



**16  
OVER  
60**

# **AWARDS GALA**

**Wednesday, November 17, 2021**

**Senior  
NEIGHBORS**  
no longer alone

**LEARN MORE ABOUT  
THE 2021 HONOREES!**

# 16 OVER 60 ALUMNI



**2018 HONOREES**



**2019 HONOREES**



**2020 HONOREES**

## Recognizing 16 Over 60 Honorees of the Past

Each year, since 2018, the 16 Over 60 Awards Gala has recognized and shared the contributions and impact of those over 60. These individuals, and all of those over 60 years of age, are an important part of the fabric of our community in West Michigan!

To learn more about each of these engaged & inspiring honorees, visit [seniorneighbors.org/16over60](http://seniorneighbors.org/16over60).



## FRED BIVINS

*Arts Ambassador, Community Booster, Artist*

When Fred took an early retirement, he devoted himself to art, his studio, and the arts community in Grand Rapids. As a woodturner and printmaker, he operates Vincroft Studios which he developed into a hub for local artists with weekly Spaghetti Nights and annual gallery sales. According to one patron, Fred “is an incredible craftsman and woodworker, one of the few Renaissance men left in this world.” Described as both “Mr. Festival” and “Ambassador for the Arts in Grand Rapids,” Fred has been involved in the Festival of the Arts for more than 40 years. Through this work, he helps raise the profile of regional artists, encouraging them to create, exhibit, and successfully sell artwork in their own community. He also managed the bi-annual ArtPrize exhibition at the Women’s City Club. Fred sees his involvement in local arts as a way to “help in the future look of the arts in Grand Rapids.” His goal is to expose as many people, young and old, to as many artistic disciplines as possible. Fred also strives to improve quality of life in his community through service on the board of the Mitten Foundation and the Grand Rapids City Manager’s Art Advisory Committee.



## MARILYN BOOKER

*Agent of Change, Facilitator, Relationship Builder*

Since turning 60, Marilyn has devoted herself to helping others experience genuine and healthy relationships, see value in their own gifts, and be their authentic selves. She does this through her work at Dispute Resolution Center of West Michigan by promoting “restorative practices,” which seeks to build and repair positive relationships between people and communities. She has been instrumental in expanding restorative practices at every level at Wyoming Public Schools, helping students, teachers, and staff improve and repair relationships to better focus on their mission of education. She has worked with organizations such as Grand Valley State University, Kent County Prosecutor’s Office, City Attorney’s Office, Kent Intermediate School District, and several other school districts in Michigan to design restorative practices/restorative justice programming. She has also provided training for a wide variety of other organizations throughout the state. Marilyn is passionate about restorative practices because she believes it can “have a major ripple effect on how human beings work together to create and live in a better society that acknowledges and values everyone.” She does not seek attention for her work; she simply hopes to inspire others to be their best selves, grow and help one another, and enjoy the ebbs and flows of life.



## LARRY BYLE

*Devoted Museum Volunteer, Inspiring Coach, Teacher*

Larry's volunteer work with the Grand Rapids Public Museum was like a second career. Starting as a docent in 1996, he quickly gravitated to the Van Dort Print Shop, where he demonstrated 1890's printing processes for guests. Twenty-five years and more than 18,000 volunteer hours later, Larry was still there three days a week until cancer treatments slowed him down. A beloved inspiration to visitors and students, he was described as "simply an incredible human being." For Larry, it was the hope of influencing the children visiting the shop, through education or encouragement, that spurred him on. Having taught Science at Hudsonville High School for 41 years and helping create the school's Summer Science institute, Larry was a lifelong educator. He also mentored students coaching football and baseball and was named to the Michigan High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame. His love of sciences

and nature also drove him to volunteer with the Sierra Club on projects in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and at Antietam National Battlefield. When Larry sadly lost his battle with cancer this summer, a former student wrote, "I want to thank Larry Byle for being my rock, my inspiration, and my hope for a more beautiful world."



