



## THE MANY FACES OF UNIVERSITY CIRCLE



Warmer weather is finally here after a winter season that was far different than any in recent memory. While many of our traditions looked different this past year, I am proud that our team at UCI was able to continue to provide vital services, educational opportunities, and innovative programming for our community.

With the rise in temperatures, it is wonderful to see more people on the sidewalks, streets, and walking paths getting out to enjoy the Circle.

As you can see, this newsletter looks a bit different. With this edition of *Full Circle*, we are excited to highlight some of the individuals who live, work, learn, and play in University Circle. The people who make up our community, who we are lucky enough to work with and learn from every day, are what make our neighborhood truly special.

From the educators who engage young learners with new educational opportunities, to restaurant owners who continue to provide dine-in and takeout options for new and returning customers, to the artists who liven up spaces and bring smiles

to faces with their creativity and ingenuity, there are so many stories to share about the people who bring life to the places we know and love in University Circle each day.

We hope you can take a moment to sit back and flip through the pages of this newsletter to learn more about the many faces of University Circle.

Sincerely,

Chris Ronayne  
President



# University Circle Welcomes New Residents through Hopewell



*Transition Services is the most important addition to Hopewell's unique treatment model since the organization started. Recovery from mental illness is a journey, not a destination, and we are so very fortunate to have partner organizations in University Circle to help us provide even greater independence and opportunities for our residents.*

— Clara T. Rankin, Founder, Hopewell

Sitting on 300 verdant acres in Mesopotamia, Ohio is Hopewell – a therapeutic farm community dedicated to helping adults 18 and older who have been diagnosed with schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, major depression, and other forms of mental illness. Hopewell was founded in 1993 by Clara T. Rankin, who generously supports many organizations in University Circle, including University Circle Inc.

Hopewell's treatment model combines the tranquility of the farm's natural surroundings with work, clinical support, and an accepting community where residents learn to live independently and successfully with their mental illness. Once residents have completed their treatment program at the farm, they work with staff on a transition plan. Residents are often ready to go home at that point, but sometimes they are not. What had been missing was a happy medium between full independent living and full residential care. Enter University Circle.

The idea for a transition services program in University Circle came about through Jim Bennett, Hopewell's former Board Chair. Jim knew the combination of University Circle's abundance of apartments and vibrant arts and cultural scene could help former residents continue along the path towards independent living. Jim approached UCI President Chris Ronayne with the idea of transition apartments in University Circle, and Chris embraced the concept. The Hopewell University Circle Transition Apartments welcomed their first residents in 2020.

The University Circle Transition Apartments care model and location offer numerous benefits. Residents live on their own while still receiving the support services they need. Hopewell's Director of Outreach Christina Goodall, who oversees the day-to-day operations in University Circle, said, "This is supported independent living with access to our personnel 24/7. Having a Hopewell facility in University Circle allows for continuity of care with our clinicians and creates stability. Clients have a full-time case manager and

either see therapists who come out from Hopewell or take part in group therapy with those still at the farm through Zoom." Similar to the farm, Hopewell residents in University Circle are expected to complete daily tasks in addition to attending therapy.

In addition to the advantageous continuity of care, residents in the apartments can avail themselves of the rich arts and cultural offerings in the neighborhood. "The institutions of University Circle really enhance and augment our program," said David Shute, Executive Director of Hopewell.

All Hopewell residents in University Circle belong to Magnolia Clubhouse, an organization dedicated to helping those with mental illness. Magnolia Clubhouse's members become part of Hopewell's support network (and vice versa), and its programs supplement Hopewell's own. Another valued University Circle partner is The Music Settlement, who hosts music therapy sessions. Hopewell's residents and art therapists frequent The Cleveland Museum of Art, and ecotherapists lead groups through Cleveland Botanical Garden, Wade Lagoon, and the grounds of Lake View Cemetery. "We are very interested in partnering with other organizations in the neighborhood, and encourage them to reach out to us," David added.

