

BOYS TO MEN

A Heinz Endowments' task force and its community partners have launched a bold strategy to provide African American boys and men in the Pittsburgh region with new opportunities and brighter futures.



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The Magazine of The Heinz Endowments

inside

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

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

That mission is to help our region thrive as a whole community—economically, ecologically, educationally and culturally—while advancing the state of knowledge and practice in

the fields in which we work. Our fields of emphasis include philanthropy in general and the disciplines represented by our five grant-making programs: Arts & Culture; Children, Youth & Families; Education; Environment; and Innovation Economy.

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 grant-making programs. As an expression of that commitment, this publication is intended to share information about significant lessons and insights we are deriving from our work.

Editorial Team Linda Bannon, Linda Braund, Donna Evans, Carmen Lee, Douglas Root, Robert Vagt. Design: Landesberg Design

About the cover The Endowments-supported African American Male Mentoring Initiative developed by the Negro Educational Emergency Drive, or NEED, brings together students like 17-year-old Oliver High School seniors DeAndre Yarbrough, left, and Ed Mathis, center, for activities and discussions that spark life-improving interests and life-changing ambitions.

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message

By *Teresa Heinz*
Chairman, *The Heinz Endowments*

In a Dec. 24 column in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that is reprinted here, Heinz Endowments Chairman Teresa Heinz announced that she was being treated for breast cancer. Since then, she has spoken out in several national media appearances about her continuing treatment, why women must continue to get mammograms, and why women, especially, need to care about the broader issue of environmental toxins and their effects on human health. She will continue to lead discussion on these issues at this year's Women's Health & the Environment conference, April 21 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.



Join women—and the men who care about the women in their lives—from around the region and beyond for **Women's Health & the Environment: New Science, New Solutions**, a free conference sponsored by Teresa Heinz, The Heinz Endowments and Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC, Wednesday, April 21, 2010, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.

To learn more or for conference registration, visit www.womenshealthpittsburgh.org.

Under ordinary circumstances, the revised mammogram guidelines recommended last month by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force would have struck me as misguided. But these were not ordinary circumstances, at least not for me. Just before the guidelines were released, I had been diagnosed with breast cancer.

It was one of those strange accidents of timing that sometimes happen in life. I know some people dismiss these instances as meaningless coincidence. But as someone who believes God has a special if mysterious purpose for each of us in this world, I have always paid special attention to them.

AN INVITATION

The conference features nationally renowned scientists, environmentalists and activists who will share the newest science examining the possible link between the environment and our health. Our morning speakers will share scientific data to support that toxins affect our health. Afternoon speakers will share solutions that will enlighten us about healthy choices we can make in our lifestyle to create a healthier environment for us and our families.

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Will Allen, Founder and CEO, Growing Power

Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA, U.S. Surgeon General

Julia Brody, PhD, Executive Director, Silent Spring Institute

Ken Cook, President, Environmental Working Group

Leslie Davis, President, Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC

Alan Greene, MD, Author, "Feeding Baby Green" and "Raising Baby Green"; Founder of drgreene.com

Teresa Heinz, Chairman, The Heinz Endowments

Patricia Hunt, PhD, Edward R. Meyer Distinguished Professor in Life and Environmental Science, School of Molecular Biosciences, Washington State University

Lisa Jackson, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency

Pete Myers, Founder, CEO and Chief Scientist of Environmental Health Sciences

Jeanne Rizzo, RN, President and CEO, Breast Cancer Fund

Joel Schwartz, PhD, Professor of Environmental Epidemiology, Harvard School of Public Health

Rick Smith, Executive Director, Environmental Defence Canada, and **Bruce Lourie**, President, Ivey Foundation, Authors, "Slow Death by Rubber Duck: The Secret Danger of Everyday Things"

Beverly Wright, PhD, Director, Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, Dillard University



They can instruct, inspire and guide us, or sometimes just invite us to reflect for a moment longer than we otherwise might do. It is healthy to be reminded occasionally that we are not so much in charge as we would like to believe, and then to consider what that means in how we are living our lives.

In this case, it has motivated me to be public about something I had kept private for two months, to share something deeply personal in the hope of helping others.

So here are the facts as I know them now.

I was diagnosed and treated for stage one cancer (two different types) in both breasts. The cancer was detected at an early stage thanks to a mammogram and the work of a

The mantra of prevention and early detection has guided me since my childhood. My father was a doctor, and from watching him question and listen to his patients, and from watching him teach them to prevent further disease, I learned how important it is for us to understand the connection between our health and the world around us.

remarkable physician who insisted on investigating beyond what the mammogram could show. I have had two operations and my prognosis for a full recovery is good.

Cancer patients sometimes speak of their diagnosis as a gift and now I understand why. The stress of illness can be daunting—on the way to my second surgery I even managed to fall down some steep stairs, hit my head hard enough on the floor to get a concussion and broke my heel. I have learned that I am far from alone in having this sort of “when it rains, it pours” story to share.

But my illness also reminded me to slow down, cherish family and friends, and deepen my sense of life as a gift to be

unwrapped each day with newfound joy and hope. And it appears I am among those blessed to go on enjoying that gift—because I have wonderful health care and amazing doctors, yes, but also because of routine screening.

The mantra of prevention and early detection has guided me since my childhood. My father was a doctor, and from watching him question and listen to his patients, and from watching him teach them to prevent further disease, I learned how important it is for us to understand the connection between our health and the world around us.

The notion that preventing injury and illness is far better and safer than having to treat them guided me years later to become an advocate for understanding the relationship between women’s health, pediatric health and the environment. It has been part of my personal mission to persuade everyone from policymakers to individual women to study and to try to remove causes of disease and catch illness in its earliest stages.

This is not always comfortable or convenient. As any woman can attest, mammograms can be nerve-racking. And as the government’s task force pointed out, they can produce misleading results and anxiety. But I’ve been personally reminded that they also can produce something else: a lifesaving early diagnosis.

The members of the task force were predisposed to choose numbers over people and their recommendations forgot that women do not need more excuses not to get a mammogram at regular intervals, as determined by their doctors. Our busy lives are full of those. What we need are more reasons to keep those appointments, more support of the value of prevention and refinement of diagnostic procedures, and more choices.

I am not a doctor or medical expert, but it is neither the doctors nor the experts to whom I wish to speak here. It is, rather, to all the women who have been left confused by this latest report, and to all those who love them.

Like many of you, I have seen friends die because their cancers were detected too late. And like many of you, I suspect, I have just been given my own personal tutorial in the value of early detection.

My message is simple: That mammogram appointment? Keep it. And make your appointment for next year while you’re at it. *h*

FAMILY



BONDS

Too many released inmates see family and neighborhood as way stations on the round-trip back to jail. But new programs and services are working to turn home into the permanent refuge from recidivism. by Jeffery Fraser

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Glenn Davis had done time before, more than enough to know how tough it is to restart life on the outside with a criminal record, a weakness for drugs and alcohol, and other baggage from a lifestyle that led to trouble more often than not. His mood was anything but celebratory as the end of a four-month stint in the Allegheny County Jail for simple assault crept closer last year. “I was so sick, my stomach and that. I had all kinds of anxiety and fear.” • Previous incarcerations had failed to keep him from getting locked up again, including 20 months in state prison for driving under the influence. “I once did 15½ months in county,” says the 44-year-old Davis. “I was so happy to go home, I got out and was arrested 12 days later because I went and got drunk and did something else stupid.” • Each arrest not only deepened his troubles, but affected those on the outside he cared for—none more than his son, Christian, 24, who has spent much of his life dealing with mental illness. Two months following Davis’ arrest last year, his son got into a fight, left his group home and was hospitalized. It was a familiar pattern. “When I’d go to jail, he’d fall apart.” • All of that weighed on Davis as he waited for his release date. “I was afraid of making the same mistakes I’d made in the past. It’s the fear of the unknown, all the changes. It’s not like you don’t want to leave, but it’s like jail’s safe because I don’t got as many worries.”

