



Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2022

Northeast Ohio. In Fiscal Year 2022, we conserved nearly 3,000 And, we went on the road to provide our urban conservation and acres at 35 properties with 23 different landowners. We added revitalization expertise in Michigan, Southern Ohio, and on the acreage to a dozen public parks and preserves. We preserved national stage as well. 750 acres of Ohio farmlands owned and managed by 10 farming families. The numbers illustrate a year of success, but only tell part Beautiful natural landscapes that make our region special are of the story.

create equitable nature access for kids. The Land Conservancy to connect and change. At Western Reserve Land Conservancy, received a planning grant to spearhead a regional coalition to create we describe our work in one word: transformational. programs, partnerships, and policies to help kids learn, play, and grow with nature. Cities use a variety of strategies, implemented Thank you to all our supporters and friends, without whom none of through parks, schools, libraries, and early childhood settings. We are proud to be one of 14 cities to receive this grant and the only land trust in the nation.

On Earth Day we continued our tradition of hosting a tree planting. But what made it special is that our staff and volunteers from the Cleveland Browns, White Claw, the City of Eastlake, the Port Authority of Eastlake, Chagrin River Watershed Partners, and Holden Arboretum helped set a Guinness World Record for the most people watering plants simultaneously. The event was at a protected public park and was featured on the "Today" show on NBC as we joined nearly 800 people from across the country to set a new world record.

We expanded our Sporting Circle program, welcoming nearly two dozen Cleveland kids for a Youth Fishing Event with our partners at the Cleveland Police Athletic League at Blue Heron Preserve in Memory of Janet Franklin Foster, one of our Signature Parks & Preserves.

Our Thriving Communities program opened up the Garden of Eleven Angels in Cleveland's Mt. Pleasant neighborhood, a memorial to 11 women murdered at a private residence that was demolished and turned into a beautiful public park. We purchased the Euclid Beach Mobile Home Community at the request of local government and community stakeholders, ensuring this lakefront property would

Western Reserve Land Conservancy's success is spreading across remain in local hands and not be turned into high-rise apartments.

protected now and for future generations. On family farms that stretch back generations, we conserve fertile soils forever. In Cities Connecting Children to Nature is a national initiative to communities plagued by blight and decay, we partner with neighbors

> this important work could have been accomplished. We hope you enjoy reading our stories about the extraordinary impact our work is having throughout Northeast Ohio.

> > Sincerely,

Rich Cochran President and CEO



Mitchell Schneider **Board Chair**





OUR MISSION

To provide the people of our region with essential natural assets through land conservation and restoration.

OUR VISION

Thriving, prosperous communities nourished by vibrant natural lands, working farms, and healthy cities.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets	2022	2021
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$13,218,335	\$8,210,776
Pledges Receivable	4,088,645	4,938,346
Accounts Receivable	122,902	112,736
Notes Receivable	83,159	1,352,835
Conservation Property	6,395,065	11,141,738
Property and Equipment	10,758,977	4,942,523
Other Assets	47,680	105,304
Total Assets	34,714,763	30,804,258
Liabilities		
Loans Payable	12,325,000	10,699,613
Accounts Payable	192,367	222,005
Accrued Expenses	536,052	418,229
Total Liabilities	13,053,419	11,339,847
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	15,187,893	13,118,693
Temporarily Restricted	6,473,451	6,345,718
Total Net Assets	21,661,344	19,464,411
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$34,714,763	\$30,804,258

