



June 9, 2017

9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

MJ Freed Theater

515 Avenue of the States

Chester, PA 19013

**The Story of a Block –
A Tour of Chester’s Avenue of the States
with Artists, Entrepreneurs & Urban Farmers**

**June 9, 2017
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

Agenda

9:00-9:30 AM Registration and Breakfast

Visit the Chester Housing Authority’s Mobile Market and Boundaries and Bridges’ Food Wagon just outside the MJ Freed Theater, then join us inside to register and connect with colleagues.

9:30 - 9:50 AM Welcome and Introductory Remarks

- Devon Walls, Artist Warehouse, MJ Freed Theater and New Day Chester
- Honorable Thaddeus Kirkland, Mayor of Chester
- Kimberly Allen, Wells Fargo Regional Foundation

9:50 - 11:15 AM Panel Discussion: Place & Philanthropy

Moderated by: Andrew Frishkoff, LISC Philadelphia

Overview of Chester Made Initiative

- Devon Walls, MJ Freed Theater
- Laura Koloski, The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage
- Laurie Zierer, Pennsylvania Humanities Council

Boundaries and Bridges and Urban Farms

- Sharon Meagher, Widener University
- Misty Sol, Sowing Good Seeds Project
- Bonita Taylor, Sowing Good Seeds Project
- LaNoana Segree Odom, Sowing Good Seeds Project
- John Bush, Artist and Developer
- Reverend Hilda Campbell, Chester Writer’s House

Program Related Investing/ Mission Aligned investing

- Chuck Lacy, Barred Rock Fund
- Kristina Wahl, The Barra Foundation

11:15 AM - 12:30 PM “On Your Own” Tour of Avenue of the States Spaces

Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in activities/observe performances at 3 locations, engage in a discussion around mission related investing and program related investing, and explore other spaces along the Avenue of the States. Refer to your map for additional details.

Arts and Performance (Abstract Space at MJ Freed)

Discussion of arts classes and performance at the MJ Freed Theater

- Devon Walls, Artist Warehouse, MJ Freed Theater and New Day Chester
- Jerry Dukes, Performer
- Kenneth Hunt, Performer
- India Irvin, Performer
- Robert Young, Performer

Food and Sustainability (Outdoors)

Visit the Chester Housing Authority's Mobile Market and Boundaries and Bridges' Food Wagon

- Misty Sol, Sowing Good Seeds Project
- Bonita Taylor, Sowing Good Seeds Project
- LaNoana Segree Odom, Sowing Good Seeds Project
- Sharon Meagher, Widener University
- Steve Fischer, Chester Housing Authority
- Michael Basher, Fare & Square

Community Engagement and Placemaking (Pop up Makerspace)

Engage in a discussion of placemaking and participate in a build activity that will be incorporated in the new space

- John Bush, Nebula Gallery
- Alex Gilliam, Public Workshop
- Angelique Hunter, Smith Flooring, Inc.
- Ulysses "Butch" Slaughter, Chester Made Project Manager

Impact Investing (Coffee shop)

Join our presenters over a cup of coffee to ask questions and discuss mission-related investing and program-related investments.

- Chuck Lacy, Barred Rock Foundation
- Kristina Wahl, The Barra Foundation

12:30 - 12:45 PM Lunch

Return to the MJ Freed Theater for lunch, reflection, conversation and next steps.

12:45 - 2:00 PM Conversation and Next Steps

- Remarks from the City
- Kimberly Allen, Wells Fargo Regional Foundation
- David Bradley
- Devon Walls, Artist Warehouse, MJ Freed Theater and New Day Chester

2:00 PM

Conclude

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Registration List

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Mindy	Aldridge	The Grace S. and W. Linton Nelson Foundation
Kimberly	Allen	Wells Fargo Regional Foundation
Mike	Basher	Fare & Square Market
Dr. Juan	Baughn	Chester School District
Moira	Baylson	Citizens Bank of Pennsylvania
Linda	Braceland	Art on Avenue of the States
David	Bradley	
Debbie	Brodeur	Lansdowne Economic Development Corp. (LEDC)
John	Bush	The Nebula Gallery
Rev. Hilda	Campbell	Chester Writers’ House
Barbara	Craig	Crozer-Keystone Community Foundation
Richard	Crespo	United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey
Mischico	Daniels	Crozer-Keystone Community Foundation
Cordelia	Delson	Chester Children’s Chorus
Ken	Dinitz	Pennsylvania Humanities Council
Jerry	Dukes	Poetry and Song Presenter
Sara Zia	Ebrahimi	Leeway Foundation
Rachel	Edward	Smith Flooring Inc.
Steve	Fischer	Chester Housing Authority
Isabel	Floyd	Pennsylvania Humanities Council
Kathleen	Freed	Threshold Group
Andrew	Frishkoff	LISC Philadelphia
Alex	Gilliam	Public Workshop
Heather	Goldfarb	Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation
Kenneth	Hunt	Poetry and Song Presenter
Angelique	Hunter	Smith Flooring Inc.
India	Irvin	Poetry and Song Presenter
Theresa	Jackson	Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia
Jelissa	Jones	Smith Flooring Inc.
Tara	Jones	Chester Arts Alive!
Melody	Keim	Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation
Jeanne	Ketcham	Lansdowne Economic Development Corp. (LEDC)
Elizabeth	Killough	Untours Foundation

