

The logo is a circular emblem with a purple-to-blue gradient. It features a central illustration of the Cleveland skyline, including the Terminal Tower and the Rockwell Group building. The background of the circle is filled with numerous thin, white, radial lines that create a sunburst or starburst effect. Five white, five-pointed stars are arranged in an arc across the top of the circle. A semi-transparent grey rectangular box is centered over the lower half of the circle, containing the text 'The Cleveland Heritage Medal' and '2018' separated by a vertical line.

The Cleveland  
Heritage Medal

2018

The Cleveland  
Heritage Medal  
2018



Since its creation in 2015, the Cleveland Heritage Medal has become Greater Cleveland's highest civilian award. It serves to honor those who rose above the rest to elevate our city and region in historic ways.

Modeled after the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the distinction has been bestowed upon 13 worthy citizens, each of whom has contributed to the rich and complex fabric that makes our city so great.

The Cleveland Heritage Medal Committee chose to pay tribute to individuals whose commitment to service to others; teamwork; courage and respect; and inclusion and diversity has left an indelible mark on all who live here.

As in previous years, the committee has insisted that the selection process be based solely on true merit, free of politics and bias of any kind. Those chosen to receive the Cleveland Heritage Medal would be recognized for their estimable leadership, collaborative spirit and perennial focus on the greater good.

The distinguished inaugural class of 2016, in meeting these requirements, set an auspicious tone.

The first recipients: Morton L. Mandel; Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr.; Sandra Pianalto; Richard W. Pogue; and Sen. George V. Voinovich.

The tradition continued in 2017 with another stellar class that included Samuel H. Miller; Albert B. Ratner; and Michael R. White.

This year the Cleveland Heritage Medal welcomes its newest honorees: Toby Cosgrove, MD.; Robert D. Gries; Steven A. Minter; and Jerry Sue Thornton, PhD. This exemplary collection of leaders has blazed new paths in their respective fields of medicine; business and philanthropy; social service and the nonprofit sector; and education.

All have passed their professional mantels to the next generation, yet their influence throughout Greater Cleveland and beyond remains palpable.

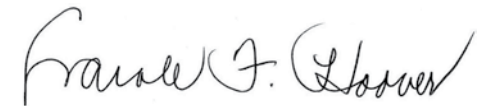
Please join us as we thank them for giving so much of themselves and individually and collectively enriching our lives.

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Frank G. Jackson.

The Honorable Frank G. Jackson  
Mayor  
City of Cleveland

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Akram Boutros.

Akram Boutros, MD, FACHE  
President and CEO  
The MetroHealth System

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Carole F. Hoover.

Carole F. Hoover  
President and CEO  
HooverMilstein  
2017 Cleveland Heritage Medal Recipient