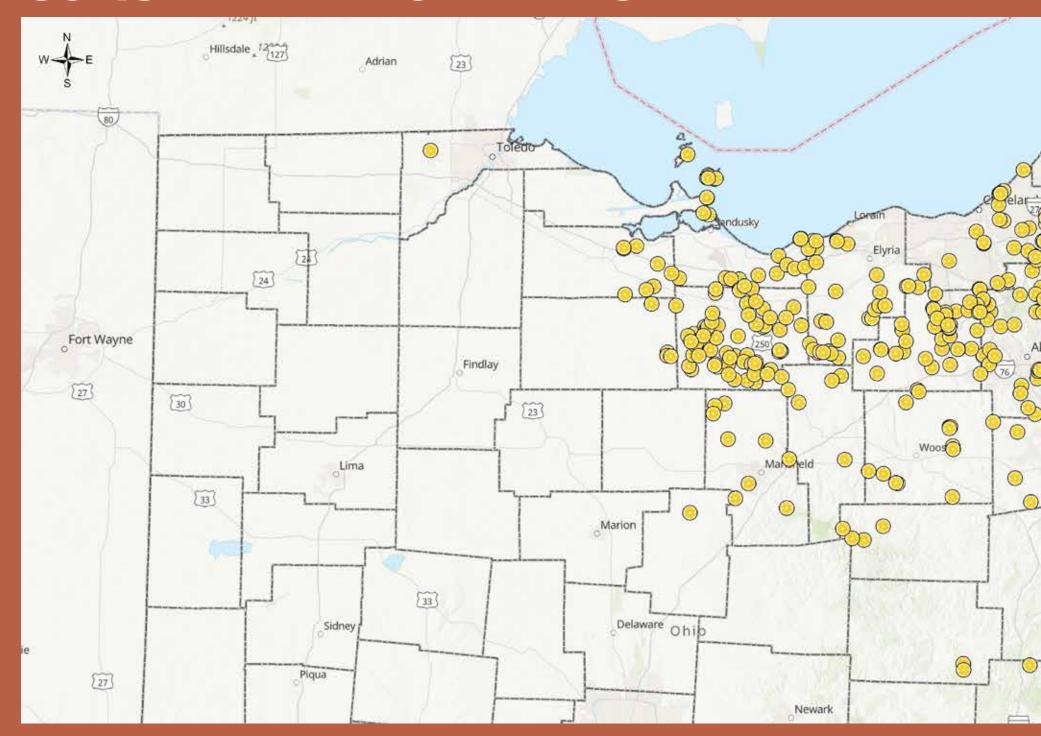


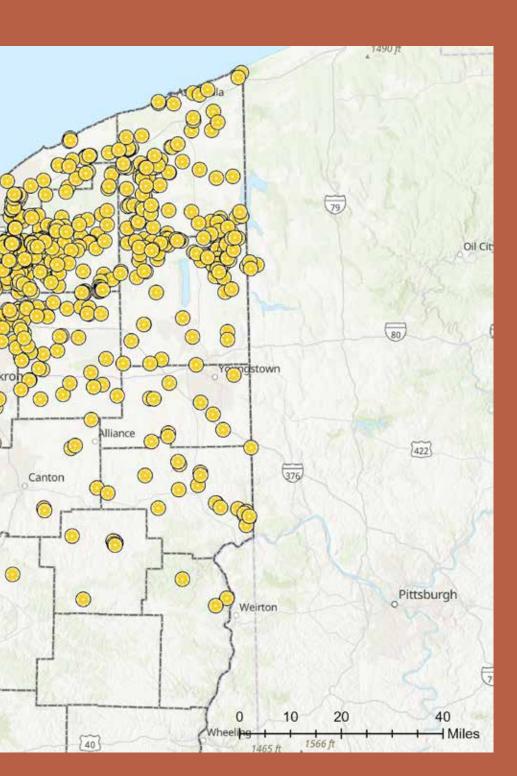
STATEMENT OF REVENUE & EXPENSES

Revenue	
Transfer of Conservation Property	\$4,717,514
Other Program Revenue	10,979,262
Program Revenue	15,696,776
Foundation Grants	977,887
Individual Donations	3,908,740
Corporate Donations	370,002
Events Net Revenue	228,313
Philanthropic Revenue	5,484,942
Interest & Investment Revenue	(42,868)
Total Revenue	21,138,850
Expense	
Program	17,444,139
Fundraising	833,773
Management and General	357,278
Operating Expense	18,635,190
Depreciation	306,727
Revenue Over (Under) Expenses	\$2,196,933



CONSERVED PROPERTIES





COUNTY	CONSERVED PROPERTIES
Ashland	5
Ashtabula	109
Carroll	6
Columbiana	20
Coshocton	2
Cuyahoga	108
Erie	21
Geauga	144
Guernsey	1
Holmes	4
Huron	70
Jefferson	3
Lake	35
Lorain	33
Lucas	1
Mahoning	9
Medina	40
Morrow	1
Ottawa	5
Portage	61
Richland	6
Sandusky	8
Seneca	4
Stark	10
Summit	42
Trumbull	97
Wayne	12
*Pennsylvania	5
	040

TOTAL 862



Fiscal Year Results











HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS



MAJOR WATERSHEDS
WHERE LAND WAS PROTECTED

SIGNATURE PARKS & PRESERVES
WITH ONGOING CONSTRUCTION
IMPROVEMENTS



OUT & ABOUT









ROC IN CLE

Nearly 500 of the Land Conservancy's closest friends and supporters converged on a conserved property in Mentor, Ohio to support our Reforest Our City program and enjoy a live concert featuring Grammy-award winning artists Train. It was an unforgettable night filled with delicious food, signature cocktails, and an amazing performance.