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Chrissy	Kind	Patricia Kind Family Foundation
Valerie	Kind-Rubin	Patricia Kind Family Foundation
Hon. Thaddeus	Kirkland	City of Chester
Laura	Koloski	The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage
Lyn	Kremer	
Chuck	Lacy	Barred Rock Fund
Jennifer	Leith	The Douty Foundation
Michelle	Lewis	Pennsylvania General Assembly
Joseph	Matassino	Widener University
Laura	McHugh	The HIVE at Spring Point
Sharon	Meagher	Widener University
Drake	Nakaishi	Chester Economic Development Association
Michael	Norris	Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
Jamee	Nowell Smith	Senior Community Services
Lanoana	Segree Odom	Sowing Good Seeds
Chris	Odom	Sowing Good Seeds, The Butterfly Effect
Kristi	Poling	The Barra Foundation
Annette	Pyatt	Chester Community Improvement Project
Janet	Riley Ford	Boys & Girls Club of Chester
Kabria	Rogers	Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia
Laurie	Rosard	United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey
Daphne	Rowe	Pembroke Philanthropy Advisors
Elizabeth	Rubin	Chester Children's Chorus
Amy	Seasholtz	Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia
Simran	Sidhu	The HIVE at Spring Point
Twyla	Simpkins	Yes We Can Achievement and Cultural Center
Ulysses	Slaughter	Pennsylvania Humanities Council
Kristin	Smith	Smith Flooring Inc.
Misty	Sol	Sowing Good Seeds
Bonita	Taylor	Sowing Good Seeds
Taylor	Tolton	Pennsylvania Humanities Council
James	Turner	Chester Water Authority
Karen	Vesely	Homeless Assistance Fund, Inc.
Frances	Vilella-Velez	Chester Children's Chorus
Kristina	Wahl	The Barra Foundation
Devon	Walls	MJ Freed Theater
Portia	West	City Council
Elizabeth	Williams	City Council
Lisa	Witomski	T. Frank McCall's
Laurie	Zierer	Pennsylvania Humanities Council

Philanthropy Network thanks the MJ Freed Theater for hosting today's activities!

The Story of a Block - A Tour of Chester's Avenue of the States with Artists, Entrepreneurs & Urban Farmers

Overview Of The Initiatives

During The Story of a Block Tour, guests will see the results of the great collaborative work done by funders like the Barra Foundation, Barred Rock Fund, Pennsylvania Humanities Council, and The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. Partners will share the grant making practice for this revitalization and explore what it means to "let go" in order to develop local assets and organizational capacity with – not for – a community.

CHESTER MADE



[Chester Made](#) is a humanities-based initiative to recognize and promote arts and culture in Chester and harness their power as a force for community revitalization. Beginning in 2015, with leadership from Pennsylvania Humanities Council (PHC), and support from partners including the City of Chester, Widener, Chester Arts Alive!, The Artist Warehouse, and Just Act, a group of Chester artists and educators met with community members to gather stories and information about Chester arts and culture. Over 1,500 residents were engaged with the entire project, and over 140 stories and 120 surveys were collected.

In 2016 PHC received two major grants to move Chester Made into its next phase, from the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) and [The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage](#). All funds are supporting the development of a Chester Made Exploration Zone in the 500 block of Avenue of the States through summer 2018. The zone is a creative, cultural space that gives community members the chance to engage with one another, learn more about the city's cultural assets and history, rebuild their downtown, and change perceptions about Chester. The Exploration Zone expands on the Chester Made [cultural assets map](#) and the great movement led by Chester artists, entrepreneurs, and city officials that is transforming the downtown and bringing business back to Chester.

In recent months, PHC launched a program with The Artists Warehouse and Philadelphia's Public Workshop called [#TheBuild](#) in the [Chester Made Exploration Zone](#). After months of designing, creating, and building with the community we [officially kicked off the Exploration Zone](#) through introduction of the new pop-up makerspace and a furniture-making workshop at 511 Avenue of the States, which will serve as a central hub for Chester Made's creative placemaking and history projects on the main street of Chester's cultural district. Moving forward, Chester artists, residents, and city officials will be working with Mike Lydon, the author of *Tactical Urbanism*, to [temporarily animate vacant spaces and other outdoor public art activities](#). The community will also [uncover the untold stories and dig up the history of the downtown](#) with local Widener historians and archaeologist like Rebecca Yamin, author of *Digging in the City of Brotherly Love*.



(Left) Artists, staff, and residents posing around a table that was built during the Reclaim.Rebuild.Repurpose workshop. (Right) Butcher Shop Rehab's L. Ward guiding participants through the process.

A CLOSER LOOK

Pew Center for Arts & Heritage

Chester Made & Chester Made Cultural Exploration Zone

The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage has supported community development work in Chester, guided by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council for the past several years, beginning with Chester Made, an arts-based planning process in 2014-15. As an arts and culture funder, this is unusual work for us to support, but the compelling arts and history focus at its core ultimately made this work relevant to our interest in supporting organizations and individuals who are developing new ways to deliver meaningful arts and humanities experiences to diverse audiences.

Pennsylvania Humanities Council

Chester Made

At the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, we believe that the humanities are crucial to civic life and that people's stories are a powerful foundation for civic engagement. This is certainly the case with Chester Made, a humanities-based initiative to recognize and promote arts and culture in Chester, Pennsylvania, and to harness their power as a force for community revitalization.