Establishing the Transition Apartments program during a global pandemic was challenging, but Hopewell was successful and residents are finding themselves at home in University Circle. "Taco Tuesdays at Tacologist are a favorite," Christina said with a smile. "We plowed through [COVID-19]. We're looking forward to visiting places in University Circle we haven't been to yet." David agreed that the future is looking bright. "We're grateful to UCI and to Jim for their help, and we look forward to deepening and expanding our partnerships with University Circle and its institutions going forward."

**For more information on Hopewell and its services, visit [hopewellcommunity.org](http://hopewellcommunity.org).**

JOAN SOUTHGATE

## Creating a Space Today to Embrace Stories of the Past

Reflecting on her past with her eyes wide and a grin from ear to ear, Joan Southgate sits on a bench in the middle of the new exhibit at the Cozad-Bates House, the only pre-Civil War home remaining in University Circle. Joan is the founder of Restore Cleveland Hope, a group that celebrates the stories of Cleveland's Underground Railroad and provides educational programs for people of all ages. She is also known for her 519-mile walk across Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Canada, a journey she embarked upon in 2002 to highlight those who sought freedom through the path of the underground railroad.

Explaining the establishment of Restore Cleveland Hope ("Hope" was the underground railroad name for Cleveland) and her passion for sharing historical stories and events with others, Joan said, "I don't know how it all started, but I felt that I wanted to do something specific for all of the freedom seekers as well as the conductors. I wanted to do something personally to honor them."

The new Cozad-Bates House Interpretive Center, set to open to the public soon, highlights the area's history as a center of anti-slavery activism. Together with leading interpretive partner Western Reserve Historical Society and long-time community partner Restore Cleveland Hope, UCI established the Cozad-Bates House Community Advisory Committee, a group of community activists, educators, and historians, to guide development of the Interpretive Center's content and educational curriculum.

For Joan, the Center is a place to bring people together to awaken further understanding of the experiences of the freedom seekers and to potentially ignite conversations regarding current events and the continued need for unity and equality. "I'm so excited not only to know what could happen here for teaching, but also excited to have these kinds of exhibits for the community to see," Joan said. The programming "starts the conversation with the story of the underground railroad, brings it up-to-date and [creates a space] for people to share their own stories."

Joan is as enthusiastic about the outdoor areas of the house as she is about the indoors. The preserved front lawn of the Cozad-Bates House is now home to a new greenspace that highlights the people and places of the Underground Railroad with educational signage, bronze installations, plantings, seating, and accessible pathways, including the Joan Evelyn Southgate Walk. "The story the outside tells is just so amazing," she remarked, explaining that the building and grounds are a work of art, in their own way. "And I love that the walk along the side includes my full name because my middle name is my mother's name and also my first-born daughter's middle name," she said.

Joan is happy to see everything come together, the stories of the past embraced by learners of all ages in an interactive space in the heart of University Circle. "It is beyond my imagination!" Joan exclaimed. "More than I could have dreamed of or hoped for."



*The past meets the future as Joan Southgate and daughter Letitia Baldwin enjoy a moment together at the Cozad-Bates House, located at the Mayfield Road and East 115th Street intersection.*

# Beyond the Classroom – Working to Enrich the Lives of His Students

Dr. Lee Buddy Jr., principal of Wade Park School in Cleveland, is described by the Community Education team at UCI as a leader who goes above and beyond to encourage excellence, lead by example, and work closely with parents and community partners to help students thrive.

Being a leader and mentor to young students is a role that Lee came to appreciate early in life. Both of his parents were school principals, and his mother is currently an academic superintendent responsible for advising school principals in Naples, Florida. Learning from them, Lee said, “definitely shaped my career.”