Special thanks to Scott and Julie Mawaka and the Scott and Julia Mawaka Charitable Foundation, Jane and Fritz Neubauer, Kaulig Companies for being our presenting sponsor, and dozens of other sponsors. In total, we raised over \$500,000 to support our efforts to rebuild Cleveland's tree canopy by planting and maintaining tens of thousands of trees across the city.

EARTH DAY

Continuing our tradition of hosting tree plantings on Earth Day, about 80 people showed up in Eastlake, Ohio to plant a few dozen trees at a conserved property operated as a public park by the City. But what made this tree planting special was that a portion of it involved setting a Guinness World Record live on the "Today" show on NBC!

Our guests and staff joined nearly 800 volunteers at 12 sites across the country – including at the "Today" show studios in New York City's Times Square – to each water one plant for 20 seconds to set a World Record title for the most people watering plants simultaneously at multiple venues. It was an Earth Day for the record books!







CLEVELAND TREE COALITION

My heart is always with Cleveland. I am so excited to be in a role that will allow me to combine my passion for trees and a healthy natural environment with my love for the City of Cleveland and its residents.

-Samira Malone, Director, Cleveland Tree Coalition



The Cleveland Tree Coalition (CTC) – a collaborative group of public, private, and community stakeholders that have partnered with the City of Cleveland to rebuild our urban forest – took a major step forward in its goal to reforest the Forest City when it hired its first full-time director, Samira Malone.

A Cleveland native with advanced degrees in urban planning and development, Samira brings a wealth of knowledge, experience, and connections to the CTC that will further efforts to plant and maintain a healthy urban tree canopy in Cleveland. Samira was the Neighborhood Planning Manager for MidTown Cleveland, Inc. where she was responsible for leading MidTown's tree plan from concept to implementation, helping developing neighborhood parks and green space, executing placemaking and public art projects, and assisting in the facilitation of MidTown's Neighborhood Vision Plan. Prior to that, she was a Cleveland Foundation Public Service Fellow at MidTown.

CONSERVING AND PROTECTING LAND



KEEPING OHIO'S WATERS CLEAN

There's a familiar acronym among Western Reserve Land Conservancy staff that is a critical part of our conservation success: WRRSP. The Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program, created by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency more than 20 years ago, supported five major projects by the Land Conservancy that permanently protect nearly 1,000 acres of high-quality wetlands, clean water resources, and unique wildlife habitat across Northeast Ohio.

"This Ohio-based program is critical to funding important water and wetland

restoration projects," said Chris Szell, Director of Conservation Project Management at the Land Conservancy. "In 2022, one Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District loan of \$200 million for construction of an underground water storage tunnel allowed the sewer district to sponsor 10 WRRSP projects – five of which were Land Conservancy projects."

These projects received major WRRSP funding over the course of several years. Without it, we could not complete these critically important conservation projects.

- Black Fork Preserve at Charles Mills in Mifflin Township, Richland County – 480 acres
- Farmington Forested Wetland Expansion in Trumbull County – 185 acres
- Bridge Creek Wetlands in Geauga County – 76 acres
- Whittlesey Beach Ridge Preserve in Lake County – 80 acres
- Seasons Road Fen in Portage County 113 Acres

TINKERS CREEK

- The Portage Park District took ownership of a 112-acre parcel on Seasons Road in Streetsboro known as the Tinkers Creek Greenway. Previous land acquisitions along the Greenway were used to create Trail Lake Park, south of this new property and adjacent to Herrick Fen State Nature Preserve.
- Funding for this project covers restoration activities including invasive species control, plugging an old oil and gas well, clearing debris, restoring nine acres of wetlands and planting over 70 acres of forest and meadow habitat. The property is primarily meadow but includes a large wetland, streams, and a portion of high-quality rare wetland fen habitat for endangered species. The wetlands and tributaries on this property that flow into Tinkers Creek and provide habitat for many different species of plants and wildlife will be clean and healthy.

