



WALNUT WAY

WELLNESS WORK WEALTH



ANNUAL REPORT

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DEAR FRIENDS,

The last year has put all of us to the test and strengthened our purpose. It is a reminder of the roots we were founded on 20 years ago, to dismantle systemic racism and create spaces for resident influence, leadership, and power. Despite the challenges that 2020 posed, Walnut Way is proud to share that it has been a year of action, accomplishment, and adaptation.

In addition to Covid-19 distribution of health kits, outreach campaigns, and the transition of our ongoing programs to a virtual format, Walnut Way continued to improve the green infrastructure and climate resilience of the Lindsay Heights neighborhood in significant ways.

Blue Skies Landscaping continued to grow in scale and employ 20 members throughout the pandemic as essential workers, maintaining 175 of the City of Milwaukee's bioswales, that mitigate stormwater.

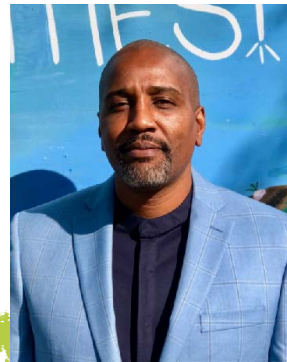
In 2020, we strengthened our community wealth building efforts by launching several social enterprise programs, supported entrepreneurs on

their journeys towards prosperity, and launched strategic housing stabilization efforts.

Throughout the year, the much anticipated Wellness Commons construction carried on. We are happy to announce that phase two is complete with a village of *Wellness, Work, and Wealth* tenants ready to be a hub for community resilience.

Thank you for continuing your journey with us over the past 20 years.

Please enjoy a look back at 2020.

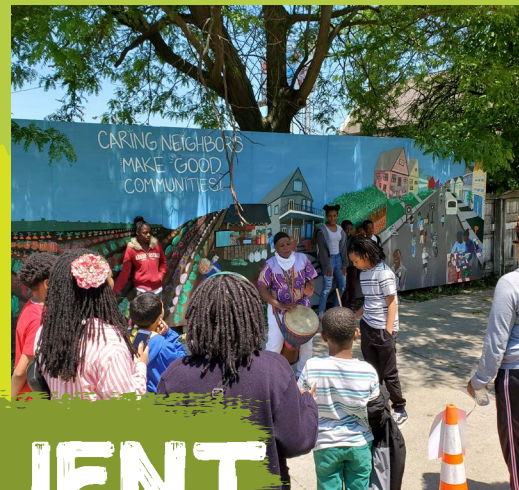


Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Antonio Butts".

Antonio Butts,
Executive Director





WE ARE RESILIENT



2020

WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS'
SKILLS AND TALENTS



WE INNOVATE TO FIND
SOLUTIONS



WE COLLABORATE TO MAKE
IDEAS POSSIBLE



WE ARE STEWARDS OF OUR ENVIRONMENT

WE LEARN THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION

**WE TAKE PART IN CIVIC
RESPONSIBILITY**





ACTIVATING GREEN SPACES FOR RELIEF

Walnut Way took full advantage of opportunities to offer programs outdoors and online including mental health peer groups, wellness workshops, voter registration, a garden tours, outdoor music and diaper giveaways.

This year, we also opened up our gardens and encouraged residents to grow their own food, offering eager families the chance to get outdoors, dig in the dirt, and grow healthy fruits and vegetables.

Thanks to Anthem, Pete's Fruit Market and many volunteers, Walnut Way distributed wellness kits door-to-door during the spring shut down. The kits included Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and other essential items to aid residents.

LEVERAGING OUR VOICE

As coronavirus began to spread in our community, Walnut Way launched a neighborhood wide safer at home campaign. We placed over 150 signs throughout the neighborhood and on our Innovations and Wellness Commons Building to encourage people to stay at home.