# Committee





2018 Cleveland Heritage  
Medal Chairs

**The Honorable  
Frank G. Jackson**  
Mayor, City of Cleveland

**Akram Boutros, MD, FACHE**  
President and CEO, The  
MetroHealth System

**Carole F. Hoover**  
President and CEO,  
HooverMilstein

Committee Members

**Kristen Baird Adams**  
PNC

**Thomas W. Adler**  
Playhouse Square Real  
Estate Services

**Mitchell Balk**  
The Mt. Sinai Health Care  
Foundation

**Carrie Carpenter**  
Gordon Square Arts District

**Rick Chiricosta**  
Medical Mutual

**Marianne Crosley**  
Cleveland Leadership Center

**Margot James Copeland**  
KeyBank Foundation



**Pamela B. Davis, MD, PhD**  
Case Western Reserve  
University School of  
Medicine

**Maureen Dee**  
Catholic Charities Corp.

**Joseph DiRocco**  
Fifth Third Bank

**David Gilbert**  
Destination Cleveland

**Don Graves, Jr.**  
KeyBank

**Rev. Cory Jenkins**  
South Euclid United Church  
of Christ

**Stuart Kohl**  
The Riverside Company

**Jim Kubacki**  
St. Edward High School

**Thomas M. McDonald**  
Thomas McDonald  
Partners, LLC

**Randy McShepard**  
RPM Inc.

**Marsha Mockabee**  
Urban League of Greater  
Cleveland

**Dan Moulthrop**  
City Club of Cleveland



**William Napier**  
Cleveland State University

**Augie Napoli**  
The United Way of Greater  
Cleveland

**Rear Adm. Michael Parks**  
American Red Cross, Greater  
Cleveland Chapter

**Jon Pinney**  
Kohrman Jackson & Krantz,  
LLP

**Ronn Richard**  
The Cleveland Foundation

**Rev. Dr. Stephen Rowan**  
Bethany Baptist Church

**Ron Soeder**  
Boys & Girls Club of  
Cleveland

**Terry Szmagala, Jr.**  
Eaton

**Brenda Terrell**  
Brenda Y. Terrell, PhD  
& Associates

**Brian Zimmerman**  
Cleveland Metroparks





# Criteria and Award Description



**No city can thrive without them.** They are the dedicated community leaders committed to creating and sustaining a city of true greatness — one that provides opportunities for businesses to prosper, for new ideas to flourish, for cultural richness to thrive and for residents to enjoy an exceptional quality of life.

During its 220 years, Cleveland has been a city blessed with accomplished leaders from civic, business, philanthropic and government spheres. Their contributions have created the lasting heritage that makes Cleveland the city it is today.

This year's recipients of the Cleveland Heritage Medal are upholding the legacy of the greatest leaders from our city's long history. These honorees were selected by a 32-person committee made up of other dedicated community and corporate leaders for this award.

These individuals have demonstrated leadership in civic, philanthropic or corporate spheres, or have made an impact in





another private or public endeavor. Their community impact reflects **service to others** marked by compassion and selflessness. They espouse **teamwork** as necessary to making a difference in our community, actively encouraging the contributions of others.

The individuals we honor with the Cleveland Heritage Medal have also demonstrated **courage and respect** as they take on difficult yet impactful initiatives for the good of Cleveland and its residents. These exceptional leaders are committed to fostering a community of **inclusion and diversity**, where differences are celebrated and all have the opportunity to participate. They are people of the highest character, serving as **role models** for others in the community.

Outstanding leaders are the foundation of a city's heritage. With this honor, we celebrate the individuals who are creating today the great Cleveland of tomorrow.



# Making of the Medal





When it came time to create the Cleveland Heritage Medal, it seemed only fitting that it be designed by young people—those whose lives and careers in Cleveland will be shaped by the legacies of the city's great leaders.

So the Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA)—known as one of the nation's top art and design schools—created a competition among its graphic design upperclassmen to create a medal that would represent the city's rich heritage. Larry O'Neal, CIA's department chair for graphic design, oversaw the creation of the Cleveland Heritage Medal.

MetroHealth President and CEO Akram Boutros, MD, FACHE, judged the competition and selected the design of the winning student, Euclid native Jessica Sandy.

She created a medal emblazoned with three iconic Cleveland landmarks—the Veterans Memorial Bridge, Terminal Tower and





Lake Erie. Its more subtle elements include five stars, which also adorn the city's seal and symbolize each of the five times Cleveland was named an All-American City by the National Civic League.

The five stars also represent the five characteristics of the Cleveland Heritage Medal recipients:

**Service to others**

**Teamwork**

**Courage and respect**

**Inclusion and diversity**

**Being a role model**



# Heritage Medal Honorees



2018  
Heritage Medal Honoree

Toby Cosgrove, MD



“I never really thought of myself as a leader in Cleveland when I started as CEO. I concentrated hard on the institution and how the institution could benefit the community.”

— Toby Cosgrove, MD

“One of the reasons Cleveland Clinic is a success is because it’s in Cleveland,” says Toby Cosgrove, MD, executive advisor and immediate past president and CEO of the world-renowned hospital system.

“Cleveland is a good filter. People are not coming here to go to the beach or to ski. They’re coming here to work,” he says. “So, when you recruit someone here, they are coming to participate.” And then “they inevitably fall in love with the city.”

Dr. Cosgrove is a recruiter extraordinaire. When current CEO Tom Mihaljevic, MD, was still weighing his initial job offer at Cleveland Clinic against a plum assignment at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Cosgrove arranged to have Dr. Mihaljevic’s name hung on his would-be office door and embroidered on a white lab coat. And that was just for starters.

