



# The Governor's Office of FOUNDATION LIAISON

**Partnering for a better Michigan.**

## Our Mission:

To develop **strategic partnerships** between philanthropy and the executive branch of state government in order to create better outcomes for all Michigan citizens.

## Priority Issue Areas:

We focus our efforts on three key issue areas identified by the governor and aligned with foundation priorities:

- P-20 Education
- Workforce Development
- Health

Michigan's non-partisan Governor's Office of Foundation Liaison (OFL) was created in 2003 at the suggestion of Michigan philanthropic leaders. Staffed through CMF by two full-time individuals with foundation experience, it currently operates with the support of Governor Rick Snyder and reports to the Governor's Director of Strategy. The Office - the first of its

kind in the nation - helps to identify and broker strategic partnerships between the state and foundations to encourage the success of programs or policy reforms that would improve the lives of all Michigan residents. Since its inception, the OFL has been funded by more than 20 foundations and supported by state government.



**CMF** Council of  
Michigan  
Foundations

[michiganfoundations.org/ofl](http://michiganfoundations.org/ofl)

## GOALS

The OFL seeks to accomplish its mission through the following goals:

**PROMOTE** mutual understanding and collaboration between state government and foundations, and to identify strategic opportunities for partnering.

**SERVE** as a trusted source of data, information and dialogue about programs, policy impacts, and policy and implementation options.

**FACILITATE** strategic joint investments that will improve outcomes for Michigan and its residents.

## GOVERNANCE

The OFL is governed by an advisory committee of contributing funders; the Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF), its fiscal agent; the Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA); and a member of the Governor's executive staff. Current committee members are:

**DAVID EGNER, Co-Chair**  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation

**REGINA BELL, Co-Chair**  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

**DONNA MURRAY-BROWN**  
Michigan Nonprofit Association

**MELANCA CLARK**  
Hudson-Webber Foundation

**ROB COLLIER**  
Council of Michigan Foundations

**NEAL HEGARTY**  
C.S. Mott Foundation

**KATE LEVIN MARKEL**  
McGregor Fund

**DAVID MCGHEE**  
The Skillman Foundation

**JULIE RIDENOUR**  
Steelcase Foundation

**DIANA SIEGER**  
Grand Rapids Community Foundation

**DOUG BITONTI STEWART**  
Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation

**JOHN WALSH**  
Office of the Governor

## IMPACT

Since its inception in 2003, the OFL has brokered more than \$150 million in foundation investments in public-private partnerships benefitting all Michigan residents through reforms in K-16 education, economic/workforce development, health, early childhood and land use. Highlights include:

**OFFICE OF GREAT START** Through its unique connecting role being “in” but not “of” the executive office, the OFL brought together the governor, State administrators, local school officials, researchers and foundation leaders to help coordinate the State's early childhood programs with a goal of building collaborative partnerships throughout the public/private sector. As a result of the collaborative effort, the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC), an entity designed to be the State's focal point for information and investment in early childhood education in Michigan, was founded. The ECIC has led to millions of dollars of philanthropic investment in support of early childhood, \$130 million from the Michigan Legislature towards State preschool funding and an estimated \$1.15 billion in savings to taxpayers annually.

**PATHWAYS TO POTENTIAL** The OFL's ability to convene experts and State officials on myriad educational topics and bring other successful State programs to the table for review and discussion helped the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) create and expand its Pathways to Potential project, including transitioning Michigan to the Community School model in which a Community School Coordinator works directly with a success coach to connect families within the school and surrounding community with needed services.

**MICHIGAN COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK** The OFL secured a \$1 million grant from The Kresge Foundation to the Michigan College Access Network to develop high-quality, community-based college access strategic alliances known as Local College Access Networks (LCANS) across the state. Grant funds were used to leverage \$25 million in matching support from the U.S. Department of Education. Since launching as a statewide network, MCAN has invested public and private funds in Michigan's college access movement by guiding 50 LCANS in development, establishing partnerships with leading state and national organizations, training hundreds of K-12 counselors as postsecondary planners, and hosting professional development opportunities.

**MICHIGAN BENEFIT ACCESS INITIATIVE** Initiated during the economic recession, the Michigan Benefit Access Initiative (MBAI) continues to help low-income families easily access benefits and services. The OFL convened meetings, disseminated data, extended the list of stakeholders and coordinated funding from foundations. Successes born of these efforts include Michigan Benefit Access Capacity Building Mini-Grants of more than \$450,000 to 72 diverse nonprofit organizations statewide.

### CONTACT US:

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