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## foundation leadership award

### JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION



The best description of the impact the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's philanthropic support has had for The University of Akron and Akron, Ohio, is *transformational*.

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation is a national foundation with local roots. Based on its belief that "nothing big happens without a big idea, nothing new without a new idea," Knight Foundation provided a \$200,000 initial planning grant to fund the University Park Alliance. Its goal was to launch an ambitious 40-block revitalization plan to provide new business, retail, and mixed-use housing surrounding The University of Akron.

In the past seven years, the Foundation has granted more than \$12.7 million to The University of Akron and the University Park Alliance to change the face of a once-blighted community. Today, stimulated beyond its original goals, University Park is poised to be a strategically vital component of Northeast Ohio and Greater Akron's economic future.

The Knight Foundation's support of the University Park Alliance brought together an unprecedented collaboration of the University of Akron, Summa Health System, The City of Akron, Akron Public Schools, The Akron Beacon Journal, The Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, and the Greater Akron Chamber to seek alternative and entrepreneurial avenues to help the greater Akron community transition to an innovation economy.

Beyond its immense philanthropic support, Knight Foundation has added to the civic life of the greater Akron community. The foundation has supported the endowment of the John S. Knight Lectureship, which brings talented and discerning literary figures and journalists to the Akron community in remembrance of Mr. Knight; The National Center for Family Literacy Project; The Akron Knight Family Education Program; The Excellence in Education program; and an endowment for the E. J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall.

It is the passion and vision exemplified by organizations like the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation that will light a path for community development and growth throughout the nation. Knight Foundation's commitment to community advancement and the cultural growth of American citizenry stands as a bold testament to its founding principles.

*presenting sponsor*



nominated by  
The University of Akron  
member Maureen Katanic