

WOMEN OF NOTE AWARDS

Every year, Crain's Cleveland Business honors a group of extraordinary women who are impacting Northeast Ohio through their leadership in business and in the community. This year, 15 more women join the ranks of female leaders who have been recognized by Crain's for their professional and civic accomplishments. The Women of Note class of 2022 is made up of entrepreneurs, thought leaders and innovators who have made a difference in their workplace, blazed trails for others and are leaving a mark on their communities. To call them Women of Note is an understatement.

Photography by Ken Blaze



April Miller Boise

Executive vice president and chief legal officer | Intel Corp.

April Miller Boise likes a challenge. And that's good, because she's about to take on a big one as the new executive vice president and chief legal officer for technology giant Intel Corp. Boise will officially take on her new role at the Santa Clara, California-based company in July. Her background in industry at large global companies — and what she calls her “affinity for technology and manufacturing” — makes her a good fit for them.

And the company is a good fit for her, too. Boise likes that Intel is investing in U.S. manufacturing, and she thinks she can add “significant value” at a time of change for the company.

“I always love a challenge, and there's a lot going on there, a lot of opportunities ahead of us,” she said.

Boise is joining Intel from Eaton Corp., which she joined in early 2020. Her career started on Wall Street, and she spent significant time at law firm Thompson Hine, becoming a partner and managing partner there. But her heart was always in “making things,” as she put it.

Boise, who first realized an interest in law as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, went to law school at the University of Chicago. She interned for General Motors and Saturn, and has worked at industrial companies like Meritor and Veyance Technologies Inc.

Throughout Boise's career, tack-

ling challenges and continuing to learn have been important. The teams she's worked with have been critical, too. Boise said talent development, helping members of her team to grow and thrive, is important to her. And she enjoys getting to help set and guide strategy at a company.

“I like really being engaged and involved in driving a company's strategy: setting that vision and then figuring out how are we going to get there,” she said.

Boise is a “superb lawyer” and an “extremely driven individual,” said Craig Martahus. Martahus was a partner at Thompson Hine when Boise joined the firm, and the two have stayed in touch, though he has

since retired and she has moved on to other roles. He's not surprised to see her taking a prominent new role at Intel.

“Believe me, it's not luck,” he said. “It is the result of years of hard work and dedication and commitment.”

Boise expects her new role to come with a lot of travel, as her team will be spread across the country. Speaking shortly after the Intel announcement was made, Boise said she thought she'd stay in the Cleveland area, but couldn't say for sure.

Cleveland, where Boise was born and where she's lived for much of her life, is close to her heart. And she's involved in the community. She's on the boards of organizations as varied as the Cleveland Clinic, the City Club

of Cleveland, the Assembly for the Arts and the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, to name a few.

“I love being able to invest in the community in that way and give back to the community,” she said. “I get out of it just as much as I put into it. Because those things, for me, in just building a place where we want to live and play and thrive, is really, really important.”

And her family's important to her, too. Boise said her husband, David Willbrand, is her “best friend and No. 1 fan.” Between them they have four children: Zoé Miller Boise, Maxwell Miller Boise, Ella Willbrand and Ethan Willbrand.

— Rachel Abbey McCafferty



Congratulations Women of Note

Squire Patton Boggs pays tribute to this year's talented honorees, including our partner Marissa Darden, and all the women who make Cleveland's business community thrive.

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WOMEN OF NOTE



Dr. Carol Cunningham

State medical director | Ohio Department of
Public Safety's Division of EMS

When finances forced Dr. Carol Cunningham to decline her Harvard University acceptance, her dad assured her she'd get there one day.

Decades later, Cunningham got into Harvard's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative and visited his grave to tell him, "Daddy, you were so right."

In June, the initiative named her the 2022 Meta-Leader of the Year in recognition of her service, dedication and innovation through the COVID-19 response.

Cunningham, state medical director for the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Medical Services, began issuing COVID-19 guidance in March 2020 from an inpatient bed while recovering from surgery.

She worked virtually with Robert Wagoner, the division's executive director, to offer best practices to protect health care providers. In 2021, she served as co-medical director of Cleveland's Wolstein Center federal vaccination clinic. The COVID response is a "poignant" example of her years of dedication, Wagoner said: "She just gives and gives and gives; it doesn't matter what it is."

If an EMS provider in the state sends the division a question, Cunningham will do "everything she can to get them the answer and to help them better understand," Wagoner said. "I've never seen her shy away from anything."

Cunningham is the first Black Meta-Leader of the Year, and first emergency physician and first EMS medical director to receive the honor. Her history is dotted with "firsts." In 2004, she became country's first Black female state medical director for EMS. During her residency, her locker was initially in the men's bathroom because they didn't expect female emergency medicine physicians.

When a young Cunningham

learned she didn't have the bloodline to become a queen, she decided to read every book in the library and serve as a queen's adviser instead. She found her way to medicine when her uncle took an X-ray of her stuffed dog, T-Bone, in his office at the Cleveland VA and helped her administer penicillin. She was hooked.

"I can be a doctor and still advise the queen," she said with a laugh. "And as you can see right now, I mean I still have more than one job."

Among other roles, Cunningham teaches at Northeast Ohio Medical University, is active with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's First Responder Resource Group and provides care at Cleveland Clinic Akron General's emergency department, where she increased her shifts during the pandemic.

Mentorship is incredibly important to Cunningham. She participates in career days and several years ago established at Maple Heights High School (her alma mater) the Melfi-Peck-Tate Scholarship, an endowed scholarship named after three influential teachers.