KINGSVILLE SWAMP

 Western Reserve Land Conservancy worked closely with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History to permanently conserve 29 acres of land adjacent to Kingsville Swamp in Ashtabula County. At least two rare species have been documented on the property: the state-threatened Walters' St. Johnswort (*Triadenum walteri*), a flowering plant that grows in abundance on this property, and the globally vulnerable West Virginia white butterfly (*Pieris virginiensis*), a small white butterfly found primarily in wooded habitats.

AEP

American Electric Power (AEP), Western Reserve Land
Conservancy, Ohio Public Works Commission and Muskingum
Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) have worked
together to permanently preserve 934 acres of forestland in
Linton Township, Coshocton County, Ohio. The Extension
Property is adjacent to the original 1,827-acre Coshocton
Forest Property (to the north) and the 3,807-acre Wills Creek
Lake Property (to the south). This land, which has been open for
public use for years as part of the Conesville Public Recreation
Area, will forever remain open for public use.

CARBON CREDITS AND REGEN NETWORK

Western Reserve Land Conservancy recently partnered with City Forest Credits, a Seattle-based nonprofit that has revolutionized the carbon offset world by creating an urban-based carbon-credit registry. With their Carbon+ Credits Program, companies can purchase carbon credits from local Land Conservancy projects – such as conserved property with lush old-growth forest that will not be logged and will remain in its natural state – to offset their carbon emissions. While carbon credits are the primary motivation for buyers, these projects provide additional cobenefits to the environment and the communities where they exist by preserving the forests, streams, and wildlife habitat for future generations.



Bumb Property in Huron County

BUMB

- 100-acres were conserved in Huron County. This property is the 27th easement recorded by Bob and Deb Bumb, bringing their total acres preserved to 2,830 acres. Bob, an 8th generation farmer, and Deb, a 7th generation farmer, took the lead from Deb's parents who preserved over 600 acres.
- This particular property contains about 60 acres of active agricultural land with nearly all Prime Farmland Soils, about 40 acres of forested areas, about 5,000 feet of two tributaries from the Huron River, Slate Run, and Mud Run. The property connects two sides of farmland previously preserved by Bob and Deb and is located within three miles of several hundred acres of preserved farmland.

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES



GARDEN OF ELEVEN ANGELS

Healing and closure have come for the residents of Imperial Avenue and the families of 11 angels. Hundreds of local community activists, residents, elected officials, businesses, and family members were on hand to witness the grand opening of the Garden of Eleven Angels.

Western Reserve Land Conservancy partnered with Burton, Bell, Carr Development, Inc., LAND Studio, a host of other local organizations, and the families of the 11 angels to lead the years-long effort to acquire and demolish the site and other adjacent properties and create a community space and memorial for the women.

The Garden of Eleven Angels is intended to uplift the surrounding neighborhoods of Mount Pleasant and Buckeye-Shaker. Both of these neighborhoods, much like many neighborhoods in the City of Cleveland, have experienced significant population loss, disinvestment, and blight resulting from the foreclosure crisis and Great Recession of 2008, which disproportionately impacted

these communities due to discriminatory practices including redlining and predatory lending.

The Garden of Eleven Angels will serve as a call for our community to do better, to protect and care for one another, and to oppose the systems of oppression and injustice that often allow these kinds of horrific acts to go unnoticed, and to happen in the first place.

EUCLID BEACH MOBILE HOME COMMUNITY

- To ensure a 28-acre mobile home community in the Greater Collinwood neighborhood remained under local control and that residents would be treated with dignity and respect, we purchased the Euclid Beach Mobile Home Community.
- In concert with more than a dozen housing, government, and nonprofit agencies, there was a year-long community planning process to determine the future of the site. The result was overwhelmingly clear: local residents want a connected urban greenspace along Lake Erie that can be enjoyed by the entire region.

CITY OF HAMILTON PROPERTY INVENTORY

- As part of larger urban revitalization efforts to address the city's changed needs, uses, and conditions of the built environment, the City of Hamilton requested a parcel-level property inventory.
- Land Conservancy staff inventoried over 31,000 parcels in Hamilton and provided the city with vital data such as code violations, vacant properties, illegal dumping, and neighborhood-scale maps visualizing the huge data set.



U.S. EPA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROBLEM SOLVING GRANT

- With funding from the U.S. EPA, the Land Conservancy is partnering with city agencies to create the Cleveland Vacant Land Opportunity Tool (CLEVELOT), a tool that creates a transparent accessible and equitable vacant land reuse process.
- The 30,000 vacant lots in Cleveland are a burden on city resources and the people who live nearby. CLEVELOT will help reduce maintenance, improve the quality of life for residents, and make Cleveland climate resilient.