The Commons building became central in our civic engagement efforts. We partnered with Wisconsin Conservation Voices to make a voter registration site at the Commons and remove any barriers to voter registration with assessibility and educational resources. Along North Avenue, which sees over 20,000 cars per day, we launched a 20 block street signage campaign to encourage people to vote.

To further encourage our voice matters, we rallied together with partners on National Voter Registration Day to hold a press conference to get out the vote and register voters.

50

VIRTUAL GATHERINGS
HELD FOR MEN'S
MENTAL HEALTH, THE
POWER OF PLANTS ON
OUR HEALTH, DIAPER
GIVEAWAYS, AND VOTER
REGISTRATION EVENTS



BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL



Musician WebsterX

Thousands of people gathered at the Black is Beautiful Bike Ride I, in the summer of 2020 in solidarity around Black Lives Matter (BLM). The ride was organized as an effort to support wellness activities for black and brown people facing stress from racism and fighting for social justice in the wake of George Floyd's death.

The ride was organized by musician WebsterX and clothing apparel owner, Among the Prime. They created a campaign to rally riders to pre-order shirts to support the work of Walnut Way and Leaders Igniting Transformation. Thanks to their efforts, they donated \$5,789 to Walnut Way from the ride!

We want to give a big thank you to WebsterX, Among the Prime, and those that bought apparel for supporting our work, supporting the BLM movement, and acknowledging and creating spaces for unity, wellness, and solidarity for black and brown people.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT | THANK YOU

20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY GEAR

2020 marks our 20th year in operation and we are celebrating with our own line of apparel, inspired by the gardens. Although we can't celebrate together in person, you can celebrate with us in our new 20 year styles.

All of our apparel is printed by Lindsay Heights community members on the Walnut Way campus. When you make a purchase, your support goes directly to our urban agriculture programs that have been at the root of our work since our early beginnings, when residents transformed vacant lots into active gardens of fresh locally grown food, learning, and community.

Support the continuation of this work by purchasing our apparel for yourself, family, and friends.

Check out our full catalog of designs and make your purchase at www.walnutway.org.



Use Coupon Code **5OFF**
to receive \$5 off!

BLUE SKIES LANDSCAPING GROWS TO NEW LEVELS

Since 2012, Blue Skies Landscaping (BSL) has grown an average of 20% per year, and 2020 was no different. BSL specializes in sustainable urban landscaping, with a focus on green infrastructure projects that reduce stormwater pollution. The team maintains 175 bioswales across the City of Milwaukee, an amazing feat for a small crew coordinating logistics and implementation.

Key projects in 2020 included the Sherman Phoenix entry plaza, streetscape and parking lot landscape. The community-owned market had its asphalt

replaced with a green oasis, including new trees and native plants, two bioswales, and permeable pavers that divert stormwater from the sewer. A similar project was completed at the Dubbel Dutch Hotel, a boutique hotel where BSL installed a permeable patio.

BSL is also in the process of helping to revitalize the Victory Over Violence Park, installing ADA pathways, so that people of all ages and abilities may enjoy the park. These projects are significant because of the benefits and value they add to the neighborhood.

Overall results included: 1,097 stormwater-diverting perennials planted in bioswales, 175 bioswales maintained, 20 sustaining green jobs, 556 linear feet of lannon stone wall installed at Victory Over Violence Park, and 9 park cleanups and restorations completed.

1,097

STORMWATER-DIVERTING
PERENNIALS PLANTED IN
BIOSWALES

9

PARK CLEANUPS
& RESTORATIONS
COMPLETED

175

BIOSWALES
MAINTAINED

20

SUSTAINING
GREEN JOBS

556

LINEAR FEET OF LANNON
STONE WALL INSTALLED
AT VICTORY OVER
VIOLENCE PARK

WE BUILD AND TRANSFORM

YOUTH LEADER SPOTLIGHT



"At Walnut Way I gained critical job skills including being professional, interviewing, and communicating effectively. I was always motivated and inspired by the example of the elders of Walnut Way who guided and cared for me every step of the way. I am blessed to be able to put my experience and wisdom back into the community that has generously poured its own into me. To be able to come back and work with the new interns has been one of the most rewarding and fulfilling experiences for me."