In his first “State of the Clinic” address, Dr. Mihaljevic credited Toby Cosgrove with leading the Cleveland Clinic to astonishing heights,



noting that in 2017 alone, Cleveland Clinic ran one of the largest graduate medical education and training programs in the country; opened the \$276 million, 377,000-square-foot Taussig Cancer Center; built new rehabilitation centers and urgent care facilities; logged thousands of telemedicine visits; and continued to increase its uncompensated care and community activity.

During Dr. Cosgrove's tenure (2004–2017), the number of physician-scientists nearly doubled, from 1,800 to 3,400; patient visits increased from 2.8 to 7.1 million; the number of caregivers soared to 52,000; research funding grew to \$260 million; and new construction was prolific.

As many Clevelanders can tell you, *U.S. News & World Report* ranks Cleveland Clinic the No. 2 hospital in America, and the best hospital for heart care and urology. Cleveland Clinic also is one of the country's "Best Workplaces in Health Care" (*Fortune*) and among the "World's Most Ethical Companies" (Ethisphere Institute). Dr. Cosgrove



is perhaps most proud of the fact that Cleveland Clinic is the largest employer in Cleveland, the second largest employer in Ohio, and has a \$13.5 billion economic impact on Northeast Ohio.

“Cleveland Clinic adds to the region’s intellect, economy, health and welfare,” he says, offering examples of more jobs, increased salaries, vast numbers of visitors from around the globe, and the revitalization of neighborhoods around its facilities.

Dr. Cosgrove is routinely described as an idea guy, team builder and visionary. Examples abound.

He based the Cleveland Clinic’s internationally recognized Critical Care Transport (CCT) program on his experiences as chief of the U.S. Air Force Casualty Staging Flight during the Vietnam War. At age 28, Dr. Cosgrove and his small team evacuated more than 22,000 wounded, a feat that earned him a Bronze Star. Today, Cleveland Clinic’s CCT unit facilitates quick and efficient movement of critically

ill and injured patients of all ages via ambulance, helicopter and jet aircraft. It is an industry model.

With the goal of “patients first,” Dr. Cosgrove reorganized clinical services around organs and diseases, hired the first chief patient experience officer, and set into motion a “same day access” program, which in its first year served more than 1 million first-time patients—another industry model.

Confronted with the challenges of too much medical student debt and never enough high-performing researchers, Dr. Cosgrove made the Lerner College of Medicine tuition-free. In the college, a partnership with Case Western Reserve University (CWRU), students attend an extra (fifth) year to complete a research thesis. The program attracts top students worldwide (2,000 applicants for 32 positions). “I hope someday this is going to be looked at as the equivalent of a Rhodes Scholarship,” Dr. Cosgrove says proudly, noting the hospital invests \$500,000 per student.

The concept for Cleveland's Global Center for Health Innovation came out of countless trips around the globe in search of best-in-class materials and equipment to furnish hospitals. "Biomedical technology was not likely to take root in Cleveland given the intellectual fervor coming out of places like Boston, North Carolina, Austin and San Francisco," says Dr. Cosgrove. "But a medical mart had great possibilities."

His most recent brainchild—another collaboration with CWRU—will open in the summer of 2019. The \$515 million Sheila and Eric Samson Pavilion is expressly designed to advance interprofessional education, interaction and innovation. "Cities across the country are focused on 'meds and eds' (institutions of higher learning and medical facilities) says Dr. Cosgrove. "This takes us a long way on both fronts and it's a stunner of a facility."

Dr. Cosgrove ranks getting into medical school, landing a job at the Cleveland Clinic and being asked to serve as its CEO as three turning points in his life. Each comes with its own story.

Vocal about his dyslexia, Dr. Cosgrove says he chose surgery over other professions because it relied less on reading and writing and more on his dexterity. He readily admits being an average student and barely getting into medical school. He applied to 13 schools before being accepted to just one—the University of Virginia School of Medicine. (He then completed his clinical training at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston Children's Hospital and Brook General Hospital in London.)

When it was time to find a full-time gig, Cleveland was not his first pick. "I spent my first night in town in the back of a U-Haul truck in Cleveland Clinic's parking lot," he remembers. His crumbling Chevy Vega rode inside the truck because it may not have survived a tow.

“There was no reverse, but the car did have a unique feature”—a hole in the floor—“that allowed me to check road and weather conditions,” he jokes. Dr. Cosgrove ultimately worked as a cardiac surgeon for nearly 30 years, performing more than 20,000 operations and earning an international reputation for expertise in valve repair. He ultimately rose to chairman of the Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, following in the footsteps of his mentor and boss, Floyd “Fred” Loop, MD.