Lee believes it is important to provide programming that gives students opportunities to learn outside the classroom. “Going back to about 2005 when I started teaching, I always had a student ambassador program,” Lee recalled. “I started teaching in Miami-Dade, Florida and then moved to Atlanta where I had programs to mentor and give the students new opportunities.”

It was important to Lee that the students of Wade Park benefit from the same experiences. “I now run the student ambassador program which focuses on academics, service, and empowerment,” he said. The ambassador program allows young learners to get out in the community to help others in need by volunteering at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and at local churches. The program also empowers students to write speeches focusing on their lived experiences and share them with other students.

UCI Director of Community Education Greg Deegan works closely with Lee on several of UCI’s programs that are offered at Wade Park, including the Early Learning Initiative



(ELI), Linking Education and Discovery (LEAD), and the new Circle Explorers camp. Utilizing these programs, Lee and UCI reach learners of all grade levels at the school.

“The team at UCI has been incredibly helpful. We’ve been able to take the students to The Cleveland Museum of Art and moCa, among other field trips. Our partnership has helped open the doors for teaching beyond our four walls and brought a wealth of resources that all of our students can use outside the classroom.”

Lee added, “Anything that the families in the community need, UCI finds a way to support it and make it happen for us.”

One of Lee’s greatest traits, Greg shared, is that he makes himself available. “He takes time to cultivate deep relationships with his students and staff and his connections with others are genuine.” While on spring break this year, for instance, several students who knew about Lee’s background in acrobatics reached out for help in preparing for cheerleader tryouts at John Hay High School. “They said, ‘We need to learn our back handspring. Can you teach it to us?’ So I met with them to try to teach them how to do a back handspring,” Lee said. “Anything they need, they aren’t afraid to ask me. If I can’t help them myself, I will look for someone to ask.”

Overall, Lee says of his work with students and the approach he takes to partnerships within the community, “We want to expose our students to as many enrichment opportunities as we can. We want to encourage our students to be successful.”

**To hear more from Dr. Lee Buddy, Jr. follow him on Twitter @PrincipalBuddy**



Wade Park student ambassadors participating in team building activities at Play CLE in 2019.



Wade Park student ambassadors performing for the end of the year student showcase in 2018.

## TRACIE VITANTONIO



"I love helping scholars develop a strong foundation of reading skills and a love of books!"

Tracie Vitantonio said of her role working with the students of Mary M. Bethune School. Tracie is the Reading Recovery and Primary ELA (English Language Arts) teacher at Bethune, a PK-8 school in Cleveland's Glenville neighborhood that partners with UCI's Community Education team.

The school began its relationship with UCI years ago through the Linking Education and Discovery (LEAD) program which provides free field trip opportunities. In recent years, Tracie and others at Bethune started thinking about ways to immerse more scholars in the University Circle community with a variety of arts and cultural experiences. Tracie said, "We knew the possibilities for the students were endless."

Tracie and her colleagues helped UCI develop Circle Scholars, the newest community education program, for

middle school students to utilize the incredible resources of University Circle. "We wanted these opportunities to extend beyond field trips," Tracie said of her collaboration with the UCI Community Education team and Kelli McCorvey, instruction coach at Bethune.

The shift to online programming this year due to COVID-19 was a challenge they met with great enthusiasm and exciting new ideas. With the help of community partners, the school's spring session, Tracie explained, "is focusing on entrepreneurship and elevator pitches." The students even had the unique opportunity to work with ideastream to create their own podcast featuring healthy ways kids can cope with stress.

UCI Director of Community Education Greg Deegan is grateful for Tracie's work. "Tracie is an incredible advocate for Circle Scholars as she serves as the glue of the program at Mary M. Bethune School," Greg said. "She has deep relationships with the students and keeps them connected to each other and to the program."

Tracie expressed her passion for her work with UCI, saying, "I love seeing the scholars discover the wonderful things their community has to offer. They are excited to have these experiences and look forward to each session."