Glenn Davis, left, knows the toll his repeated jail time has taken on his family, particularly his son, Christian, right. That’s why he appreciates the mentoring and other support he receives through Allegheny County Jail Collaborative programs that have kept him focused and productive since his release.

Repeat offenders know how to do time. It's holding down a job, knowing how to keep a family and living up to other routine responsibilities of daily life on the outside that usually trip them up. Without any help getting their lives back in order, one-third of all inmates released from the Allegheny County Jail return within a year.

Ramon Rustin knows them well. He's spent 25 years as a correctional officer, supervisor and, currently, as the county jail warden. "Of all the guys I've known, very few want a criminal career. Most want to be everyday tax-paying citizens. But it's hard. They don't have a lot of experience doing that. And jail, unfortunately, becomes their refuge. When things start to fall apart in life on the outside, they know they have the jail to fall back on. It's terrible to think that way. But that's something I think we can change."

Research and anecdotal evidence suggest that ongoing reform of the county jail is making progress in doing just that. Davis and others like him are getting help through a comprehensive strategy for reducing recidivism and strengthening the bond between inmates and their families, the centerpiece of the jail's inmate rehabilitation efforts. Studies show that strong family relationships are important to keeping ex-offenders from returning to jail and to improving the outcomes of their children, whose hardships often go unnoticed.

Guiding reform is the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative, which includes all of the players critical to its success, such as the courts, probation, mental health and child welfare. Rustin chairs the collaborative; other county leaders—Department of Human Services Director Marc Cherna, Health Department Director Dr. Bruce Dixon and Common Pleas Court President Judge Donna Jo McDaniel—serve as co-chairs.

And offering their support to this work are individuals, churches, community organizations and foundations that are

enthusiastically investing in a variety of programs at the jail to help ensure that they have an impact in stabilizing the lives of ex-offenders.

"At the moment, we have a unique window," says Carmen Anderson, senior program officer with The Heinz Endowments' Children, Youth & Families Program. "If we can't make a change with this kind of leadership aligned, then it's not likely to happen."

Among the recent additions to the strategy is the Center for Family Support being created to work with inmates, their children and families on building and sustaining healthy relationships. More than \$1 million is being invested in the center, which is scheduled to open as a pilot program this year with 10 inmates and their families. The goal is to reach as many as 180 inmates and families with services inside the jail and in the community following the inmate's release. It is being supported by federal and county funds and local foundations, including the Endowments, which contributed a \$200,000 two-year grant in 2008.

Of particular concern to the Endowments are the children of incarcerated parents, who have traditionally been an overlooked population, says Anderson. On any given day, an estimated 7,000 children have a parent in the county jail, according to a report by Pittsburgh Child Guidance Foundation.

"Their needs are often invisible," says Anderson. "These children usually end up in the care of the extended family, which often doesn't have the resources to fully care for them."

As part of an earlier effort to ease the emotional strain these children face when visiting an incarcerated parent, the Endowments contributed \$200,000 to establish a child-friendly Family Activity Center that opened in the jail lobby in 2007. The foundation was among 100 organizations and individuals that supported the project. The center operates on an annual



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Ramon Rustin, warden, Allegheny County Jail

ON ANY GIVEN DAY,

the number of children who have a parent in the Allegheny County Jail:

7000

Percentage of female and male inmates who have at least

one child under the age of 15:

53 (MALE) 61 (FEMALE)

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO WERE LIVING

WITH THEIR CHILD AT THE TIME OF THEIR

ARREST: 36

budget of about \$80,000. Today, an estimated 3,000 children use the Family Activity Center, which includes a craft area, a video nook, a book corner, a slide, healthy snacks and mock visiting booths to help children prepare for what they find when they are taken upstairs to meet their jailed parent.

While children with incarcerated parents remain an underserved population, there are signs that the situation is changing. In some parts of the country, initiatives to address their needs have emerged. One of the most effective, the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership, is working to improve family support within jails and prisons, and has published a bill of rights for this poorly understood population of children. In Pennsylvania, a resolution in the state House of Representatives to form an advisory committee to study issues related to children of inmates passed by a unanimous vote.

“During our Appropriations Committee hearings, we heard from the Department of Corrections along with Probation and

While complementing the county efforts, the work of the Mon Valley Initiative and the Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence has been separate from the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative’s approach to reducing recidivism, which involves offering inmates a range of services and support that includes drug and alcohol treatment; stress and anger management; GED preparation; and vocational, life and parenting skills training. Recidivism data show that the voluntary program has paid off: only 16.5 percent of inmates who take advantage of the services return to jail within a year of their release, while the recidivism rate is double that amount for those who don’t participate, according to an evaluation by Pitt’s Center on Race and Social Problems.

Researchers also looked at the collaborative’s efforts to reduce recidivism in terms of dollars and cents, and found them to be a bargain. They calculated that it costs \$43,662 on average to incarcerate an inmate in the county jail, which includes expenses



“This is money well spent on helping people get their lives together. If you can prevent someone from committing a future crime, everyone is better off. They’re not robbing your house. They’re paying taxes, they’re with their families, and they’re contributing to society.”

Marc Cherna, director, Department of Human Services

Parole that the issue of incarceration is very much cyclical and generational,” the primary sponsor of the resolution, Cherelle Parker, D-Philadelphia, told her colleagues moments before the vote. “If we can find a way to support the needs of this constituency very early on, it is our hope that the results of this resolution will help the Commonwealth save money by investing early and not later on in our criminal justice system.”

The Endowments’ support for programs to assist inmates released from prison includes a \$300,000 grant through the foundation’s Innovation Economy Program two years ago to help the Mon Valley Initiative expand its job placement and training program for ex-offenders. The community and economic development nonprofit has partnered with the University of Pittsburgh’s Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence to develop employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. The organizations recently hired two employees to work full-time with the volunteer-based Southwestern Pennsylvania Reentry Coalition.

to house inmates and process them in criminal courts, as well as an estimate of the medical expenses, property loss and other costs that victims of crime incur. Factoring in the cost of the services the collaborative put in place and the lower recidivism rates that resulted, the researchers found that providing assistance to as few as 300 inmates a year saves Allegheny County \$5.3 million — a cost-savings ratio of \$6 saved for every \$1 spent.

“This is money well spent on helping people get their lives together,” says county Human Services Director Cherna. “If you can prevent someone from committing a future crime, everyone is better off. They’re not robbing your house. They’re paying taxes, they’re with their families, and they’re contributing to society.”

Among the lessons learned from the reform effort has been the importance of following up in-jail services with community support once the inmate is released. An early program to help inmates stay out of jail and rebuild family relationships failed to achieve expected outcomes largely because it lacked strong community-based aftercare. “We kind of messed up,” says Rustin.