What distinguishes Chester Made within the context of current trends in creative placemaking is that the community and local artists have ownership of the process. Instead of taking a typical top-down approach steered by urban planning and outside curators, this initiative seeks to build the capacity of local leaders, organizations, and artists and sustain their efforts beyond the scope of the project. That ensures that the authors of this story are the residents of Chester themselves.



Widener University, in collaboration with Devon Walls of the Artist Warehouse, has received a 2015 Catalyst Fund from the Barra Foundation to support a Boundaries and Bridges initiative, which aims to strengthen and support arts collaboration in the city of Chester and realize the planned Culture and Arts Corridor from

Widener University to Chester's City Hall. The \$211,000 grant will allow for a range of collaborative arts and creative place-making activities over the course of the next year. Members from Widener and the greater Chester community will work with artists to identify boundaries that may be obstructions to deeper trust and stronger collaborations between the university and community. Workshops will be offered to catalyze and encourage new collaborative possibilities, and funds will be available for artistic interventions that strengthen or build new bridges.

The Boundaries and Bridges initiative comes on the heels of the Chester Made initiative, which was part of a collaborative effort led by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council to support the Historic Chester Arts and Culture District and the concept of a Chester Culture and Arts Corridor. A key goal of Chester Made was to frame the story of arts and culture and its place in the life of Chester through story gatherings.

There are three major steps in the Boundaries and Bridges project:

1. Utilize culture and arts methodologies to gather stories and data about boundaries between Widener University's Main Campus and the Chester community. We call this step the "Boundary Project."
2. Hold workshops for Chester community members along with Widener University Arts & Sciences faculty and students. These workshops will introduce immersive arts pedagogies and methodologies and also help foster possible new collaborative projects. Check out our [workshops page](#) for information.
3. Start to bridge the gap and break down the boundaries. We call this step "Bridge Projects," and it will include specific events organized by the Core Team along with the collaborative projects between Chester and Widener community members. Our first bridge event was Poetic Bridges, a spoken word event that took place on the Walnut Street Pedestrian Bridge. Stay up to date on upcoming events by visiting the [events page](#) of our website and following us on [Facebook](#).

The Boundaries and Bridges project was influenced by the Chester Made process and continues to use some of its arts-based methodologies for the purposes of visioning and planning. But in this project, we are focusing on strengthening trust and new collaborative relationships between Widener University and other Chester-based partners. Both the need and promise for doing so came out during some Chester Made storytelling circles in which people both noted important arts and cultural activities at Widener while also noting that there were still obstacles to full collaboration in the community. At the same time, we recognized the power of storytelling and other arts methods to empower people and create stronger community relations.

Overview taken from: <https://www.bridgechester.org/about>

A CLOSER LOOK

The Barra Foundation

Supporting Widener University's Boundaries and Bridges Project

The City of Chester is one of the most economically distressed municipalities in the region. In recent years, key arts, business, city government and non-profit organizations have been collaborating to revitalize and heal the city. That work coalesced as "[Chester Made](#)," a participatory urban planning process. Widener proposes the [Boundaries and Bridges](#) project, which will utilize civic arts methodologies to build on the momentum generated by Chester Made to identify and bridge community-university boundaries to strengthen and support collaboration in Chester. This approach to civic engagement can serve as a new model for other schools looking to positively engage with their partner communities.

Widener University

Launching Boundaries and Bridges

Having discovered the promise of utilizing creative placemaking strategies to involve Chester community members, including Widener faculty, staff, and students, in a participatory urban planning process (Chester Made), we developed this project to build on that work to strengthen community—with a particular emphasis on building trust and stronger collaborative projects between Widener University's College of Arts & Sciences and local Chester artists and interested community members. As we near the end of the project, we find that we have successfully seeded sustainable collaborative projects involving food, writing, dance, theater, and film and developed stronger bonds of trust and understanding between Widener and greater Chester community members.

Early Projects

[Sowing Good Seeds](#) - The first collaborative project to grow from the Boundaries and Bridges Creative Placemaking and Food catalyst workshop, creative writers, urban farmers, a local nutritionist, and environmental science students and faculty partnered to create a summer program for Chester children and their parents to learn about nutrition, cooking, and where food comes from. The group is building on that work to develop a collaborative urban farm, street and park-based vertical vegetable gardens, and community healthy eating and growing events and activities.

[Tiny Forest Food Wagon](#) - The Farm Forest Wagon Project is mobile growing, teaching, and literacy station that our cooperative members, Plant it Planet, will use to encourage people in Chester and Philadelphia to grow food, and eat healthy. This is an on-going collaborative project involving urban farmers, artists, and Widener faculty and students; the project was the outcome of seed money from Boundaries and Bridges; the key project leaders participated in the Creative Placemaking and Food catalyst workshop.

[Chester Writer's House](#) - Chester Writer's House provides individual writing mentoring, literary events, and writer's groups in the Chester community. One of the Writer's House's biggest projects that was created with seed money from the Boundaries and Bridges project is The World Split Open. Since January of 2016, the Writer's House, has been hosting a women's writing group for those who live, work and study in Chester. They developed the World Split Open story collaborative as a way of reaching out to other women to encourage them to tell their own stories, joining other women in sharing life experiences and exploring their sense of agency. Each story collaborative member will find girls or women who live, work or study in Chester who would like to participate as story tellers. Each story will be transcribed, culminating in a collection and manuscript.

