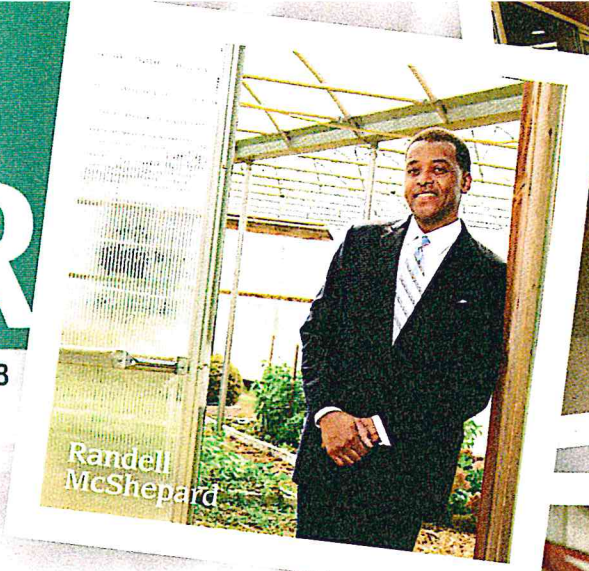


COMMUNITY LEADER

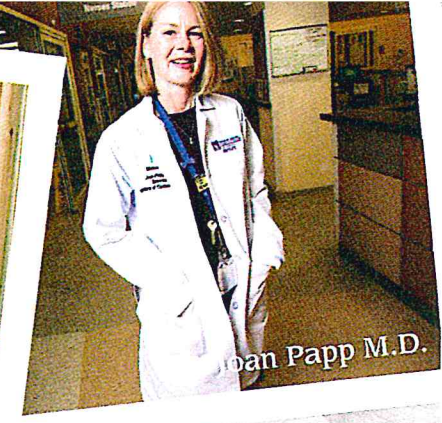
NOVEMBER 2018



Lee
Friedman



Randell
McShepard

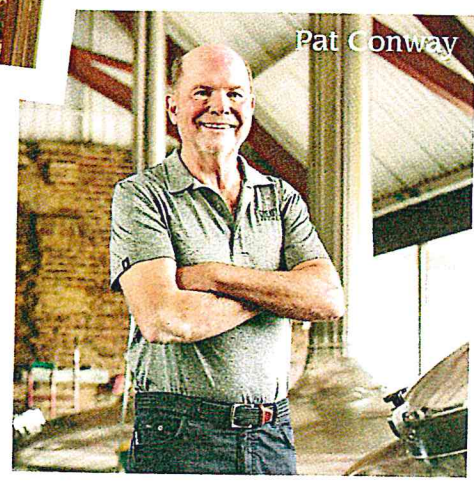


Joan Papp M.D.

Business Hall of Fame &

Community Leaders of the Year

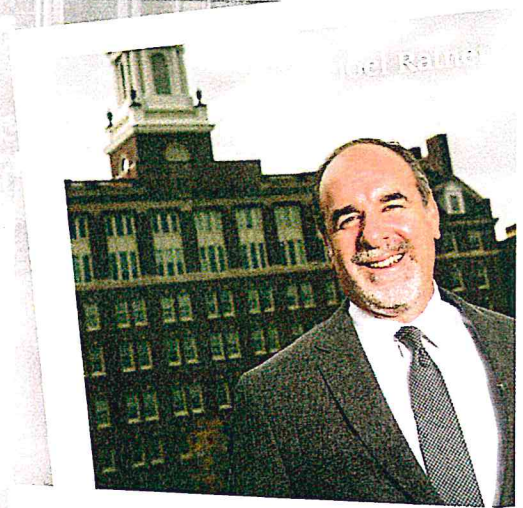
*Individually making
a difference
Together inspiring change*