Dr. Cosgrove’s rise to CEO was somewhat accidental. He’d decided in 2004 that he wanted to stop performing surgeries before experiencing any decline in his athleticism. As he was contemplating what he might pursue next, Dr. Loop announced his retirement. While the C-suite was not in Dr. Cosgrove’s plans, his passion for the Cleveland Clinic and his vision for what could be accomplished drove him to apply.

Author of a book (*The Cleveland Clinic Way*) and nearly 450 journal articles and book chapters, Dr. Cosgrove has been consulted by industry leaders and successive presidential administrations. He also has filed 30 patents for surgical innovations.

What’s next? Ask Google. Dr. Cosgrove recently signed on as executive advisor to the technology company’s Healthcare & Life Sciences team. He says, “Working with Google is exciting because it’s an opportunity to do things with the massive amount of data we have in health care.” Plus, he likes the idea of wearing a black outfit and flipflops.

Dr. Cosgrove is married (Anita is “the smart and driven one in the family,” he says) and has two children.



2018  
Heritage Medal Honoree

Robert D. Gries

“The ancient Jewish prophet, Hillel, said it all in two sentences: ‘If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, what am I?’

— Robert D. Gries

“I knew growing up I wanted to continue the heritage my family established here in Cleveland,” says Bob Gries. “Four generations of my family lived here and contributed significantly to the city’s welfare.

“Most of my ancestors were born in poverty, but they succeeded. I was fortunate to live in Shaker Heights and attend the best schools (Hawken School, Taft School in Connecticut—from which he graduated in 1947—and Yale University). I always knew it was my job to stay here and try to make some difference as a fifth-generation Clevelander.”

Robert Dauby Gries is proud of his family’s rich narrative. His paternal great-great-grandfather and proclaimed hero, Simson Thorman, was the first Jewish settler in Cleveland, arriving in the early 1830s and settling in 1837. He journeyed from a small town in Bavaria, where he had worked as a sock weaver and struggled under religious and economic oppression. Soon after settling in Cleveland, Mr. Thorman wrote home and convinced 17 more people to join him—including a



woman who would become his wife and bear him 11 children.

Mr. Thorman established the city's first synagogue, was elected city councilman, and was privileged to serve as an honor guard when the train procession carrying the body of President Abraham Lincoln came through Euclid Station.

Mr. Gries tells of another paternal great-grandfather, Kaufman Hays, who had an uncanny knack for numbers. "He came to Cleveland in 1852 with 50 cents in his pocket, but became a very wealthy individual," he says. When a city official sailed to England with stolen Cleveland funds, the mayor asked Mr. Hays to save the city from bankruptcy—"which he did!" Mr. Gries notes.

Paternal grandfather Rabbi Moses Gries was rabbi of Cleveland's largest Reform temple and was instrumental in the founding of numerous Jewish and community organizations, "including the largest Sunday school in the world, with 900 children," says Mr. Gries.

Nathan Dauby, his maternal grandfather, was the builder of the May Company and a leading business and philanthropic leader. His father, Robert Hays Gries, was one of the founders of both the Cleveland Rams (1936) and the Cleveland Browns (1946) football teams and was a significant businessman and philanthropist.

As a young man, Bob Gries was profoundly disheartened by the inequity he observed in his community. "I was appalled that in this great land of opportunity, accomplished people couldn't live where they wanted, work where they wanted or join organizations they wished to serve to help others."

Upon graduation from Yale in 1951, Mr. Gries joined the May Company, which his grandfather had built into the largest department store chain in Ohio. In 1957, he became manager of the 350,000-square-foot May's on the Heights store, which in peak season had 1,000 employees.

He recalls three sales people refusing to hand their packages to a newly hired African-American woman in the housewares department; all three women resigned from their posts. Prior to this, “none of the six department stores had a minority sales person and May’s, as the largest store, was expected to set an example,” he says.

Mr. Gries participated in many small steps to help needed change occur. “I was so passionate about seeing what could be done to change things, I joined the civil rights march to Municipal Stadium in the early ’60s,” he remembers.