-BJ Johnson, Growing Youth Leadership Graduate

BJ returned to Walnut Way this summer to the Growing Youth Leadership (GYL) program to teach a Learning Lab on colonialism and its impact on the modern world, specifically communities of color. BJ is a senior at Howard University studying Psychology. He served as a GYL intern in (2014) and Supervisor in (2017/18).

375 LBS
OF PRODUCE SOLD
TO WHOLESALE
CUSTOMERS

12
DIFFERENT
PRESERVED
PRODUCTS WITH
GARDEN PRODUCE

8
GROWING YOUTH
LEADERSHIP
INTERNS HIRED

343
VOLUNTEERS HOURS

75
VOLUNTEERS ACTIVATED
THE GARDENS THANKS
TO PUBLIC ALLIES,
RESIDENTS.

WE GROW YOUTH LEADERSHIP

RESIDENT LED NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

In 2020, Walnut Way took several giant leaps to ensure the long-term economic growth of the Lindsay Heights neighborhood. We started by working with residents to develop the Lindsay Heights Neighborhood Action plan that aims to implement Housing and Community Economic Development projects that are being planned for the Lindsay Heights Area.

With the help of the Northwestern Mutual Data Science Institute Partnership and Data You Can Use, Walnut Way conducted research into the housing and economic development conditions of the neighborhood and the history of these trends over time. This study dove-tailed with our participation in the neighborhood housing and economic development planning initiative funded by the Zilber Family Foundation.

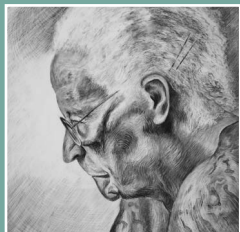
A Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) committee was created with new resources to increase resident equity and help families live, work, play, and prosper in a safe, distinctive and healthy environment. The committee has already hosted four resident town hall meetings and assisted four emergency home renovations and repairs to assist low-income seniors and people living with disabilities.

Our Community Wealth Building (CWB) plays a key role in Walnut Way's economic development strategy. CWB supports neighbors who want to grow their skills and talents, thereby increasing their income. CWB has connected 71 Lindsay Heights residents to economic resources and opportunities, provided 7 educational sessions on effective business and cooperative practice, and engaged 20 organizations as partners.

Walnut Way's new social enterprise, "Designaway" is a printshop which offers businesses, nonprofit organizations, artists and entrepreneurs a chance to put their ideas onto T-shirts, bags and other items.

GIVING CARE TO HOMES

Walnut Way hired local contractors and coordinated volunteer efforts to make repairs at the former home of Mrs. Harriet Dorsey. Mrs. Dorsey was an elder who moved to Lindsay Heights in 1940 and lived to be 107 years old. Her home withstood freeway expansion on her street, when homes around her were torn down for a freeway that wasn't built. Her home is now owned and occupied by her family. As Walnut Way focused on resident housing needs this year, we were able to leverage resources and provide much needed repairs to Mrs. Dorsey's home and three additional homes.



Mrs. Dorsey's grand scale portrait, by artist Raoul Deal, is hung prominently in the Walnut Way Center, honoring her legacy and those of community elders.



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**SOCIAL ENTERPRISES
LAUNCHED:
DESIGNAWAY, &
TASTE OF LINDSAY
HEIGHTS**

8

**MEETINGS HELD
AROUND HOUSING,
SOLAR INDUSTRY
CAREERS, AND
FINANCIAL LITERACY
FOR YOUTH**

7

**EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS
PROVIDED ON EFFECTIVE
BUSINESS
AND COOPERATIVE
PRACTICES**



**WE SUPPORT
COMMUNITY WELLNESS
AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**



After much anticipation, phase two of the Innovations and Wellness Commons (IWC) project is complete. We would like to give a warm welcome to our community of tenants that are serving resident needs through employment programs, health, wellness, and education. Tenants are located at 1601 - 1617 W. North Avenue in our new and restored buildings.

