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NEXUS (nɛks) N.
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2. A CONNECTED SERIES OR GROUP.
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THE Columbus Foundation
WINTER 2016
"I’ve lost a lot of interest in politics because it doesn’t seem to me the primary reality anymore.” So said David Brooks during an interview on the program On Being (broadcast locally on WOSU-FM 89.7 at 7am on Sundays). As they ask in some churches when something especially sensible or inspiring is said, “Can I get an Amen for that?”

WHAT A RANCOROUS, DISPIRITING, and corrosive year of presidential politics this was. Signs of it are everywhere. A few weeks ago, someone whose writing I have admired over the years, Reagan speechwriter and author Peggy Noonan, was asked by a local audience member how she would recommend the next President craft a message of unity in the first day in office.

Ms. Noonan’s response was “I can’t help you in the act of dreaming to be a privilege?” Think about that—I would guess that every reader of this column has dreamt during their lives about better days, better fortunes, and a better life for themselves and their loved ones. And yet, that seems out of touch for many living desperate lives in places where violence and hunger abound, and opportunity is hard if not impossible to find and imagine.

So, in the face of lack of unity and despair, what do we do? Certainly, we don’t give up. Rather, we gravitate towards and support those who, in the game of working towards common ground, shoving respect for differences instead of giving in to them.

Do you want to strengthen your unity with and support of our country, our community, and celebrate the best of humanity? A few months ago, almost 5,000 people did, when they participated in The Columbus Foundation’s The Big Table, a community-wide day of conversation that took place in libraries, coffee shops, homes, and churches, designed to build understanding and respect amongst us here in central Ohio.

One of my favorite points made during one of The Big Table conversations was shared by Mark Lomax, who said, during a discussion about children in poverty, “Who would have thought of the act of dreaming to be a privilege?”

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So, in the face of lack of unity and despair, what do we do? Certainly, we don’t give up. Rather, we gravitate towards and support those with the energy, the commitment, and the will to engage and improve. As a community and as individuals, we only truly prosper when we care, not when we give up and only help ourselves.

Frankly, that is why The Columbus Foundation exists—to provide ways in which to come together to help you help others through the most effective philanthropy possible, and to make dreams and dreaming possible. That’s our primary reality, and it seeks and embraces, not defies, unity.

Note: this column was written prior to the November 8 election.
Brewing for Good

COMMONHOUSE ALES CRAFTS A NEW WAY TO GIVE

IT WAS DURING HIS TRAVEL as an architect that Lenny Kolada landed in a brew pub in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1989 and tasted what would become his future calling. While aware of craft beer, the industry was still in its infancy, and not nearly as widespread as it is today.

“If somebody would have beaten me to the punch, I probably wouldn’t have gotten into craft beer; I would have just enjoyed other craft beers. Really, I just wanted it in Columbus,” Lenny said.

When he started Barley’s Brewing Company in 1992, it was the eighth craft beer brewery in Ohio and there were only about 200 in the entire country. Today, Lenny says there are approximately 4,800 with 2,000 in planting.

Originally from Cleveland, Lenny came to Columbus to attend The Ohio State University. He spent most of his architectural career working for Karlsberger doing healthcare design. Yet for years, he felt like there was more to life than the monotonous cycle of work, weekend, vacation, repeat.

“In my 20s I remember thinking, wouldn’t it be neat if somewhere in mid-life you change and do something else, instead of what is expected of you?” he said.

In 1999, Lenny left his job as an architect to focus full time on his growing craft beer business. Five years after opening Barley’s, he started Smokehouse Brewing Company, and realized he had to choose one career to focus on.

“I was one of the craft beer pioneers in Columbus. I guess in a way I proved that I was worthy,” Lenny said. “Who knew that the little guys could actually scare the big brewers? It’s worthy,” Lenny said. “Who knew that the little guys could actually scare the big brewers? It’s easier to do it in a more public way, I’m hoping it will take the wind out of the sails—irrespective of our own profitability,” Lenny explained. “Rather than an expense down the line, it’s actually another cost of goods. It is literally one of the ingredients in our beer.”