Khalid Ali, the Land Conservancy's Urban Greenspace Coordinator at the Woodhill Community Garden, Photo: The Land

WOODHILL COMMUNITY GARDEN

- Three vacant parcels next to the Calvary Hill Church of God in Christ and the East End Neighborhood House are now a vibrant community garden thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- In addition to providing fresh, locally-grown produce to neighbors, the Garden has wash stations, fenced-in raised garden beds, an irrigation system, paved pathways and a driveway, a pavilion shelter for community gatherings and educational programming, and much more.

DUMPING PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP

- With support from the Cuyahoga County Soil and Water District, we launched a collaborative illegal dumping prevention campaign in Cleveland's vacant lots and properties that included neighborhood outreach and information for residents on how to report illegal dumping.
- The results were substantial: we collected 349 bags of trash and 108 tires, hosted 15 community cleanups involving over 200 volunteers, surveyed 14,606 parcels for illegal dumping and created and distributed over 1,000 educational fliers, brochures, door hangers, and magnets.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Western Reserve Land Conservancy hosts an array of virtual and in-person educational programs for children and adults that expand nature knowledge and allow attendees to visit and appreciate the natural areas, family farms, and urban green spaces we've protected.

This last fiscal year we offered 30 in-person field trips for 566 attendees as part of our Field Explorations and Nature Quests series. We also offered 15 virtual programs attracting over 6,400 registrants. These educational presentations have garnered over 8,000 views on our YouTube channel and helped us stay connected with our supporters during the pandemic. Our farreaching virtual series has gained national attention and is wellregarded among nature enthusiasts.



Tom & Paula Bartlett and State Park Manager Chris Ashley hosted our group at the owl banding station on Kelleys Island. That night saw a Lights Out, an initiative to turn record breaking 41 owls captured, with Master Bird Bander Tom and his volunteers from Kelleys Island banding 39 Northern Audubon, Saw-whet owls, one Eastern Screech owl and recapturing one Northern Saw-whet. After the birds had been banded and recorded, they were safely released to continue their nightime journey.

ZOOM INTO NATURE: CONSERVATION AWARENESS & LIGHTS OUT

Our Conservation Awareness series featured a program on off building lights during spring and fall bird migration. Presenter Harvey Webster described the fatal impacts of light and glass on birds and informed us of the wonderful work of a group of early morning volunteers who walk the streets of Cleveland gathering birds--their efforts save many.





NATURE QUESTS: OBERLIN PRESERVE

The forested wetlands at Oberlin Preserve are a biological gem filled with vernal pools and wetlands poised for exploration. Guided by naturalist Judy Semroc, our intrepid questers had an opportunity to learn about isopods, side swimmers, and caddisflies and hold a Wood frog egg mass and Garter snake.

VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM: INVITING BIODIVERSITY INTO YOUR GARDEN

This five-part virtual symposium focused on the ecosystem benefits of landscaping with native plants. Delivered in partnership with the Cleveland Pollinator and Native Plant Symposium and Nature Spark, we provided the platform and moderation for this series that attracted participants from nearly every state and Canada. This series hosts national and regional experts who inspired viewers to create habitats in their yards that are not only pleasing to the eye, but support pollinators and native wildlife species.

SPORTING CIRCLE



Hunters and anglers best understand the value of protecting land, and we are proud to partner with the Department of Natural Resources to make our preserves available for everyone to experience and enjoy.

-Alex Czayka, Chief Conservation Officer, Western Reserve Land Conservancy

Thanks to a new Ohio program and a collaboration with Western Reserve Land Conservancy, sportsmen and women can now hunt on land owned and managed by the Land Conservancy, including at Ashcroft Woods, one of our Signature Parks and Preserves.

The Ohio Landowner/Hunter Access
Partnership (OLHAP) program is
administered statewide by the Ohio
Department of Natural Resources. It allows
landowners to permit public hunting on
privately held lands. The Land Conservancy
is given preference to participate since we
are enrolled in the state's Wetlands Reserve
Program.

This program is another tool to engage the public, promote the value of conserved land, and allow for hunting access on approximately 2,400 acres of Land Conservancy property.





The Cleveland Police Athletic League (PAL) brought young anglers to Blue Heron Preserve in Memory of Janet Franklin Foster – a Western Reserve Land Conservancy Signature Park & Preserve – for a fun day of fishing and enjoying nature.

