THE MAGAZINE OF
THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS
Issue 1 2024

THE PITTSBURGH CULTURAL TRUST: HELPING THE CITY'S ARTS SCENE THRIVE



inside h

ISSUE 1 2024

Board of Directors

André T. Heinz
Chairman

Teresa Heinz
Chair Emeritus

John Heinz
María Marteinsdóttir
Wendy Mackenzie
Damon Aherne
Judith Davenport
Carolyn Duronio
Nick Hoffman
Maxwell King
Shirley Malcom

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 become a just and equitable community in which all of its citizens thrive economically, ecologically, educationally, socially and culturally. We also seek to advance knowledge and practice in the field of philanthropy through strategies that focus on our priorities of Creativity, Learning and Sustainability.

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.

Editor: Carmen Lee
Production Manager: Courtney Tolmer
Editorial Team: Becky Brindle, Chris DeCardy, Donna Evans Sebastian, Scott Roller
Design: Landesberg Design

About the cover: During Jazz Club at the Greer Cabaret Theater in Downtown Pittsburgh, from left, Antonio Cruz on piano, Sean Jones on trumpet and Dwayne Dolphin on bass guitar performed to a full house on April 27. Photo by Joshua Franzos.





4 TRUST FACTOR
As the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust upgrades its venues, it also is trying to give a needed boost to the vitality of the city's Downtown.

11 CREATING A CULTURAL DISTRICT
The history of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and the city's Cultural District stretches back to the 1980s when H. J. "Jack" Heinz, then-CEO of Heinz Inc., pursued his vision to use the arts as a catalyst to revitalize Downtown Pittsburgh.

12 JOB POTENTIAL
Although the Pittsburgh region's unemployment rate is lower than it's been in decades, more needs to be done to ensure that good-paying jobs with benefits are broadly available.

20 FAILURE TO BOOM
A Shell ethane cracker plant in Monaca, Pennsylvania, has not delivered on its economic promise of job and population growth and instead has faced millions in fines for air quality violations.

22 THE KEYS TO SUCCESS
Pittsburgh Scholar House provides housing assistance and family supports to single parents pursuing their academic and career goals.

---

2 HOMETOWN SNAPSHOT
30 HERE & THERE



hometown SNAPSHOT



Grow Pittsburgh

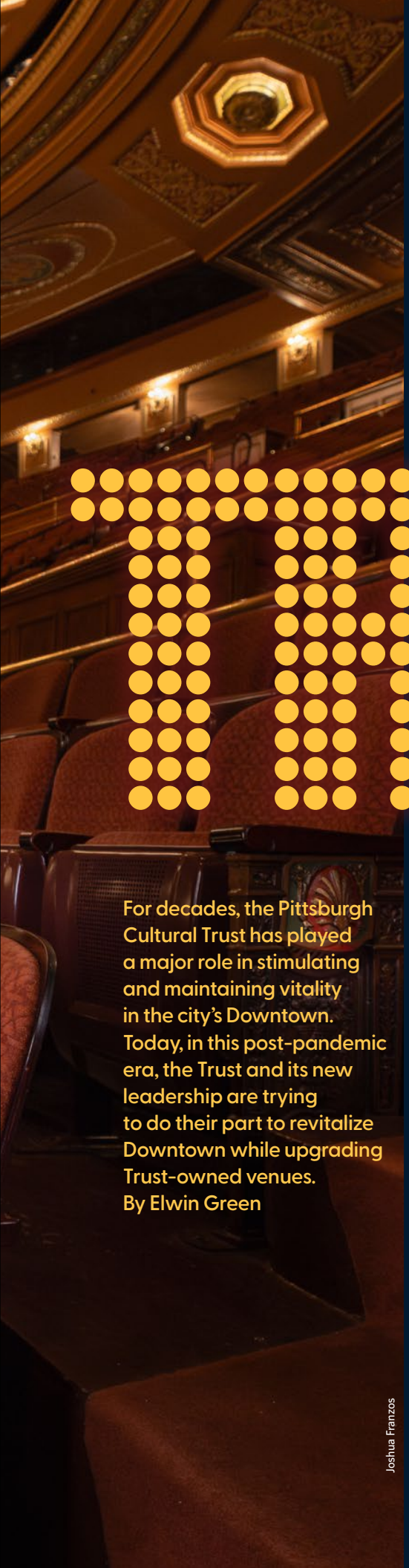


Garden Party

Penelope Vicaro, 9, was in third grade at Pittsburgh Dilworth PreK-5 when she received a mushroom slider and the recipe for mushroom barbecue in May during the annual Chef in the Garden celebration. The event is sponsored by Grow Pittsburgh, a nonprofit that promotes and supports gardening in the Pittsburgh region. As part of Chef in the Garden, local Pittsburgh chefs visit school gardens and serve students delicious and healthy snacks. This year, Common Plea Catering donated its mobile kitchen to the event, and mushroom barbecue sandwiches were prepared by chef Elizabeth Barsotti from Nino's Restaurant in the Laurel Highlands. The mushrooms were grown by Luke Mitchell from Mitchell's Mushroom Farm in Murrysville, Pennsylvania.



As president and CEO of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust since February 2023, Kendra Whitlock Ingram is applying her energy and enthusiasm to enhancing arts venues such as the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, shown here, and reinvigorating the city's Cultural District.



TRUST FACTOR

For decades, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust has played a major role in stimulating and maintaining vitality in the city's Downtown. Today, in this post-pandemic era, the Trust and its new leadership are trying to do their part to revitalize Downtown while upgrading Trust-owned venues.
By Elwin Green

Joshua Franzos

Kendra Whitlock Ingram's face lights up when she talks about the Lullaby Project, an arts project that helps families celebrate their newborns.

"We hire local musicians who can become flexible in various genres of music," she said. "Then we identify families through some of our community partners. Sometimes it's mom and dad, sometimes it's auntie, sometimes it's grandmama, sometimes it's a combination of folks.

"They work with families to learn about the family—what's unique about their family, what they want to have their baby remember — then work with them to develop the lyrics and the music.

"Then, once the song is created, the musicians have the songs professionally recorded so that the family will have them as a keepsake.

"How we connect it back to the District is that we invite all those families, and the musicians, the community partners and the general public, to a concert where we perform all the lullabies—where the musicians that have written the lullabies perform them in a special concert."

The "District" in this narrative is the Cultural District, 14 connected blocks in Downtown Pittsburgh that encompass a cluster of performing arts and gallery spaces, including the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, the Byham Theater and the O'Reilly Theater.

The "we" is the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, the $70 million nonprofit that owns the above-named theaters, along with more than a dozen other properties in the District. That makes the Trust the landlord, in a sense, for the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, the Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, the Pittsburgh Public Theater and other arts organizations. The Trust also is an important player — under Ms. Ingram's direction — in efforts to pump new life into the city's Downtown since the COVID pandemic while upgrading its venues to burnish its own future.

"District activation is a big part of our history, and I would even say of our present and our future," said Ms. Ingram.

She should know — in February 2023, she became the Trust's third president and CEO, following inaugural office-holder Carol Brown, who led the organization from 1986 to 2001, and Kevin McMahon, whose tenure began in 2001.

She brings a wealth of experience, having last served as president and CEO of the Marcus Performing Arts Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and with earlier executive stints at the Newman Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Denver and Omaha Performing Arts, a nonprofit that manages three live-performance venues in Nebraska's largest city.

Ms. Ingram's current post in Pittsburgh is not her first. The Scranton native earned her bachelor's degree in arts education from Duquesne University, graduating in 1997. There, her eagerness to volunteer in off-campus activities ("I was a hand raiser") led to an internship at the Pittsburgh Opera. That exposure to the behind-the-scenes world of theater instilled an interest in arts management and a fondness for the Cultural District.