## DANIELLE GIBSON

# Get to Know UCI's Newest Team Member



As UCI's newest team member, Summer Programming Coordinator Danielle Gibson will oversee the coordination of the new Circle Explorers Camp for students of UCI's focus schools and will support the new YAY! Saturdays family series. Danielle brings a wealth of experience in program creation and coordination as a veteran educator and community engagement specialist.

Danielle grew up in Shaker Heights and her interest in educational programming began at age 17 when she took the role of Summer Coordinator in the children's department of the Shaker Library. "I enjoyed being around the books and talking to the young students," she said.

Danielle studied history and education at Bennett College in North Carolina, and after several different opportunities working in the field of education, her

journey led her back to the Cleveland area to continue her career organizing programs for young learners. As Danielle explained, "I love working in programming for kids. I love their tenacity for life and love their joy."

Throughout the years, her experience working with students of differing backgrounds and various learning challenges was eye-opening for Danielle and informs how she currently "thinks about the world and understands education and the needs of kids in different demographics." Getting to know parents of the children she works with is important, she suggested, "to be able to be a support system to parents and get to know students and what they need."

Danielle is thrilled that her opportunity with UCI will let her get to know the University Circle community, and she is especially excited to learn

more about the museums. Her work with neighborhood schools and administrators is underway, and she is looking forward to the collaborations that will make the ideas for the programs come to life. "I'm super excited! I like relationship building and am big about community. This is a great position!"

Fun facts about Danielle: Her favorite musical artist is Marvin Gaye. "I could talk about Marvin Gaye for hours!" The three words she would use to describe herself: passionate, caring, and considerate. She is also a good listener and a team player, enthusiastically adding, "Teamwork makes the dream work!"

**To learn more about UCI's new summer programming, please visit [universitycircle.org/yourcommunity](https://www.universitycircle.org/yourcommunity).**

RON BLAND



## 4 Questions with a UCI Ambassador

### How long have you been a UCI Ambassador and what do you do as an Ambassador?

I have been an Ambassador for nine years. My daily duties include maintaining the cleanliness, safety, and allure of University Circle. I also do my best to stay informed on issues and events that affect the district. This allows me to give visitors the best information to maximize their experience while they are here.

### What do you like most about being in University Circle?

What I like most is the people. I am constantly meeting the most interesting people, with long attachments to the area. I learn so much about the history of University Circle from them.

### What is one of the most memorable days on the job?

One story that sticks out to me was when a married couple from the Ural Mountains in Russia stopped by the Visitor Center. They wanted to know the usual information; where to go, what to eat. We asked them what brought them to Cleveland. They told us that they read an advertisement in a Russian newspaper. It said that they could have a great time in Cleveland for less money than going to San Francisco or New York. It amused me that Cleveland was so international now, a world class city.

### What do you like to do in your spare time?

When spending time with my family, we like to play board games, watch TV shows, and prepare meals together.

MARK BALOGH

## The Coffee House at University Circle



Mark took over the Coffee House in 1997, and in 2011 expanded menu offerings adding fresh food and baked goods made daily in-house. He explained, "At the beginning, there were very few food and beverage offerings, so my goal was to raise the bar in regard to our product offerings, service, and the atmosphere." He renovated the basement of the house, which is now a full kitchen. The original goal of cultivating excellent product offerings, service, and atmosphere has persisted ten years later, and the House has cultivated a group of loyal clientele and employees. In fact, three members of the team have been employed at The Coffee House for over ten years.

For many, The Coffee House has become much more than a place to study or grab a cup of coffee. The House regularly hosts meetings, religious groups, and acts as a common space for political groups to organize. Mark recalls how The Coffee House has become a common stop for many around the Circle saying, "I have seen kids start Suzuki at The Music Settlement, attend the Cleveland Institute of Music, and then eventually bring in their own little ones." The Coffee House has even been the location for many marriage proposals.