Pat Conway



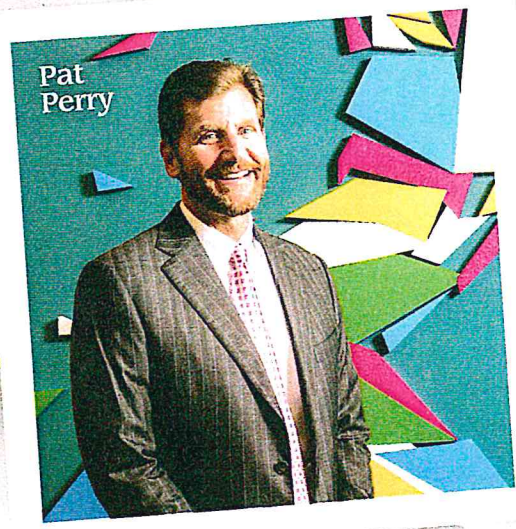
Dan Conway



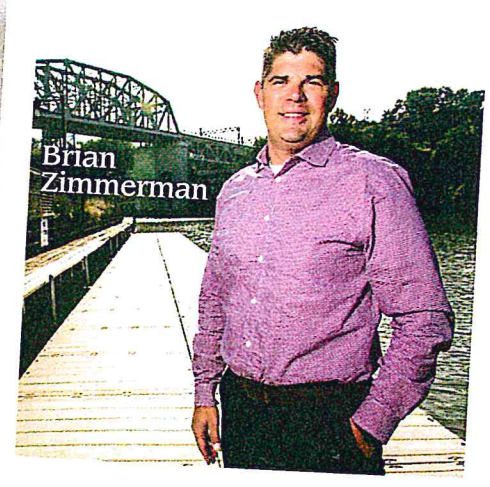
Michael Rainey



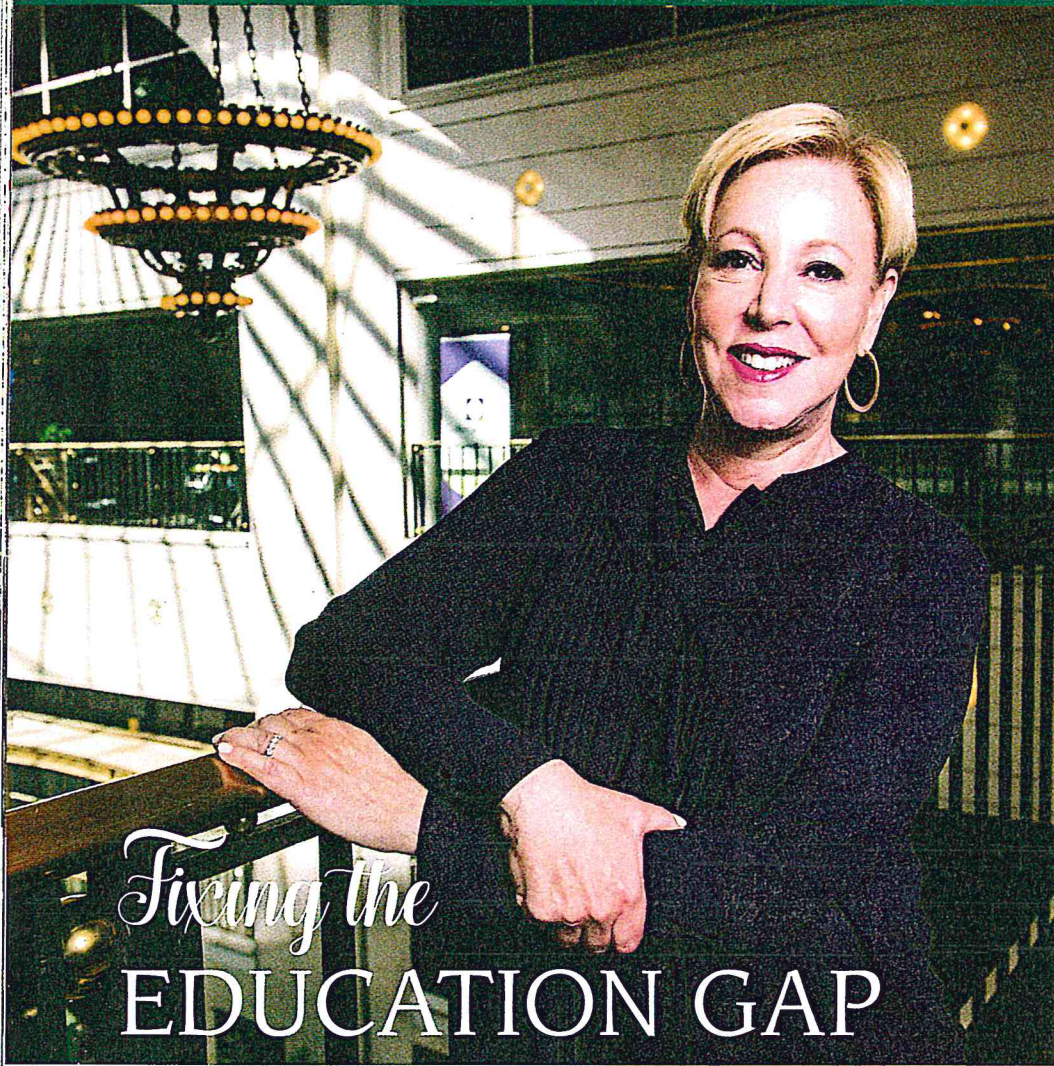
Fred
Bidwell



Pat
Perry



Brian
Zimmerman



Fixing the EDUCATION GAP

A \$500 INVESTMENT in College Now to support a high school student with advising, mentorship and guidance to get to college can result in a \$70,000 package for that Pell Grant-eligible student. Those numbers talk, says Lee Friedman, CEO, College Now Greater Cleveland.

"A lot of the issues the community is facing have to do with education equity," Friedman says. "By solving for that, you can change life for individuals."

Friedman has been driving the wheel of change at College Now, helping businesses understand that their support pays off by creating talent pipelines.

"In its history, people saw College Now as a scholarship for kids who are disadvantaged — we did tactical things. If there's something I brought, it's this transformation. College Now as a part of a long-term, regional economic strategy."

EDUCATION

Lee Friedman, CEO,
College Now
Greater Cleveland

Friedman started talking differently — quantifying the impact. And, beyond going to college, College Now has focused on improving graduation rate so those students are prepared in the workforce.

"For kids who are Pell-eligible, the on-time graduation rate is about 40 percent," Friedman relates. "For kids coming from poverty, the graduation rate is not even 20 percent. Our College Now students had a 60 percent graduation rate, and then we added a mentoring program and our graduation rates are tracking at 80 percent."

Students need support, Friedman em-