But she "never in a million years" thought she would return to work in the District, much less to head up the Trust.

The size of the Trust's portfolio, the depth of its partnership roster and its 40-year history of success in helping to transform Downtown Pittsburgh mean that "this is a destination job in my industry" of arts management, she said.

Ms. Ingram's arrival came on the heels of a high mark in her predecessor's tenure: a three-year capital campaign, ending in December 2022, that raised $25 million more than its $150 million goal.

Raising a large amount of money for an ambitious program of capital improvements is one thing; deploying those funds well is quite another, requiring a separate set of skills.

According to Christopher Hahn, general director of the Pittsburgh Opera, Ms. Ingram has turned out to be the right person at the right time.

"Kendra, when she came in, was able to start afresh with a war chest already dedicated to improvement," he said.

"I think what she has been excellent at is ensuring that those funds are spent with great care and thought, to make sure that the expenditures, when they start happening, are where they need to be, with prioritization."

In her first year, Ms. Ingram oversaw the completion or near-completion of work on three Cultural Trust properties: 937 Liberty Avenue, the Greer Cabaret Theater and the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts.

The renovation of 937 Liberty Avenue is transforming it into a multispace, with a 100-seat theater on the first floor, a second-floor gallery and a 50-seat flex space on the third floor.

Around the corner and down the street, the Greer Cabaret Theater, a 198-seat dinner theater venue that is part of the Theater Square complex on Penn Avenue, underwent an extensive redesign that included expanding the Backstage Bar and combining the lobbies for the box office and the restaurant into a single open space.

Elwin Green is a Pittsburgh-based freelance writer. His last story for h was published in Issue 1, 2023, and covered a three-day convening in Pittsburgh of foundation representatives from across the country to discuss environmental challenges, such as the impacts of fossil fuel extraction and strategies for addressing them.



Pittsburgh Cultural Trust

The District

Theater Square, a complex in Pittsburgh's Cultural District that houses the O'Reilly and Greer Cabaret theaters, Katz Plaza and a parking garage, is bustling on evenings when productions take place at multiple Downtown venues.

The Trust's real estate portfolio contains a total of 17 properties that encompass more than a million square feet, including outdoor spaces.

"I think what she has been excellent at is ensuring that those funds are spent with great care and thought, to make sure that the expenditures, when they start happening, are where they need to be, with prioritization."

Christopher Hahn, general director, Pittsburgh Opera

The Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, which mounts its mainstage productions at the 1,311-seat Byham Theater, has used the Greer since 2004 for its CLO Cabaret series of more intimately staged shows.

"We've definitely benefited from the improvements," said CLO executive producer Mark Fleischer, noting that the new layout provides patrons with a more seamless experience.

"You can park in the parking garage, take the elevator down, then after the show go back into the bar and get drinks or desserts.

"You never have to leave the building. It's truly a one-stop shopping and entertainment experience."

At the Benedum Center, which seats 2,870, the biggest and most obvious change has been the upgrading of both the front and the side marquees with digital lighting.

The marquees were last improved as part of a renovation of the Benedum in the 1980s. That was also when much of the interior lighting equipment for the theater was installed, Mr. Hahn said.

"Lighting equipment, like much of tech, advances year to year with astonishing speed," he said — which means that when Ms. Ingram arrived, the Benedum's lighting equipment was, in a word, ancient.

Now, lighting upgrades are in progress on a multi-year schedule.

Looking forward, one of the primary beneficiaries of the campaign will be the 650-seat O'Reilly Theater, home to the Pittsburgh Public Theater.

Managing Director Shaunda McDill said that over the next three years, the O'Reilly will receive $4 million in upgrades to its sound and lighting systems.

After focusing on capital improvements in her first year, Ms. Ingram wants to shift the Trust's gaze.

"The next thing that we're looking at is how we can help with the revitalization of Downtown — almost like we've come back to our original mission," she said.

"How do we play a role in revitalization when the center of Downtown is maybe not the center of business, but the center of leisure or recreation?"

Part of the answer is "better placemaking in some of our outdoor spaces." That means making improvements to the Agnes R. Katz Plaza at Penn Avenue and Seventh Street (home of the granite "eyeball benches" by sculptor Louise Bourgeois), and the upper level of Allegheny Riverfront Park, a narrow strip of parkland that lies between Fort Duquesne Boulevard and the Allegheny River.



Joshua Franzos

The restoration of the park is one of the targets of The Heinz Endowments' $20 million gift to the capital campaign. That work is being done in partnership with Riverlife, a nonprofit steward of and advocate for riverfront property in Pittsburgh.

The hope behind those improvements is "to encourage people to spend more time [Downtown] that's unstructured," rather than being tied to attending a particular event, Ms. Ingram said.

Another part of the answer is perhaps counterintuitive, namely, "going out of the District to meet people where they are."





Pittsburgh's Cultural District in the city's Downtown incorporates lively performance venues, such as the Greer Cabaret Theater, left, where trumpeter and composer Sean Jones and bassist Dwayne Dolphin performed during the theater's Jazz Club in April. The District also includes landscaped areas, such as Allegheny Riverfront Park, where Ryan Kiger and Christina Johnson, both of Oakmont, Pennsylvania, enjoy an evening stroll and take a selfie with Ms. Johnson's children Nathan, 10, and Cara, 15. The strip of green space overlooks the Allegheny River.



SPACES AND PLACES



"A Sudden Gust of Wind" is a public art installation created by Lenka Clayton and Phillip Andrew Lewis that consists of 200 multicolored kite sculptures installed within the branches of more than 80 trees throughout the Cultural District.

Ms. Ingram foresees the Trust bringing nationally and internationally touring artists, not just into Downtown but into other Pittsburgh neighborhoods, to do masterclasses, workshops and community talks "to build more of a relationship that's beyond the walls of the theaters."

The Trust also has moved beyond property management into arts management. It developed a program of shared services whereby it offers support to non-tenant arts organizations.

The August Wilson African American Cultural Center is one of those organizations. The Center taps into the Trust's account with Tessitura Network, an arts and cultural tech support service, to handle its ticketing needs and to help with fundraising. The August Wilson Center also receives marketing services from the Trust, such as the printing of program books, on a shared-cost basis.

But the organization's collaboration with the Trust goes further.

"We're always looking for ways to work together," said Janis Burley, the Center's president and CEO.

One of those ways is by allowing Trust organizations such as the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre or the Pittsburgh Opera to use the Center for some of their programming, something that Ms. Burley said happens two or three times a year.

The flip side of that is the Center moving some of its programming into one of the Trust theaters, such as jazz pianist Herbie Hancock's appearance at the Byham.

Other arts organizations that make use of the Trust's shared services include Pittsburgh CLO, Pittsburgh Public Theater and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

In addition to her work at the Cultural Trust, Ms. Ingram has what she calls "a side hustle" that could become significant for Pittsburgh's arts and culture community—a fellowship program, Executive Leadership in the Performing Arts. She and Josephine Ramirez, executive vice president at The Music Center in Los Angeles, worked collaboratively with National Arts Strategies and AMS Planning & Research, two organizations that support arts and culture in communities, to develop and launch the program, designed to bring more people of color into top leadership positions in arts organizations (Ms. Ingram identifies as "biracial Black").

"We often see Black and brown folks in education, community engagement and HR roles at the executive level" in the arts, she said. "But we don't often see Black and brown people in CEO, CFO, COO positions."

She said that when she speaks with potential candidates, they often express preferences that correspond to lower-level positions: "I want to be close to the art" or "I want to be more grassroots."

"But where do you think the actual power is?" she said. "Who do you think is actually controlling your budget?

"This is the job where you can actually make change."