“We’ve done focus groups with a lot of families. I like to talk about things that knock my socks off. In this latest round, it was how sturdy the children are, how competent the family members caring for them are, and how committed they are to caring for them. There is surprising strength in many of these families. We can’t discount them.”

Claire Walker, executive director, Pittsburgh Child Guidance Foundation

“We said, ‘We trained you. You’re ready. See you later.’ But it doesn’t work that way. They may have it all in their heads, but then they’re confronted with real-life situations and have to decide whether to implement what they learned or go back to the way of life they’ve been living forever. A lot of our people don’t make the right choice. They need a lot of support.”

Davis says now that he is on the outside, he leans on the mentoring, aftercare and other support offered by a faith-based program, Helping Open People’s Eyes, or HOPE. Administered by jail chaplain Lynn Yeso’s office, the program prepares inmates to re-enter the community while they are on the inside and uses volunteers from local churches to maintain contact with them following their release.

“I just keep reaching out to people who have their lives together who were willing to help me,” says Davis, who after his release from jail landed a job in sales and got his son into a new group home. “The main thing is, you need positive things to do. It’s the idle time that gets you.”

For Davis and fellow ex-offender Robrigo Gilmore, mending their relationships with their children is among the incentives they say are helping them resist the drugs, drinking and other temptations they know are their tickets back to the jail. “My son needs me around because his mental stability is borderline,” says Davis. “And he needs someone who is strong and secure, not somebody constantly getting arrested, worrying about warrants and who is broke all of the time.”

Gilmore says he’s started down the long road toward a better relationship with his 6-year-old daughter, who is in his sister’s custody. He’s been incarcerated four times in the county jail. His last stint ended with his release in September after spending a year on the jail’s HOPE pod while serving 13 months for aggravated assault. “She was seeing me from time to time when I was in jail. But she knew I was drinking before I went to jail, and she’s seen the rage, the yelling and the running from the cops. And she shut down. I’m trying to do everything I can to get her back into my life, but it’s hard for her to communicate with me. That’s what I’m dealing with.”

Because much of the attention on incarceration has focused on inmate populations, the prisons and jails that hold them, and the cost of keeping them behind bars, the children of inmates have quietly endured hardships that a growing body of research

suggests puts their immediate well-being and their future at risk. Children of inmates, for example, are more likely than other children to experience developmental delays, do poorly in school, suffer emotional distress, be referred for psychological counseling and develop substance abuse problems. In the Allegheny County Jail, 61 percent of female inmates and 53 percent of male inmates have at least one child under the age of 18. And 36 percent of incarcerated parents were living with their child at the time of their arrest.

The challenges encountered by children with parents in the county jail began to emerge in 2003 when Pittsburgh Child Guidance Foundation, which had decided to focus its resources on addressing their issues, started holding conversations with inmates and families, and publishing reports of their findings. Those reports, says Rustin, opened his eyes to issues of the family he hadn’t given much consideration to during his more than two decades of correctional work.

“We have a tendency to focus on drugs and alcohol, job readiness and things like that. But we don’t touch the family. We don’t deal with those issues. I thought, maybe we should. If it is important to the inmates, it should be important to us.”

One of the first steps taken was to make visiting the jail less stressful for children. The jail lobby was anything but welcoming: hard plastic chairs; vending machines filled with sugary snacks; strict correctional officers with little tolerance for noisy, active children; and long waits to speak with a parent through a smudged Plexiglas® window. “We know from interviews and focus groups that going to visit a parent in jail is a very difficult event for a child,” says Claire Walker, Child Guidance executive director. “We also know that they don’t want to lose contact with their parents.”

When Rustin arrived as the jail’s new warden from West Chester, Pa., in 2004, Walker presented him with the study that revealed the hardships endured by the children and families of inmates, including the unwelcoming environment that confronted them when visiting an incarcerated parent. It was an eye-opener. “I’d been in the business for 24 years and had never thought of that as an issue I should be concerned with,” says Rustin. “But when I went out to the visiting lobby, it was packed with mothers, little kids coming to visit their fathers in jail, and I could see this was a real problem.”

Pittsburgh Child Guidance Foundation led a campaign to resolve the issue, gaining support from jail officials for the Family Activity Center in the lobby and raising the money to design and build it. Besides the Endowments, philanthropic funding partners included the Grable, Eden Hall, and Staunton Farm foundations, and the Maurice Falk Fund, all of whom initially supported the project through Lydia's Place, a faith-based organization that helps female offenders and their children rebuild their lives.

Although Rustin says he recognized the benefits of such a center in the lobby, he had some reservations. "It was a little controversial for me. I came up from the operations and security part of the operation. Visitors are a security risk for us. Introduction of contraband, everything from exposure to diseases to assaults and escape attempts—visitors impact all of that."

When the center opened in 2007, it immediately transformed the children's experience. It was an instant hit. The benefits are apparent, and security hasn't been compromised, Rustin says. "It's had an impact. The kids aren't as afraid to come to the jail now. They like playing here. They don't get on the correctional officers' nerves. They don't get on their caregivers' nerves as much. By the time the visit happens, it's a good visit."

"And when you see the activity center, you get the impression that the jail cares about its inmates, their families and the community. It's a good way to present the jail."

The inroads made by the Family Activity Center and the HOPE program support the promise of the Center for Family Support, which is expected to provide a more comprehensive approach to nurturing family relationships. With its addition, the jail will become a setting in which the process of reunifying the family begins in earnest before the inmate's release. The Center for Family Support will represent a change in the culture within the jail. Inmates in the program will reside in a special pod where they, their spouses or partners, and their children are guided by specialists as they work on the issues critical to strengthening the family that are identified in personal assessments. Family services will be offered, such as child development and parent education. Inmates and their families will help shape the ex-offender's discharge plan. Case managers will coordinate community services to help released inmates address specific needs, such as housing, education, family counseling or finding a job.

The center is modeled after the network of 33 family support centers found in neighborhoods across Allegheny County. That network has earned national recognition over the past

FAMILY ACTIVITY CENTER

With its bright colors and child-friendly activities, the Family Activity Center at the Allegheny County Jail is an oasis in an otherwise bleak and sobering institution. Opened in the jail lobby in 2007, the center was designed to help reduce children's stress as they wait to visit parents or other adults. The area provides children with healthy snacks, a craft area, a video nook, a book corner and mock visiting booths that allow them to prepare for visits by role-playing. Full-time employees and trained volunteers at a resource center are on hand to answer questions, make referrals to government and social services agencies, and distribute informative materials.



15 years for its success in strengthening at-risk families in ways that create healthier home environments and communities.

"We're not going into this blindly. We realize that this is tough work. But we're not new at it," says Marge Petruska, senior director of the Endowments CY& F Program, which has been a key leader and benefactor of the county family support movement from its earliest days. "This is a community that understands family support. We have the experience, the expertise, the leadership and the people to do this work successfully."

Still, long-term recidivism data suggest that rehabilitating inmates remains more of an art than a science. Nationwide, 67.5 percent of inmates are rearrested within three years and 52 percent return to prison, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. Repairing the bond between inmates and their families promises to be equally difficult in light of the fact that many families face complex challenges that may include poverty, joblessness, and drug and alcohol addiction.

But insight gained from conversations with inmates and families gives Walker of the Pittsburgh Child Guidance Foundation hope that many families disrupted by incarceration can heal.