Like many establishments, The Coffee House experienced a significant disruption due to COVID-19 with a 50-75% decline in business. Mark said, "It has been sad, but a lot of our regular clientele aren't even on campus because they are working from home."

When asked about the future of The Coffee House, Mark said he would like to "maintain what we're doing and have always done." While he is continuing to expand menu options and partnerships, Mark is excited to welcome back students, regulars, and visitors alike.

The Coffee House at University Circle is as charming as the neighborhood surrounding it. The business, located at 11300 Juniper Road near the Cleveland Institute of Music, is nestled in a historic home built in 1907. Owner Mark Balogh attributes the location and architecture of the house to its success, citing space for study rooms and an outdoor patio which draw in customers.

The physical location of the house is not the only unique aspect of the business. The Coffee House prides itself on efficient service and individualized relationships with the customers. "If I see you walking down the street, I can prepare your usual before you even get to the counter," Mark shared. "People always appreciate that. We have always been service oriented." Interacting with customers is one of Mark's favorite things about University Circle and he enjoys the intellectual atmosphere. "Between the doctors, the professors, the curators, and the students - I've really gotten a kick out of that."

# Cleveland Museum of Natural History



*The Perkins Wildlife Center at Cleveland Museum of Natural History*

JEFF SCHRADER



**What is your role at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and how long have you worked there?**

My role at the Museum is Exhibit Designer and I have been here since November 2019.

**Please share a little bit about your role.**

Working with our scientists, writers, and the rest of the exhibits department, I create the visual stories we display in the Museum. This includes temporary and permanent displays, wayfinding and signage, parts of traveling exhibits, and more. When developing exhibits, I get to incorporate a variety of content: 2D graphics, 3D items, videos, interactives, sounds, and lighting

as needed. It's great to concept an exhibit from scratch, like I did with our new Current Science gallery, or work with a traveling exhibition like our Wildlife Rescue exhibit, which includes enclosures for many wild animals. I love taking all the details and information and turning it into a visually engaging display that everyone can enjoy and learn from.

**Do you ever interact with the kids who visit the museum and is there a memorable story you can share about a time when you did so?**

I did spend some time volunteering on the Museum floors when we first reopened to safely welcome visitors back, and it was great to hear their reactions to the Museum overall and specific exhibits. Just hearing a grandmother call out to her grandson, "Hey, you've got to come see this," or a visitor simply say, "This place is so cool," was wonderful.

**What do you like most about working in University Circle?**

I like the variety of museums all in one area that are walkable with open spaces. I love to work in an urban setting that has all this grass and trees—it has more of a natural feel than just concrete and buildings.

RENATA BROWN



**What is your position at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and how long have you worked there?**

I'm the Director of School and Family Learning, and I started in September 2019. I have a great team of educators who work directly with thousands of students every year.

**What is something you find special or unique about the museum?**

The Museum is celebrating its centennial this year, and it's been great to learn more about its history. Though I'm a native Clevelander, I didn't know the Museum once ran the Aquarium, the Zoo, the Parks, and the Arboretum. The founders of the Museum were very interested that a city of such stature should have a natural history museum, which then later assisted with starting or running many of the other amazing Cleveland institutions.

**What do you like most about working at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History?**

I'm so proud to work at such a venerable Cleveland institution, and to work with all of my esteemed coworkers who are actively doing research and teaching students and teachers.

# Q&A with Abington Arms Apartments Staff Members

*Abington Arms is a housing facility for older adults and people with disabilities. The apartment building, located at 11501 Mayfield Road, is owned by University Circle Inc. and the Holy Rosary Church and managed by The Finch Group.*

MARY L. STOUDENMIRE



## **What is your current role?**

I am the Resident Service Coordinator for Abington Arms Apartments. The primary function of service coordinators is to ensure the residents in independent-living senior housing are successfully living independently. We assist with coordinating home and community-based services and health and wellness programs.