The Cultural Trust will be hosting a fellow in the program's next cohort.

Meanwhile, Ms. Ingram and her crew continue the work of managing the Cultural District, where the fall calendar will include the Pittsburgh Public Theater's staging of "Dial 'M' for Murder," an extended run of "Hamilton" at the Benedum Center, and a one-night live edition at the Byham Theater of the popular comedy podcast Girls Gotta Eat as part of their No Crumbs Tour. And that's just in September.

For Ms. Ingram, everything is about maintaining, and even growing, that level of activity, which may have been difficult to even imagine when the capital campaign was launched in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

"Our priority needs to be on what makes up the bulk of our business—and that is actually driving our business—and that's what's in the theaters." h

How do we play a role in revitalization when the center of Downtown is maybe not the center of business, but the center of leisure or recreation?"

Kendra Whitlock Ingram
president and CEO, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust

Joshua Franzos



CREATING A CULTURAL DISTRICT

Pittsburgh Cultural Trust



The transformative impact of Pittsburgh's Cultural District can be seen in differences between a stretch of Liberty Avenue, Downtown, when it was part of the city's red-light district before the mid-1980s, and the area's current reincarnation as an arts and cultural destination for events such as gallery crawls.

The Heinz Endowments' connection to the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust precedes its existence: H. J. "Jack" Heinz II, then-CEO of Heinz Inc., was one of the Trust's founders in 1984.

His vision, shared with founding Cultural Trust president and CEO Carol Brown, was to use the arts as a catalyst for revitalizing a Downtown that had fallen far from its days when the dense concentration of corporate headquarters earned it the nickname "The Golden Triangle."

Bringing the vision to pass began with real estate.

"It was an intentional transformation that involved buying up properties that were considered nuisance properties," said Mac Howison, senior program officer for Creativity at the Endowments.

Perhaps the single property in the Trust's portfolio that best encapsulates the transformation that the organization spearheaded is the Harris Theater.

According to the Trust's website, the theater, originally the Art Cinema, was the first in Pittsburgh to show art films but surrendered to competition in the 1960s, when it began showing adult films. By the 1970s, the Art Cinema was one of a group of adult theaters and bookstores that made Liberty Avenue a swamp of pornography and illicit activities.

The Trust purchased the building housing the theater and renovated it, reopening it as the Harris Theater in November 1995. Now it operates as a repertory theater, with single-day or short-term showings of art, foreign and classic films, and offers memberships that allow patrons to receive discounted ticket prices.

The trajectory of the Harris reflects that of the Cultural District overall. Once the Trust acquired properties, "it became the operating principle to steward those resources and widely market them as regional assets, and also to handle the complexity of booking arts presentations," Mr. Howison said.

That stewardship role grew as the Trust acquired properties that were not nuisance properties but that fit into the overall vision of a thriving arts district, such as the Benedum and the Byham. **h**

—Elwin Green

POTENTIAL



Pittsburgh's unemployment rate is lower than it's been in decades. But challenges, such as a lack of transportation and access to affordable child care, along with military veterans' underemployment and unemployment, continue to serve as reminders that more needs to be done.
By Julia Fraser



Neil Webb

The Beatles broke up. Roberto Clemente played right field for the Pittsburgh Pirates. The Boeing 747 jumbo jet entered the airways "drawing qualified raves from the airlines," according to a New York Times article from 1970.

Unsurprisingly, much has changed in 54 years, but worth noting is that 1970 was the last time the Pittsburgh region reported an unemployment rate as low as in the past six months.

Julia Fraser is a Pittsburgh-based freelance writer. Her last story for h looked at a Heinz Endowments–funded study to determine the impacts of the PAServes care network and the Veterans Affairs health system—separately and together—on veterans and their families.

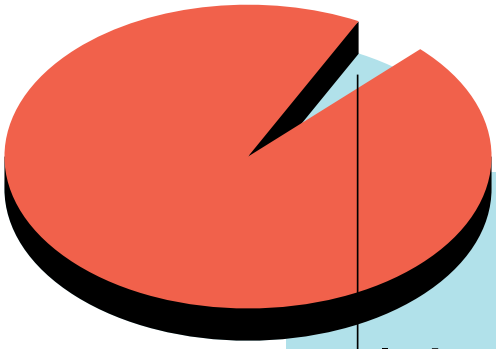
"The unemployment rate is low, and it's not just that it's marginally low. It's lower than it has been in the past 50 years by a large measure," said Christopher Briem, regional economist at University of Pittsburgh's Center for Social and Urban Research.

In April 2024, only 3.2 percent of workers in Allegheny County, home to the city of Pittsburgh, were unemployed, and Pittsburgh's employment numbers seem sunny. In addition to the historic lows in unemployment, employers in the region report a stability in hiring and a rise in average wages, and the dive in the region's labor force during the pandemic steadied.

Behind the numbers, workforce programs training workers in industries ranging from the building trades to the restaurant business to the region's burgeoning tech sector have seen swelling enrollment, expanding placement and paths to careers.

But the employment picture is still far from rosy. Pockets of decline — in the region's population and in jobs that provide a family-supporting income — persist. Barriers to employment, such as access to transportation, affordable child care, stigma around formerly incarcerated status and the mental health crisis, have shut workers out of lucrative career paths, according to nonprofit leaders in the Pittsburgh region.

In the wake of historic federal investment through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, this moment can be a tipping point for the region's economy, according to local nonprofit leaders, but only if the region can pull together a cohesive economic strategy that capitalizes on the full potential of its workers.



In April 2024, only 3.2 percent of workers in Allegheny County, home to the city of Pittsburgh, were unemployed.

DIFFERENT SIDES OF THE NUMBERS

With the number of people looking for work in the Pittsburgh region hitting record lows, employers had to wake up to a new economic reality. Unemployment isn't just low in Pittsburgh, it's low across the country, with the national unemployment rate hitting 4 percent in May 2024.

"It means that current local employers have no memory of having to hire workers in such a difficult or tight labor market," Mr. Briem said. "A lot of local employers haven't had to try to retain workers the way they have to do so right now."

The competition over hiring workers has put pressure on employers to pay their employees more. Workers in the Pittsburgh region earned an average wage of $29.60 per hour in May 2023. That's a 19.4 percent raise from the average hourly wage of $24.79 in May 2019, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for the Pittsburgh metropolitan statistical area.

Over the past year, things have settled for employers, according to the Allegheny Conference on Community Development.

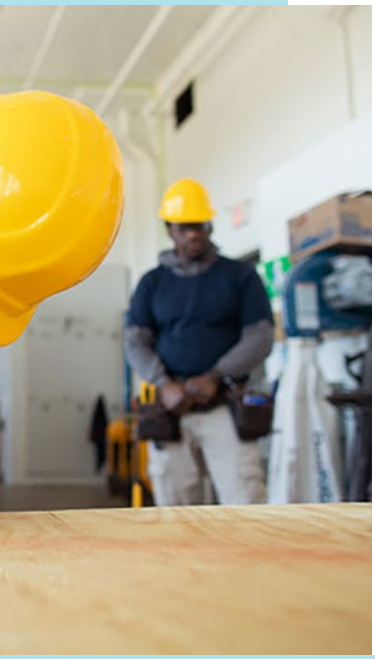
"The talent shortages that we saw in 2021, '22 — that is no longer true," said Vera Krekanova, chief strategy and research officer at the Allegheny Conference. "What we hear from businesses is that the talent pipeline is not huge, but they are able to find what they want with the right skill sets, for the most part. There is a little calmness and easiness on both sides. People who are looking for jobs

Participants in the Innovation District Skills Alliance's September 2023 and January 2024 cohorts had placement rates of 57 percent and 63 percent, respectively.