After 12 years at the May Company, Mr. Gries began what would become a three-decade career in venture capitalism, an industry then in its infancy. He recognized that further advancement at May Company would require moving to other cities, which for him was not an option.

In 1967, Mr. Gries served as treasurer of the Carl Stokes campaign for mayor. “Some people thought electing the first African-American mayor would fix everything, and some thought it would be the next Armageddon,” he recalls. “I believed it would be neither. It was simply a necessary next step.” Mr. Gries also was politically active with the late George Voinovich, a former mayor of Cleveland, Ohio governor and United States senator; and former Mayor Michael R. White.

In 1961, Mr. Gries invested in the Cleveland Browns and in 1966, at his father’s passing, he assumed control of the family’s interest, which he built to 44 percent by the 1990s. He was adamantly opposed to the team’s move in 1995 but could not legally stop it and sold the family’s interest rather than participate.

Mr. Gries’ involvements, achievements and honors are extensive. At age 89, he still serves on the boards of the American Jewish



Committee, Boy Scouts of America, Cleveland Play House and Vocational Guidance Services—each for 50 years and counting. He also is on the boards of Ideastream (45+ years) The Cleveland Jewish Federation (40+ years), University Hospitals of Cleveland (40+ years), the Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio (35+ years), LAND studio (35+ years) and is a founding director of the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage, which opened in 2005.

“I especially prized my 10 years on the Cleveland Foundation Board in the 1970s,” Mr. Gries says. During his tenure, he fought hard and successfully to limit Cleveland Foundation board service to 10 years. “Some members wanted to serve continuously, but I believed the Foundation must continually have a changing diversity of Clevelanders.”

Mr. Gries also worked with the Cleveland Foundation to create an organization of Northeast Ohio foundations and an organization of

Ohio foundations, which ultimately were combined into one entity called Philanthropy Ohio.

In 2000, he was further gratified to chair a successful effort that provided substantial funds for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Mr. Gries credits much of his success to his life partner, Sally Gries. “I like to think I’ve made some difference,” he says, “but I truly believe I couldn’t and wouldn’t have been able to accomplish what I did without Sally. We share similar values about philanthropy and she has been not only a partner, but sometimes the lead in our major endeavors. I would not be here today without her love and guidance the past 46 years.”

All but one of the sixth generation of the Gries family live in Cleveland and are finding ways to give back to the city. Six of the seven who

make up the seventh generation have grown up in Cleveland. “I hope and expect some of them will settle here and carry on the family legacy,” says Mr. Gries.

The Gries family stories shared here—and a great many more—can be found in a book authored by Mr. Gries, *Five Generations: 175 years of Love for Cleveland*. He also is the author of *Aging with Attitude*, highlighting the 108 physical adventures (including long-distance running, mountain climbing, biking and high-altitude hiking) he has undertaken in 45 countries on all seven continents since age 51.



2018  
Heritage Medal Honoree

Steven A. Minter

“You have to think about what it is you’re interested in doing and where you want try to make a difference, where you want to have some impact in the long run. And you have to step forward to figure out what more you can do to really make a difference.”

— Steven A. Minter

The Hough Riots of 1966 left four men dead and a neighborhood shattered. Many businesses decided not to reopen; many residents who could afford to move opted never to return.

Steve Minter remembers. Having lived and worked in Cleveland inner-city neighborhoods for more than 50 years, the accidental-social-worker-turned-public-official-turned-community-foundation-leader has stories. Most revolve around neighborhood progress, downtown renewal and a region’s resurgence.

“To witness and experience what Cleveland has gone through, and to know that I actually played a part in Cleveland’s evolution since 1960 ... well, maybe that is an achievement,” Mr. Minter reflects.

Steve Minter took the reins of the Cleveland Foundation in 1984 from his mentor and friend, Homer Wadsworth, after serving the foundation for nine years as program officer and associate director.



He retired from the Cleveland Foundation— noted for being both the world’s first community foundation and the second largest—in 2003. In September 2003, he was appointed executive-in-residence and a fellow at the Center for Nonprofit Policy & Practice in the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University (CSU). He also served as interim vice president for university advancement and executive director of the CSU Foundation.