## **What is unique about being in the University Circle community?**

We have volunteers from Case Western Reserve University. They enjoy volunteering in the building and the residents enjoy having them. Also, having easier access to medical care for the residents, especially with transportation for our senior and disabled folks being a serious issue. Just before the pandemic hit, the University Circle Police Department had “Cocoa with a Cop” at Abington Arms and we were working on plans for other events. There is a spirit of working to make the Circle a more age-friendly and intergenerational place to be, which will benefit everyone.

## **What do you enjoy or find fulfilling about your role?**

What I enjoy most is seeing the residents engaged in the community activities. I would get a real kick out of seeing small groups of them walking to WOW! Wade Oval Wednesdays or planning and working on their costumes for Parade the Circle. Also seeing them working with our art therapist, Laura Cooperman, creating amazing works of art and participating with the Cleveland Institute of Art students.

## **What would you like the community to know about you and your role?**

I would say that for any service coordinator, it takes teamwork, honesty, passion, a real desire to serve, knowing when to help, knowing when to let the person figure it out, making and keeping good community partnerships, financing, imagination when there is no financing, perseverance, boldness, continuing education, prayer, and a hearty sense of humor to make it all work.

SUSAN PERSING



## **What is your current role?**

I am the Property Manager at Abington Arms Apartments and have been here for 28 years.

## **What is unique about being in the University Circle community?**

What makes University Circle unique is the diversity of people and cultures, eating establishments, and cultural venues and opportunities. There is something for everyone. Not only do I work in University Circle, I live here as well and love it! It is a safe and secure community in which to live, work, and explore. What I like most about University Circle is the small town feeling while at the same time having the advantages of a larger city close by.

## **What do you enjoy or find fulfilling about your role?**

I could go on forever answering this question! The short answer is that I love the people we serve and love working with them. I would rather do for someone else instead of doing for myself. I encounter many different types of people throughout the day, and almost each one has a different problem or situation that they are looking for the answers. I certainly do not have all of those answers, but I can almost always direct them in the right direction so that they can obtain the proper answers. Knowing that when I close the office door at the end of the day, I have helped at least one person is so very gratifying and heartwarming.

## **What would you like the community to know about you and your role?**

I am a people person and love being around people. I immediately fit right into this apartment community because of the 155+ residents it serves. We are a “family” at Abington Arms, not only with the residents, but with the staff and upper management. All of these components are what make my job so wonderful: great building, residents, staff, and management! I am very fortunate and blessed.



*Images of Abington Arms residents and their art projects.*

## LAURA COOPERMAN



### **What is your current role?**

I am a Resident Artist at Abington Arms. I run the art room, a separate space in the building with a kiln for ceramics, sewing machine, fabric, and paint, that is free and accessible to all Abington residents. Prior to the pandemic, residents could come with ideas of what they wanted to make and I would guide them or help them discover something they were interested in. We had larger group workshops once a month like printmaking or tie-dyeing. We also had ongoing projects like knitting hats for preemies at Rainbow or stitching quilts for children at Providence House.

### **What led you to your current role?**

I'm originally from Cleveland Heights and went to college at the Maryland Institute College of Art. I spent time at the New York Studio Program in New York, NY and while there my artwork transitioned from primarily 2D paintings of landscapes and architecture to 3D paper cut installations. After college I received a grant to travel to China to study the effects of the 2008 Olympics on the urban environment in Beijing. I had a studio there for about a year. Upon my return I won the Creative Workforce Fellowship and shortly after was commissioned by the City of Cleveland and LAND studio to create the entry portal to the new 3rd District Police Station.

### **What do you enjoy or find fulfilling about your role?**

I think the most fulfilling thing about my role at Abington is seeing someone really light up and become engaged. Maybe it is watching someone work with clay for the first time and realize they made a sculpture. They glow. A resident, new to our building after having a stroke and losing the ability to walk and use her right arm, got up the courage to come to the art room. In a few months she was sewing quilts and dolls on the sewing machine to donate to children at Providence House, a crisis nursery in Cleveland. From there on out she was a fixture of the art room. Many people in the building face issues that make it easy for them to turn inward. When you see someone turn outward, connect with others, and get excited to share what they are working on it is really wonderful.