Community Kitchen Pittsburgh



Michael Savisky

are able to find them, and businesses are able to fill positions."

But the positive numbers cover some of the region's economic bruises.

In the Pittsburgh region, a decline in the labor force has contributed to the lower unemployment rate since the COVID pandemic began in 2020, explained Gus Faucher, senior vice president and chief economist of The PNC Financial Services Group, in a Pittsburgh Post-Gazette column in April. The loss of workers who relocated or retired may help the unemployment numbers look better but "will be a significant drag on long-run job growth in the Pittsburgh area as firms look elsewhere for employees," he wrote.

Also, military veterans' unemployment rates in the Pittsburgh region hover above civilian unemployment rates — a trend that is reversed in most regions, including in Cleveland, Charlotte and Detroit, according to data from the D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University.

"For veterans here, underemployment is an even larger issue than unemployment," said Megan Andros, director of Veterans Affairs at The Heinz Endowments. "We don't want to see people just get a job. For people coming out of the military, they have skills, experience. It's not success to just get a job."

A recent study funded by the Endowments found that 62 percent of people who got out of the military in the summer of 2016 were still underemployed, more than six years after leaving the service.

ENCOURAGING NEWS AND PERSISTENT GAPS

Helping to achieve some of the positive numbers have been robust nonprofit training programs with holistic support systems, unions looking outside their traditional membership base and local employers looking to hire. A chunk of the region's employment success depends on these partnerships.

When restaurants reopened after COVID restrictions were lifted, the workers had moved on. Restaurant owners scrambled to find help, raised wages and still sat short-staffed.

Community Kitchen Pittsburgh, a nonprofit that provides training for careers in the food industry for individuals who have barriers to employment, such as those formerly incarcerated, seized the opportunity for its graduates. Community Kitchen has been able to place 93 percent of its graduates in jobs in the restaurant industry with an average wage of $16 an hour.

Then the hiring boom settled, and the current landscape is more complex.

"The jobs are there but the industry has shifted," said Jennifer Flanagan, executive director of Community Kitchen. "If the choice is to go into a restaurant, you have to be available weekends and evenings. A big shift we've

Community Kitchen Pittsburgh has been able to place 93 percent of their graduates in jobs in the restaurant industry with an average wage of $16 an hour.

Above: Asia Griffen learned the basics of building practices and the practical use of power and hand tools in Trade Institute of Pittsburgh's Core Carpentry program. She graduated from the Trade Institute's masonry and carpentry programs in 2022 and is an entrepreneur and tradeswoman, a member of the program's Alumni Council, and a Trade Institute Wall of Fame honoree, recognized for her continued success following graduation.

At left: Professional chefs, such as Cory Hughes, center, from Fig & Ash restaurant on Pittsburgh's North Side, lend their expertise in demonstrating meal preparation techniques to Community Kitchen Pittsburgh students. On May 23, Javonna Ross of Wall Township, far left, and Camerin Edmonds of Turtle Creek worked with Mr. Hughes on a guest chef dinner.

seen in the restaurant world is that a lot of them, especially the smaller ones, they're not open the way they used to be open."

Remote work and empty office buildings eliminated many lunch shifts and, with them, desirable daytime hours.

"This can be tough for single parents looking for the elusive daytime, weekday shifts, which are primarily available only through large institutional employers like hospital systems," Ms. Flanagan said.

The Innovation District Skills Alliance is a program that trains workers from marginalized communities for jobs with family-sustaining wages, benefits and union opportunities. According to the program's records, recent participant cohorts in September 2023 and this January had graduation rates of 88 percent and 73 percent, respectively, and placement rates of 57 percent and 63 percent. Among its biggest successes for graduates has been placing them with big companies and universities with ties to the city, such as the University of Pittsburgh and UPMC, according to Sean Luther, president and chief executive officer of InnovatePGH, the public–private partnership that runs the program.

The civic expectation to hire locally and invest in the community that the Pittsburgh-based companies have — and many tech start-ups lack — is critical to the future of tech in Pittsburgh, he added.

"We need to cook that into the definition of a start-up's civic expectations," Mr. Luther said, "so that in 10 years, they're looking at Pittsburgh first. They're developing their neighborhoods and investing in their neighborhoods and not just following the path of least resistance."

Nothing about the approach to workforce training at the Trade Institute of Pittsburgh follows the path of least resistance. The nonprofit, based in the city's Homewood neighborhood, teaches masonry and carpentry skills to those with significant barriers to entering the workforce, such as having a criminal history or not having a driver's license, and places them in careers.

The nonprofit has been able to graduate more students — from 50 in 2020 to 91 in 2023 — with a target of 115 in 2024. The average starting wage for a graduate went from $18 an hour in 2021 to $20.53 in 2023, with the hopes of getting around $22 or $23 an hour



There persists a misconception that any tech industry in Pittsburgh — robotics, advanced manufacturing, life sciences — is going to turn into the steel industry. No industry is going to be the steel industry again, ever."

Sean Luther, president and CEO, InnovatePGH

this year with pay increases across the board and more graduates placed in union jobs, according to Executive Director Donta Green.

More unions have been interested in expanding their membership and creating "an environment for all," according to Mr. Green. They include the Laborers' Union, which "has gone above and beyond to make sure our students feel safe."

The organization's success relies on building relationships with the students and supporting their individual needs.

"We look at the person and look at what are the key barriers to that person being employable, and we provide resources and supports so that person can overcome those barriers," Mr. Green said. Those supports include life coaching, case management, drug and alcohol counseling, and anger management and math classes.

This also requires a nimble approach to new challenges as they pop up. Mental health concerns have surged since the pandemic, Mr. Green explained. The organization responded by hiring additional counselors.

HIDDEN WORKERS, VISIBLE BARRIERS

Hiring practices, such as automated screening systems, reject many qualified workers who could fill job vacancies, according to a 2021 report from Harvard Business School on hidden workers. Those estimated 27 million people in the U.S. include veterans, whose work experience often doesn't precisely match skill descriptions from employers, those without work histories and those who do not currently have jobs or degrees. Some of them can be found in rejection piles in Pittsburgh.

Over-skilled or highly restrictive job descriptions shut out relevant talent. Management positions at Giant Eagle supermarkets required "big-box retail experience," according to Ms. Andros, leaving veterans with relevant supply chain experience from the military out of consideration. Education requirements can be irrelevant and inflexible. Local universities require bachelor's degrees for many staff positions that rely on skills that could be learned outside of the classroom.

"Not having a good work history and pattern of employment is the most difficult thing to overcome, particularly with large employers," Ms. Flanagan said. These large employers, like UPMC, often come with benefits, higher pay and career paths.

But these employers often use automated screening systems to sort many applications, which are then sorted by busy hiring managers. For graduates of Community Kitchen, hiring success has been more personal.

"It's about developing relationships," said Ms. Flanagan. "We feel we have a better chance of getting folks jobs if we have a warm handoff and discussion with the hiring manager, the person who's doing the hiring."

Long-standing barriers to employment, such as transportation and access to child care and health care, persist.

"Transportation is always an issue," Ms. Flanagan said. "It doesn't go everywhere the jobs are. We look for jobs that are going to be on somebody's bus route or easy to transfer."

Finding affordable housing along those bus routes has become increasingly difficult. Housing instability has spiked across the country. In Pittsburgh, the average monthly housing cost is $953, and the share of lower-income apartment rentals in the market has fallen over the past decade, according to a 2024 report by the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE FOR ALL

"We're in a once-in-a-generation opportunity with the level of federal investment we're seeing," said Matt Barron, Sustainability program director at the Endowments. "I think efforts to apply these investments to removing the barriers [to employment] are the right moves, and that can lead to substantial success."