On June 14, 2022 more than 20 kids from Cleveland PAL joined two dozen Cleveland Police Officers for a morning of environmental education and fun fishing. Anglers young and old caught and released blue gill and bass and walked away with a fishing rod and backpack compliments of the Cleveland Police Foundation. The day ended with lunch and a visit from the Cleveland Police Mounted and K9 units.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Every June, we celebrate our landowners and supporters at Conservation Celebration, a fun and intimate way to share our appreciation for the people who help make our vision a reality. We use the opportunity to present two of our highest organizational honors: The Grimm Family Conservation Medal and the top-secret surprise announcement of the Sugar Maple Award winner.

The Grimm Conservation Medal honors conservationists for their outstanding individual leadership and distinguished service to preserving and protecting our region's natural and historic resources for the benefit of their community and for future generations. Two conservation families received the 2022 Conservation Medal Winners.

Linda and Gayle Gifford from Chesterland, Ohio conserved 27.5 acres of their property, the last of Linda's father's 150-acre dairy farm. Their commitment to keep the land that has been in Linda's family for generations led them to work with the Land Conservancy to establish permanent protections. "It's the last part of my dad's 150-acre dairy farm," Linda said. "I'm a sixth generation Geauga County resident. It's very special here because there's so much growth in Chesterland and I don't want this land to be developed. I want to keep it a farm forever, it's just so special to us."

Dawn and Darrell Fleming-Kendall conserved 128 acres of their grass-fed cattle farm in Thompson, Ohio. Their sustainable approach to farming keeps the land healthy and provides delicious local foods for sale at their store, The Ox Shoppe. "We understand the health benefits of grass-fed cows, the amount of nutrition you can pack into the beef. Meals in the U.S. can travel up to 1,500 miles to get from farm to plate," Darrell said. "There have been days when we can measure the distance our food travels in feet. We want to provide food for our community that is local, healthy, and safe. Having preserved farmland to make this happen is absolutely critical."

The Sugar Maple Award winner is the Land Conservancy's best kept secret. In 2022, our board chair Mitchell Schneider was surprised to learn he was the year's recipient. Staff went to great lengths to conceal the true winner from Mitchell, going so far as to enlist the help of Trustee Loyal Wilson to pose as that year's winner in order to throw Mitchell off the scent. As Mitchell stepped down from being our Board chair, welcoming our new board chair Craig White, we presented him with the "12 Things We Love About Mitchell Schneider." Twelve of our staff went on stage to each deliver a short speech about Mitchell and what they loved most about working with him as we presented him with the Land Conservancy's highest honor.

Once again, Conservation Celebration was a resounding success.





IN MEMORIAM

In August 2021, Western Reserve Land Conservancy and all of Cleveland mourned the passing of Jacquie Gillon, Manager of Community Engagement and Diversity.

Jacquie attended Shaw High School and then went on to Hiram College where she graduated in 1978 with a degree in communications. She dove into local advocacy, and was appointed to the former East Cleveland City Commission at just 23. She went on to serve three terms on East Cleveland City Council focusing on community development, youth, environmental policy, and safety and law enforcement.

Jacquie then spent 19 years with Neighborhood Centers Association and Neighborhood Leadership Institute, co-facilitating and mentoring 29 classes of Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland. She joined Western Reserve Land Conservancy in 2014 focusing on urban blight removal and community engagement. She also led our organization's DEIJ Committee.



In 2019, Jacquie told Freshwater Cleveland that, "I want to make sure that people recognize that a leader is only as important as the people who are working with them, and we endeavor to be a collective and not a hierarchy. And for African-Americans, it's particularly important. The civil rights movement was not successful because Martin Luther King was the leader. There were many leaders with him. So yes, ideally you always have that one person who convenes everyone as a focus, but we have got to come together and work collectively in Cleveland."

Jacquie impacted so many people throughout her life and career and the Land Conservancy will be forever grateful for her contributions to our organization and to the City of Cleveland.

At Western Reserve Land Conservancy, it is our privilege to work with landowners across the region to permanently conserve and steward cherished local landscapes. We foster strong and lasting partnership and friendships with generations of landowners. We feel a true sense of loss when landowners pass away. Through the work that we do to conserve land in perpetuity, it is our commitment to remember, honor, and celebrate the tremendous legacy of those landowners who are no longer with us. These are the great landowners who we have recently lost:

David R. Siekkinen
Scott Wolstein
Lawrance J. "Larry" Young

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VISIONARY \$25,000+

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