NEW DAY CHESTER

This distressed street in the center of Chester, PA may look unremarkable, like any once-thriving commercial avenue in decline. But something unique is underway on the Avenue of the States that could not only change the game for Chester, but inspire other efforts to create an urban renaissance from within. And it provided The Barra Foundation the chance to try something new—providing a low-interest loan instead of a grant to an organization seeking transformational change.

It all begins with an entrepreneur named Devon Walls, a Chester artist who envisioned new life for this once-thriving street as an arts community owned and created by local artists. “I grew up in a family of artists,” Walls say. “One of my uncles wanted to put an arts and cultural district in the city of Chester.” When his uncle died with his dream unfulfilled, Devon decided to carry on—buying properties devalued by the fleeing middle class and turning them into community spaces for performances, classes, exhibits and events.

Walls worked closely with Barra on [Bridges and Boundaries](#), a Barra-funded project which he co-directed with Widener University to build relationships between the campus and town. Through the project, Walls met Chuck Lacy.

“I was attracted to the project largely because of Devon’s vision, but also, his resilience and long-term commitment to Chester,” said Lacy, former president of Ben & Jerry’s and president of the Barred Rock Fund, a private foundation. While arts revivals are often initiated by artists from out of town seeking inexpensive rent, this is a homegrown effort by and for local artists. “This is an extraordinarily ambitious goal to create an arts district and arts identity for Chester and it’s going to take a wide range of skills. Not only does Devon have the skills but he’s been cultivating those skills among large groups in Chester.”

In 2015, Lacy and Walls created a partnership, New Day Chester, Inc., and to-date have acquired six properties on the Avenue of the States to create venues for Chester performers, painters, furniture makers, sculptors and clothing designers to develop their own businesses.

Using a relatively novel funding mechanism, Barra is providing a low-interest loan to the project which is too high-risk to attract traditional funders. The \$250,000 loan to help complete renovations will potentially reassure future lenders that the project is financially viable—and it is an opportunity for Barra to model the use of Program-Related Investments (PRI) for other foundations.

A PRI is an emerging philanthropic tool that’s a hybrid of the investment and charitable functions of the foundation. It is an impact investment designed to advance a social cause aligned with the Foundation’s mission. New Day Chester was the perfect opportunity for Barra to not only advance innovation, but to model it as well.

So far, New Day Chester has rehabbed formerly vacant buildings into a 220 seat theater, an arts program center, a dance and photography studio, a community woodworking shop, and a soon to be opened coffee shop.

“Barra’s early support is giving other foundations the confidence to consider their own investments in Chester,” said Lacy. “As much as the investment, Barra’s continued engagement and connections made between Chester and regional foundations and expertise is making the difference.”

Lacy believes that Barra’s commitment and Wall’s devotion will enable a renaissance in Chester unlike others elsewhere. “Barra’s involvement is making local ownership possible,” Lacy said, “and local ownership is the key to long term community success.”

“My vision is to make this strip full of restaurants, galleries, living spaces, coffee shops, entertainment,” Walls said. “And then have people look at it and say, ‘If it could be done here, it could be done anywhere.’”

The Barra Foundation

Program-Related Investment in New Day Chester

Several recent developments have provided an opportunity for mission-aligned investment in Chester, PA. After many years of decline and then vacancy, entrepreneurs are returning to Avenue of the States. With strong entrepreneurial leadership emerging, the arts are poised to ignite an urban renaissance in Chester. Unlike other artist driven urban revivals, the leaders are from Chester and are dedicated to developing and showcasing local talent for local audiences, nurturing arts enterprises and creating a distinct Chester arts movement. A Program-Related Investment (PRI) in the form of a low-interest loan to New Day Chester, Inc. will provide the funding needed to continue rehabbing three of the six buildings, which will be at the core of the arts district. Since this would be Barra's first PRI there is a significant opportunity for Barra to learn, and share its learning, about this emerging tool for foundations and nonprofits.

The Barred Rock Fund

Supporting New Day Chester, Inc. and the MJ Freed Theater

Barred Rock's commitment to New Day Chester, Inc. and MJ Freed Theater is similar to previous projects. The Fund looks for visionary entrepreneurs committed to an important social purpose and who are overlooked due to the audacity of their ideas. The Fund's president, Cuck Lacy, looks for entrepreneurs with skills complimentary to his and gets operationally involved. Barred Rock's equity and loan investment with Devon Walls and his New Day Chester, Inc. are consistent in form with the Fund's previous work but is the Fund's first investment in real estate and place making. Unlike most conventional venture capital Barred Rock are long term investors. Some of the Fund's most successful companies took ten or more years to take hold and lead their markets. Barred Rock also contributed some of the startup funding and legal work for MJ Freed Theater for the Arts, the new non-profit operating the theater and arts spaces.

New Day Chester, Inc.

After working for more than a decade to create conditions for an arts revival, Devon Walls partnered with Chuck Lacy and the Barred Rock Fund a 501c3 non-profit foundation. Together they created New Day Chester, Inc. to acquire and develop property on Avenue of the States.