"I think kids need to see somebody who, No. 1, looks like them; No. 2, came from a similar background, or even have less; and 3, see what they've been able to accomplish despite the odds," she said. "I want to empower them."

Cunningham, who serves on the boards for the Tri-C JazzFest and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, has three big loves in her life that keep her energized through her work: music, teddy bears and adventure. The Kirtland police have dubbed her home "Maynard's House of Swing" after her favorite teddy bear Maynard and the jazz music she listens to every day. "I think you should live your life doing the things that you're passionate about and also, not following the herd," she said. "Explore new adventures, have the curiosity and the courage to try something new."

— Lydia Coutré



Bethia Burke

President | Fund for Our Economic Future

Bethia Burke does not really like to talk about herself, but if you get her started, she has no problem talking at length about her work at the Fund for Our Economic Future.

As only the second president of the organization, founded in 2004 to help shape the regional economic development agenda, Burke brings both an intense passion and an emotional intelligence to the otherwise staid work of economic development.

"She's got a great sense of humor," said Brad Whitehead, the fund's first president and Burke's former boss. "Sometimes when you are in the office, you can hear her laugh from down the hall, and what a great thing to be in an office where you hear the boss laughing, as opposed to hearing the boss yelling."

Burke was first hired as a manager of emerging initiatives in 2010 after honing her financial and analytical skills as lead of cost risk assessments at Northrop Grumman in the Washington, D.C., area. By 2018, she was promoted to vice president and continued adding new projects to her slate of responsibilities, including "The Two Tomorrows" report on inclusive economic growth in Northeast Ohio.

Her ascension to president at the fund was significant because it marked one of the first major leadership changes, followed by many more from the region's philanthropic and civic organizations — and one that was a conspicuous move on Whitehead's part to hand over governance to the next generation.

"The passing of the torch was intentional on his part, and I thought it was a good idea. He said, 'This is what I'm doing, and this is why I'm doing it,'" Burke said. "Change just for the sake of newness does not always work, but sometimes you need somebody else to, as they say, pick up the crossword, and give a new perspective."

Burke explains that a lot of crucial preparation and deliberate conversation went into preparing her to go from "program executor to inspiration leader," which became official just as the pandemic was taking hold in March of 2020.

Burke had to immediately jump into a new role with an organization that had a pressing new imperative to aid other groups wading through the bureaucracy and confusion of federal COVID funds, Whitehead said, and was successful at both endeavors.

"She immediately embarked on a new strategy and started doing all kinds of new stuff," he said. "She was faced with some serious headwinds and she stood firm against them, and not only did she get us through the pandemic, but she changed the composition of the board, embarked on a new strategic model and launched some new initiatives."

The fund's mission can be difficult to pin down as it tackles large and long-term solutions to complex problems, but Burke is clear that the mission is to work on the difficult issues. "We work on how to get from what we say matters to initiatives that can address those things and then shape those into something that is bigger and goes beyond the organization," she said.

Her ability to see beyond her role as head of the fund, to prioritize the work over her ownership of the work and all the ego that can be wrapped up in a leadership role is what makes her so perfect for the job, Whitehead said.

"She's honest about what's working. She's honest about what's not working," he said. "The organization is bigger than her in her mind, not the other way around."

— Kim Palmer



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Marisa Darden

Partner | Squire Patton Boggs



Breaking barriers is a family tradition for Marisa Darden. Her paternal grandfather, the Rev. Thomas Darden, functioned as the city of Sandusky's first Black mayor. Darden's maternal grandfather Joseph Burrucker, served as a Tuskegee Airman during World War II.

Although Darden is not following the exact course of her forebears, she is blazing a trail in the primarily white-male-dominated field of law. In March, Darden was named partner at Squire Patton Boggs after three years as principal at the Cleveland office. As the first woman of color in firm history to reach these heights locally, Darden is determined to guide her historically underrepresented colleagues along a similar path.

"(Being named partner) is not only an honor or a testament, but also a responsibility to other African-American associates and law students," said Darden, 39. "This is a path forward that they can achieve."

Darden currently mentors Black associates through a Squire-based resource group. The Lakewood resident, who spent parts of her formative years in Shaker Heights and Sandusky, has her own mentors providing advice and honing an ever-growing skill set. Among this group is Squire global managing partner and DEI chief Fred Nance, whose client-focused insight became Darden's watchword.

"Lawyers don't think about working in the private sector as customer service, but that's what it is," Darden said. "If you can harness your networks and understand the personal connections that create valuable relationships, you're going to be successful."

Aside from an emphasis on mentoring and community outreach, Darden's day-to-day includes leading the Cleveland office's pro bono initiative. Her team recently launched a pipeline project with Equality Ohio around the legality of gender expres-

sion in the Buckeye State.

A commitment to the region brought Darden home from Manhattan, where she served as assistant district attorney. Prior to joining Squire, she worked as an assistant U.S. attorney in Cleveland. Even with her busy schedule, Darden loves spending time with her paternal grandparents, now in their 90s, who still live in Sandusky.

"My family always cared about Northeast Ohio," said Darden. "They taught me the value of understanding where you come from so you can give back in a meaningful way."

Tenacity when faced with adversity has been an especially crucial lesson for Darden. Standing out in a field where women of color are still making strides means being just a little bit better than the competition.

"The way I've done that is by putting in the hours, while leveraging my personality to make connections with clients, partners and teammates," she said. "I'm not afraid to be vulnerable, to lay out who I really am."

Colleague Nance pointed to Darden's empathetic nature — combined with a dogged determination — as key to her success at Squire.