## LOIS CAREY

*Flower Lady, Compassionate Volunteer, Senior Advocate*

It has been said that Lois was born with a natural spirit to help, lead and make a difference. For 30 years she has demonstrated this, volunteering tirelessly throughout our community. She actively promotes the well-being of local seniors through her service with the Area Agency on Aging's Advocates for Senior Issues as well as Kent County's Council on Aging. She participates in support groups to improve caregivers' knowledge when caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's, and even appeared in a short film for a dementia support group. She regularly helps in many ways with Veteran Pinning Ceremonies. For years, Lois and her late husband were active with the American Red Cross, taking on twelve separate three-week disaster assignments. Known as the Flower Lady, Lois also coordinated Hospice of Michigan's Flower Program for 16 years, coordinating the delivery of more than 35,000 hand-

crafted bouquets to adults and children on hospice. An active member at Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, Lois co-sponsors monthly senior activities programs and has served for the past eight years on the Congregational Life Committee. For those affected by her devotion, Lois' bright smile and engaging personality are "like a sunbeam on a gray Michigan winter day."



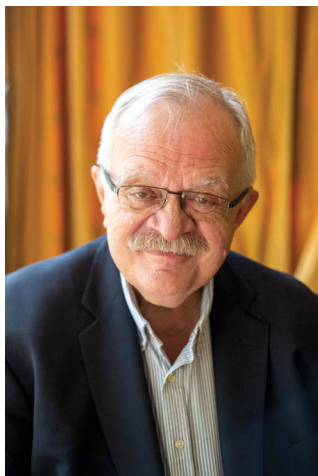


## DEBORAH CLANTON

*Advocate for the Under-served, Community Organizer, Sorority Leader*

**D**eborah is not content being idle. After 30 years with the Kentwood District Court she retired in 2014 as the Court Administrator and the City's first District Court Magistrate. Now, finding fulfillment in helping others improve their life, she continues serving the community through multiple organizations. For 47 years she has been active with the public service organization Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and has helped raise more than \$400,000 in local scholarship funds. She has served two terms on the board of the Grand Rapids African American Health Institute and currently chairs a committee. Volunteering with the non-partisan group PROACTIVE, she championed efforts to persuade residents to register and vote, participate in the census, and get vaccinated. She volunteers at the Samaritas Affordable Living Community, on the board of

the Calvin Prison Initiative Foundation, and on the Healthier Communities Black Vaccination Resources Committee. Her four decades of faithful worship and service at Messiah Baptist Church include 15 years of teaching Sunday school, 35+ years as an usher and currently serving on the Pastor's leadership team. Believing strongly in the scripture of Luke 12:48, "To whom much is given, much is required," Deborah's passion for service reflects her faith.



## REVEREND BOB EVANS

*Mentor, Non-Profit Leader, Pastor*

**R**everend Bob Evans has been active in the Heartside Neighborhood for many years, helping countless individuals get a second chance at life through his work as a case manager. When he retired from case management after turning 60, his passion for helping others drove him to a full-time position as a donor relations officer at Guiding Light as well as many volunteer roles throughout the community. At Guiding Light, Bob seeks and provides resources for individuals who are struggling with homelessness and addiction, helping them fulfill their God-given potential. Outside of this work, he consults with two non-profit organizations, helping them expand their services through improved donor relations and community connections. He also serves on the boards of 501(c)(3) church organizations and volunteers with his own church as a bible teacher and supply pastor. In addition, he records a weekly

online devotional for people in recovery. "I'm a preacher at heart," he says. "If someone asks me to preach, no matter what it's for, I happily oblige." Bob believes everyone deserves to make amends and discover their own path to a better life. For him, the joy of helping people become successful community members is a gift that keeps giving.



## DR. JAMES FAHNER

*Health Care Hero, Visionary Leader, Medical Mentor*

Since graduating from medical school in 1983, Dr. Fahner has dedicated his career to treating children with cancer. As founder and Endowed Division Chief of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology at Spectrum Health Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, he has helped mold and nurture the hospital's children's cancer treatment program to become one of the largest in the Midwest, nationally recognized for excellence and innovation. Recently, the hospital's first leadership endowment was established and named after Dr. Fahner. He also is an Associate Professor at MSU and the Medical Director of Strategic Philanthropy and Provider Engagement for Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. His volunteer service includes board work for the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Foundation, Spectrum Health, the Hospice of Michigan Foundation, Van Andel Institute, and Van Andel Institute Graduate School. For the Make-A-Wish Foundation of

Michigan, he serves as Medical Advisor and works to measure the positive outcomes children derive from having a wish granted. In recent years, he has received numerous awards and honors for his work and dedication. As a mentor to those pursuing health careers, Dr. Fahner finds hope and joy each day in helping inspire a "circle of curiosity, learning, service, and dedication to community and compassion."