The company has already made multiple contributions to the fund since launching the beer in August 2016, and has made its first grant contributions to the fund since launching the Commonhouse Shares Fund, a Donor Advised Fund established by Lenny and his wife, Joan, at The Columbus Foundation in 2015. But unlike other models, it’s a portion of sales, and not profits, that are donated to support the fund.

“I really wanted to be committed to this approach, so what we donate is a portion of sales—irrespective of our own profitability,” Lenny explained. “Rather than an expense down the line, it’s actually another cost of goods. It is literally one of the ingredients in our beer.”

The company has already made multiple contributions to the fund since launching the beer in August 2016, and has made its first grant as well.

“Much of philanthropy is anonymous. By doing it in a more public way, I’m hoping it will inspire others to say, I can do that too,” he said.

For Good, is an Ohio common ale. One dollar from every six pack, and a portion of keg sales, goes to the Commonhouse Shares Fund, a Donor Advised Fund established by Lenny and his wife, Joan, at The Columbus Foundation in 2015. But unlike other models, it’s a portion of sales, and not profits, that are donated to support the fund.

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Commonhouse Ales is a Pending Certified B Corporation, and hopes to become the first certified brewery in Ohio.

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The Big Table Feeds Community Desire for Togetherness and Conversation

The Columbus Foundation’s inaugural Big Table on August 30, 2016 brought an estimated 5,000 residents together around more than 450 tables for community building conversations that collectively fostered understanding across the region.

The Focus of the Day-long Effort was not to find immediate solutions, but rather to create authentic civic energy and engagement through the conversations that occurred and the ideas that were shared.

“Small acts of courage can lead to big results, and the hosts and others who said yes to building understanding were The Big Table’s real leaders,” said Douglas F. Kridler, President and CEO of The Columbus Foundation. “Good ideas can come from anywhere and with The Big Table they came in abundance from everywhere—an awesome display of community spirit and progress for all.”

Eighty-four percent of Big Table hosts responded to a follow-up survey from the Foundation, and 1,095 of the roughly 5,000 participants responded as well.

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“This is a brilliant way to involve people in community action. It is positive and affirms that we are all connected and capable of affecting change.”

“I was really inspired that this concept came to life, and grateful—kind of opens a new hope in me.”

“Collectively we can feel empowered to make little differences in our neighborhood, workplace, etc. The little steps we take are bigger because others are walking this way too!”

“You have captured a moment in time when citizens need an opportunity to be courageous and a moment to be empathetic in just one hour.”

“I felt like Columbus grew three inches on Tuesday, August 30.”

KEY FINDINGS:

- 97% were satisfied with their Big Table experience
- 97% are likely to participate again
- 97% said they were likely to recommend participation to others

In gratitude and honor of each person who participated in The Big Table, The Columbus Foundation made a contribution to the Gifts of Kindness Fund—thanks to the William H. Davis, Dorothy M. Davis and William C. Davis Foundation and the Paul G. Duke Foundation. The Gifts of Kindness Fund provides one-time emergency grants through partner nonprofits to help lift up individuals and families who experience an unexpected setback.

TAKE ACTION: To find out more about The Big Table, to receive updates about Big Table activities, or to access the full report, visit columbusfoundation.org/takeaction
Governing Committee member, Chairperson of the Siemer Family Foundation, and Columbus Foundation donor Barbara Siemer has spent years battling student mobility, and the effect it has on children across the country. Through the Siemer Family Foundation, a Supporting Foundation, Barbara and her husband, Al, launched a program in 2003 that has since grown to include 53 cities in 30 states, creating stable homes, thriving families, and successful students. She recently sat down to give us an update.

You are an educator at heart. How have times changed since you were teaching, and what do you feel are the biggest obstacles children face today?

I think we have lowered our expectations of what our kids can do. When I compare things that I taught or things that I learned when I was growing up, I don’t see that level of expectation or excellence happening in schools. When I go into public schools around the country, I see what I would have thought was fourth-grade learning in sixth grade. I’m sure the reason is because kids are coming to school so unprepared, and they simply are unable to move the kids faster through the system. I am also tired of phones, tablets, and computers consuming inordinate amounts of time. I worry that we are becoming so involved with digital devices that we are not communicating very adequately with each other—and I think we are suffering from that severely.