The buildings were designed with purpose, preserving historical elements and combining new architecture like a rooftop terrace that overlooks North Avenue. With resilience and sustainability in mind, the IWC includes solar panel installations and energy efficient features. Blue Skies Landscaping is installing environmentally sustainable features on the rooftop terrace and parking lot to mitigate stormwater.

The development project was completed, built and managed by people of color, maintaining our mission to lift the assets within our community to create sustainable longevity.

INNOVATIONS AND WELLNESS COMMONS IS COMPLETE!

MEET THE TENANTS



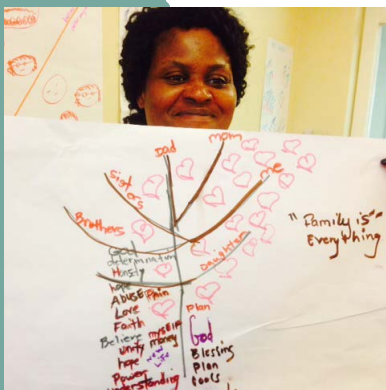
UNITED NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS OF MILWAUKEE

The United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee (UNCOM) is creating opportunities and improving lives daily in every zip code of Milwaukee county. UNCOM member agencies collectively serve over 50,000 people, employ over 900 Milwaukee area residents, and thousands more volunteer their time in support of local communities. This significant local presence has created impactful, deep and lasting roots in Milwaukee. UNCOM is working to nurture and enhance this presence so these neighborhood centers can continue serving Milwaukee neighborhoods and their residents for many years to come.



MILWAUKEE AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTERS

The mission of Milwaukee Area Health Education Center (AHEC) is to increase the diversity and distribution of health professionals through strategic partnerships to improve the health outcomes in Southeastern Wisconsin. Its vision is of a sufficient health workforce reflective of the communities that it serves.



BENEDICT CENTER'S SISTERS PROGRAM

The Benedict Center is an interfaith nonprofit agency working with victims, offenders and the community to achieve a system of criminal justice that is fair and treats every person involved with dignity and respect. Sisters Program is a street outreach, case management and skill building program for women in prostitution and or/sex trafficking. The program is an innovative community-police partnership and is gaining recognition as a more effective way to improve the health and safety of women and communities.



PERSEVERANCE HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Bridgett Wilder is a Widowed Mother of 9 children, CEO of Perseverance Health and Wellness Nutrition Consultation Services LLC., Dietitian, Author, and Motivational Speaker. As a Dietitian, she uses her knowledge to help her clients improve their overall nutritional health outcomes by teaching the concepts of nutrition and psychology. Bridgett is a graduate of Mount Mary University where she earned her bachelor's degree in Science with an emphasis in dietetics and psychology.



MARRIKA RODGERS

Marrika Rodgers is a holistic practitioner, licensed professional counselor, national speaker, and a celebrated radio personality. As a mental health clinician and business consultant, she is known for empowering others by providing effective tools with tangible results. She offers wellness coaching, counseling for individuals, groups, families, and couples, and parental support groups. Marrika lives a life dedicated towards serving the development and overall wellness of men, women, and youth.



MSOE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Milwaukee School of Engineers (MSOE) University Scholars Honors Program combines experiential learning, real-world projects and community service. This academically rigorous program enhances the MSOE experience through honors-level courses that allow students to explore innovative ideas, build relationships with classmates and community members, and complete projects that pair engineering skills with a healthy dose of creativity.



DESIGNAWAY

Designaway is a social enterprise printing apparel program, owned and operated by Walnut Way and staffed by Lindsay Heights community members. Designaway creates online storefronts for businesses and artists that want their own apparel shops. It also provides opportunities for companies to purchase bulk apparel orders from a local, community-owned supplier. It stimulates the neighborhood economy by providing jobs and practical business experience. It strengthens academic partnerships with UWM, Marquette University, and MSOE to develop processes and beta testing.