New Day Chester acquired 45,000 sq/ft of attached commercial and residential property on Avenue of the States. To date, under Devon Walls leadership and majority ownership, we've renovated 12,000 square feet working to a budget to create five distinct venues for arts and culture in Chester.

In addition to equity and debt from both founders, the project has been driven substantially by loans and professional help from Untours Foundation and then Barra Foundation. These five year term loans financed renovations after the purchase of the buildings. The terms provide time to continue developing the arts district which will increase building values enough to earn conventional financing in the future. Almost all work was done with local and minority contractors and extensive apprenticeship opportunities for young people, many of whom are also pursuing arts interests. These timely loans increased the pace of our renovations which in turn stepped up the metabolism of the already developing arts district.

MJ Freed Theater

MJ Freed Theater for the Arts is a new 501c3 non-profit which runs theatrical, dance, arts, photography woodworking and other arts programs and venues on Avenue of the States. MJ Freed is led by Executive Director Devon Walls and an experienced board with a majority Chester residents. Promoting arts opportunities for all ages and abilities beginner to professional, MJ Freed builds on decades of volunteer work by Chester artists with a new structure and beautiful renovated spaces. MJ Freed currently relies on volunteerism, ticket sales, personal philanthropy by the founders, and venue rentals.

MJ Freed Theater for the Arts will support local artists as they create a new arts identity for Chester, stimulating imagination and entrepreneurship, and a new narrative for the city.



**The Story of a Block -
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Presenter Bios

Kimberly Allen, Senior Vice President/Senior Program Officer, Wells Fargo Regional Foundation/CDC

Kimberly Allen is Senior Vice President/Senior Program Officer of Wells Fargo Regional Foundation/CDC, where she oversees the Foundation's grantmaking processes. She was instrumental in the founding of the Wells Fargo Regional Foundation and has been serving as a Program Officer since its inception. She has remained at the foundation ever since, serving first as Program Officer and for the past several years as the Senior Program Officer. She oversees the grantmaking program and processes, and is responsible for underwriting and due diligence for over \$5 million in grant and loan decisions each year. She is the lead staffer for the Program and Planning Committee of the foundation's board and its strategic planning and implementation of the foundation's mission – to improve the lives of children and families in low-income neighborhoods. Kimberly holds a BA from the University of Maryland in organizational psychology and dynamics, and is a 2006 graduate of Leadership Philadelphia.

Mike Basher, Vice President of Retail Operations, Fare & Square

Mike Basher is the Vice President of Retail Operations for Fare & Square, the first nonprofit grocery store of its kind throughout the nation. Fare & Square was opened by Philabundance in 2013 to provide fresh, affordable food to those living in Chester and the surrounding area, which had previously been a food desert for more than 10 years.

In his current role, Mike oversees all store operations including item selection, community outreach, and managing Fare & Square employees. With 38 years of retail and operations experience, Mike has helped many local associates in low-income neighborhoods fulfill their dreams of upward mobility into full-time management positions.

Prior to Fare & Square, Mike was the first Executive Director for the nonprofit, Uplift Solutions, formed to help solve food desert issues across the country. Prior to that, Mike was Director of Community Development and District Manager & Store Director for Brown's ShopRite, which has 11 locations around Philadelphia.

Mike currently serves on the Hispanic Commission of Chester and is involved in the ministerial ministry within the Chester community. He resides in Upper Chichester Township with his wife and three children.

David Bradley

David Bradley is a director, producer, writer, teaching artist and consultant whose work includes making plays, leading a range of boundary-crossing artistic collaborations and exploring civic and community themes through the arts. He's been a member of the People's Light ensemble since 1991. In Summer 2016, he was playwright and director of Voices of Voting, commissioned by the Committee of Seventy as part of events surrounding the Democratic National Convention. In Spring

2016, he directed *A Fierce Kind of Love* by Suli Holum, commissioned by Temple University's Institute on Disabilities.

David is Founding Director of LiveConnections, which inspires learning and builds community through collaborative music-making, working out of World Cafe Live. He's Artistic Director of Living News at the National Constitution Center, where he also directed the exhibition/theater hybrid *Fighting for Democracy*. He's a frequent collaborator with Philadelphia Young Playwrights, leading a range of multi-generational collaborations. David is a participating artist with *Outside the Wire*, which creates theater projects addressing public health and social issues, and has led and facilitated projects for them at conferences and military bases across the country and in the Middle East. He teaches at Arcadia University and has taught at University of the Arts. David is a graduate of Yale University.

John Bush, Artist and Developer

John Bush is a Chester resident, artist, and entrepreneur that focuses on improving the quality of life of people in the community, and changing perceptions of Chester. For the past 3 years, John has been diligently working to improve Chester through public Art, horticulture, education, vacant lot repurposing, and combating illegal tire dumping. In June 2017, John opened the Nebula Gallery, which focuses on contemporary art and sculpture. In addition, John is a volunteer for numerous not-for-profit entities in Chester with year to date in-kind services totaling \$7,500.

John earned a Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Marketing and Management, and an MBA in Pharmaceutical Business from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science. Prior to opening the Nebula Gallery, he was a top-tier global management consultant that led over 50 engagements assessing the value of innovative medicines and technology to society. This experience has provided John with the unique ability to understand high-level issues, yet at the same time, fully grasp the significance of incremental improvements at a personal level.