You and your husband, Al, established what would later become the Siemer Institute (SI) in 2003. How have you worked together to build the Institute to where it is today?

In 2003, it was simply my dream to see if I could completely prevent a family from being housing insecure and children from being school insecure. For five years in Sarasota, I did it on my own and got all the bugs out of the program and found out what kind of help these families needed. When the recession hit, we realized we were dealing with. They were in a world of hurt. By 2011, the Institute to where it is today?

In 2015, more than 13,000 school-aged children were supported through SI’s network of partners. What does this number mean to you—and how does it make you feel?

It makes me feel totally inadequate. Our goal for this year is 30,000–40,000 kids. Al’s stated goal for the last five years is that before he dies he wants to stabilize a million children. It just feels like it’s still way too little. Evictions are increasing across the country exponentially. It’s not getting better, it’s getting worse. And it just means that we feel like we have to expand the program, and try to figure out how to help cities raise more money so their programs can grow. It’s a small comfort to think about the kids we have helped, but there are still too many kids, too many families, too much pain, too much trauma.

What are your future hopes and plans for the Institute?

We are continuing to expand. The program is currently in 53 cities with three more joining this year. The dream has always been that we would show people what could be done, and they would do it themselves. Every city really should have the SI program, which is why we went to United Way, because they are in just about every city. That connection has been invaluable. Without The Columbus Foundation and United Way, we could never have done it. You don’t do this stuff alone.

What does The Spirit of Columbus mean to you?

This city is really remarkable. I don’t know of many cities where people come together as much to support an extraordinary number of nonprofits. It is without any question the most generous community I’ve ever come across. I love Columbus. This is home.

To learn more about the Siemer Institute, visit familystability.org.

COLUMBUS SHINES DURING NATIONAL CEOS FOR CITIES MEETING

DESPITE THE PREDOMINANCE of raindrops, Columbus shone during the 2016 National Meeting for CEOs for Cities. The city welcomed more than 400 leaders from 75 cities across the country for a three-day collaboration at the end of September that connected thought leaders and local visionaries. Attendees included mayors and civic, corporate, and nonprofit leaders who gathered to share smart ideas and best practices.

CEOs for Cities is the nation’s premier city learning network—connecting cross-sector urban, civic, and entrepreneurial leaders with each other and with the smartest ideas and practices for city and regional economic growth and opportunity.

“Columbus is the ideal setting for leading doers making things happen in their communities and leading advocates for communities of opportunity, sustainability, and equity,” said Douglas F. Kridler, President and CEO of The Columbus Foundation. The event enabled local leaders to showcase experiences unique to our city that have allowed it to grow and thrive in a time when other cities have struggled. The Columbus Foundation led the effort to bring the national meeting here, as well as the local fundraising for it, and organized the local content.

A number of Columbus-based influencers led segments during the event, including Nancy Kramen, Founder and Chairman, Resource Ammirati; Alex Shumate, Managing Partner, Squire Patton Boggs and Chairman of The Ohio State University Board of Trustees; Hon. Michael Coleman, Director of Business and Government Strategies, IceMiller Legal Counsel and former mayor of Columbus; Alex Fischer, President and CEO, Columbus Partnership; Joe DeLoss, Owner, Hot Chicken Takeover; and Peggy Kriha Dye, Artistic Director, Opera Columbus.

National speakers included Angela Glover Blackwell, Founder and CEO of PolicyLink; Harvard Professor Jan W. Rivkin; Gabriel Metcalf, President and CEO of San Francisco-based SPUR; and Manuel Pastor, Ph.D., author of Equity, Growth, and Community: What the Nation Can Learn from America’s Metro Areas and Professor of Sociology and American Studies & Ethnicity at the University of Southern California.