Born in Akron, Mr. Minter accepted two governmental assignments that took him out of Northeast Ohio for brief periods. From 1970 to 1975, he served as the commissioner of public welfare for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under Gov. Francis W. Sargent. In 1980, he took an unpaid leave from the Cleveland Foundation to assume the role of the first undersecretary for the U.S. Department of Education during President Jimmy Carter’s administration.

Otherwise, Mr. Minter has resided and worked in and around Cleveland his entire life, beginning his career as a caseworker at the Cuyahoga County Welfare Department (dashing early hopes of becoming a high school coach), and rising to director.

“Those were very important years for me,” he reflects. “Working with people who were at the bottom of the ladder, trying to turn their lives around, despite the hardships, and to see firsthand that it was possible to change your trajectory in life.

“I took great satisfaction in working with bureaucracies and trying to change them,” Minter says. “It was gratifying to work with welfare recipients who were getting the opportunity to receive special training, get their GEDs, and get the kind of health care that made it possible for them to go back into the workforce.



“When we could offer the right kind of safety net and assistance and support, they could become wage earners and take care of their families and move off the public assistance rolls,” he adds.

When considering his tenure with the Cleveland Foundation, Mr. Minter speaks with still greater passion.

“It’s not to say it wasn’t hard and frustrating at times,” he admits, “but to really be engaged, to help turn around the Cleveland public schools, to effectively deal with the desegregation of the schools, to make progress with early childhood education, to see Lexington Village and Beacon Place [part of the Hough neighborhood revitalization] come to fruition ...

“I had the opportunity to be a participant. I was able to work with governors, mayors, (and) county commissioners, as well as private sector officials in trying to advance Cleveland. What a privilege.”

Born in Akron and the eldest of eight children, Mr. Minter credits his parents, Lawrence and Dorothy Minter, and his Midwestern upbringing, for much of the good he's been able to do for and with his neighbors.

"My dad was a very skilled laborer, and ultimately became the first African-American county superintendent appointed by the Ohio Department of Transportation," Mr. Minter says. "He set a very good example. But I was also highly influenced by my mother.

"We moved around a lot when I was young," he explains. "My father didn't like having a boss so we moved from one Northeast Ohio community to another—in most instances, we were one of just a few African-American families living in the town—and my mother was quick to find the church, join the church, go to the school, volunteer to help ... it was sort of, 'OK, so we're here. Let's get on with it.' I think that is something I got from my parents. If something needs to be done, and it's a reasonable request, then step up and do it.

"And I always had this sense ... I'm not going to step back because I'm an African-American person," he says. "I was pretty good at being a participant and reasonably comfortable taking the lead. I learned if you're willing to step out there and assume some responsibilities and use reasonably good judgment, people will follow."

The significance and the responsibility of being the first African-American in numerous leadership positions was not lost on Mr. Minter; he didn't want to be the last. "I only recently thought about it. But I was kind of paving the way."

He was the first (and only) African-American to enter and graduate from Kinsman Township's public high school, entering the school as a sophomore and becoming class president in his junior year.

Mr. Minter also was the first African-American to serve in a county department of social services, in the governor's cabinet of Massachusetts, as president of what's now the American Public

Human Services Association, as president of a major community foundation, and on many corporate boards.

“Growing up, I looked to Jackie Robinson and Larry Doby; they were first,” he says of the first and second African-American players to break the color barrier in Major League Baseball. “I think as a kid, I always thought, somebody had to be first.”

While Mr. Minter’s accomplishments and honors are far too many to name, he takes joy in being co-recipient with his wife of the Humanitarian Award from the Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio in 1991. Dolores (Dolly) Minter died from complications of Alzheimer’s disease in 2017.

Mr. Minter also is tremendously proud of his three daughters. Michele is vice provost for institutional equity and diversity at Princeton University. Caroline is a professor of economics at Stanford University.

Robyn just finished her stint as partner-in-charge of the Cleveland office of Thompson Hine. Later this year, Robyn will be named Black Professional of the Year by the Black Professionals Association Charitable Foundation, an award Mr. Minter received in 1985. They are the first father and daughter in the foundation’s history to be so honored.



2018  
Heritage Medal Honoree

Jerry Sue  
Thornton, PhD



“In Cleveland, if you raise your hand, you’ve just volunteered. You can be a part of this wonderful community without having to have lived here your entire life. You’re rewarded for wanting to be involved and wanting to use your talents by being allowed to use them. There’s a place at the table.”