Reverend Hilda Campbell, Co-Director, Chester Writer's House

Rev. Campbell is co-director (with Widener English and Writing faculty member Jayne Thompson) of Chester Writer's House. Originally a union trade carpenter, Rev. Campbell felt a calling to the ministry and became an ordained minister in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church. She has served as pastor at Siloam United Methodist Church and Trinity United Methodist Church as well as director of human relations and leadership ministries with the conference. Rev. Campbell has served in numerous conference board positions, including conference resource team, addressing community and world issues and the conference transformation team. She previously served at Feltonville United Methodist Church and as assistant to the pastor at Grace Community United Methodist Church in Chester. A current Widener student and a graduate of Manna Bible College of Philadelphia, Rev. Campbell also holds an undergraduate degree in applied science/construction technology from Delaware Technical Community College. She was the first female in Carpenter's Local 626 and supervised a maintenance crew in IBEW 1238 and a long-time little league coach.

Steven A. Fischer, Executive Director, Chester Housing Authority

Steven Fischer brings over 30 years of housing management and development experience to the Chester Housing Authority. Prior to his arrival in 2005, he headed the Housing Authority in Kingston, New York for 17 years. Before that, he worked for the City of New York, the Department of Housing & Urban Development and served in the Peace Corps for three years in the Central African Republic.

Fischer has held a seat on the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association's Board of Trustees since 2002, where his service as Chair of the Legislative Committee has placed him among industry leaders in the advocacy of affordable housing. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Florida.

Andrew Frishkoff, Executive Director, LISC Philadelphia

Andrew Frishkoff has served as Executive Director of Philadelphia LISC since 2011. Andrew provides leadership in developing and implementing LISC's strategy and initiatives and overseeing fundraising and external communications.

Andrew first arrived in the Philadelphia area in 1984 to attend Haverford College. He has dedicated his adult life to addressing issues of affordable housing and community development, serving previously in leadership roles for ACORN Housing Corporation of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Low Income Housing Coalition, the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition and the City of Philadelphia.

Andrew lives in West Philadelphia with his wife and three sons. Occasionally, he coaches youth sports, plays capture the flag with foam swords, sings songs without remembering the words and dreams about taking up running again.

Alex Gilliam, Founder and Director, Public Workshop

Alex Gilliam is founder and director of Public Workshop, which helps clients and community partners create opportunities for youth and their communities to shape the design of their schools, neighborhoods and cities. Past projects include design-building an outdoor adventure makerspace and STEM building workshop with students in Phoenix; making rolling tree houses with students in rural Virginia; as well as transforming vacant lots into playgrounds and exercise courses in Philadelphia, Flint, and Camden.

Alex is a national expert on K-12 design education with an emphasis on service learning. In 2012, he was named by Philadelphia Magazine as one of the 'brightest minds' in Philadelphia and as one of the top 100 public interest designers in the country. Most recently, Alex co-founded Tiny WPA, a nonprofit organization in Philadelphia that provides youth and adults from diverse social and economic backgrounds with innovative year-round training in design, collaboration, leadership, fabrication, and entrepreneurship.

Angelique, Hunter, Marketing & PR, Smith Flooring Inc.

If creative content is what sparks your interest, Angelique Hunter is the girl you talk to. After spending years working as a stylist in the fashion industry, Angelique traded her heels for a hard hat and joined her family's commercial construction business.

"I wanted to change the approach of how the construction industry speaks to the public." Says Angelique. Her combination of real-life storytelling and her love for visuals, both photo and video, connect with people who may or may not work in the construction industry. "I love the transparency that our company has online. Our content tells our customers who we are from a very authentic viewpoint."

As Marketing Director at Smith Flooring Inc. her responsibilities include campaign marketing, digital content, brand management, leads and sales. In handling all PR aspects, she enjoys curating events that build relationships but also fulfill Smith Flooring's commitment to community outreach.

Honorable Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland, City of Chester

Elected in his first attempt for public office in 1992, Kirkland was charged with the task of representing the 159th Legislative District, which includes the communities of the City of Chester, Chester Township, Lower Chichester Township, portions of Ridley and Upper Chichester townships, Eddystone, Marcus Hook, Trainer, Upland and Parkside.

Kirkland is the pastor of Community Baptist Church. Prior to his election to the General Assembly, Kirkland was a community service coordinator at Crozer Chester Medical Center, where he conducted outreach and educational programs for teenagers.

Kirkland has been a strong advocate for the elderly and has fought to ensure equal rights for both the visually impaired and the physically challenged. He is the prime sponsor of legislation relating to prayer in schools, Braille, video surveillance, absentee ballot, technical training and Head Start. A 1973 graduate of Chester High School, Kirkland holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from Cheyney University. He also attended classes at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Kirkland currently serves as Democratic chairman of the House Tourism and Recreational Development Committee. Within the House of Representatives, he is a member of the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus and the Democratic Policy Committee. Additionally, Kirkland is Vice President of West End Ministerial Fellowship of Chester and Vicinity, former Vice-Chairman of the National Black Caucus of State Legislatures, a former Board of Trustee member of Lincoln University and a graduate of the Widener University Leadership Academy. He is also a member of Wine Psi Fraternity, Incorporated and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated.