"Marisa has a vivacious, outgoing personality that people gravitate to," said Nance. "The combination of personality and real-world experience is what led us to name her as partner so quickly."

Darden feels privileged to achieve what she has at a relatively young age. Casting ahead, she plans to use her platform to affect additional change, ideally setting a tone that encourages others of similar background to follow her lead.

"I'm a collaborative leader — it's important to make everyone on the team feel seen and valued," said Darden. "I'm very aware that success is predicated on cooperation and teamwork. I also want to thank Squire for believing in me and giving me this platform in the community. I'm fortunate to be part of the team here."

— Douglas J. Guth



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WOMEN OF NOTE



Katrina Evans

Executive vice president | KeyCorp

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Katrina Evans will always take an opportunity to bet on herself, an adventurous attitude that has served her well in 30-plus years as a KeyCorp mainstay.

Evans recalls being asked to lead Key's call centers, a virtual leadership position that entailed management of 1,200 people in five departments. Even as her experience at the time centered around operations and retail, Evans took on the challenge with her usual gusto.

"When approached about (the job), I thought, 'Are you people crazy? I can't do that,'" said Evans. "But I stilled that voice to say, 'I can, I should, I will!' That was also a seminal moment for me about the value of taking a risk. I'm always curious, and always wanting to learn. It's a feeling that I can contribute more and make a bigger difference."

Evans has been a difference-maker at Key since arriving in 1994. Today, she leads growth-forward efforts around marketing, communications and analytics, in 2021 orchestrating expansion of a multibillion-dollar community benefits plan for low- and moderate-income clients.

The industry-leading financial executive also steered Key in receiving 10 consecutive "outstanding"

ratings from a regulatory office at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. On the diversity, equity and inclusion side, Key has been recognized a dozen times under Evans' watch as one of the country's most community-minded corporations.

Overall, Evans has accelerated Key's long DEI legacy through a diversity-centered workforce and supply-side engagement.

"These efforts are not a tough sell in the C-suite," Evans said. "It's incredibly rewarding to have work that's not only central to my heart, but also central to what I want the company to be. To have leadership mobilizing in the same way is a powerful thing."

Key president and CEO Christopher Gorman has known Evans for two decades, watching with admiration her rise into management positions that currently encompass chief of staff and director of corporate center.

"Trina brings a versatile and dynamic set of skills to her role," Gorman said in an email. "While Trina demonstrates business acumen and a strategic mindset, she is best known and respected for her authenticity and emotional intelligence. She is a highly trusted partner and adviser who influences others, cultivates culture, and gains the alignment necessary to move

the business forward. Trina is a culture carrier at KeyBank and a wonderful ambassador for our reputation and brand."

Fostering inclusive leadership comes with putting the ladder down for other women on the way up, Evans added. As senior positions can sometimes put leaders in a bubble, she makes sure to remain authentic, relatable and transparent in her dealings with staff.

"Being yourself shows (colleagues) that they can be themselves, too," said Evans. "People are going to have different yardsticks for success, so I want each team member to define that the way they want when it comes to determining their work and personal lives."

In her own free time, Evans bikes and travels with her husband, Ken, while spending time with their teenage daughter. No matter the obstacles involved, she looks forward to continuing a lifetime of adventure in the corporate realm.

"It's been a wonderful journey with great opportunities along the way, but it's also had its share of challenges," said Evans. "For me, it's best framed by an interest in learning new things, exploring new areas of the bank, and finding other ways to contribute."

— Douglas J. Guth

Habeebah Rasheed Grimes

CEO | Positive Education Program

Growing up alongside a brother who would later be diagnosed with schizophrenia, Habeebah Rasheed Grimes saw first hand what emotional trauma can do to a child.

For her brother, that meant run-ins with police and difficulty focusing in school. For Grimes, it had the opposite effect. She aced her classes and followed the rules. Kept her head down. In college, she told her mother and role model she was looking to become a physical therapist, but something about that route didn't feel genuine.

It wasn't until a friend shared a 1999 clipping from The Plain Dealer classifieds section outlining a job working one-on-one with kids with severe emotional issues that Grimes gained clarity.

"That clipping and that interview process really centered on my lived experience in a way that I hadn't known (was) possible," she said.

Thus began a long career with the nonprofit Positive Education Program (PEP), which has provided services to Cleveland-area children with severe mental health and behavioral challenges since 1971.

Grimes began as a one-on-one aide, then went on to earn her master's degree in clinical psychology from Cleveland State University.

She returned to PEP as a clinical supervisor for one of its day treatment centers. She went on to become a director of clinical services, then chief clinical officer. And she did all that before turning 40, even earning a spot on Crain's Cleveland's 40 Under Forty list in 2015. In 2018, she became CEO of the \$40 million organization.

Grimes credits the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Ladder to Leadership program with helping her to see herself as a leader in her new role.

Susan Berger, chief external relations officer for PEP, said it's Grimes' ability to build bridges with stakeholders, community members and

everyone from staff to children that makes her so effective in her role.

"Habeebah is somebody who is uniquely skilled at standing at those junctures between different worlds and working hard to help people understand each other," she said. "She's just incredibly empathic."

"She is someone who is very comfortable creating brave spaces and having courageous conversations."

Now married with two sons, Grimes hosts a podcast called "No Crystal Stair" in which she holds conversations about the joys of Black motherhood.

The first episode features a conversation with her mother in which they discuss her late brother Hashim.

"Her podcast is beautiful," said Berger. "She's so passionate about her role in this life as a mom, as a wife and as a daughter — who she is to her family is really important."