— Jerry Sue Thornton, PhD

“I’m a sucker for graduations,” Jerry Sue Thornton says. “All those stories of families who sacrificed ... students who transformed themselves from who they were to who they are walking across that stage ... That’s what it’s all about. That’s the end-product. No matter how crazy the year or semester might have been, when you get to graduation, it all melts away. You remember why you’re in this business.”

The former president of Cuyahoga Community College recalls being an avid reader growing up. “I always loved learning. Teaching is what I always wanted to do. My heart is in the classroom.”

But she also felt called to lead.

“I realized I could shape policies and procedures within school districts and institutions and influence the education of many more students in a leadership role,” she says. So, she ultimately pursued roles where she could have the most impact.



After teaching for a decade at the sixth-grade, high school and college levels, Dr. Thornton accepted several administrative roles, including dean of arts and sciences at Triton College in Illinois and president of Lakewood Community College (now Century College) in Minnesota, before assuming the top spot at Tri-C at age 43.

During her tenure from 1992 to 2013, Tri-C became an economic force in the region, employing more than 3,000 faculty and staff and adding more than \$115 million in additional labor and non-labor income.

Also under Dr. Thornton's leadership:

- Enrollment grew 40 percent—from 23,000 students on three campuses to more than 32,000 students on four campuses.
- More than 20,000 people enrolled in workforce training programs at Tri-C's Corporate College, Unified Technology Center (now Manufacturing Technology Center), and Advanced Technology Training Center.

- Construction and renovation projects totaled \$300 million. Voters supported five countywide ballot issues.
- A student scholarship endowment grew from \$1.3 million to more than \$38 million. Further, the college maintained the second-lowest tuition in the state, and the curriculum grew to more than 1,000 credit courses in more than 140 career and technical programs.

Her impact spanned beyond Northeast Ohio. Dr. Thornton also co-chaired the 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges and through that organization helped introduce the community college concept to other countries.

“Community colleges are like jazz in that they are uniquely American,” she points out. Or they were until Dr. Thornton determined it should be otherwise. In addition to jazz, Dr. Thornton enjoys theater, most sports (“I’m a big Cavaliers fan”) and all the free activities she and her husband, Walter Thornton, find to do in Cleveland.

Dr. Thornton describes her move to Northeast Ohio as a turning point in her life. Having grown up in a small farm community in Kentucky, the daughter of a union coal miner and domestic worker (“We grew what we ate and we all worked hard”), she found city life exhilarating.

“I didn’t know anything about Cleveland when I was offered the position here,” she admits. “But Cleveland made me realize quickly how much I like urban environments. I like the energy of cities, the grittiness of cities, the people who reside in cities ... I like resolving issues that matter in cities. I decided I could make a better difference in an urban environment. I fell in love with Cleveland.

“I think Cleveland has a history of great leaders and a memory of greatness. Like a rubber band. No matter how it gets pulled, it seems to me that it goes back to that legacy of greatness.”

Dr. Thornton’s love for the city is manifested in her service to it—in countless capacities. And she has no plans to let up. She has



provided leadership to and supported activities of the United Way of Greater Cleveland, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Playhouse Square, The MetroHealth System, University Hospitals, The City Mission, the Cleveland Heart & Stroke Ball, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller and the Bluecoats, which provides assistance to the families of Cuyahoga County police officers, firefighters and members of safety forces who have lost their lives in the line of duty. She also is involved with and supports the Marine Corps University in Quantico, Virginia; Murray State University (Murray, Kentucky); The University of Texas at Austin; and the Cuyahoga Community College Foundation.

In her volunteer work and philanthropy, Dr. Thornton says she engages where she thinks she can make the greatest difference.

While she typically doesn't get involved in politics, she decided to involve herself in Frank Jackson's most recent mayoral campaign in 2017. "Cleveland had real momentum going and I didn't want to see

it interrupted. I thought consistent leadership was important. I didn't think we were prepared for a change."

Today, Dr. Thornton coaches new college presidents through Dream Catchers Educational Consulting Services, a company she founded in 2013.

"My life is full," she says. "There are only 24 hours in a day. So, prioritization is important." But she's not slowing down and education remains her focus. "I think you have energy out of passion," she adds. "I'm a firm believer that if you care deeply about whatever it is, you can put your energy to it. None of us know how long we're going to be on this earth, but I think we need to figure out how we can contribute, how our lives can be meaningful."