CEOs for Cities got underway with Lee Fisher, Senior Advisor for CEO for Cities, leading a discussion about innovative economic opportunities with mayors from Columbus, Cincinnati, Akron, Dayton, and Toledo.
A PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION led by a passionate team of partners is winning accolades and providing a beautiful entryway into the Weinland Park neighborhood just southeast of The Ohio State University.

In May 2014, The Columbus Foundation announced a $2 million low-interest loan to help support the restoration and renovation of a collection of vacant buildings, now known as Grant Commons. Originally built from 1916–1921 by Charles Foster Johnson, the buildings are part of the New Indiana Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

The Foundation provided support to help with the overhaul of 23 buildings—more than 90 units in total—stretching along East 11th Avenue from Grant Avenue to North Fourth Street. Work on the buildings started in March 2014 and wrapped up in June 2015.

“By supporting this collective investment in Grant Commons, a large collection of buildings that represent the original historic fabric of the Weinland Park neighborhood stays intact,” said Michael Wilkos, Director of Community Research for The Columbus Foundation. “Over the past eight years, the Foundation and its donors have championed ideas that help strengthen families in this neighborhood, offering everything from youth sports and social gatherings to stable affordable housing and resources to support the goal of full-term, healthy babies.”

The units represent the first market-rate renovation in Weinland Park in many years. Updated with new mechanicals, wood floors, and off-street parking, rents for the one and two bedroom homes range from $850–$1,150.

The restoration has turned what was once an eyesore of boarded up windows and sagging facades to a street teeming with energy and life. “The 11th Ave corridor has become the main gateway to the Weinland Park neighborhood and OSU from the east,” said Mark Wagenbrenner, President of Wagenbrenner Development, which owns and manages Grant Commons. “The rehabilitated units on 11th Avenue now display some of the best architecture in the neighborhood and the re-establishment of the ‘front porch’ townhome.”

The units are located just two blocks from OSU from the east and are near Weinland Park, home of the Ohio State University. “I learned what advancement looks like behind the scenes, and what it means for a group of individuals to work for a common mission,” said Ryan Fisher, a former Fellow with United Schools Network and graduate of The Ohio State University.

In October, Wagenbrenner Development, The Columbus Foundation, Campus Partners, the City of Columbus, and Historic Preservation Consultant Judy Williams were named recipients of the Preservation Merit Award from the State Historic Preservation Office for the rehabilitation of Grant Commons.

Fellowship Offers Students Opportunities to Grow on the Job

IN MAY 2015, the Foundation launched the Development and Fundraising Fellowship Program to provide students with the experience of working as a development professional in the nonprofit sector.

After identifying a need for strengthening the pipeline of skilled professionals, the program initially connected eight college seniors with nonprofit organizations to foster a long-term interest in development and fundraising within the central Ohio college/university community. This need was identified in a survey conducted in partnership with the Association of Fundraising Professionals Central Ohio Chapter, which showed not only a lack of incoming talent, but also a decrease in tenure of employment at an organization.

A new group of college seniors were selected in October 2015 for the current Fellowship session, which will run until summer 2017. Nonprofits participating include the Columbus Metropolitan Library, Equitas, Children’s Hunger Alliance, MidOhio Foodbank, and Childhood League.

Fellows receive valuable experience and are paid for their work, while nonprofits benefit from the additional support that students provide to development initiatives. Each Fellow works nine hours per week.

“Working as a Development and Fundraising Fellow was a very rewarding experience,” said Ryan Fisher, a former Fellow with United Schools Network and graduate of The Ohio State University. “I learned what advancement looks like behind the scenes, and what it means for a group of individuals to work for a common mission.”

The Development and Fundraising Fellowship is the second Fellowship program created by the Foundation. Its first, the Summer Fellowship Program, began in 2000. Since then, the highly competitive program has provided opportunities for 67 college students, recent graduates, and graduate students to gain valuable experience working for central Ohio nonprofits. Summer Fellows work full-time and focus their 10-week summer projects on specific topics that fit their interests and the nonprofits’ needs to achieve an objective.
Books that Inspired Me

Like a lot of us, Carter Stewart has a stack of books at home waiting to be read. But time is precious for this father of three and former presidentially appointed United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, who today serves as Managing Director of the Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation (DRK), a global venture philanthropy firm.