Grimes said the goal of PEP is to help children who have had traumatic experiences learn how to move through the world and thrive.

"You can buffer young children from stressors and adversity by having knowledgeable adults surrounding them and by building up the village that surrounds and supports a child," she said.

Had someone recognized the early signs of mental health struggles in her brother, he might have gotten the help he needed, Grimes said. Her mother, too, would have had support even as she worked hard to find the right help and resources for her son.

The work at PEP is taxing and the job is never done, so Grimes has her own network of support with professionals who remind her to eat and exercise and take time for herself and her own well-being, so she can show up each day to give her best effort.

"Everyone has ambition, but that's not what drives her," Berger says. "She's just constantly thinking, 'How do I use my life in service to the things I care most about? And if it's through leadership, that's OK.'"

— Kristine Gill



Congrats!

Bethia Burke

President, Fund for Our Economic Future

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Yvette Ittu

President and CEO | Cleveland Development Advisors

Yvette Ittu has earned bragging rights for helping make change in Cleveland neighborhoods, but you would never hear her say so herself.

Known as a collaborator, an empathetic leader and colleague, Ittu has overseen the operation of Cleveland Development Advisors, a corporate- and foundation-backed patient investor in projects catalyzing change in the local economy and lives of Clevelanders, for 18 years. She recalls how her predecessor, Steve Strnisha, got her to join CDA as its first employee 23 years ago.

"I'll never forget when he showed me my first empty building (now the apartments at 1900 Euclid Ave.), I tried to imagine it as apartments," Ittu said. "I thought, 'I can be a part of all this.'"

That led her to what she describes as her "dream job." Today she oversees a staff of five at CDA and a total

of 70 staffers as she also serves in leadership at the Greater Cleveland Partnership.

Her impact, through the board she works with and its funders, is vast. With Ittu at its helm, CDA has invested \$475 million in more than 160 projects that have resulted in 7,700 new housing units and 13.6 million square feet of commercial space. That includes repurposing 5 million square feet of former office space downtown as residential and hotel use, along with nonprofit projects aiding education and social services throughout the city.

Ittu actually has had several careers with the common thread of her being a Certified Public Accountant and attorney. She worked in finance for the city of Cleveland and Cleveland Public Power, as a bond lawyer at Calfee Halter & Griswold and as finance director for the city of Lakewood.

Debra Janik, a co-worker at the city of Cleveland and GCP who now

works at Bedrock Cleveland, says Ittu is brilliant.

"She has the amazing ability to sit in a meeting where a lot of ideas are tossed around, listen to what everyone has to say and put it all together in a story so that everyone knows the next step," Janik said. "She is a Cleveland kid and knows the city she serves. It's not just project work. It's all about affecting change in Cleveland."

For her part, Ittu said, "It's important to me that whatever you are doing has purpose. I love what I'm doing. It's something I'm really passionate about."

Ittu also serves as a board member of Downtown Cleveland Alliance and Digital C, a group that works to increase broadband availability in underserved neighborhoods. She has served two years as president of the national New Markets Tax Coalition, an advocacy group that pushed for continued funding for the federal New Markets

Tax Credit program, which recently helped win reallocation of funds for the program from Congress

Ittu balanced her career and volunteer efforts with being the mother of two now-grown children. She said she and her husband, Jim Ittu, are planning a cross-country bicycle tour in Norway to celebrate their 35th anniversary.

Ittu also loves to row on the Cuyahoga River and is a member of the 31x team of the Western Reserve Rowing Association.

"I often use rowing as an analogy for teamwork," Ittu said. "When you are all rowing in sync, it's almost meditative."

Jeffrey J. Wild, chairman of the CDA board and chair of the real estate and environmental practice group at Benesch, puts Ittu's impact succinctly.

"Her fingerprints," Wild said, "are on our skyline and throughout the city."

— Stan Bullard



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Carey Jaros

President and CEO | GOJO Industries

It would be hard to think of an executive who's been busier the last couple of years than GOJO president and CEO Carey Jaros.

While a lot of businesses were sending people home and sheltering from the pandemic, Jaros and her team could do no such things. Their primary product, Purell hand sanitizer, rapidly became a critical element in the battle against COVID — and it was being used up faster than GOJO was making it in early 2020.

Jaros became president and CEO the first day of 2020. On Feb. 3, the U.S. declared a public health emergency that was quickly followed by a string of shutdowns, shortages and panicked buying of things like toilet paper and, of course, hand sanitizer.

Under Jaros, GOJO quickly expanded so it could ensure health care providers and then consumers had a reliable supply of Purell.

"Carey steered GOJO's 2,500 team members through a highly effective response to the surge, making 140 billion doses of PURELL products in 2020 — more than three times the company's 2019 output," Ray Hancart, GOJO vice president of strategic communications, wrote of Jaros. "In paral-

lel, she oversaw GOJO's expansion from two to five manufacturing and distribution facilities in Northeast Ohio, and investment in a local ethanol plant, providing a path to growth and a secure supply of products that impact health and well-being."

On top of all that, under Jaros' leadership GOJO also started thinking about the end of the pandemic, or at least about when it would subside enough to enable life to become more normal again, long before most other companies did. At the start of this year, GOJO unveiled a detailed return-to-work plan that had input from employees across the company and that defined employee roles and specified work-from-home policies clearly.

Naming Jaros a Crain's Woman of Note this year took about as much thought as deciding whether to pump the hand sanitizer on the way out the door.

Jaros credits GOJO's corporate culture for her success.

