



**Ashtabula
Foundation**
FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ASHTABULA COUNTY SINCE 1922

100 Years and Growing!

They are leaders. Some of Ashtabula County's best. They are committed to the betterment of the County and its people. They have expertise in the fields of finance, education, religion, healthcare, and business.

They find time in their busy lives to volunteer as directors of the Ashtabula Foundation.

"I just retired from my day job (senior internal auditor of Molded Fiber Glass) and am starting the next phase of my life," said Board of Directors President Carolyn Turk. "With my current role at the Ashtabula Foundation I get to meet new people, learn about our communities, and hopefully make a difference. How great is that?"

"I learned about the Ashtabula Foundation from Board Director, Rev. Glen Warner, a dear friend who I had worked with for many years at Molded Fiber Glass. I was always in awe as to the good works that the organization was able to accomplish for the Ashtabula County residents. I saw firsthand, in my hometown of Orwell, the financial support to Country Neighbor and Orwell Community Park, Turk said.

The Foundation president said her experience with the organization has had a number of special "moments." One of the most recent has been experiencing, "the ability to collaborate among the social service agencies in the county to provide life necessities to Ashtabula County residents during the Covid 19 pandemic."

"A weekly conference call was conducted by four Ashtabula Foundation directors, Cheryle Chiaramonte as facilitator, Roger Corlett, Joseph Misinec Jr., and me to discuss Covid issues with leaders of major Human Service organizations for the County," Turk explained.

"They collaborated to conduct food distributions, to stock food pantries, to prepare and deliver thousands of meals, to pay utilities, to provide holiday meals and gifts to families, and much more."

Presently, the conference calls take place monthly and include, Board Members, Cheryle Chiaramonte, J. Trombley (J.T.) Kanicki, Joseph Misinec Jr., and Carolyn Turk.

In 2020, the Ashtabula Foundation redirected traditional grant cycles with a commitment to focus on providing financial assistance "where needed" within the human service sectors.

Turk is also proud of the Foundation's Youth Philanthropy program. "It is an amazing program that was created over a decade ago, to encourage and teach philanthropy at each of the 10 County High Schools." The Foundation gives each school's student board \$5,000 per year to distribute to nonprofit organizations. "The students go through the process of reviewing, interviewing, and awarding grants. It is wonderful to witness this process and see how smart, how kind and how the students develop critical thinking skills, the Board president said.

J. Trombley (J.T.) Kanicki, finds the Foundation experience, "extremely rewarding." Kanicki is relatively new to the Board, having joined in 2020, but has learned, "There are so many hard-working and caring people behind the scenes working to make an impact here in Ashtabula County. It is rewarding to be able to lend support to those organizations that are changing lives every day."

One of the most significant challenges' Kanicki said, "is having a finite amount of funding available. There are more needs than available funding. Fundraising is also a challenge due to the vast number of organizations that individuals can contribute to for philanthropic purposes."

"Being a Director at the Ashtabula Foundation has been much more than I envisioned, Kanicki said. "A significant amount of work goes into the operation and management of the Ashtabula Foundation. I find it very satisfying to see and hear about how financial support provided by the Ashtabula Foundation has assisted non-profit organizations. It has also been rewarding to work with the entire Board and the Associate Director Kelley Katon. It is a very good group of people committed to forging relationships and carrying on the solid philanthropic work of the Ashtabula Foundation for many years to come.

For Rev. Glen Warner who has served since 1987, "It has been a wonderful experience.

"In 1987 I was invited to join the board of the Ashtabula Foundation. This was partly due to the resignation of Rev. George Johnson of First Presbyterian Church. I am an ordained minister and at that time was pastoring another established church in Ashtabula.

"I have been honored to serve these past 35 years with seasoned businesspeople who believe in the priority of wise philanthropy to non-profit organizations within our own communities. For me, it is uniquely God's work."

In Addition to Turk, Kanicki, and Warner, Board members are Vice-President Timothy Green, Treasurer Roger Corlett CPA, Jerome Brockway PhD, G. Richard Coblitz, Cheryle Chiaramonte, Joseph A. Misinec Jr., Lynn M. Zalewski, J. Michelle R. McClure, and Roy H. Bean, Director Emeritus.

Watch for next month's article to learn more about the Ashtabula Foundation.
Celebrating 100 years of service!