phasizes. This is why she's excited College Now is one of the partners of the Say Yes to Education initiative with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD). "We're going to make sure students have the social, academic and emotional supports they need — and the families get support," Friedman says.

Friedman's message is resonating with business, civic and philanthropic leader Partnerships with the region's major employers is helping fill the gaps in college access services in four counties.

"We went to employers who struggle with pipelines and started showing them the impact and showing them on paper the difficulty that kids coming from low-income families have in just getting to college, or even knowing that they can get there," Friedman says, adding that "education is security. Nothing changes for individuals if we can get them to have the aspiration to go to post-secondary, and then give them the tools and funding."

Friedman's thinking comes from a successful background in community development, beginning with leading Clean-Land Ohio out of bankruptcy in 1991 to 1995, and launching the Downtown Cleveland Partnership in 1999. During her tenure through 2005, downtown benefitted from \$1 billion in new development. Then in 2005, Friedman merged five leadership organizations to form the Cleveland Leadership Center.

Friedman joined College Now as CEO in 2010, and she calls the position "dream job and a privilege," giving credit to a team of 175 — that's a jump from the 45 people on staff when she joined, and the budget in her time has also increased from \$4.5 million to \$13 million.

As Friedman and her team consider the future of workforce development in Cleveland, the organization is focusing more on reaching adults.

Friedman says, "We are starting to see traction in a whole different way."

She adds businesses are beginning to understand the complexity of the education gap problem. "College Now has been a loud voice in this space," she says.