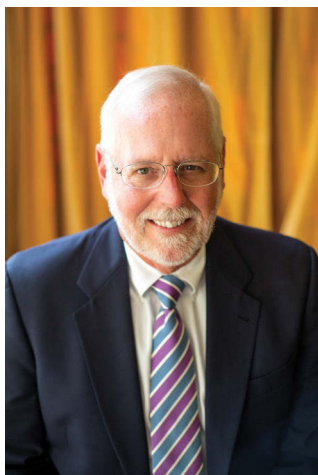


## MARLIN FEYEN

*Community Builder, Servant Leader, Traveler*

Though quiet and humble about his efforts, Marlin is a servant leader and his actions speak loudly. He lives with purpose and pursues goals. With his partner Bob Zylstra, Marlin grew Feyen Zylstra from a small electrical firm to a nationally recognized electrical services and industrial tech company. Now, stepping away from the firm he cofounded, he has adopted five priorities: healthy living, meaningful engagement, mentoring, life-long learning, and travel. His engagement and commitment to community remains strong. For four years, he chaired Safe Places Alliance and advocated with the City Commission and State legislature to intervene in the violence of core urban areas. He serves on the board of Roosevelt Park Ministries, advocating on behalf of recent immigrants from Hispanic cultures. With the Social Justice Group of Westminster Presbyterian Church, he pursues racial

justice in housing, employment and the judicial system. Marlin also recently worked on the strategic plan and feasibility study for the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre, Chairs the Grand Rapids Public Museum Board of Trustees and participates in the campaign to revitalize the Grand River. Marlin believes it takes participation by all citizens to meet the full needs in a society, and he leads by example.



## DR. KEVIN FOLEY

*Dementia Care Advocate, Innovator, Educator*

**D**r. Foley's career has focused on improving care for adults suffering from dementia and expanding educational opportunities for health professionals in dementia care. In 2001, he began caring for older adults with dementia with a local internal medicine practice. At the time, Kent County lacked specialty services for diagnosing and managing memory disorders. Seeing the need, Kevin garnered support from area physicians and community leaders to establish the Alzheimer's Disease and Memory Disorders Service, the first in West Michigan to provide comprehensive services to patients and their caregivers. As the clinic medical director since 2003, he has personally cared for nearly 8,000 patients with memory loss and established vital synergies with organizations and agencies, improving the lives of those struggling with dementia. He also has mentored hundreds of students, residents, and

health professionals to broaden their knowledge and care management skills. Since turning 60, he's focused on a new collaboration with Michigan State University supporting post-mortem, neuropathological studies of Alzheimer's disease. Eventually this will lead to more research and reach a broader population of patients. A staunch advocate of collaboration, Dr. Foley readily credits the skills, expertise and devotion of countless partners, co-workers, and leaders for his own impactful achievements.



## DR. RONALD GRIFKA

*Child Advocate, Healthcare Visionary, Runner*

**G**rowing up with a brother with Down syndrome inspired Ron Grifka to become a physician. At the time, he wished doctors would have done more for his family. Now, as Chief Medical Officer at University of Michigan Health-West hospital, he inspires colleagues to strive for constant improvement by asking, "How can we get a little bit better today?" Despite challenges with COVID, Ron will tell you the last two years have offered rewarding opportunities to improve health care in West Michigan. He helped develop more than 20 new medical and surgical programs and helped establish a Comprehensive Stroke Center, improving care for stroke patients through a concerted cross-disciplinary approach. Overseeing Patient Quality and Safety, he saw Metro Hospital's quality score improve from grade C to A, the only hospital in Grand Rapids with this achievement! Despite work demands, Dr. Grifka continues to

exercise 5-6 days a week, running 6 miles and participating in 5K and 10K runs. Also, he feels honored to serve on the boards of Kids' Food Basket and the Children's Healing Center. As a still-practicing pediatric cardiologist, Ron says the recognitions that matter most to him are written by hand and decorated in crayon by his patients.