The federal government unleashed more than a trillion dollars of spending directed at building and repairing the nation's infrastructure through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 and in expanding clean energy jobs through the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.

Capitalizing on this stacked investment will require a strategy for how to use these dollars to create pathways for a broad swath of the region's workers.

"There persists a misconception that any tech industry in Pittsburgh — robotics, advanced manufacturing, life sciences — is going to turn into the steel industry," Mr. Luther said. "No industry is going to be the steel industry again, ever. We'd need 50 tech companies, 100 life science companies to [replicate the steel industry] in 1970." h



The Shell Polymers Monaca plant in Beaver County, in Pennsylvania, spews various gases and other emissions that have raised concerns in the community.

Mark Dixon

FAILURE TO BOOM

Rather than ease the economic loss that Pennsylvania's Beaver County experienced after the steel industry collapsed, a Shell ethane plant accumulated air quality violations instead of significant job growth. By Julia Fraser

Back in 2011, then–Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett said he wanted to make the state "the Texas of natural gas." This statement in his annual budget address added fuel to a bipartisan frenzy surrounding the economic promise of the natural gas industry.

In southwestern Pennsylvania, that frenzy centered on the construction of the Shell Polymers plant in Monaca, which would take ethane, a component of natural gas fracked in the region, and convert it into plastic pellets. The plant would serve as a catalyst of "downstream" industries related to fracking — industries that use the natural gas drilled in the area as feedstock for their products, such as plastic food packaging, medical supplies and household goods. The project received the largest corporate tax break in Pennsylvania history.

The boom never arrived. Instead, construction workers came and left, job growth stagnated, population declined and the facility racked up fines for violating air quality standards, blemishing its economic promise.

The boom never arrived. Instead, construction workers came and left, job growth stagnated, population declined and the facility racked up fines for violating air quality standards, blemishing its economic promise.

"We've called this a cautionary tale because there are opportunity costs associated with waiting over 10 years for one facility to deliver on an economic renaissance that's not even capable of coming," said Joanne Kilgour, executive director at Ohio River Valley Institute, a regional economic think tank launched by the Johnstown, Pennsylvania–based Community Foundation for the Alleghenies.

The Shell plant was supposed to usher in a petrochemical boom that included the construction of up to five additional ethane cracker plants and two underground storage facilities.

"The jobs that are going to be created are jobs that are going to be day-in, day-out jobs," then–Gov. Tom Wolf said in 2016. "[Workers are] not going to be able to come in, live here a couple months and go back home. So, I think if we get this right, these are going to be jobs that stay here."

A Shell spokesman in 2016 stated the plant would employ 6,000 workers during construction, leading to 600 permanent operational positions once the facility became functional. Gov. Wolf posited that the plant would inspire industries to sprout up in proximity to the cracker as justification for a $1.65 billion subsidy to Shell to build the plant — the largest in state history. Shell snatched it up.

A decade after it was announced, the plant launched in 2022. The Shell ethane cracker plant hasn't lifted Beaver County out of its doldrums. The additional plants, storage facilities and related industries never arrived with their "jobs that stay here."

Since 2012, Beaver County has lost population and lagged behind the state and nation in job growth, even with the temporary workers factored in, according to a June 2023 analysis from Ohio River Valley Institute. Outside factors, such as historical natural population loss, continue to play a role.

Beaver County was the hardest-hit county in the region when the steel industry collapsed; unemployment peaked at 28 percent in 1983. The exodus of young adults at that time and, as a result, the absence of their future families continue to have an effect on the natural population today. But the Shell plant didn't boost the county's economy and reverse historical trends.

Instead, within six months of beginning opertions, the plant reported at least 31 malfunctions to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection related to excess emissions, flaring or spills. The DEP issued a consent order in May 2023 and required Shell to pay $10 million in fines for air quality violations.

Using public resources for large investments in a single facility that is operated by multinational corporations, comes with environmental threats like air and water pollution, and requires 10 years to get up and running hasn't paid off for Beaver County. The county's gross domestic product fell 5.9 percent from 2012 to 2021 in contrast to the state's, which grew by 9.7 percent over this period, according to the Institute's report.

Alternative economic development strategies exist.

Prioritizing development around "environmental quality, transportation and green space to create quality of life in our communities will attract the business community," Ms. Kilgour said. "We see the need to integrate those strategies. To look simultaneously at how we invest in the livability of our communities as a strategy of economic development and not thinking these large single investments will lend themselves to that quality-of-life improvement because we know that this isn't generally the case."

These strategies align with federal funding around clean energy industries, such as solar and electric vehicles, as part of the Inflation Reduction Act. It's resulted in more than 271,000 jobs and $352 billion in investments in the U.S. since August 2022, according to an analysis by Climate Power, a Washington, D.C.–based climate-focused research and communications organization.

"It's an investment decision above all else when you look at industrial facilities," said Matt Mehalik, executive director of the Breathe Project, a coalition of residents, environmental advocates and others working to improve air quality in the Pittsburgh region. "When they're built, they're there for 50 or 100 years. It makes no sense to be investing in heavy industry. The smart money is on investing in facilities that depend on renewable power, electricity and low-carbon materials, not based on fossil fuels." h



Giulio Bonasera

THE KEYS TO SUCCESS

PITTSBURGH SCHOLAR HOUSE IS BOOSTING THE CHANCES FOR SINGLE PARENTS TO ACHIEVE THEIR ACADEMIC AND CAREER GOALS THROUGH A RANGE OF SERVICES, INCLUDING HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND FAMILY SUPPORTS, THAT ARE OPENING UP NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS. BY JOYCE GANNON

Joyce Gannon is a Pittsburgh-based freelance writer. Her last story for h ran in Issue 2, 2023, and examined how foundations and nonprofits in southwestern Pennsylvania are helping to ensure that the region takes advantage of opportunities through the Inflation Reduction Act.

Khaleena Yates was a senior at Clarion University, majoring in mass media, when she became pregnant at age 20. She dropped out of school, returned to live with her parents in her hometown of Pittsburgh, and eventually ended up working for Pittsburgh Public Schools — first in food service and, for the last three years, as a paraprofessional at Obama Early Childhood in the city's East Liberty neighborhood.

Now 35, the single mother of five children ages 2 to 14 is back in college. She expects to graduate in 2026 or 2027 with a degree in early childhood education and the chance to realize her dream: "to have my own classroom."

Ms. Yates never abandoned the idea of finishing college after leaving Clarion, which is about 80 miles north of Pittsburgh and now named PennWest Clarion. But with family and full-time work commitments, "I was focused on taking care of my children," she said.

She also had financial worries, including a long-standing debt at Clarion that prevented her from enrolling elsewhere. Last year, she learned about Pittsburgh Scholar House, an organization launched in 2022 that aims to improve the quality of life of single parents and their children by supporting the parents in earning post-secondary degrees and providing comprehensive services to their families, with the goal of disrupting cycles of poverty.

After Ms. Yates was accepted into the program, Pittsburgh Scholar House paid off her $1,700 balance at Clarion so that her transcripts could be transferred to Carlow University, a private university in Pittsburgh's Oakland neighborhood where she started classes last fall and is now a junior.

Ms. Yates is a member of the program's Parent Community Builder Committee, which plans events for scholar parents and their children. These activities include seasonal parties for children; child care during parents' group study sessions; and wellness sessions, such as yoga and meditation, that provide an opportunity for members to share their struggles of juggling family, work and school.

"I feel motivated," Ms. Yates said. "I am at a different place in my life … and know what I want to do versus when I was 18."



Joshua Franzos

“I FEEL **MOTIVATED.** I AM AT A DIFFERENT PLACE IN MY LIFE… AND KNOW WHAT I WANT TO DO VERSUS WHEN I WAS 18.”

