Wean Foundation Board Renews its Support for Two Neighborhood-focused Community Development Corporations

(Dec. 13, 2019, Warren, Ohio) – Over the next two years, The Raymond John Wean Foundation will award more than $2 million to the Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC) and Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership (TNP) to expand the Foundation’s support of resident engagement, race equity and inclusion, social equity, collaboration, community investment and learning.

At its December meeting, Wean board members awarded Community Investment Grants to the Youngstown-based YNDC and the Warren-based TNP, community development corporations that have been operating as strategic partners for the Foundation due to their strong leadership roles in resident empowerment and sustained community development in Warren and Youngstown neighborhoods.

“With input from community stakeholders, this decision will uphold a shared vision between partners ‘to collectively build capacity to provide voice to residents and leaders throughout the Mahoning Valley,” said Jennifer Roller, president of the Wean Foundation.

In addition to its support for YNDC and TNP, the Wean Board also celebrated the 10th anniversary of its Neighborhood SUCCESS Grants program with a reception and the release of SUCCESS: A Decade of Transformation, a book chronicling the history and impact of the grassroots grantmaking program.
The Wean Foundation partnered with PolicyLink’s Founder-in-Residence Angela Glover Blackwell, to reflect on the progress of the last 10 years, in addition to providing a call to action to Mahoning Valley residents for the next decade.

“Led by residents, the Neighborhood SUCCESS grants offer a strong example of how true collaborations can lead to intergenerational changes,” says Blackwell. “While celebrating the transformation and learning of the last 10 years, we must also take the opportunity to map a path into the coming decade.”

The Foundation’s support of TNP and YNDC mirrors a commitment to community revitalization and civic sector leadership that Blackwell points to as philanthropy’s historically powerful role in building community capacity across the United States.

YNDC and TNP have been focused on improving housing and property conditions, decaying public infrastructures, general blight and housing vacancies and a lack of healthy foods for low-income residents in Warren and Youngstown. YNDC and TNP have made progress in numerous key areas:

- The productive re-use of vacant properties, creating opportunity for residents to become homeowners and transforming the aesthetic and economic well-being of neighborhoods.
- Training for low- to-moderate income Youngstown and Warren residents in property renovation, deconstruction, post demolition, lot greening and vacant property maintenance.
- Community organizing efforts that build neighborhood resident capacity and grassroots power.

The December Wean board meeting concluded with the appointment of three new board members, who will begin their terms in January 2020.

Sybil West, a lifelong resident and active Youngstown leader, has a proven record of community building as president of the
Bennington Block Watch on the city’s eastside and a Resident Council Member for the Foundation’s Neighborhood SUCCESS Grantmaking Program. A retired Ohio Lamp employee of 38 years, West holds an associate degree in Criminal Justice and Psychology from Youngstown State University.

Warren-based lawyer, Stanley A. Elkins, served as the Assistant Law Director in Warren for 13 years and now works with the Trumbull County Prosecutor’s Office, as the Chief Prosecutor of the Juvenile Division. Elkins is actively involved in the community, coaching and supporting youth sports programs and is an inductee of the Trumbull County African American Achievers Hall of Fame.

Warren resident, William Mullane, supervisor of school improvement for the Ashtabula County Educational Service Center and Jefferson Area Local Schools, served as the principal and educator at Warren G. Harding High School for twenty-eight years. In addition to his work as an educator, Bill has been involved in the region’s arts and philanthropic community for more than forty years.

Such additions to the Wean Foundation leadership will continue the Foundation’s history of partnering with the community to create a thriving and vibrant Mahoning Valley for all residents.