"Two of our GOJO Values, 'Better Together and Always Learning,' were essential to me during the pandemic," Jaros told us. "We believe in molecular leadership, not heroic leadership, and I have never been more

grateful to be surrounded by others whose expertise, ideas and approaches were different than mine. Together, we did things none of us could have done alone."

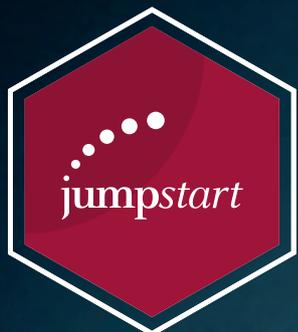
She also credits outside help that she started receiving at home in childhood and has continued to seek in her life.

"On a more personal level, the pandemic required me to draw on nearly every life experience I've had and every good piece of advice I've ever gotten. The challenges we faced seemed to change daily, and leading through that took equal parts heart and head," Jaros said.

Marcella Kanfer Rolnick, GOJO executive chair, on the other hand, credits Jaros for the CEO's own success.

"Carey has that unique combination of intellectual curiosity, a focus on results, and an ability to engage people at all levels. She has an unwavering moral compass that earns the trust of all who know her," Rolnick told us. "These skills make her a great transformational leader in good and difficult times. There is no one else that I want as my partner in shaping the future of GOJO than Carey."

— Dan Shingler



TELEANGÉ THOMAS

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WOMEN OF NOTE

Jeneen Marziani

Ohio market president | Bank of America

Early in her career, it wasn't uncommon for Jeneen Springer Marziani to encounter prospective banking clients who wanted her male boss to handle a meeting instead of her.

Obnoxious as it was, she tried to not let it bother her that much. It was nonetheless something she shouldn't have needed to deal with as a young professional trying to find her footing in what remains a male-dominated industry.

"It was hard, because it wasn't like I didn't know the work," Marziani said. "My boss totally supported me. But I think that really opened my eyes to the way people can discriminate."

Sometimes her bosses would tell her to forge ahead on her own. Sometimes they'd come in with other team members to provide support.

Sometimes she'd get cross looks for trying to pull off an outfit with pants instead of a dress.

There were tough situations to navigate, but Marziani said the issues were more with customers than her supervisors.

But this is what it was like for a woman in banking in the 1990s.

"There were some situations like that which eroded my confidence a bit," Marziani said. "If I had a different manager, I could've gone a different direction, and I could've lost not my way but my stride, because you start to think, 'Are you good enough?'"

Suffice to say, time has shown that Marziani — who is now the Ohio market president for one of the largest banks in the world — is good enough.

Marziani began working for Bank of America out of college. She grew up in a military family and moved several times throughout her childhood.

That was a challenging dynamic for a kid. But it also seems to have had the unexpected effect of preparing her to handle change throughout her life.

She studied speech at Miami University in Ohio and considered a future in media. A job recommendation from a friend brought her to the

bank, where she first began in the credit department before shifting into marketing-related roles.

"Sometimes you just have to take a risk," Marziani said. "And I think that has helped me in my life, going with my gut."

In her work with the bank, she often helps clients with whatever needs they may have. There may be similar solutions, but each one is different.

This variety has been stimulating as well as rewarding. After all, Marziani says that what she is most passionate about — besides her family — is helping other people.

A career with the bank has enabled her to do just that, as well as in the community.

She's active on many boards, including the Tri-C Foundation and the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. She's helped develop and lead book drives for the Daily Dose of Reading nonprofit and Cleveland Metropolitan School District and is an executive sponsor for the Northern Ohio LEAD for Women network.

Her impact on Tri-C is immeasurable, according to Cuyahoga Community College president Alex Johnson, who retires in June.

"She has a great personality and is very engaging in addition to being very, very professional in the manner in which she conducts business," Johnson said. "She knows how to connect with people."

He added that Marziani has made a "strong and meaningful impact" in just the few years since she's settled back in Northeast Ohio proper — which led to her taking on the dual title of Cleveland market president for the bank on top of her statewide leadership role.

"Bank of America is very fortunate to have Jeneen representing them in this market," Johnson said.

For others who aspire to follow in her footsteps, Marziani encourages being confident and driven.

"Be intentional in the path you want to take. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Lean on your network," she said. "And don't be afraid to take some risks and make some mistakes."

— Jeremy Nobile

THE LAND SCAPE

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The team and board of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress extends a sincere congratulations to **TANIA MENESSE**, President & CEO of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, on her distinction as a Crain's Cleveland Business "Women of Note" honoree.

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress



Fostering equitable revitalization throughout Cleveland's neighborhoods by strengthening the community development ecosystem.

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Valerie Mayén

Founder, owner, lead designer | Yellowcake Shop

Valerie Mayén is done thinking small.

That's what the founder, owner and lead designer of Yellowcake Shop said she "assumed that was what I was capable of" for years. She thought her place as a business owner was relatively defined: pay your bills, buy some nice things occasionally, stay content, repeat.

But over time, as her women's outerwear and accessories company grew, she said she realized that wasn't sufficient. She began to challenge that line of thinking, in part by watching documentaries and learning about other female business leaders.

"If I want to be able to create real change and have a seat at the table and start supporting the businesses that I want to see more of around me, I can only do that if I have wealth behind me," she said.

Mayén's business is multifaceted. Of course, there's the clothing, designed and handcrafted in Cleveland as well as Chicago. She's an alumna of the fashion design TV show "Project Runway."