Khaleena Yates, junior, Carlow University



Nate Smallwood

DEGREES OF **HELP**

Above, Pittsburgh Scholar House provides space for participants to devote time to family and to academic and career pursuits. Faith Otey, above, reads to her children, Zera Emanuel, 5, left, and Asa Emanuel, 3, at a Scholar House facility on Pittsburgh's North Side.

Below, left, single parents interested in Pittsburgh Scholar House meet at Emerald City Pittsburgh, a downtown co-working, hospitality and social space, to learn more about family, education and other support available through the program.

Below, right, individuals interested in enrolling in the Pittsburgh Scholar House's Wayfinders Program to achieve their goals are encouraged to become a part of the PSH Connect Community, which is an online forum that notifies members when application processes are opened and keeps them connected. The Wayfinders Program provides a range of academic, housing and job search support.



Ezra Easley II

> FOR ME, **THESE MOMS** ARE A FORGOTTEN PART OF OUR TALENT PIPELINE. THEY FACE ECONOMIC BARRIERS AND CAN'T PARTICIPATE IN OUR ECONOMY BECAUSE NO ONE FOCUSED ON THEM."
>
> **Diamonte Walker**, chief executive officer, Pittsburgh Scholar House



A Model to Follow

The nonprofit Pittsburgh Scholar House is an affiliate of Family Scholar House, an organization in Louisville, Kentucky, that offers housing to single parents in college, as well as services that include child care, tutoring, financial counseling and family therapy.

Family Scholar House has provided housing for about 1,000 student parents and 1,500 children under 18, said Kristie Adams, chief learning officer. Approximately 800 parents in the Louisville program have earned their degrees, and about 80 percent exit the program with stable jobs, according to Family Scholar House.

Among those success stories for the program and the process is Maria Wilson, 39, who credits Family Scholar House with providing her the "road map and instruction manual" she needed to finish college as a struggling single mother who had her first son when she was 14.

Ms. Wilson spent much of her childhood in foster care in Jacksonville, Florida, and said she "had to Google how to go to college" because she lacked a support network to guide her. At 19, she landed at Illinois Central College in East Peoria, Illinois, gravitated to unhealthy relationships and again became pregnant.

After transferring to the University of Louisville in 2011, Ms. Wilson learned about Family Scholar House from a friend at church and began attending its workshops to get help with financial literacy and stress and time management.

"I had mentors who really set me up for the real world," she said. "They gave me discipline and confidence." When she moved into the program's housing, she felt for the first time that she "had stability and a home."

Ms. Wilson worked full time to support her two sons while earning dual degrees in justice administration and communications, and later earned a law degree at Washington University, St. Louis. Now she's back in Louisville, where she works as affiliate program director for Family Scholar House. She has three more sons with her husband of 11 years, and they own their home.

"Family Scholar House broke the cycle of poverty in my life and my children's lives," said Ms. Wilson.

The Pittsburgh Way

Pittsburgh Scholar House currently has 60 participants enrolled in school, with five scheduled to graduate this year — three from Carlow and two from Point Park University, said Diamonte Walker, chief executive officer of the nonprofit. Other partner schools are Community College of Allegheny County, Duquesne University, LaRoche University, Robert Morris University, University of Pittsburgh and Western Governors University.

Pittsburgh Scholar House created the Wayfinders Program to guide single parents in achieving their education goals. The program's four components — Wayfinders Prep, Wayfinders Plus, Wayfinders Plus Housing and Ready2Prosper — offer a range of support. This includes connecting parents to colleges

most likely to help them achieve their goals and providing benefits and assistance designed to help them balance the demands of being both parents and students.

The program also is developing housing that is affordable and working to ensure that housing arrangements provide academic, familial and other supportive services on site. Wayfinders' Ready2Prosper component offers post-graduation services such as assistance with preparing for job interviews and drafting resumes.

In April, Pittsburgh Scholar House participant Saleena Aiken became the first college graduate since the Wayfinders Program was launched in the fall of 2022. Ms. Aiken earned a bachelor of arts in instructional studies from Point Park University.

For now, all Pittsburgh Scholar House participants are women, but there are plans to target single men in future outreach, Dr. Walker said. Higher education is at the core of the program, she explained, "because it has the power to transform" individuals and families living in or at risk for poverty.

A 2019 study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a Washington D.C.–based nonprofit, found that single mothers in Pennsylvania who have a bachelor's degree are 71 percent less likely to live in poverty, and will earn $608,566 more in their lifetimes, than those with only high school diplomas.

In the Pittsburgh Scholar House program, 90 percent of current participants earn less than 60 percent of the area median household income, which in 2022 was $60,187 in the city of Pittsburgh and $72,031 in Allegheny County, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Eighty percent of those in Pittsburgh Scholar House are women of color. Their average age is 32, and their children's average age is 9.

"For me, these moms are a forgotten part of our talent pipeline," Dr. Walker said. "They face economic barriers and can't participate in our economy because no one focused on them."

SUCCESS STORIES

"[The Scholar House financial assistance] was pivotal in me starting the journey back… I want [my sons] to know you finish what you start… I took them with me to campus when I got my student ID. They're proud."

Alana Griffin, psychology major, University of Pittsburgh

I knew I needed a degree to accomplish my goals in life. I tried it without a degree and failed."

Sacoyia Bey, early childhood education major, Carlow University

I had mentors who really set me up for the real world. They gave me discipline and confidence. …I had stability and a home."

Maria Wilson, affiliate program director, Family Scholar House, and graduate of the Scholar House program

Stable housing is key to helping them earn their degrees, she said.

Pittsburgh Scholar House is scheduled to have its first housing units in the city's East Liberty neighborhood available for occupancy this fall. The goal is to have 100-plus housing units available by 2028 for participants who meet requirements for low-income vouchers through the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh, Dr. Walker said.

A housing pilot in East Liberty includes five two-bedroom units at Naomi's Place, a community where residents can get assistance with financial management, counseling and parenting skills. Pittsburgh Scholar House participants need to be enrolled full time in school and maintain a 2.0 grade point average to be eligible to live there.

Also in development are housing sites Downtown, in the North Side's Manchester neighborhood and at Hazelwood Green, Dr. Walker said. Pittsburgh Scholar House is collaborating with developers to obtain low-income housing tax credits for the projects.

All will be in "high-opportunity ZIP codes" where residents will have access to grocery stores with fresh food, public transportation, child care and other "social determinants of health," she explained.

Although some of the communities do not have "full-service" grocery stores now, residents can or will be able to access stores if they live there, she added. For example, the Manchester and Downtown neighborhoods offer public transit to reach grocery stores,

Dr. Walker noted. And Hazelwood Green is a "logical location for future [Pittsburgh Scholar House] residential communities," she said, because it's being developed as a future hub for the high-tech economy and universities, and will eventually offer services and amenities for residents.

Developing the Local Strategy

The idea to bring the Scholar House model to Pittsburgh grew out of conversations starting in 2017 among the city's major philanthropies, including The Heinz Endowments, that wanted to help single parents earn college degrees and become self-sustaining, said Michelle Figlar, at the time vice president of Learning at the Endowments and now executive director of the Birmingham Foundation.

"We wanted a program laser-focused on helping single parents go to post-secondary schools … and wrap services around the kids," said Dr. Figlar, who sits on Pittsburgh Scholar House's board.

Sally McCrady, chairwoman and president of the PNC Foundation, told the other funders about Family Scholar House, which PNC — with significant operations in Louisville — has been supporting since 2006. Ms. McCrady helped to organize a couple of field trips to Louisville for officials from Pittsburgh foundations, universities and other organizations.