While he admits he misses the sunny shores of California, where he served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in San Jose, as well as a litigator at Bingham McCutchen LLP in San Francisco, Carter considers Columbus home. He and his wife, Michelle Alexander, moved to Columbus 11 years ago and are happy to be raising their children here.

Carter recently took the time to share with us some of his favorite books and authors, and why one book has very special meaning to him.

If you had to name a favorite author, who would it be and why?
I have favorite authors from different stages in my life. When I was in high school, my favorite author was Alex Haley. I didn’t read Roots, but I watched the TV show, and I read the autobiography of Malcolm X, which Haley co-wrote. Both Roots and The Autobiography of Malcolm X were powerful to me, in terms of the stories they told of the struggles of African Americans coming to the United States—and also the struggle of finding self.

In college and right after college I really enjoyed historical fiction by James Michener and books by Pat Conroy, who authored The Lords of Discipline, The Great Santini, and The Prince of Tides.

More recently, I like Ron Chernow, who wrote Alexander Hamilton and David McCullough, author of Truman. I love history and I love seeing what people have done before that has worked. I believe that old cliché—those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. I think we are shaped today by events and people in the past.

Did you have a favorite book as a child?
The Chronicles of Narnia series by C.S. Lewis were favorites, and I also really liked the Horatio Hornblower series by C. S. Forester and books by Beverly Cleary.

What book(s) are you currently reading?
Right now I’m reading American Heiress: The Wild Saga of the Kidnapping, Crimes and Trial of Patty Hearst, which was a book chosen by the Huron Shire Literacy Society, of which I’m a member. I’m also reading Joining a Nonprofit Board by Marc Epstein and F. Warren McFarlan, and Money Well Spent by Paul Brest and Hal Harvey.

Is there a book you regularly recommend to others? If so, which one and why?
The New Jim Crow by my wife, Michelle Alexander. We’ve used the book as lesson points for our children when events happen around the country, whether it’s Ferguson, Charlotte, or other things. We don’t talk about every single event, but when we do there’s often a reference to “Mom’s book.” I love the book. There were multiple times during the writing process when she wanted to quit. Having read the first few chapters, my message to her was, “The world needs this book” and I encouraged her to finish it. She’s working on her second book now.

The Green Funds at The Columbus Foundation were awarded the Green Collaborative Achievement Award from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), acknowledging their lead sponsorship of Earth Day in central Ohio—the largest Earth Day event in the country. Pictureed at center is Bill Habig, of the Green Funds, with other awardees and MORPC representatives.

Hardworking scholarship recipients came together with generous donors to celebrate another year of more than 1,000 scholarships at our annual ice cream social.

The Green Funds

Twisted 2

The Arts Innovation Fund for the collaborative show in September.

CARTER STEWART

NEXUS WINTER 2016 / 7
On August 31, 2016, hundreds of donors, friends, and community leaders came together for our annual Celebration of Philanthropy events, during which we honored our 2016 Philanthropy Award Winners.

**Patricia Duke Robinson**, of Troy, President Emeritus of the Paul G. Duke Foundation, was named the recipient of the Leadership in Philanthropy Award for her 30-year role in leading the Supporting Foundation her father created, and her dedication to Miami County.

**American Electric Power and American Electric Power Foundation** were named the Harrison M. Sayre Award winners for their extraordinary leadership and support of the Scioto Mile, and their passion for making a difference in a variety of areas throughout central Ohio.

**The Columbus Museum of Art** was named The Columbus Foundation Award recipient for its recent nationally acclaimed expansion and ongoing commitment to make it possible for residents of all ages to experience art.

Established in 2011, the Leadership in Philanthropy Award of Community Foundations, Inc. is awarded periodically to recognize outstanding philanthropic contributions to communities beyond central Ohio.

The **Harrison M. Sayre Award**, given in honor of the Foundation’s founder and 26-year volunteer director, recognizes leadership in philanthropy in central Ohio.

Created in 1986, The Columbus Foundation Award recognizes organizations that have made a difference in the quality of life in our community.