# Lift Up Your Voice

With school activities cancelled and increased time spent confined indoors due to the pandemic, UCI invited young artists to submit to Lift Up Your Voice, an initiative that allowed local students to express themselves through art, providing an outlet to share original work with the community.

One artist, Neil Stasek, submitted two pieces, the first of which was a self-titled portrait. Neil began work on his portrait for a class and continued to work on it during the stay-at-home period of the pandemic. "It was one of his more challenging pieces," his mother Kris explained. Neil is a teenager with autism who also has an ear that did not fully develop, which he wanted to highlight in his portrait. "He is proud of his art, and how it truly reflects who he is." Neil's work is important because by sharing it with others, she said, "He wants to inspire others."

Neil's second piece, a photograph called "Someday I'll Play at the Arcade," provides an image of one his favorite places that he has missed during the pandemic. The photograph, taken at the arcade at Scene 75 Entertainment Center in Brunswick, captures how "unhappy, sad, and gloomy" he felt during that point of the pandemic. Though there is sorrow, there is also hope as Neil shared that he looks forward to "going to the arcade with people again."

A student in the Cleveland Institute of Art's Young Artist's Program, Neil has enjoyed opportunities to work with and learn from local artists like Brian Jones, known for his art gallery in Little Italy. Neil even finds motivation and inspiration by looking at the works of the other student participants of Lift Up Your Voice. Hoping to provide the same inspiration that he receives from viewing paintings and photographs of his peers, Neil was excited to submit his artwork to Lift Up Your Voice because it provides a place for young people to express themselves without competition.

Neil is currently enjoying his time working virtually with various artists to further his techniques and is in the process of creating his own website to share his work. "Art has been an emotional, communicative, creative outlet for Neil," his mother said. "During this pandemic, it has not replaced his need to be social. It has helped, though."

***Below are a few of the pieces submitted to Lift Up Your Voice. All submissions can be viewed online at [universitycircle.org/lift-up-your-voice](https://universitycircle.org/lift-up-your-voice).***



*"Neil" - Neil, Age 18*



*"Someday I'll Play at the Arcade" - Neil, Age 18*



*"Enlightenment" - Layla, Age 17*



*"Flower Child" - Jessica, Age 16*



*"Upside Down World" - Dimpal, Age 17*



*"The Eye" - Jalen, Age 16*

## FADY CHAMOUN



Fady Chamoun is a name synonymous with the best Middle Eastern food offerings in Cleveland. Well known for Aladdin's Eatery and local restaurants like Taza and Boaz Cafe, Fady recently opened the fourth Sittoo's Pita and Salads at the corner of Euclid Avenue and Ford Road in University Circle.

Sittoo's, described by Fady as traditional Lebanese food that is healthy and affordable, is a real crowd pleaser, he said, because of the "price point and quality. It is very attractive to everybody. Students, residents, you name it. Everyone is coming to eat our food!"

When talking about his affinity for the neighborhood, Fady took a moment to reminisce about his past. "Years ago, I had a Little Caesars right here [in University Circle]. When I saw this space was available, I jumped on it. I couldn't wait!"

"We want to be a part of the neighborhood. We love the area!" Fady said about Sittoo's, adding, "Come to Sittoo's and see what we do!"



Images courtesy of Seasoned Brands.