They came away "equally impressed with the model as I was," she said. "The multigenerational approach was unique and didn't already exist in Pittsburgh."

"I think what really sold us is the impact it has on children," said Endowments Learning Program Officer Kathleen Keating. "Kids are getting high-quality learning experiences and seeing their parent going to college. Parents aren't spending all their energy thinking of child care and housing."

Supports for the children of single-parent scholars include financial assistance for food, diapers, health care services and school supplies. The program also helps scholars find child care if needed.

The Endowments has made four grants totaling $925,000 to Pittsburgh Scholar House, beginning in 2021, Ms. Keating said.

PNC has provided $300,000, and the Henry L. Hillman Foundation made two grants totaling $550,000, according to their staff.

"We knew right away that it could thrive in Pittsburgh," said Lisa Johns, vice president of finance at the Henry L. Hillman Foundation. "It eliminates the binary choice between family and education."

Other funders include The Buhl Foundation, the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, Eden Hall Foundation, First National Bank, McAuley Ministries, Opportunity Fund, Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation, Segal Family Foundation, United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania and UPMC.

To get the program up and running in Pittsburgh, funders asked the Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education, a consortium of local colleges and universities, to serve as its fiscal sponsor until Pittsburgh Scholar House obtained independent nonprofit status last year.

"It's sort of the jewel in the crown, in my opinion, of what's possible," said Karina Chavez, executive director of the consortium and a board member of Pittsburgh Scholar House.

Though Pittsburgh is "nonprofit-services rich" with programs that offer child care, food security, affordable housing and other basic needs, she said, "We don't have the connective tissue to wrap around single-parent students in the way Pittsburgh Scholar House will do."

For Alana Griffin of McKeesport, a divorced mother of two sons who dropped out of Pitt at age 19 during her sophomore year after her mother died, money was a chronic obstacle to going back. She completed some online credits at Penn State University after her first child was born, but high credit card debts prevented her from obtaining more financial aid.

Pittsburgh Scholar House paid a $2,380 debt she owed to Pitt and provided $1,000 in tuition aid when she re-enrolled at the university.

"[The Scholar House financial assistance] was pivotal in me starting the journey back," said Ms. Griffin, who's majoring in psychology and works as a marketing consultant. Now in her early 40s, she told her sons she returned to college "because I want them to know you finish what you start … I took them with me to campus when I got my student ID. They're proud."

Sacoyia Bey, 42, of Squirrel Hill, a mother of two sons who works as a caregiver for the elderly, completed cosmetology courses after high school and later earned more than 100 credits from the Community College of Allegheny County, Laurel Business Institute in Uniontown, and University of Phoenix online courses.

But a divorce, custody battle, and series of family challenges kept her from finishing a degree, she said.

After she was accepted to Pittsburgh Scholar House, the program paid off her outstanding debt of nearly $1,000 at CCAC, gave her $1,000 for tuition at Carlow, and has helped connect her with food pantries and in-home services for her younger son, who is autistic.

Carlow accepted 90 of her college credits, and Ms. Bey expects to graduate in 2026 with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education. She's working on a business plan to open a child care center that could accommodate children with special needs.

"I knew I needed a degree to accomplish my goals in life," Ms. Bey said. "I tried it without a degree and failed."

Ms. Bey and one of her sons were featured in a promotion for Pittsburgh Scholar House last August during the Pittsburgh Foundation's #OneDay Critical Needs Alert. Donations generated for Pittsburgh Scholar House from that event totaled $8,000, said Kelly Uranker, vice president for the foundation's Center for Philanthropy.

Dr. Walker is confident Pittsburgh Scholar House will achieve its mission "to break the cycle of poverty" as more participants earn degrees and achieve financial stability.

"My goal in 10 years is that we don't have the daughters of the people in the program now in our program [then] because they won't need us," she said. h

here&there

ARTISTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

The 2024 Carol R. Brown Creative Achievement Award recipients are fiber artist Tina Williams and director, playwright and performer Adil Mansoor. Each is receiving $50,000 in unrestricted funds in recognition of their exemplary artistic achievements and the promise of their future creative work. Ms. Williams has been named as this year's Established Artist, and Mr. Mansoor has been selected as Emerging Artist. The two annual awards honor former Pittsburgh Cultural Trust president and CEO — and retired Endowments board member — Carol R. Brown and her tireless dedication to the region's creative scene. The awards are presented through a partnership between the Endowments and The Pittsburgh Foundation. Go to heinz.org to watch celebratory videos for each of this year's awardees.



Emmai Alaquiva



Joshua Franzos



SUPPORTING LOCAL YOUTH

Brandi Fisher, CEO of Rise Up 365, speaks at the J. Miles Youth Engagement Center, which Rise Up operates in Downtown Pittsburgh. The center, which celebrated its grand opening in February, provides resources and recreational activities to youth and young adults ages 15 to 25. It offers a wide range of support, including a free store with clothes and hygiene products, a recording studio, homework area and a social worker. The Heinz Endowments is among the funders.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

This year marks milestone anniversaries for three Heinz Endowments grantees. Two organizations — Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future, also known as PennFuture, and Riverlife — are celebrating 25 years of groundbreaking work. PennFuture is committed to legislative advocacy that protects the environment and supports Pennsylvania residents in addressing environmental issues through legal, policy, education and communications strategies. Riverlife has been working with community leaders and residents to enhance and redevelop Pittsburgh's riverfronts. For 10 years, BOOM Concepts has provided spaces and opportunities for artists and creative entrepreneurs representing marginalized communities to express themselves and promote their work.

25&10

RECOGNITION TIME

Spring was media awards season, and freelance writers for h magazine took home top honors. Cristina Rouvalis won first place in the education magazine writing category of the Press Club of Western Pennsylvania's 60th annual Golden Quills journalism competition for her 2023 h article "Voices Against Hate." The story examined how the Eradicate Hate Global Summit, established after the 2018 Tree of Life synagogue mass shooting in Pittsburgh, inspired a group of suburban Pittsburgh teens to create an anti-hate club at their high school and how the club, in turn, inspired summit organizers to add youth programming to their conference. Golden Quill awards recognize exceptional professional and student work in written, photographic, design, broadcast, audio, video and digital journalism in Western Pennsylvania and nearby counties in Ohio and West Virginia.





Rob Taylor's 2023 h magazine story "Path to the Top" earned first place for business, consumer and technology writing in the Pittsburgh Black Media Federation's 35th Robert L. Vann Media Awards Competition. The article explained how the Pittsburgh-based Executive Leadership Academy's program helps Black professionals gain executive corporate positions and has expanded into a national initiative. The awards contest honors the commitment of the late Robert L. Vann, legendary publisher of the Pittsburgh Courier, to journalism and to creating a voice for the Black community. Proceeds from the Vann Media Awards help fund college scholarships, professional development programs, international reporting fellowships and other initiatives.



WELCOMED GIFTS

Several Heinz Endowments grantees were among the more than 360 nonprofits to receive major contributions from billionaire philanthropist MacKenzie Scott as part of the $640 million she donated in March. The Hazelwood Initiative received $2 million from Ms. Scott in recognition of its work to provide affordable housing, revitalize the business district, achieve environmental goals and increase community engagement in the Pittsburgh neighborhood. Also receiving $2 million was the Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation, which promotes health and wellness among LGBTQ+ and HIV communities. Catapult Greater Pittsburgh, a nonprofit that assists and advocates for disenfranchised communities to help them achieve economic justice and an equitable quality of life, was awarded $1 million. Ms. Scott donated $1 million to the Education Law Center–PA, which has offices in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

"WE CAN BE" NEW PODCAST SEASON

Beginning this summer, The Heinz Endowments' "We Can Be" podcast, hosted by Endowments President Chris DeCardy, welcomes fascinating, personable and informed guests for the first half of its fifth season. Jennifer Flanagan, right, founder and executive director for Community Kitchen Pittsburgh, dives into how her organization's thoughtful workforce development programs use food as a foundation to change lives and strengthen communities, while climate justice organizer and Heinz Award for the Environment honoree Colette Pichon Battle shares her work to advance human rights for Black and Indigenous communities on the front line of the struggle against climate change. Other new episodes give voice to experts in the fields of maternal and infant health, art representation, food equity and environmental science. Use search term "Heinz We Can Be" to find new episodes on all major podcasting and music platforms.