TASTE OF LINDSAY HEIGHTS

Taste of Lindsay Heights will be a carryout cafe at 1609 W. North Avenue. It's a place for budding food entrepreneurs to take their business to the next level. With proper resources and support for success, our model ensures makers are not stepping too far out on a limb. Lindsay Heights residents and neighboring communities will benefit from a space to create and sell food, connect and eat well.

MILWAUKEE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENCE

Milwaukee Center for Independence's (MCFI) commercial kitchen in The Commons provides food-service industry training and jobs to local residents, and prepares fresh, healthy meals for child care centers and schools that serve mainly low-income families. This aligns with MCFI's mission of partnering with people of all ages and abilities to advance their total health, its vision of healthy and hopeful communities, and its values of understanding people, leading success and working together.

FONDY FOOD CENTER

Fondy Food Center brings healthy food and economic opportunity to Greater Milwaukee by operating local farmers markets throughout the year, providing access to land, resources and support to small-scale farmers, and working with partners to build a better food system for our community. Its mission is to connect Greater Milwaukee to local, fresh food – from farm to market to table – so that children learn better, adults live healthier, and communities celebrate cultural food traditions.



INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Aaria Troiano
Aleksandra Gawlik
Among the Prime
Ann Beier
Annie Gonring
Andrew Bochman
Bizzie Gonring
Brian Klabunde
Brittany Mathews
Carol J. Geddes-Engle
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& Frank Foersterling
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Magda Peck
Mark & Julie Goltermann
Martha Spencer
Mary Beth Collins
Mary H Wegmann
Megan Helt-Baldwin
Meredith Bourne
Michael Arney
Michelle Lexmond

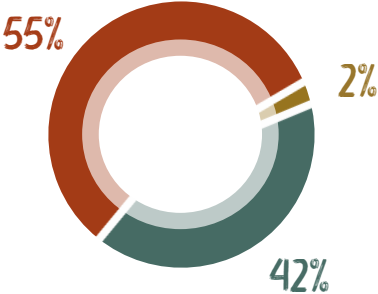
Miguel Castro
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Nelson Kies
Nickolas Roedel
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Lisa Malmarowski
Patrick Platter
Phyllis Weil
Ryan Vasta
Sam Warmuth
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& Malcom Gatford
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Virginia Prince
Warren Enstrom
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Willa Rentel
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Associated Bank
Aurora Health Care
Bader Philanthropies, Inc
Blue Ribbon Organics
Bradley Foundation
CERES Family Foundation
City of Milwaukee
Community Partnerships for Health Equity
Data You Can Use
Fund for Lake Michigan
George L.N. Meyer Family Foundation, Inc.
Greater Green Bay Community Foundation, Inc.
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Greendale Community Church
Gustav and Gladys Kindt Foundation
Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program
Institute for Sustainable Communities
Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful
Kopmeter Family Foundation
Krugler Family Fund
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Lloyd Consulting, Inc.
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District

Milwaukee Public Schools
Paycheck Protection Program
Pete's Fruit Market
RENEW Wisconsin
The Brico Fund
The Forrest Trust
TIAA Charitable Inc.
T K & C Heinen Family Fund
United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County
Voss Organics
We-Energies Foundation
Wisconsin Conservation Voices
Zilber Family Foundation

SOURCE OF FUNDS



Philanthropic Support
\$481,218 (42%)

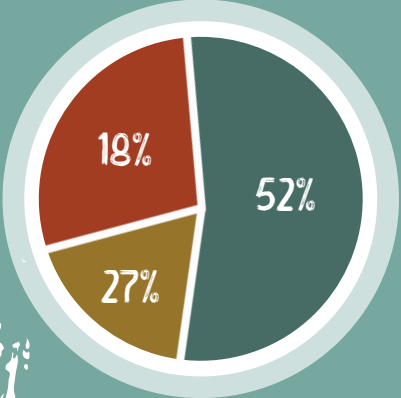
Blue Skies Landscaping Earned Revenue
\$621,021 (55%)