"We've done focus groups with a lot of families," she says. "I like to talk about things that knock my socks off. In this latest round, it was how sturdy the children are, how competent the family members caring for them are, and how committed they are to caring for them. There is surprising strength in many of these families. We can't discount them." *h*

A. A fun “swoosh” down the Climb & Slide at the county jail’s Family Activity Center brightens children’s faces before they see an incarcerated parent or relative.



Walt Seng

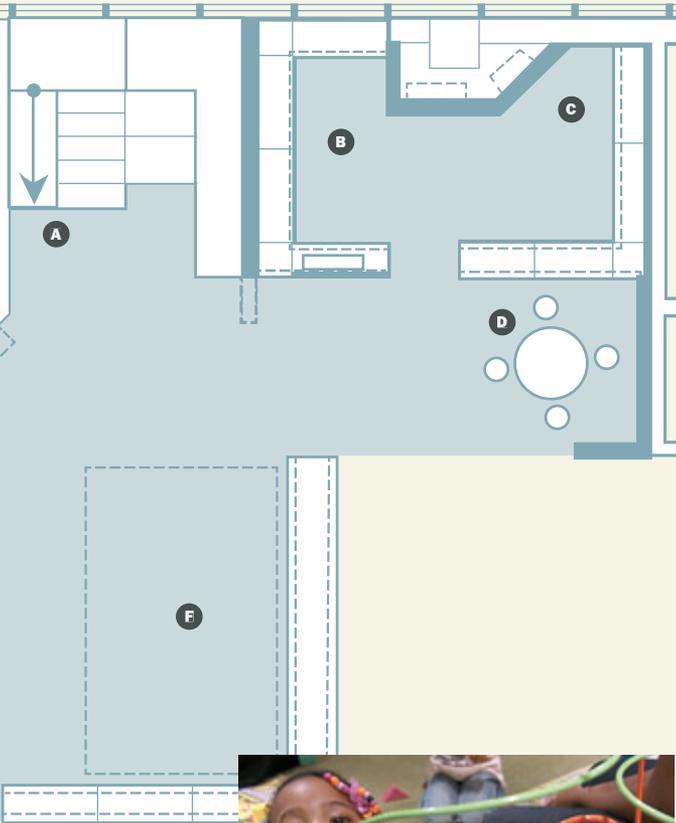


B. Reading to children can help calm them down and lend a sense of normalcy to a jail visit.

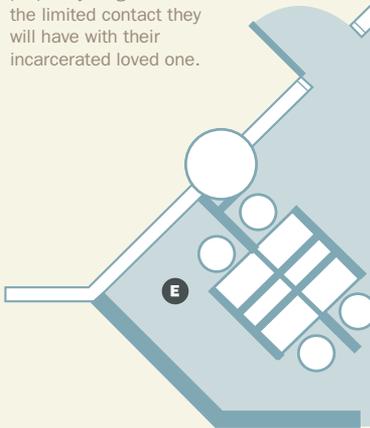
C. Children visiting the jail can watch videos of beloved personalities and favorite cartoon characters to help soothe anxieties they might have about their surroundings.



E. The mock visiting booths are close enough to the real thing to prepare youngsters for the limited contact they will have with their incarcerated loved one.



D. In the craft area, children can work out their anxieties by coloring pictures or making something out of a variety of materials.



F. Toys in the play area keep young minds alert and entertained so that their visit to the jail is as enjoyable as possible.





THE ULTIMATE MEASURE OF A MAN IS NOT WHERE HE STANDS
IN MOMENTS OF COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE,
BUT WHERE HE STANDS AT TIMES OF CHALLENGE AND CONTROVERSY.

REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

MEN MOLDING MEN

BUFFETED BY HISTORICAL RACISM AND A HOST OF NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS, MANY AFRICAN AMERICAN BOYS AND YOUNG MEN FACE LONG ODDS IN DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL LIVES. NOW, A BOLD FOUNDATION INITIATIVE IS RELYING ON AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS AS NEVER BEFORE IN A NEW STRATEGY THAT BUILDS ON COMMUNITY ASSETS TO CREATE BETTER OPPORTUNITIES. BY CARMEN LEE

Seventeen-year-old James Mathis' motivation for doing well in school and pursuing a professional career has increased exponentially, thanks to his participation in the Endowments-supported African American Male Mentoring Initiative. Created by the Negro Educational Emergency Drive, or NEED, the program is part of a strategy crafted by a unique coalition of Endowments staff and African American community leaders to increase positive life opportunities for black men and boys in southwestern Pennsylvania.



Terry Clark

“WHEN I FIRST CAME HERE, [ANTHONY JOHNSON] WAS ASKING EVERYBODY ABOUT THEIR GPAS, AND MINE WASN'T WHERE IT NEEDED TO BE. THAT MOTIVATED ME TO GET MY GRADES UP.”

James Mathis, NEED program participant



The Endowments' African American Men and Boys Task Force supports programs like the NEED African American Male Mentoring Initiative in Pittsburgh to provide role models and helpful influences too often lacking in lives of local African American youth. Opposite page: above, NEED college and career advisor Anthony Johnson, far left, leads the mentoring program at Oliver High School, where a group of students including, from right foreground, junior Curtis Brown, 16, and 17-year-old seniors DeAndre Yarbrough, Ed Mathis and David Marshall meet to discuss topics and plan activities designed to prepare them for successful futures. The NEED program also gets support from school staff. Here, senior counselor Lloyd Weston, below center, assists in working with students such as, below from left, seniors Raymont Goodwine, Jehosha Wright and Shane Phillips, all 18.

At one end of a table that nearly fills a small meeting room in Pittsburgh's Oliver High School, senior Donte Jeter jokes easily with other teens during a Tuesday lunchtime session.

He exudes the confidence you might expect from the football quarterback who is fourth in his class and a gregarious man-about-campus with college recruiters knocking on his door.

At the opposite end of the table, junior James Mathis is watching intently. He is quieter and more soft-spoken, but nonetheless an alert and engaged participant in the NEED—Negro Educational Emergency Drive—African American Male Mentoring Initiative.

Both 17-year-olds are comfortable in a setting where a dozen jeans-and-T-shirt-clad youths lack any hesitancy in holding hands for a quick grace before diving into white paper bags of sandwiches, chips and fruit. They listen eagerly to Anthony Johnson, who was already a NEED college and career adviser before the two-year-old mentoring program started. Johnson urges the group to prepare for the SAT and alerts them to upcoming meeting topics, ranging from money management to table etiquette. He also cajoles the youths to memorize the program's pledge "to always strive to achieve greatness, pursue the height of excellence and be the best we can be."

Jeter and Mathis have taken that message of achievement to heart, even though a 2006 RAND Corp. study of the Pittsburgh Public Schools, the most recent comprehensive review available, reported a 50 percent dropout rate for African American males in the district.

"When I heard about what this program had to offer—the information and the fellowship among young African American males—I wanted to get involved," says Jeter after the meeting. "I've learned about getting ready for college... I want to be successful."

Mathis quickly volunteers that he has a 3.0 grade point average and aspirations of his own. "When I first came here, [Johnson] was asking everybody about their GPAs, and mine wasn't where it needed to be. That motivated me to get my grades up," he says. "I want to go to college for architecture, and this is giving me a better outlook on what I need to do and what I haven't done but still can do to prepare... and not let other things get in my way."

The unprompted responses are the type that program organizers usually can only dream about. But these are authentic; the sweet sounds of success in the critically important work of black men helping African American boys, who face so many of life's tripwires, become men—good, strong, productive men.