Both of Dr. Thornton's parents died while she was in college. She made the decision to pack up and sell the family home and return to school, with her younger brother in tow.

"My brother was determined he wasn't going to college; I was determined he was," she says with a victorious grin. While her brother earned his baccalaureate degree at Murray State, she attained her master's degree, working and taking out loans to pay tuition. She went on to earn her doctorate at The University of Texas at Austin.

Dr. Thornton credits her education and her teachers for much of her success. "I had such great role models," she says. Her fourth-grade teacher Corria Mimms died in March 2018 at age 102. "We had kept in touch all these years. Many of my teachers became lifelong mentors and friends," she says. "Those were the heroes I saw every day growing up. They inspire me still."





# 2017 Heritage Medal Honorees



2017 Honoree  
Carole F. Hoover

“God has blessed me to open some doors that I never thought I’d open, meet people who I never thought I’d meet. I owe whatever I can give to other people, opening any doors of opportunity for others that I can open.”



2017 Honoree  
Samuel H. Miller

“In order to be a leader, you have to be a servant first. Learning to be a good servant gives you a foundation for great leadership.”

2017 Honoree  
Albert B. Ratner

“There’s a Jewish tradition that you stand on the shoulders of giants. It’s what comes before you that allows you to take the next step. Part of life is learning the lessons of the people who came before you and adding what you can.”





2017 Honoree  
Michael R. White

“What creates a heritage is neighborhood commitment, respect for people, being willing to challenge the status quo, being willing to risk what you’ve developed and an abiding belief in the people of Cleveland.”





# 2016 Heritage Medal Honorees



2016 Honoree  
Morton L. "Mort" Mandel

"Think of the world as a million candles. If God made a million candles since the beginning of time, and there have been about 200,000 candles lit, there's still an awful lot of darkness. I've lit a few candles myself, and I'm going to go on and light as many candles as I can."



2016 Honoree  
Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr.

“Some of the greatest assignments we receive in life as a servant are the leadership responsibilities thrust upon us that we were not seeking. If you do what you have to do and you do it well, you will be given more than you can handle. Service is what is greatness. You can get fame from other means.”



2016 Honoree  
Sandra Pianalto

"I didn't take on any assignment or agree to be a part of an organization or cause where they just wanted to use my name and my position. I'm a person who if I commit to doing something, I am all in. I'm not an 'in name only' type of individual. The only way you can be all in is if you are passionate about the cause and about the impact the organization can make."



2016 Honoree  
Richard W. "Dick" Pogue

"The key to getting things done in this community is number one, know the facts. If you know the facts and are willing to work hard and are collaborative, you're going to get things done."



2016 Honoree  
The Honorable  
George V. Voinovich

“My parents were first-generation Americans who struggled hard. They underscored that as citizens of the United States, we had an obligation to give back to our community.”



Our great city continues to grow and thrive because of the dedication of its accomplished civic leaders. We are grateful for your generosity, inspiration, philanthropy, and your belief that Cleveland, and all of those who call it home, can create a better tomorrow together.

We congratulate Bob Gries and all of the 2018 recipients of The Cleveland Heritage Medal.

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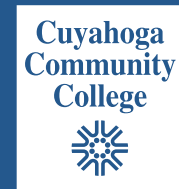


## THE CLEVELAND HERITAGE MEDAL HONORING JERRY SUE THORNTON

Tri-C® salutes President Emeritus Jerry Sue Thornton, who embodies the characteristics of The Cleveland Heritage Medal — Teamwork, Courage & Respect, Inclusion & Diversity and Service to Others — and is an exemplary role model for Tri-C and for Cleveland.

Congratulations to the other 2018 honorees —  
Toby Cosgrove, Robert D. Gries, Steven A. Minter.

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Toby Cosgrove, MD

Robert D. Gries

Steven A. Minter

Jerry Sue Thornton, PhD

*“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is,  
‘What are you doing for others?’”*

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

To each of this year’s Cleveland Heritage Medal recipients, you have answered that question with a lifetime of selfless contributions and boundless leadership and vision.

Congratulations,  
The MetroHealth System





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2018 CLEVELAND HERITAGE MEDAL