Rental Income
21,021 (2%)

2020 Operating Budget: \$1.346 million

USE OF FUNDS

- **WELLNESS | Civic Engagement** 18%
- **WORK | Environmental Stewardship** 52%
- **WEALTH | Economic Development** 27%





BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LaVonda Graham, *President*

Annie Robinson, *Vice-President*

Monique Graham, *Secretary*

X'Zayvion McCoy, *Treasurer*

Heidi Moore

WALNUT WAY STAFF

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Executive Director

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Amber Ascher

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Emonia Barnett

Kimberly Eubanks

Marylin Mitchell

Pastor Teresa Boyd-Thomas

Russell Borkin

Trasus Wright

Worthington Hortman



I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A GIFT!

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, St, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

SUGGESTED GIVING LEVELS:

- \$50
- \$100
- \$250
- \$500
- \$750
- \$1,000

DESIGNATE MY DONATION FOR (CIRCLE ONE):

- Wellness Commons Capital Campaign Phase II
- Operating/Programming

TRANSACTION TYPE (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY):

- CHECK** My check payable to Walnut Way Conservation Corporation is enclosed in the amount of \$ _____
- CREDIT CARD** Please bill my credit card \$ _____
Card type (circle): Visa MasterCard Discover
Account Number: _____
Expiration Date: _____ (mo)/ _____ (year) CVS Code: _____
Signature: _____
- RECURRING PLEDGE:** Bill my credit card \$ _____ a month/year (circle) for the next _____ months/years (circle) for a total pledge of \$ _____.

GIVE A GIFT TODAY AND HELP MAKE AN IMPACT!

DONATE ONLINE AT
WWW.WALNUTWAY.ORG/DONATE



OR PLEASE COMPLETE
THE FORM & RETURN TO:

Walnut Way Conservation Corp.
2240 N. 17th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53205

Explore your company's matching gift policies!
To make a gift in honor of someone or to make a pledge, stock, mutual fund, or electronic funds transfer, contact us at 414-264-2326 or email development@walnutway.org.

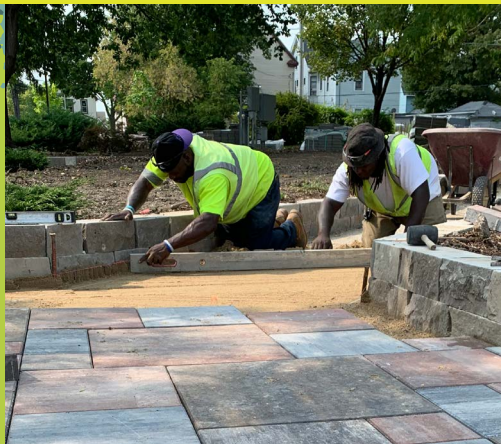
Walnut Way is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

THANK YOU!





It takes many hands to make our work possible. Thank you to community members, academic and community partners, volunteers, staff, consultants, donors, instructors, students and all of those that help to advance our mission to sustain transformation of economically diverse and abundant communities through civic engagement, environmental stewardship, and creating venues for prosperity.



IN LOVING MEMORY



WALNUT WAY

CONSERVATION CORP.

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Milwaukee, WI 53205
info@walnutway.org
(414) 264-2326
(414) 265-7245 (fax)
www.walnutway.org



In loving memory of Walnut Way alum Jeffery Robinson, Dasjon Riser, Cameron Nash, Aziz Draper, and all of those who passed away too young in 2020.

You all will always be remembered for the seeds of compassion, hardwork, and laughter that you planted in the gardens. We will continue to carry on these qualities that you exhibited so well. You will be missed.