## OLIVER HALE

*Chef, Healthy Lifestyle Speaker, Organ Transplant Ambassador*

A two-time kidney transplant survivor, Chef Oliver has served tirelessly as Ambassador for the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS). He frequently speaks at events to share his story about living with a transplant and organ donation, both through UNOS and Gift of Life Michigan. As a retired Award-Winning Healthy Lifestyle Chef, he also demonstrates healthy cooking for a variety of local audiences and co-hosts a YouTube cooking show called The Kidney Cookery, for people with kidney disease. Chef O is a board member emeritus for Meals on Wheels Western Michigan and is on the board of Revive and Thrive, an organization that feeds cancer patients. Before Covid, he regularly planned and prepared summer meals for his church SERVE group for more than 120 people. Since turning 60, he has received awards for his services including the Grand Rapids Legacy Award. In his free time, he competes in cooking competitions, and plays tennis and pickleball. Chef Oliver is enthusiastic about volunteering time to help those who can't help themselves. Organ donors saved his life. He hopes when people see how a transplant survivor like him has dedicated himself to helping others, they'll be more motivated to donate their organs too.



## ALICE JOHNSON

*Devoted Neighbor, Foster Parent, Veteran Advocate*

Alice is always busy taking care of people, helping the homeless, feeding the needy, advocating for vaccination, and babysitting for young mothers who need someone trusting to look out for their children. She retired from the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans after serving 35 years. Although it was her career, she always saw it as a service: an opportunity and a privilege to give back to those who had once served so selflessly for her. During that time, she also cared for nearly 50 foster children in her home, coming to her through Catholic Charities. In time, she even adopted six of those kids to raise as her own, along with her three biological children, focusing on building their confidence and establishing wholesome values. More recently, Alice has shifted her attention and involvement to helping those trapped and impacted by sex trafficking, working closely with Wedgwood Christian Services' Specialized Residential Treatment Program. Through this volunteer work, she helps victims of sex trafficking build self-esteem, understand issues of personal safety, develop goals and gain hope for their future. Though Alice has dedicated her life to offering comfort and building hope and empowerment, she humbly says, "I'm just working to do my part."





## HAROLD MAST

*Community Leader, Senior Advocate, Active Veteran*

Serving others has been a key tenant for Harold Mast throughout his life. For 32 years he served in elected positions as a City and County Commissioner, with a special interest in human services and improving lives in his community. A staunch advocate for seniors and veterans, he helped pass a County millage for both groups. Upon retiring from Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services, at age 60 he became Executive Director of Genesis Non-profit Housing Corporation. There, he was instrumental in developing the first Affordable Assisted Living facility in Michigan for Medicaid eligible seniors. In addition, he was able to successfully develop another 150 apartments for persons with disabilities. Hoping to build on this success, he is now involved with efforts to develop a similar AAL facility in the Franklin/Hall neighborhood. Harold's ongoing service also includes working on the board of Meals on Wheels of West Michigan, chairing the Legislative Subcommittee for the Area Agency on Aging of West Michigan, chairing the Michigan Senior Advocates Council, and serving as chair at Network 180. In addition, Harold serves his fellow veterans as 1st Vice Commander of the United Veterans Council of West Michigan and remains very active in his church.



## PAULINE MEYER

*Gatherer of Goods, Helper of the Homeless, Veterans Volunteer*

To many, Pauline is a true inspiration. Though 70, she works wholeheartedly as if she were a youngster, advocating for and helping meet the needs of those lacking food or other necessities. Her passion for serving veterans and the poor is never-ending and her impact is felt throughout the community. She serves as a homeless veterans volunteer for Community Rebuilders, at West Michigan Veteran's Association Food Pantry, at Saint Mark's breakfast for the homeless, at Mathew's House, at Shepard's of Independence and many more! Her work through American Legion Post 459 is another constant in her life, leading to many other ways she gives back. There, she raises money for children through bake sales, shops for and wraps Christmas gifts for those who cannot afford them, and volunteers at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans. Pauline is willing to do whatever she can for veterans and the homeless, sometimes that means mailing out 300 Christmas cards for veterans overseas and other times it is picking up donated items to deliver to veterans in need. Contributing to the well-being of others in the community is very much a way of life for Pauline and she wouldn't have it any other way!



