugh as vice president for Creativity and Andrew McElwaine as vice president for Sustainability & the Environment. Ms. Sarbaugh is also senior program director for Arts & Culture, and Mr. McElwaine, who had been the Endowments' first Environment Program director for six years until leaving in 1999, re-joined the foundation in 2015 as senior program director for Sustainability & the Environment.

ENVIRONMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Riverfront Renovations

Upgrades of Allegheny Landing, Pittsburgh's oldest riverfront park, are expected to be completed this fall with the latest work including the rebuilding of a riverfront trail and the addition of green infrastructure such as a rain garden. Among the previous improvements were the reconstruction of the park's boat dock and fishing pier, which were completed in 2014. In addition to the Endowments, other supporters of the renovation project included the National Endowment for the Arts, The Pittsburgh Foundation, and the Allegheny County Infrastructure and Tourism Fund.

Reporters-in-Training

With support from The Heinz Endowments, Point Park University has this fall launched a new bachelor of arts degree in environmental journalism. In addition to receiving journalism training, students in the program will be provided with instruction in data analytics, biology, ecology and environmental science. Other aspects of the program include mentoring by leading environmental journalists and collaborations each year with a professional journalist-in-residence who will work with students on projects inside and outside the classroom. Also as part of the program, Point Park is sponsoring forums and other events focusing on environmental issues that are open to the general public.

For daily updates on programs and issues that The Heinz Endowments supports, follow us on social media.



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CELEBRATING THE ARTS

Photo courtesy of Fringe Arts

Black Arts Awards

More than \$204,480 in grants have been awarded in this year's first cycle of the Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh program, which supports art rooted in the black experience. As a partnership between The Heinz Endowments and the Pittsburgh Foundation, Advancing Black Arts grants are awarded twice a year, with \$3.7 million distributed since the program started in 2010. Those receiving individual artist grants were Gabriel Colombo, Jasmine Hearn, Liana Maneese, Marcel Walker and Sarah Huny Young. Artist residency grants were awarded to the Homewood Artist Residency, the Legacy Arts Project and Opera Theater of Pittsburgh. The recipients of unrestricted and operating grants were Afrika Yetu, Harambee Ujima Black Arts and Culture Association, Kente Arts Alliance, the MLK Community Mural Project, and the STAYCEE PEARL Dance Project.

Camera Man Creation

A new mosaic mural commemorating the legacy of the late photographer Teenie Harris is adding colorful vibrancy to the TREK Development office building in Pittsburgh's Hill District neighborhood, where Mr. Harris lived and documented the lives of others. Called "Camera Man," the artwork was unveiled this summer on one side of the real estate development firm's building and includes replicas of some of Mr. Harris' photos. It was created last year by artist James Simon and 50 children in the nonprofit ACH Clear Pathways' creative camp. The mural was funded by TREK Development, The Heinz Endowments, the Grable Foundation and McAuley Ministries.



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