Laura Koloski, Senior Program Specialist, The Pew Center for Arts and Heritage

Laura Koloski is a Senior Program Specialist at the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. Prior to her work at the Center, Koloski ran education programs for historic sites and museums in the Philadelphia region and in New England. She is co-editor, with Bill Adair and Benjamin Filene, of *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World* (2011). Koloski received her BA in American History from Villanova University and her MA in Public History from Northeastern University.

Chuck Lacy, President, Barred Rock Fund

Chuck Lacy runs the Barred Rock Fund a 501c3 non-profit venture fund investing in enterprises with a social purpose. Since starting the fund in 2001, Chuck has led a dozen investments usually playing an ongoing operating role. Most of these projects have been start-ups. Previously Chuck was President of Ben & Jerry's, Co-founder and Chairman of Hardwick Beef (now the largest distributor of grass fed beef produced in the northeast), Director and Treasurer of Gonofone (founder of the largest cell phone company in Bangladesh), and various other businesses. He was a grass fed beef producer until retiring from farming in 2015. The Barred Rock board is comprised of Chuck Lacy, Judy Wicks (White Dog Café in Philadelphia) and Ben Cohen (Co-founder Ben & Jerry's).

Sharon M. Meagher, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Widener University

Sharon M. Meagher is Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and Professor of Humanities at Widener University in Chester, PA. In her role as dean, Meagher oversees the faculty, curriculum, budget, and strategic planning for the College. She also plays a key role in fundraising. She developed a grant project awarded by the AAC&U to study how first year students develop a sense of well-being that connects to community and motivates civic engagement and serves as co-director of Boundaries and Bridges. Meagher facilitates a number of multi-disciplinary collaborative projects that involve Widener faculty and students and partners in the greater Chester community. A philosopher by training, Meagher has focused most of her career on the ethics of urban development and on university-community relations and collaborative learning. She has published wide range of articles on urban planning and practice, university-community collaborative learning, and women and development in the global South.

LaNoana Segree Odom, Founder and Executive Director of Sowing Good Seeds

LaNoana Segree Odom is the Founder and Executive Director of Sowing Good Seeds, The Butterfly Effect a health and wellness foundation. LaNoana is a community organizer, wellness advisor, life coach, social justice advocate, artist, farmer, and interactive hands on trainer. Her overall mission is to raise consciousness and develop solutions to social justice issues affecting communities. She has thirty years' business experience in legal, procurement, human resources, training & development, operations, marketing communications, project management and customer service. She has the skills necessary to excel in any arena.

Ulysses "Butch" Slaughter, Project Manager, Chester Made

Chester Made Project Manager Ulysses "Butch" Slaughter is a long-time contributor to Chester's arts and culture communities. A graduate of Lincoln University and veteran of the United States Navy, Ulysses published Chester's *Perspective Magazine* from 2001 to 2004. He also wrote, directed and produced *A Chester Story*, a full-length documentary focused on the history of Chester's African American communities.

Ulysses has served various educational and social service organizations in Chester, including the Village Charter School, Chester YouthBuild and Chester High School. As a business consultant for the Chester Housing Authority, Ulysses helped create "ANUME" (A New Me), the agency's resident-run health initiative, as well as its Fathers Are Talking and Women's Circle concepts. A nationally recognized reconciliation expert, Ulysses has appeared on The Oprah Winfrey Network and The Dr. Phil Show. He is author of three books and producer behind the film series *Odyssey To Save Ulysses*.

Misty Sol

Misty Sol promotes reading, writing, and eco practices, as cultural literacy and as tools for healing and liberation in Black communities. Her teaching, publishing, and performance practice uses various forms—essay, poetry, fiction, coloring pages, paintings and short animations-, to preserve and explore experiences.

Bonita Taylor, President, Bonnies Community & Development Corporation

Bonita Taylor is the President of Bonnies Community & Development Corporation. She is an entrepreneur who nurtures entrepreneurship through teaching sustainability skills (i.e. cooking, sewing, jewelry making and farming). She has been providing health and nutrition education in hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, and universities for over forty years. She holds a B.S. in General Dietetics from Cheyney State University and a M.S. in Health & Nutrition Education, from St. Joseph's University. She is a community activist and Block Captain (since 2012). She has served the day care community as a Food Monitor Program Coordinator for over 18 years. She recently completed Sun Village Park Community Clean-Up Day as a recipient of a "Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful" grant. The project ignited a "community" that cares in a forgotten neighborhood.

Kristina L. Wahl, President, The Barra Foundation

Kristina L. Wahl joined The Barra Foundation as a Program Officer in 2010 and became President in 2013. Prior to joining Barra, she worked as a Program Officer at The Pew Charitable and as a Managing Director at the Transitional Work Corporation. After graduating from La Salle University, Kristina joined the Vincentian Service Corps and served as a volunteer at Covenant House in New York City. She holds a Master's Degree in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She has served on the Board of Trustees at La Salle University; Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School; and La Salle Academy, an elementary school for at-risk youth located in North Philadelphia. She recently served on the Philadelphia Museum of Art's Campaign Cabinet and is currently a member of Villanova University's Department of Public

Administration Advisory Board. Kristina grew up in Ambler, PA and feels a strong allegiance to the Greater Philadelphia region.