The mentoring program that has coaxed these students to brag about their academic prowess is one example from a bold, unique initiative, the African American Men and Boys Task Force. While coordination and funding comes from The Heinz Endowments, the grant-making agenda is being developed through a community-shaping process that is unprecedented among regional foundations. Its scope is broader than past foundation-funded programs directed at specific groups in the African American community. Some of these were successful in helping participants but limited in their coverage.

And while many past programs assisting boys and young men have struggled with developing strategies that remove perceptions of deficits and negatives, and meet the daunting goal of reversing the effects of injustices inflicted on African Americans through decade upon decade of discrimination, the new initiative is taking an assets-based approach. A key component of that is using powerful aspects of culture and community to make gains. Central to the development of this new track is the African American Men and Boys Advisory Board, whose 20 members are leaders and practitioners with deep roots in the region's African American community.

Since the advisory board's first meeting last year, members have invested scores of hours in education, research and group planning sessions. The Endowments has led the process, serving as the convening place for agenda discussions, the clearinghouse for fresh energy and new ideas, and a significant funder with \$2 million approved so far. All the infrastructure building and community advising have been directed toward achieving two manageable goals: addressing challenges that black

youth and men face in southwestern Pennsylvania, and building on strengths inherent in the black community—too often ignored in similar efforts—to serve as reliable resources.

“Many times, as foundations, we provide solutions without totally understanding the issues, or we do not adequately engage the very people we are trying to serve,” says Mark Lewis, president of Poise Foundation and advisory board chairman. “The approach the Endowments is taking is on target, and the advisory board is helping to frame the problems in a manner that will focus resources on the best solutions available.”

As president of a foundation that focuses solely on Pittsburgh's African American community, Lewis says he's painfully aware of the history of philanthropic initiatives that attempt to address serious problems with half-measures and little input from those most affected. “I believe the Endowments has the resources and the will,” he says.

But even an unending stream of foundation funding can't make an initiative on the order of the African American Men and Boys Task Force effective without what Endowments President Bobby Vagt describes as the receptivity and eagerness of local African American residents to shape the agenda. “There is a community here that wants to take on the mantle of dealing with this. It's necessary, but not sufficient, that the problems exist. You have to have the individuals and the groups that are willing to get involved... because unlike many important issues in the region, this one does not get the attention it deserves.”

Seizing the moment

The backdrop for this ambitious initiative includes all-too-familiar statistics about black men and often-overlooked patterns of social and economic injustice. The National Urban League's 2007 State of Black America report, for example, noted that “African American men are more than twice as likely to be unemployed as white males and make only 75 percent as much a year. They're nearly seven times more likely to be incarcerated, and

their average jail sentences are 10 months longer than those of white men [for the same offenses]. In addition, young black males between the ages of 15 and 34 years are nine times more likely to die of homicide than their white counterparts and nearly seven times as likely to suffer from AIDS.”

Those findings are amplified in southwestern Pennsylvania, where University of Pittsburgh researchers have reported time and time again that local African American men are at or near the bottom of every measure of the quality of life, including economic status, educational achievement, family stability and violence.

communities, with Barack Obama’s election as president of the United States representing the highest public leadership post attained. Similarly, accounts of positive achievements among African American youth have been the staple of community and church events for generations, even though many have complained that these accomplishments are not adequately reported in mainstream media.

And if observers dig deep enough, there actually are some encouraging new indicators of the potential for broad-based improvements in the lives of black men. For instance, U.S. Census

“MANY TIMES, AS FOUNDATIONS, WE PROVIDE SOLUTIONS WITHOUT TOTALLY UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES, OR WE DO NOT ADEQUATELY ENGAGE THE VERY PEOPLE WE ARE TRYING TO SERVE... THE ADVISORY BOARD IS HELPING TO FRAME THE PROBLEMS IN A MANNER THAT WILL FOCUS RESOURCES ON THE BEST SOLUTIONS AVAILABLE.”

Mark Lewis, president, Poise Foundation

The situation has only been exacerbated by the recent economic downturn and accompanying rise in unemployment.

Intertwined with these sobering results are the complex effects of slavery and a long history of programs and policies in the United States that often did more harm than good in addressing the structural economic and educational challenges African American men—and women—face. They include national initiatives such as the GI Bill and the federal Housing Act, which for decades permitted blatantly discriminatory practices that blunted possible benefits to the black community, and local urban renewal programs that destroyed African American neighborhoods and ripped apart the cultural and economic fabric of black life in a number of U.S. cities.

Despite the depressing statistics and damaging historical events, there have always been numerous respected male leaders in African American

Bureau and Justice Department data from 2008, the most recent available, show that more than three times the number of young black men ages 18 to 24 were enrolled in colleges and universities than were incarcerated in jails and prisons—596,000 or 29 percent of that population, compared with 185,600 or 9 percent. That’s slightly better than a decade earlier when the percentage of college-age black men in school was the same but the percentage of those incarcerated was almost 10 percent. There also have been an increasing number of projects nationally to improve life opportunities for African American men and boys, including those supported or initiated by philanthropies such as the Open Society Institute, the Chicago Community Trust, and the Ford and Robert Wood Johnson foundations.

Several Endowments task force and advisory board members say they recognize that the foundation’s initiative could have been done



Terry Clark

anytime, anywhere. But they point out that Pittsburgh is drawing increased global attention—such as its international splash as host of last year’s G-20 Summit—while continuing to have black male unemployment and arrest rates that are two to three times higher than those for white men in the region. A new national landscape of African American life, which includes Obama’s election in the mix with ongoing economic and educational struggles for black men and boys, adds to the timeliness of the work, say advisory board members Valerie Lawrence, a cultural education consultant, and Anthony Mitchell, University Community Programs officer in Continuing Education at the Pennsylvania State University Greater Allegheny campus.

This special period provides an opportunity for a focused and coordinated effort in Pittsburgh to become a model for other communities.

“It is clear that we must respond to this situation now,” insists Lawrence. “If we do not, then five years, 10 years down the road, when those strings that are barely there for African American boys and young men to hold onto have just completely vanished, we will be wondering: ‘How did they get there? What did we do? Why didn’t we do it? Who is to blame?’ And it may be too complex to say who is to blame; however, I don’t think it is too complex to say who can resolve some of these issues, and it begins with each and every one of us.”

Carmen Anderson, the Endowments senior program officer for Children, Youth & Families and

the African American Men and Boys Task Force’s chair, notes that the growing evidence of practices that have improved the lives of black males offers “opportunity for foundations to have a meaningful role in not only programming but policy and other areas we can fund that potentially can change the situation for men and boys . . . The Endowments has leadership at the board and staff levels, and partnerships in the community that we can leverage to help us make a significant, positive impact.”

Building a strategy

Currently, the Endowments initiative is focusing on supporting programs in three priority areas: educational opportunity, economic opportunity and identity–gender–character development. A communications plan has been devised to complement the initiative’s goals, promote greater community understanding of the issues, and help mobilize residents of the Pittsburgh region to take action.

The foundation already had within its grants portfolio mentoring and education programs that benefited African American males along with others. But in response to calls from members of the black community and the foundation’s board for a fresh approach to supporting African American men and boys, the decision was made to create a more targeted strategy. Anderson was asked in 2007 to lead the new initiative, and staff members from other foundation program areas were enlisted to provide a range of expertise.