But her Cleveland studios also do more. The Yellowcake website lists a variety of services: in-home styling, fashion illustration classes, custom garment creation, small-business consulting.

For Mayén, community is everything, according to one of her advisers. "She really has the community and the people around her at heart all the time," said Patty Ajdukiewicz, senior adviser of small-business edu-

cation and support at JumpStart.

That mindset is present in her next project, too. She's currently working with investor partners and developers to develop a plot of land in Cleveland's Gordon Square neighborhood. The plan is to turn it into a multi-use space with both commercial and residential opportunities.

"There is not a lot of real estate owned by women or people of color," she said. "My goal is to hopefully change that."

In fact, Mayén said the priority will be to house minority-owned businesses there while hopefully having an additional focus on female-owned businesses.

"What I've seen a lot in my community is there's an imbalance of variety between who gets noticed and who doesn't, who gets the nicer storefronts and who doesn't, who gets into the events that are in the more affluent communities and who doesn't," she said. "And I'm tired of that."

Owning property wasn't really on Mayén's agenda a few years ago. It seemed out of reach. But she said she identified that as a limiting mindset. Now, in addition to helping others, she's also focused on helping to build generational wealth for her family, something she said she didn't have as a child of two immigrants.

Wealth can provide opportunities, she said. It can give growth, it can provide peace of mind, it can support rest. For Mayén, it can help her help others. And those kinds of prospects, she said, are exciting.

— Amy Morona



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Executive Education

Megan Lykins Reich

Executive director | Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland

It's not often that an unpaid intern gets the exposure her company promises. She's even less likely to get hired or promoted. But for Megan Lykins Reich, it was an unpaid internship at the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland in the summer of 2004 that kick-started her tenure at the community mainstay where she took the helm as executive director in January.

"I was just trying to get my foot in the door, which clearly worked," Reich joked.

It's an uncommon career trajectory, perhaps, but fans of Reich's leadership style credit it with her experience at all levels of the organization.

"She's often worked that position or she's often dealt with both the challenges and the successes around different positions," said Amy Cronauer, director of grants stewardship at moCa. "And it's great that way, because she really has a different value."

A native of Cincinnati, Reich majored in art history and studio art at Pennsylvania State University. She went on to complete her master's degree in art history and museum studies at Case Western Reserve University. In between, she interned at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Ven-

ice and fell in love with museum work through her interactions with patrons.

"I remember just watching how people processed the work, the questions they asked and how I could excite them and get them really thinking and having a conversation," she said. "So I've always been really interested in that relationship and making that work and sing and thrive."

She was a fellow at moCa from 2004 to 2006 and became a full-time staffer in 2007 as an assistant curator and director of adult education. From there, she rose through the ranks to director of programs, then deputy director and interim executive director.

She threw her hat into the ring for the permanent executive director role and landed it in January after a nationwide search.

"I definitely had examples of my work to show," Reich said.

But aside from a demonstrated history of work here in Cleveland, Reich is a great leader, Cronauer said, because she's always learning and looking to have fun in the role. And she's able to inspire those around her to take ownership and pride in their work so they can best serve the community through art.

"She gave a presentation — and I

just don't think museum people use this kind of language — but she said this work is grounded in love," Cronauer said. "And she said the opposite of love isn't hate, it's ego."

Reich has been with moCa for a long time, and intends to stick around, but she's not driven by the ambition to rise through the ranks, Cronauer said. It's clear she believes in the museum's role in Cleveland to reflect and engage with its community.

"She wants this work to be as authentic and meaningful as possible," Cronauer said.

While the pandemic has been a challenging time for all museums, Reich believes the industry is in a phase of renewal and regrowth. And with a new executive director and several new staff members, it's time to come up with a fresh strategic vision for the next five to eight years, and that includes new programming and ways of using the museum's space.

"But along the way, people can always expect to come here and experience amazing, thought-provoking, fresh, contemporary art from artists working right here and across the globe," she said. "So that's not going to change."

— Kristine Gill



Cleveland Development Advisors and the Greater Cleveland Partnership congratulate all the Women of Note honorees including our own

Yvette Ittu

President and CEO, Cleveland Development Advisors
Executive Vice President, Greater Cleveland Partnership



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- Tania Menesse -

CEO and President |
Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

Tania Menesse makes no apologies for the time and energy she commits to Cleveland's inner-city revitalization — both on and off the clock.

As the leader of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, Menesse oversees two dozen staffers focused on strengthening the city's community development ecosystem, builds the private-public partnerships necessary to advance small- and large-scale urban redevelopment projects and advocates on behalf of neighborhoods that "have been left behind," she said.

After hours, the Shaker Heights native serves in other organizations taking aim at advancing underserved neighborhoods. She is a board member of Destination Cleveland, Digital C and the Greater Ohio Policy Center, and a member of the Fund for Our Economic Future.

"I also spend a lot of time, when I'm not working, going to community events, reading, researching and actively thinking about this work — both because I really enjoy it and because I feel so blessed to do this in Cleveland and to see the transformation," she said.

With a business degree from the University of Virginia, Menesse began her career in the telecom industry, holding sales, product development, project management and process re-engineering positions between the late '90s and mid-aughts. It was around that time, while living in Colorado, she became enamored with then-Denver Mayor John Hickmeyer's transformation of the city.

"I remember thinking that's what I want to do," she said.

Menesse and her husband returned home to Cleveland in 2008 so she could begin graduate work at Cleveland State University's Levin College of Urban Affairs. After earning a master's degree in urban studies with a concentration in economic development, she was hired to head Shaker Heights' economic development department in 2010. Four years later, she was named Cleveland's director of community development.