Joshua Franzos



CIVIC LEADER RECOGNITION

Carmen Anderson, the Endowments' vice president of Equity & Learning, was awarded the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh's Civic Leader Award earlier this year. She was among four honorees recognized at the annual Ronald H. Brown Leadership Awards Gala. The event celebrates individuals, organizations or corporations in the Pittsburgh region who are deemed as leaders in improving the quality of life for African Americans. Mr. Brown was the first African American to serve as the U.S. secretary of commerce and as chairman of the Democratic National Committee.



NEW ADDITION



Earlier this year, Jasmin DeForrest was named managing director of The Heinz Endowments' Creativity Strategic Area. She previously served as senior director for Arts and Culture at the Detroit-based Gilbert Family Foundation, where she had worked for eight-and-a-half years.

At the Gilbert Family Foundation, Ms. DeForrest led a strategy that increased access to arts and culture programming, with a particular focus on equity, diversity and innovation. She also served as community sponsorships director for the Rocket Community Fund, the sister organization to the Gilbert Family Foundation, and special events director at The Parade Company, which presents and promotes America's Thanksgiving Parade in Detroit.

Endowments President Chris DeCardy said in a statement that Ms. DeForrest's skills and experience are an excellent fit for leading the role the Endowments seeks to play in addressing opportunities and challenges before the region's visual and performing arts community today.

A LEADERSHIP LOSS

Jared Cohon, Heinz Endowments board member and former president of Carnegie Mellon University, passed away on March 16. Dr. Cohon was an academic and civic leader known in Pittsburgh and beyond for his brilliance, humility and integrity.

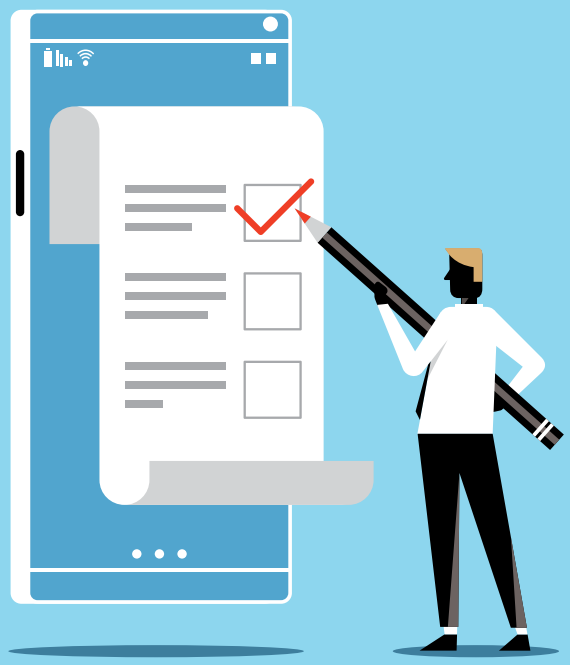
As president of Carnegie Mellon University, he initiated policy and program advances that led to major growth of the tech sector regionally and the expansion of the university's degree programs internationally. During his tenure, from 1997 to 2013, Carnegie Mellon grew from a single campus in the city's Oakland neighborhood to a university with campuses in Silicon Valley and Qatar and 16 degree programs in 14 countries. Carnegie Mellon changed its technology transfer policy to make it easier for faculty members to create companies. In addition, the university built the Robert Mehrabian Collaborative Innovation Center, where major tech companies such as Google and Apple housed offices until they expanded to other parts of the city.

> **"We will miss his thoughtful analyses and the selfless, generous spirit that benefited us all."**

Dr. Cohon also was an expert on environmental issues, particularly water resource systems and nuclear waste management. He was involved with national energy organizations and with local arts and civic groups, and he had a passion for innovation and leadership education.

In 2013, the year of his retirement, Dr. Cohon joined the Endowments board. His many contributions to the board included serving as chair of the crucial finance committee. In a statement following news of Dr. Cohon's passing, Endowments Chairman André Heinz said, "His focus on improving the lives of residents in the community and his wealth of knowledge on a range of issues were vital to the direction our board has taken on foundation programs and initiatives.

"We will miss his thoughtful analyses and the selfless, generous spirit that benefited us all."



Your input matters

Since 2001, The Heinz Endowments' magazine, h, has been telling stories about the work of the Endowments and its grantees and covering matters that are vital to the Pittsburgh region and beyond. We always strive to better serve our readers, which is why we are seeking your input concerning your readership practices and preferences. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey inside this current magazine edition or online using the QR code. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

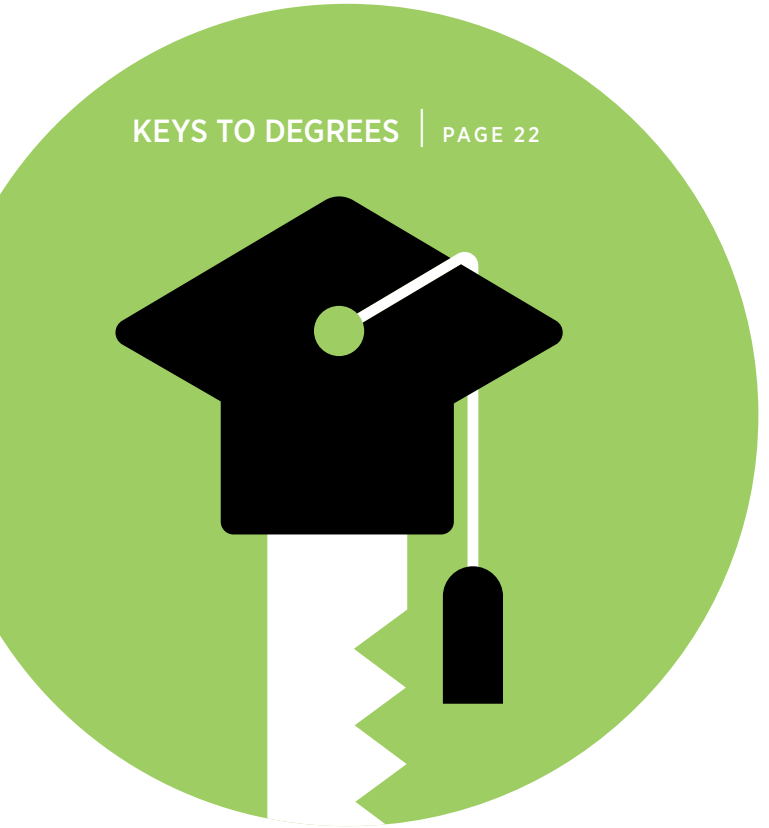
THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS

Howard Heinz Endowment
Vira I. Heinz Endowment
625 Liberty Avenue
30th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-3115

412.281.5777
www.heinz.org

facebook.com/theheinzendowments
@heinzendow
theheinzendowments
linkedin.com/company/the-heinz-endowments

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PITTSBURGH PA
PERMIT NO 57



This magazine was printed on Opus Dull, which has among the highest post-consumer waste content of any premium coated paper. Opus is third-party certified according to the chain-of-custody standards of FSC® and SFI.® The electricity used to make it comes from Green-e certified renewable energy.