Youth in the African American Leadership Institute developed by two Pittsburgh nonprofits, Community Empowerment Association and Center of Life, praise the Endowments-supported program for helping them learn more about African American history, which comes vividly to life in the multimedia center of the August Wilson Center for African American Culture. Before attending a “Hip-Hop for Haiti” benefit at the center in January, program participants, from left, Desmond Stolich, 13, and LeOndre Johnson, 14; Chris Reid, 13, above; and Chad Brookins, 18, below, read and listen to stories about African American history-makers in southwestern Pennsylvania.



“BEFORE I CAME HERE, I DIDN’T KNOW MUCH ABOUT WHERE I CAME FROM OR WHAT MY ROOTS WERE. NOW I WANT TO TEACH MY YOUNGER COUSINS ABOUT THEIR HISTORY.”

Matthew Hill, African American Leadership Initiative participant

The newly formed task force organized “Community Conversations,” a series of focus groups and forums designed to help it set goals and priorities. Mitchell, along with James Stewart, an emeritus Penn State professor and recognized expert in economics, labor and African American studies, analyzed the discussions and made recommendations based on the comments and available research on black males. To further stimulate their thinking, task force members met with experts who had proven track records in developing programs to engage African American youth, particularly boys. The advisory board was created as the primary—though not sole—mechanism to maintain ongoing community participation at each stage of the development and implementation of the strategy.

For advisory board members, this role has meant applying their skills and experiences to the work by joining subcommittees based on the initiative’s funding priorities and serving on review panels to evaluate project proposals. It also has meant adding three to four hours to a workday, four times a year, to meet at the Endowments offices and discuss how to address problems specific to black young men and boys in creative ways.

At one recent evening session, participants divided into two groups and debated ideas for generating educational and entrepreneurial opportunities for African American men and boys. In the education group, person after person emphasized the importance of starting education intervention strategies early to have the best long-term impact. “One area that’s always important to me is having some type of parent–school connection up front,” Mitchell of Penn State emphasized. Across the hall, a recurring theme was the need for mentoring programs that would show black youth and men how to start and sustain their own companies. “I think there’s a difference between execution and opportunity,” noted the Poise Foundation’s Lewis. “Do we even get the opportunity to fail?”

The steps the task force has taken to begin grant making under its own banner include supporting an initial round of projects, such as the NEED mentoring program, that would broadly address its goals. Recognizing that people’s views are often shaped by what they see and hear in the media, the Endowments team commissioned a \$40,000 audit to analyze how local Pittsburgh newspapers and television newscasts frame stories

Advisory board members, representing a range of African American professional and community leadership, spend hours beyond the normal workday meeting with Endowments staff to discuss ways to improve opportunities for black men and boys in education, employment, entrepreneurship, and identity and character development. Shown at recent advisory board meetings are, top from right, Mark Lewis, advisory board chairman; Carmen Anderson, task force chair and Endowments CY&F senior program officer; Justin Laing, Endowments Arts & Culture program officer; Tamanika Howze, education consultant; and Carmen Lee, Endowments communications officer. Below left are Valerie Lawrence, cultural and educational consultant, and Anthony Mitchell, University Community Programs officer in Continuing Education, Penn State Greater Allegheny. Below right are Pittsburgh Public Schools high school senior Carter Redwood and Endowments board member Franco Harris.

**African American
Men and Boys Advisory
Board members:**

Chairman Mark Lewis
Dr. Christopher Allen
Linda Cuttler
Ron Davenport Jr.
Paradise Gray
Jahmiah Guillory
Franco Harris
Loren Harris
Tamanika Howze

Keith Key
Valerie Lawrence
Khary Lazzarre-White
Felix Brandon Lloyd
Anthony Mitchell
Sylvester Pace
Carter Redwood
Alonford James
"AJ" Robinson
Ramon C. Rustin
Malcolm "MinNekhekh"
Thomas
Jake Wheatley

**Endowments
Task Force members**

Chair Carmen Anderson
Melanie Brown
Christina Gabriel
Bomani Howze
Phillip Johnson
Justin Laing
Carmen Lee
Stanley Thompson
Bobby Vagt

about black males and to promote more positive images. In addition, the task force and advisory board are reviewing proposals for programs that will expand horizons for African American boys and young men in specific areas such as college and career preparation; identity and character development through African-centered rites of passage; business ownership; and the establishment of commercial and community banks.

Offering better choices

Hours after the NEED program at Oliver High School closes shop, 10 African American youth from other schools in and around Pittsburgh munch on pizza and chicken wings in a classroom at Duquesne University. They remain attentive throughout the evening meeting of the African American Leadership Institute, an Endowments-supported mentoring program developed by two local nonprofits, Community Empowerment Association and Center of Life. Standing before the group, Gibbs Kanyongo, a professor of education statistics at Duquesne, and Knowledge Murphy, the institute's youth coordinator, energetically offer arguments against pinning hopes on a career as a professional athlete or pursuing quick cash through drug trafficking.

Kanyongo shows the long-shot odds in stark relief by using equations to calculate the percentage of athletically talented young men making it even for a short-term career in professional sports. Murphy provides a film-clip history tour of movies that glamorized the drug trade, such as the 1970s' "Superfly" and the 1990s' "New Jack City." Then he shows documentary clips of notorious drug dealers like Frank Lucas, whose fall from rich drug kingpin to prison-bound and penniless informant was portrayed by actor Denzel Washington in the 2007 movie "American Gangster."

"Are you getting the message that's being promoted to you?" asks Murphy. "The real men who actually live that lifestyle in the end look like broken old men. They have missed out on their youth, the growth of their families and their children, the experiences they would have had [with] their freedom, and the opportunities they would have had if they had been able to get an education."

The boys make the connections. In fact, some add their own disheartening stories, like one youth's account of a brother he hasn't seen in eight years because he's on his second prison term for selling drugs. Another boy gives a detailed description of a neighborhood convenience store known as a hangout for dealers, and a third tells the story of a friend's attempt to recruit him into the trade by asking him to "hold something."

Because they want better options than those offered in some of their surroundings, several boys agree that the institute is worth their time.

"I don't have a dad—no male figure in my family," says 13-year-old Desmond Stolich after the session ends. "So being around all the males here, I learn more stuff about being a man. I'm getting more leadership skills and a better understanding of where I come from and how I can improve and help out my mom."



Matthew Hill, 13, who says he rarely sees his father, also appreciates the chance to learn about manhood and African American history. “Before I came here, I didn’t know much about where I came from or what my roots were. Now I want to teach my younger cousins about their history.”

As African American men and fathers of sons, three Endowments task force members—Stan Thompson, director of the Education Program; Justin Laing, a program officer in Arts & Culture; and Bomani Howze, a program officer in Innovation Economy—share a personal sense of urgency for the African American Men and Boys Initiative to increase opportunities for more youth to learn their history, strengthen their identities and define their roles in society. Howze notes that studying historical successes, such as the influence of Booker T. Washington’s message of self-reliance on Marcus Garvey’s creation of the Universal

Negro Improvement Association or the Greenwood neighborhood in Tulsa, Okla., when it was known as Black Wall Street in the early 20th century, can help African American youth envision revitalizing their own communities and contributing to the world.

All three men also emphasize that, along with education, training and character-development components, the initiative’s work should involve confronting the structural racism that would prevent teens like Desmond, Matthew, Donte and James from achieving their potential.