That role put her squarely at the helm of the city's housing and neighborhood commercial redevelopment programs, where Menesse said she became more attuned to the importance of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress and the dozens of individual community development corporations (CDCs) it supports.

"What I saw is (that) we have this amazing infrastructure of (CDCs) that really understood resident needs. But over the last 10 years, we've really taken our eye off the ball of building the capacity and the talent pipeline of these organizations, specifically as it relates to real estate capacity," she said.

The need for strong CDCs, Menesse said, is most acute in Cleveland's most distressed neighborhoods, which lack any investment from conventional banks, developers and rehabbers. In many of the city's east and southeast neighborhoods, she explained, CDCs are the ones "doing home repair, rehab and marketing properties."

"They are also the folks who are out in the neighborhoods, going to community meetings, knocking on doors to get to know neighbors and residents," Menesse added. "When it's time to vote, when it's time to fill out the Census, when it's time to offer a new home repair program or get people vaccinated — that can only happen if there's those trusted partners in the neighborhood. ... Much of our work is building up the resource base to allow (CDCs) to shine and do what they do."

Jeff Epstein, chief of integrated development for the city of Cleveland, described Menesse as a linchpin in the city's advancement toward collective prosperity.

"She's super smart and not only understands the big picture of where we need to go but is very tactical in terms of how we need to get there," said Epstein, who also noted Menesse's "tirelessness" in her commitment to the "revitalization of our neighborhoods."

"It's a long game," he said, "and Tania understands that progress is made at the speed of trust"

— Judy Stringer

"She's super smart and not only understands the big picture of where we need to go but is very tactical in terms of how we need to get there."

— Jeff Epstein, chief of integrated development for the city of Cleveland



Marika Shioiri-Clark

Designer | SOSHL Studio

Marika Shioiri-Clark has helped to design a hospital in Rwanda, where residents in a poor region had no access to doctors. She's tackled projects ranging from sanitation systems in Ghana to an app that helps parents foster young children's brain growth.

And she's infused her style into developments in Cleveland's Ohio City neighborhood, where she lives with her husband and partner, Graham Veysey, and their 17-month-old daughter, Rei.

To call Shioiri-Clark a designer does not capture the breadth of her work. The 38-year-old is a problem-solver, a creative spirit who parlayed an education in architecture and urban studies into an eclectic consulting career.

"She's just great at ideas and great at execution," said Jocelyn Wyatt, a collaborator and the CEO of Alight, a Minneapolis-based nonprofit that works with refugees worldwide. "And I think it's so rare to find someone that is able to do both of those things — and do them at the level that Marika is able to."

Shioiri-Clark grew up in Berkeley, California. Her father, an engineer, influenced her interest in building things. Her mother, a Japanese immigrant, imbued her with an awareness of a world beyond the United States.

After attending Brown University, Shioiri-Clark obtained a master's degree in architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. That's where she and fellow students founded MASS Design Group, a nonprofit collective that approaches architecture as an avenue for healing.

Upon finishing a fellowship with global design company IDEO, she moved to Cleveland to join Veysey in 2012. The pair, who met at the Aspen Ideas Festival, had been dating long-distance. They carved out an apartment from the first floor of a former firehouse on West 29th Street.

As Shioiri-Clark worked with out-of-town clients and built up her design business, SOSHL Studio, she and Vey-

Erika Rudin-Luria

President | Jewish Federation of Cleveland

When Erika Rudin-Luria and her husband, Rabbi Hal Rudin-Luria, moved to Cleveland from Manhattan, they planned to stay between three and five years. That was 21 years ago.

"There were several moments where I was like, 'Nah, I'm not ready to leave yet,'" said Rudin-Luria, the president of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland. "I think finally about 10 years ago, I looked at my husband and said, 'Why are we pretending we're going to leave?'"

Rudin-Luria grew up in a suburb of Syracuse, New York, and the couple chose Cleveland over opportunities in Westchester County, New York; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Palo Alto, California, in part because the city's distinct ethnic neighborhoods reminded them of the East Coast.

"But we stayed in Cleveland because of the people," Rudin-Luria said. "We just fell in love with Cleveland."

Rudin-Luria joined the federation in 2001 as a supporting foundations

manager, working her way up through a range of positions of increasing responsibility until she became just the fifth president in the organization's more than 100-year history in 2019.

Over the past two years, she's helped lead her staff and the Cleveland Jewish community through the COVID-19 pandemic. She excelled at the big-picture moves — the federation raised \$15.5 million, while also contributing to the Greater Cleveland COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund — and the smaller touches, like writing letters to the Jewish community each week and asking them to write back and share what was happening.

The organization focused on quickly responding to the community's concerns, tapping its network of experts to answer people's health questions, address their mental health and ensure they stayed connected, even if it wasn't necessarily in person.

"We threw out a vision where we asked, 'Twenty years from now, what do we want our children to say to our grandchildren about this pandemic?'" Rudin-Luria said. "We want our children to say that our building was

closed, but our community was open and we left no one behind."

Mission accomplished, said Keith Libman, a partner at the accounting firm of Bober Markey Fedorovich.

"It is said that great leaders rise out of adversity, and leading through this once-in-a-generation challenge, Erika kept our community strong," he said.

During her two-decade tenure, Rudin-Luria has partnered with volunteer leadership on programs and initiatives such as Forward Focus (a holistic homeless prevention initiative), jHub (an interfaith outreach) and the Chesed Center Food Pantry, which distributes food, clothing, household necessities and personal care items to families in need.