## THREE NEW CIVIC TRUSTEES

### JILL K. DIETRICH



Jill Dietrich is an Indiana native who earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Psychology from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, and her Juris Doctorate

and Master of Business Administration from Case Western Reserve University. She became the Executive Director/CEO of VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System in 2019. She previously served as Director/CEO for the Dayton VA Medical Center. In addition to overseeing healthcare operations, she provided strategic oversight as a main partner in the Buckeye Healthcare Consortium with Department of Defense's Wright Patterson Air Force Base. She also served on the boards for the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Dayton Daily News' Path Forward project.

### DIANA HILDEBRAND



Diana Hildebrand, a native of Cincinnati, launched DevahD Cycling in 2019. The company is a cycling consulting, education, and logistic company with a mission to "Change

Lives Two Wheels at a Time" by connecting communities to cycling, and changing the perspective of transportation, health, and wellness while helping communities knock down socioeconomic barriers. In addition to leading rides throughout Greater Cleveland and beyond, you will find Diana creating community partnerships, advocating for safer cycling infrastructure for everyone while fighting for inclusion and equality. Diana is looking forward to working with University Circle Inc. and continuing the organization's efforts to build a community experience that connects all people.

### WILLIAM KRIEGER



William "Bill" Krieger grew up on the east side of Cleveland and graduated from University School. He attended the University of Pittsburgh and graduated in 2011 with a B.A.

in History having minored in Economics and German. He went on to Pitt's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and in 2013 earned a Master of Public and International Affairs with a focus in Security and Intelligence Studies. Bill met his future wife, Melissa, during his time at the University of Pittsburgh. After working at the National Cyber Forensics and Training Alliance in Pittsburgh for two years, Bill joined the Federal Bureau of Investigation as an Intelligence Analyst and was assigned to the Field Intelligence Group in the Cleveland Field Office.



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If you have questions or comments regarding this newsletter, please contact Director of Institutional Advancement Liz Lewis at [liz.lewis@universitycircle.org](mailto:liz.lewis@universitycircle.org)

SUSAN BURKE

## An “Accidental Engineer” Becomes a University Circle (and Greater Cleveland) Volunteer

Stop in the University Circle Visitor and Circle Living Center on a Wednesday and you will find Susan Burke behind the front desk helping guests and listening to classical music. Susan is University Circle Inc.'s longest-tenured volunteer – five years in April 2021! – and her background is as unique as the neighborhood itself.

“I was an accidental engineer,” said Susan, who first studied theater and drama. She later went back to school, earned a degree in mechanical engineering, and worked in the manufacturing industry. After retiring, she sought out volunteer opportunities with organizations that looked fun and piqued her interests.

“The Cleveland Orchestra came first,” Susan recalled. “I heard a radio commercial that they were looking for volunteer ushers. To be able to hear 18 Orchestra concerts each year in exchange for a few hours on my feet sounded like a wonderful opportunity.” In addition to helping guests find their seats before concerts, Susan also leads tours of Severance Hall. One of her favorite things to show off is a pair of glasses composer Antonin Dvořák left behind when he visited Cleveland.



Susan also volunteers at the Great Lakes Science Center (GLSC). “My uncle worked on lake freighters, and my family got to take trips on them when I was young. I saw the *William G. Mather* [docked outside the GLSC] and thought, ‘neat!’” she exclaimed. Rounding out Susan’s volunteer portfolio is her five years with UCI at the Visitor Center where she enjoys meeting new people and sharing her love of University Circle.

“People may think there’s nothing but factories in Cleveland, but it’s museum central! The neighborhood is beautiful and walkable,” said Susan. When her family visits the area, University Circle never fails to impress. “My little brother moved to New York City and the rest of the country sort of faded into the distance,” she recalled. “He found University Circle during a visit and rhapsodized about it.” Another brother came to visit and they drove through the Cleveland Cultural Gardens on their way to University Circle. “We had to stop the car so he could get out and look,” Susan said with a chuckle.

UCI is grateful to Susan for sharing her love of University Circle with visitors to the neighborhood. Next time you’re in University Circle, stop in the Visitor Center, located at 11330 Euclid Avenue, and say hello!