Devon Walls, Executive Director, MJ Freed Theater

Devon Walls is Executive Director of MJ Freed Theater for the Arts. He is a Chester native, artist and entrepreneur. He opened his first business as a teenager - a barbershop in downtown Chester. As a photographer, painter, videographer, set designer and furniture maker, Devon has a long history of promoting the arts in Chester as a teacher, funder and advocate. Shifting his professional work from national to local, he is now launching the MJ Freed Theater for the Arts, a new 501c3 to run theatrical, dance, arts, photography, woodworking and other arts programs and venues of Avenue of the States in downtown Chester. Under Devon's artistic leadership, MJ Freed works with artists of all ages and abilities to build an arts culture and a downtown arts district.

Devon is a collaborator with Chester Made and the PA Humanities Council on the recent opening a storefront community maker space. He is Artist in Residence at Widener University in Chester and was a principle in the Boundaries and Bridges initiative funded by the Barra Foundation. He is funder of Chester's annual Arts in the Park celebration. Experienced in building rehab and construction, Devon founded New Day Chester, Inc. to create arts spaces and venues to anchor the Avenue of the States arts district in Chester. These spaces will help make it possible for Chester artists to stay in Chester and build a marketable arts identity for the city. In recognition, the Chester, PA branch of the NAACP made Devon Walls their person of the year for 2017.

Laurie Zierer, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Humanities Council

Laurie Zierer is executive director of the Pennsylvania Humanities Council (PHC). In recent years she has led PHC to strategically sharpen its focus on areas of need where the humanities can have the greatest impact: civic engagement and education. In 2015, under Laurie's leadership, PHC began work with the City of Chester, The Artist Warehouse, Chester Arts Alive!, Widener University, local artists, and other community partners to launch Chester Made, a humanities-based initiative to recognize and promote arts and culture and harness their power for community revitalization.

Laurie joined PHC in 1995 and, after playing a number of leadership roles in the organization, was named executive director in 2012. Over the years she produced Humanities on the Road with PCN, Humanities Live with WHYY, the Speakers Millennium Lecture with Frank McCourt, and statewide initiatives like Our Stories, Our Future. In addition she has directed award-winning projects like Raising Our Sites: Community Histories of Pennsylvania.

**The Story of a Block -
A Tour of Chester's Avenue of the States with Artists, Entrepreneurs & Urban
Farmers**

Additional Resources

CHESTER MADE

- Pennsylvania Humanities Council, Chester Made Origins and Evolution, Webpage. <http://www.pahumanities.org/initiatives/chester-made>
- Pennsylvania Humanities Council, Community Conversation and Tactical Urbanism Workshop, WebPage. <http://pahumanities.org/initiatives/chester-made/embrace-the-art-of-change>
- Pennsylvania Humanities Council, Chester Made Exploration Zone Launch and Workshop, Webpage. <http://pahumanities.org/conversations/2017/03/13/chester-made-exploration-zone-launch-reception-workshop>
- Pennsylvania Humanities Council, About the Chester Made Exploration Zone, Webpage. <http://pahumanities.org/chester-made-exploration-zone>
- Pennsylvania Humanities Council, The Build a pop arts program, Webpage. <http://pahumanities.org/initiatives/chester-made/chester-made-thebuild>
- Chester Made Community History and Archival, Pennsylvania Humanities Council, Webpage. <http://pahumanities.org/initiatives/chester-made/chestermadearchival>

BOUNDARIES AND BRIDGES

- Boundaries and Bridges, Website. <https://www.bridgechester.org/>
- The Barra Foundation, Building Bridges, a Grantee Story. <https://www.barrafoundation.org/get-inspired/grantee-story/bridging-boundaries/?highlight=boundaries+and+bridges>
- Widener University, Urban Harvest, News Article. http://www.widener.edu/news-events/news-archive/2016/urban_harvest16.aspx
- Accompanying Resistance, Blog Post by Hank Willenbrink. <http://larktheatre.org/blog/accompanying-resistance/>
- Chester Writers House, Facebook Page. <https://www.facebook.com/ChesterWritersHouse/>

PROGRAM RELATED INVESTING AND MISSION RELATED INVESTING

- The Barra Foundation, Exploring Program-Related Investments, a Grantee Story. <https://www.barrafoundation.org/get-inspired/grantee-story/exploring-program-related-investments/>
- Mission Investors, Frequently Asked Questions about PRIs, Website. <https://www.missioninvestors.org/system/files/tools/answers-to-the-10-most-asked-questions-about-pris-ford-foundation-office-of-programrelated-investments-adapted.pdf>

- Mission Investors, Overview on Mission Investing, Website. <https://www.missioninvestors.org/mission-investing>
- Exponent Philanthropy, Impact Investing Information, Website. <http://www.exponentphilanthropy.org/connections/news/news-item/2015/09/09/essentials-of-impact-investing-a-guide-for-small-staffed-foundations>

GENERAL RESOURCES

- How to be a good Citizen? WVIA Radio Series. <http://www.wvia.org/radio/local/good-citizen/>
- Wells Fargo Regional Foundation, Grant Program Overview, Online PDF. [Neighborhood Grant Program Overview.](#)



#ChesterMade | #TheBuild

@MJFreedTheater | @CityChesterPA | @BarraFdn | @LISC_Philly | @PAHumCouncil
@PewCenterArts | @Philabundance | @philanthropyPHL | @WellsFargo | @WidenerUniv