“If we can encourage honest conversations that are more about regional ownership of the challenges and a real discussion of fundamental causes,” says Laing, “I think that would be [the initiative’s] greatest contribution beyond just programs.” *h*

D O W N

INSPIRED BY A 1950S PITTSBURGH RENAISSANCE CAPTURED IN PHOTOGRAPHS.

T O W N

AN ENDOWMENTS-FUNDED PROJECT BRINGS A NEW DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE INTO FOCUS

N O W

FOR A NEW AGE. BY DOUGLAS ROOT

In the early 1950s Pittsburgh, the Allegheny Conference on Community Development was the power center for the city and the region. The men (all men and all white in those years) included CEOs of Pittsburgh-based corporations, elected officials, and education and civic leaders. A few on the conference Executive Committee also were budding philanthropists.

This serious group had taken on one of the most significant urban redevelopment programs in the country's history. It changed so many areas of city life that it was later named the "Pittsburgh Renaissance," the first of several the city would experience in the next 60 years. The leaders who conceived Renaissance I were ambitious, impatient with delay and no-nonsense in decision making. They gloried in project blueprints and thick reports on issues such as housing, zoning and public health. They also weren't afraid to confront politicians and labor leaders in those classic smoke-filled rooms.

So it was nothing short of astounding that this elite group embraced something that had little to do with the business of building. Talented photographers were unleashed throughout the region to document the dramatic physical changes and the new patterns of daily life. The stated goal of the Pittsburgh Photographic Library, the name for the project headquartered at the University of Pittsburgh, was to educate the region and the nation using Pittsburgh as a sterling example of the great benefits that come from comprehensive urban planning.



JIM JUDKIS

Cutting corners: More public spaces and a surge in the number of people making their homes downtown combine to create new traffic patterns and new ways of interacting in an urban environment. This winter 2008 image of a lone figure crossing Katz Plaza in the late afternoon on a path marked by hundreds of snowy footprints was taken from the top floor of the adjacent Century Building during its renovation. The building is the first in a flurry of mostly high-end residential developments downtown to be marketed specifically to moderate-income renters. All 60 units were rented within a month of its opening last summer. The 23,000-square-foot plaza, which opened a decade earlier, replaced a parking lot and adult book-video store.



MELISSA FARLOW

Child-friendly downtown: Lucia Stevik-Brown, who was 5 when this image was made in the summer of 2008, embraces the fountain at PPG Plaza. The water feature that turns into a skating rink for winter humanized the plaza of the Philip Johnson–designed PPG Place after criticism that the one-acre space was “so lacking in warmth it would make a perfect setting for firing squads.” Now one of the most popular downtown gathering spots for lunchtime and weekend crowds, planners are hoping for a similar reaction to the \$5 million renovation of adjacent Market Square, the oldest public space in the city. The plan calls for a leveled four-quadrant layout in the style of a European piazza. There will be new shade trees, tables, wider sidewalks and decorative stone surfaces to lure people to cafés and restaurants.

RICHARD KELLY

Flag girls in the 2008 Labor Day Parade: While many other cities have lost their place as the staging ground for all sorts of public celebrations and convenings, Pittsburgh’s core has grown in popularity as the regional host for such events. A jump in residency, an unprecedented development boom and new offerings in the nationally known Cultural District are the magnets drawing fresh crowds and younger participants. The flag girls are performing at the corner of the Boulevard of the Allies and Grant Street as they carry an Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 85 banner.

In taking on management of the project, legendary photographic editor Roy Stryker recognized the reality of the marketing goal but sought out allies who would do justice to photography as a powerful storytelling medium. One kindred spirit on the conference Executive Committee was H.J. Heinz Co. CEO Jack Heinz, who also headed the foundation his father created. He personally admired photography as an art form and supported that role in the project as much as he recognized it as a promotional powerhouse. Indeed, The Howard Heinz Endowment was among several local foundations that endorsed the goals of civic education, artistic development and marketing, and provided funding.

Now, 60 years later, the Photographic Library project has served as the inspiration for a successor initiative, the Downtown Now Photography Project. This latest effort, funded by The Heinz Endowments, has embraced much of the mission of the 1950s project: to document dramatic changes across Pittsburgh’s physical landscape and to do so with an artistic sensibility.

What distinguishes this project from the original is that photographers are focusing only on downtown. Also, philanthropic goals have supplanted the civic and business boosterism that the Photographic Library was supposed to assist.

Working with Linda Benedict-Jones, the Carnegie Museum of Art’s first curator of photography, and consultant Mary Navarro, a former Endowments senior program officer, are nine of Pittsburgh’s most talented photographers. They have been sent into the city’s core to document the significant changes in the

natural and built environment brought on by an unprecedented development boom. In the past five years, more than \$2 billion has been committed to public and private projects on a downtown footprint so compact it takes the average person only 15 minutes to walk.

The Endowments’ goals are to do the work of preserving the historical record and also to provide more intensive photojournalistic reporting of this chapter of the city’s history. An added bonus for the community is that, in the hands of accomplished photographers, the visual record of change also rises to the level of high art, as selected images from the first two years of work attest on the following pages. At the end of this year, nearly 3,000 images will have been submitted, and 420 of those will have been selected for permanent archiving and use in a range of projects.

In a digitalized Pittsburgh of the 21st century, the range of possibilities for use in support of all the project goals is far beyond what the Photographic Library photographers ever could have imagined.

In the book “Witness to the Fifties: The Pittsburgh Photographic Library, 1950–1953,” editors Constance Schulz and Steven Plattner describe the collection of photographs as “at one level a reflection of the reality of what Pittsburgh had been and what it was becoming, and at another level, a reflection of multiple perceptions of what Pittsburgh’s past meant, and what its future ought to be.” If this project reaches those same two levels, it will be judged a stunning success. *h*





DYLAN VITONE

Progress in motion: It's skateboarding heaven in this October 2007 image, but this riverfront section that frames the David L. Lawrence Convention Center's water feature will be undergoing dramatic change as part of the \$8.5 million Three Rivers Park project. The steep grade that boarders love will give way to a flat staging area for boat docks, outdoor public programs, native plants and even public art. The redesign is part of the effort to complete an 11-mile loop of a rivers-edge trail system.



MARK PERROTT

New overshadows old: The venerable Benedum-Trees Building, one of the architectural gems of Pittsburgh at the dawn of the 20th century, now struggles for attention against the backdrop of a nearly completed Three PNC Plaza building. The largest LEED®-certified project in the country, the plaza is the latest expansion of PNC Financial Services Group's downtown presence. The 26-story structure, which opened last fall, has executive offices, a 165-room hotel operated by the Fairmont chain, luxury condominiums and a street-front park. This image was taken from Mt. Washington in late-afternoon light in March 2009.

MARTHA RIAL

Big changes under a big snow: Point Park University freshman Jossue Delgado and friends make a prime section of Point State Park their canvas for snow angel art in February after the heaviest snowfall in Pittsburgh in decades. The park, a signature landmark, has been the focus of a \$30 million renovation that includes a new lawn area on the city side. Another phase has centered on planting 7,000 native shrubs and trees in the woodlands area. This year's phase will renovate the riverfront promenades, upgrade the marine tie-up area, and install features that interpret the history, indigenous cultures and natural resources of the park.