Rudin-Luria also guided the development of the federation's latest strategic plan, soliciting ideas from senior executives and academics across the country. In addition to her federation work, she is a trustee of the Jack, Joseph & Morton Mandel Foundation, the David and Inez Myers Foundation and the Maltz Foundation, and is on the board of directors of the Parkwood

Corp., a private trust company.

She's considered one of Cleveland's go-to people whenever there are important Jewish and community issues that require intelligence and consensus-building, said Ira Kaplan, the executive chairman at the Benesch law firm.

"She is accessible to everyone, responding to the diverse needs of the people in the community, and is a reassuring and sensible voice when these needs appear to conflict," he said. "She has a talent for making people feel comfortable and is a strong and confident leader that we can all count on."

That accessibility is a blessing, not a burden, she said.

"My work is fully aligned with my values and my passion," she said. "This is what I want to be working on. I'm energized even when dealing with challenges, because all of our challenges are opportunities to bring people together and accomplish something great together."

"I wouldn't want to be doing anything else."

— Joe Scalzo



sey refashioned that firehouse.

The couple reimagined the Striebinger Block building across the street with local retailers, apartments and a living wall. With developer Michael Panzica, they replaced a nearby parking lot with Church and State, an 11-story apartment project where two buildings flank a whimsical courtyard.

"I just try to be curious and interested in lots of things and have faith that things that I'm interested in and excited about will keep coming," said Shioiri-Clark, who curates the aesthetics of those spaces, indoors and out.

Now she and Veysey are preparing for the August debut of the Creative Hangars, seven hut-like metal buildings at West 28th Street and Church Avenue that will hold a makers' market and a bar. With Panzica, they're also planning Bridgeworks, a mixed-use project at the western end of the Detroit-Superior Bridge.

"In short order, they have transformed a part of this city. Forever transformed. In a way that is completely unusual," said Lillian Kuri, executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Cleveland Foundation. Kuri has known Shioiri-Clark for a decade and worked with her on a project that brought local and international artists together to erect murals in Ohio City. Both women studied at the Harvard Graduate School of Design but put their architecture degrees to work in nontraditional ways.

For Shioiri-Clark, that's using design to come up with strategies and solutions — tangible outcomes beyond bricks and mortar.

"I think it's incredible to have someone with her talent having as much impact here in Cleveland as she's having nationally and globally," Kuri said. "Her heart is here, her family is here ... but she has a global reach, a global impact."

— Michelle Jarboe



Teleangé Thomas

Chief operations and relationships officer | JumpStart

A young, and already ambitious, Teleangé Thomas imagined her future self as a high-powered legal adviser akin to her favorite fictional trailblazer — Clair Huxtable from "The Cosby Show."

"I saw myself having a legal career because that's what Clair Huxtable did, but I didn't want to be in the courtroom," said the Alliance native. "I wanted to intersect that with business. I always saw myself being an owner or an operator of some company, making deals, building opportunity and all of that."

Today Thomas puts that trailblazing energy into Northeast Ohio's entrepreneurial ecosystem as a member of JumpStart's executive team. She joined the nonprofit in January 2021, assuming the newly created position of chief advancement and relationships officer and bringing more than 20 years of experience in public health and nonprofit management. Later that year, Thomas — who has a business management degree from Case Western Reserve

University — took full ownership of JumpStart's operations function.

Thomas said that while advancing social and economic equality was a common thread in previous leadership roles at Candid, the Sisters of Charity Foundation, University Hospitals and Cleveland's public health department, the opportunity at JumpStart timed perfectly with her own desire to have a more direct impact on the region's economic prosperity, particularly as it relates to inclusiveness.

"It was a reality of what was happening in society," she said. "Things that were very deeply personal and had always been of importance to me from a value standpoint suddenly had a new level of emphasis and a new level of urgency. ... I knew I wanted to get closer to having influence over access to resources and more closely aligned to wealth building."

In her current role, Thomas manages the strategic operations and fundraising initiatives for the 70-person JumpStart. She's also responsible for strengthening partnerships and

spearheading its involvement in civic initiatives, including the Cleveland Innovation Project and the Midtown Innovation District. Like JumpStart, a core tenant of those initiatives, Thomas said, it's economic growth that benefits everyone.

"(JumpStart is) investing in the individual entrepreneur, his or her hopes and dreams and success, but our success is really rooted in how the communities that we serve are being impacted from an overall standpoint of economic development and outcomes," she said.

Cleveland Public Library executive director and CEO Felton Thomas Jr. (no relation) said Thomas' background makes her uniquely qualified to help JumpStart and its partners embed equity into their projects and practices.

"There's this long-held belief that job opportunities and economic growth will automatically make community members' lives better, but you have to understand that in underserved communities, their lives are touched and impacted by health disparities, institutional rac-

ism and many things other than just unemployment," he said. "Teleangé has spent years understanding those realities and turning that understanding into something that can better the community."

Along with keeping "an eye and attention on equity" — as it relates to people of color as well as other under-represented communities such as LGBTQ individuals — Thomas said she hopes to drive more support for female entrepreneurs and creatives.

"Northeast Ohio has an appreciation for art and culture and a richness of creative talent," she said. "I'd like to see us think through how we can lift them up as small-business owners and entrepreneurs."

Thomas sits on the boards of Community Health Charities, Policy Matters Ohio, Green City Growers, the Conservancy of Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Cleveland Public Library. She is a fellow of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has been published in academic journals and is a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority and the Order of the Eastern Star.

— Judy Stringer