## SR. M. ROSITA SCHILLER

*Educator, Dietitian, Grant Writer*

**A**t 16, Sister Rosita joined the Sisters of Mercy, an order of Catholic nuns dedicated to service. Pursuing a career in dietetics and education, she eventually spent 25 years at Ohio State University as Professor and Director of Medical Dietetics, authoring or co-authoring more than 60 articles and books! Now, at 85, she has no intention of retiring anytime soon! In the third “phase” of her career, she is a grants specialist with Saint Mary’s Foundation of Mercy Health, helping raise millions of dollars to support vulnerable patients. She served on the hospital’s board of trustees, chaired its Quality Committee, and currently is a member of its Community Health and Well-Being committee. A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, she sits on the Trinity Health Nutrition Advisory Council, helping develop standards for nutrition services at 92 hospitals nationwide. She also promotes literacy in young children through Mercy’s

Reach Out and Read program, serves on the board of the Ohio State Alumni Club of West Michigan and is a regular reader for Sunday Televised Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew. For Sr. Rosita, her years of service have been joyful. She is grateful for God’s blessings of good health, energy, and motivation to continue productive engagement.



## ANTHONY SPALLONE

*Veterans Health Advocate, Helping Hand, Staunch Ally*

**F**or decades, Tony has fought to make life better for veterans, as well as the nurses and caregivers supporting them. In his late 50’s, when he was diagnosed with Agent Orange exposure from his service in Vietnam, he moved to the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans. Most of the vets Tony fights for are older and disabled. He gives them hope and encouragement and even shops for them! Despite major health issues, he frequently travels to Lansing to testify at the Capitol, advocating for policy changes and for the construction of the new Veterans’ Home. The pandemic hit the Veterans’ Home particularly hard, claiming the lives of 19 of Tony’s fellow vets. During the height of it, Tony took on the battle of his life; fighting for adequate protective gear, treatments, vaccinations, and policies. He also made it his job to save the jobs of the caregivers, arguing veterans deserve to have quality care as their basic right. His advocacy

was instrumental in mandating that everyone within the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans must be vaccinated. Tony says, “In the military, I was taught to *Never leave one man or woman back*. So that is what I do!”

# Thank you to our 2021 Sponsors

## GOLD



DAVID & CAROL  
VAN ANDEL FAMILY  
FOUNDATION



KLOPCIC FAMILY  
FOUNDATION \*

## SILVER



THE MEIJER FOUNDATION



## BRONZE

Feyen Zylstra

Fusion IT \*

Hospice of Michigan

Meijer \*

Mercy Health Saint Mary's

Mercantile Bank of Michigan

Peter C. & Emajean Cook

Foundation \*

Priority Health \*

Sisters of Mercy

Spectrum Health

UMRC & Porter Hills \*

University of Michigan

Health-West \*

Varnum LLP \*

Warner Norcross +

Judd LLP

## FRIENDS

Philip and April Alt \*

BDO USA, LLP \*

Blue Cross Blue Shield

Robert and Luanne Barnes

Beacon Hill at Eastgate

Clark Retirement Community \*

CPA for Seniors of Rivertown  
Finance

Crossroads Eldercare Options

Grand Rapids Community  
Foundation

Grand Rapids Public Museum  
Barbara Hohman

Guiding Light

Hylant \*

Integrity Business Solutions LLC \*

Win and Kyle Irwin

Kennari Consulting

The Laurels of Hudsonville \*

Life EMS Ambulance

Maner Costerisan

Messiah Baptist Church

Plante Moran PLLC \*

Larry and Sally Robson \*

Lori and Kevin Smith \*

Katherine and Justin Steffy \*

Unity of Grand Rapids

Doug and Kathy Vance

The Village of Heather Hills

\* 2021 Community Partner in Philanthropy

Photography  
Provided By:



TIBERIUS  
IMAGES

## OFFICIAL PRINT MEDIA PARTNER

**MiBiz**

## 2021 EVENT COMMITTEE

Roxanne Dudicz

*Event Co-Chair*

Julie Metsker

*Event Co-Chair*

JoAnn Abraham

Syd Baxter

Carole Chisholm

Tara DeWitt

Elizabeth Eardley

Cheryl Edwards-Cannon

Margaret Howard

Beth Mans

Natalie McGorty

Carla Moore

Shanna Reynolds

Barry Van Dyck

Doug Vance

Senior  
**NEIGHBORS**  
no longer alone

678 Front Ave NW #205  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504