RENEE ROSENSTEEL

Riverside gamble: The region's controversial stake in economic development, the \$780 million Rivers Casino, breaks ground on the North Shore waterfront in this January 2008 image taken from the West End Bridge. Before its opening last August, the project had to survive a brush with bankruptcy, a change of ownership, and numerous tangles with labor and public interest groups. Included on that list was Pittsburgh Riverlife, which worked to ensure that the latest addition to the riverfront landscape followed design and land-use standards.

KENNETH NEELY

Generational view: An older couple who likely remember when downtown was the hub for a public transportation system dominated by street cars brave a cold winter day in 2007 to watch the beginning of construction of the North Shore Connector, one of two underground tunnels included in a \$553 million expansion of the city's light rail transit system. The project, which will significantly reduce the physical barrier of the Allegheny River between the North Side and Downtown, has met with public objections over ballooning costs and the need for a North Shore stop that serves a casino and sports venues.

ANNIE O'NEILL

Framing the future: Vehicles jockey for space in the cramped and dingy Federal Street underpass during a January 2009 rush hour. The underpass is part of a railroad support system that also presents an unsightly physical barrier between the North Side and the gateway bridges to Downtown. Renovations that include repairs, public art and special lighting are planned for this underpass, a pilot project of the Charm Bracelet Project, a collaboration of key North Side stakeholders attempting to devise solutions to community fracturing.





here & there

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FOCUS ON IN-STATE HIGH-TECH FIRMS



Jim Frazier

A Heinz Endowments-funded study comparing Pennsylvania's high-tech company recruitment strategies with competing states could significantly change future job creation efforts in the sector.

A report on the two-year study by Good Jobs First, a Washington, D.C.-based research group specializing in assessing effectiveness and equity in economic development policies, asserts that Pennsylvania's high-tech economy needs to focus on in-state employers and stop trying to recruit out-of-state companies with costly and useless tax breaks.

That was one of several recommendations made by Good Jobs Executive Director Greg LeRoy in January at an Endowments-hosted press conference. Following the announcement, the study was discussed in detail at a meeting of elected officials, economic development teams and foundation officers.

The study report contends that jockeying in a "war among states" with competing tax incentives, Pennsylvania legislators are ignoring history. The analysis shows that, since 1990, nearly all of the growth in Pennsylvania's high-tech economy has come from companies in the state. Special tax rates or incentives designed to lure companies across state lines have proved ineffective, especially as Pennsylvania's tax rates are about average among its nearby states: Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, North Carolina and West Virginia.

A detailed press release and the full study are available on the Endowments Web site: www.heinz.org.

IMANI'S NEW HOME

Since its founding in 1993, Imani Christian Academy has temporarily occupied space in three buildings, including a residential home and a church housed in a former strip mall. In January, the private school moved into its first permanent location: the former East Hills Elementary building, which had been part of the Pittsburgh Public Schools. Imani officials purchased the building for \$1 million in 2008 and invested another \$1 million in renovations so that it could accommodate the academy's 260 students, who are in kindergarten through 12th grade. An Endowments grantee since 1994, the school is part of the foundation's strategy to support education choices for families in the Pittsburgh region.



Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

ROHR APPOINTED TO BOARD



James E. Rohr, chairman and CEO of PNC Financial Services Group, has joined the Endowments' board. "For his internationally respected business acumen alone, Jim would be sought

after to guide the Endowments' work in the region, especially during this very tough economic period," Endowments Chairman Teresa Heinz said in announcing the appointment last month. "But adding to that his extraordinary record of service to so many of Pittsburgh's civic and charitable organizations, it is clear that the Endowments' vision for the region and his personal vision are perfectly aligned. I am grateful that he has agreed to serve."

In his nearly decade-long leadership of PNC, Rohr has grown the financial institution into the country's fifth-largest bank by deposits, with assets of \$271 billion. It also has gained national prominence in community philanthropy, especially through its 10-year, \$100 million Grow Up Great initiative to improve early education for children.



Ed Massery

Sarah Heinz House building receives honor

The Master Builders' Association of Western Pennsylvania has named the \$8.4 million expansion of Sarah Heinz House on Pittsburgh's North Side as last year's best new construction under \$10 million in the region. While the total amount of the project was \$11.4 million—including architect fees, property acquisition, renovations of the existing structure and other expenses—the building contractors' organization considered only the cost of new construction. For its work on the expansion, general contractor dck north america LLC was given the Master Builders' Association's Building Excellence Award at the organization's annual Construction Industry Evening of Excellence, held recently at the Heinz Field East Club. Also recognized were the Sarah Heinz House organization, which is a Boys & Girls Club, and the project architects, Rothschild Doyno Collaborative/William McDonough + Partners.



PITTSBURGH CENTRAL KIZ PROVIDES MORE THAN \$1 MILLION TO STARTUPS

The hard work of the Pittsburgh Central Keystone Innovation Zone coordinators is reaping results. As part of its effort to attract companies to sections of Pittsburgh's Hill District, Uptown, Downtown, North Shore and South Side neighborhoods, the Pittsburgh Central KIZ has funneled more than \$200,000 in grants and \$800,000 in tax credits to local startups. The tax credit amount is the second highest statewide among the 26 Keystone Innovation Zones. Pittsburgh Central KIZ is a core economic development grantee of the Endowments' Innovation Economy Program. Its success is particularly noteworthy because it encompasses a low-income urban area, unlike nearly all of the other Keystone Innovation Zones.

WILKINSBURG APPROVES ART SELECTION PROCESS

The Allegheny County borough of Wilkinsburg is now in the vanguard of smaller communities that have created a comprehensive and inclusive public process for dealing with projects connected to public art and civic design.

As a result of recommendations from consultants funded by The Heinz Endowments, Wilkinsburg Council agreed in January to create a Community Art and Civic Design Commission to ensure that decisions about public art and new design in the borough are made with full public participation and respect for standards set by experts in the field.

Community leaders, who have for years been focusing on strategies to deal with abandoned buildings and vacant lots, realize that art and public design projects carry power in forging solutions, says Renee Piechocki of Pittsburgh's Office of Public Art, who helped in the planning for the commission.

The commission, whose membership is still being determined, will be similar to Pittsburgh's Art Commission, Piechocki says. It will be a model for how smaller communities can successfully manage public projects, influence proper design standards for private projects, protect historic properties, encourage artistic expression, and limit unsightly development.



Renewable payoff Black & Veatch, a leading global engineering, consulting and construction company, has found that Pennsylvania could add more than \$25 billion to its economy from increased clean energy development over the next 17 years. The study, commissioned by the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, The Heinz Endowments and the William Penn Foundation, supports expansion of the Alternative

Energy Portfolio Standards Act, which currently requires that 8 percent of all energy generated within Pennsylvania come from sustainable energy sources by 2020. PA House Bill 80, which is under consideration, would increase the renewable portion of the standard to as much as 15 percent by 2026, with a 3 percent requirement for solar energy. The study found that such an expansion could generate thousands of employment hours and additional income from the growing advanced-energy industry.

HOSANNA HOUSE

Two decades ago, Hosanna House was a dream for a vacant middle school building in Wilkinsburg, east of Pittsburgh. Today, it is an established social service institution that provides health care, child care, workforce development, recreation and other programs. The organization's staff and community leaders have scheduled a series of special activities this year to commemorate the journey from its incorporation in 1989 and school building purchase in 1990 to its status as a recognized service provider. The longtime Endowments grantee has received nearly \$2 million from the foundation.

THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS

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