



Photo courtesy of the Cincinnati Story Project

The view of Mount Adams is idyllic, but the reality of Cincinnati is that some of us are doing very well while others struggle. Might improved workforce development change that?

One city, two worlds

What does opportunity look like in Cincinnati?

When Vice Mayor David Mann spoke with us last year, he reflected on what stood out for him as he campaigned for public office in 2013, forty years after his first campaign.

“I found a tale of two cities,” he said.

“Life is very good for a lot of us. At the same time, life is very challenging for thousands who live in poverty, without good employment options and with a much shorter life expectancy than the average.”

He continued: “I want one Cincinnati, where all citizens have a chance to pursue their dreams, to provide for their families, and to pursue safe and fulfilling lives.”

The numbers agree with the vice mayor. According to the federal statistics, 30 percent of the city’s population live below the poverty line. That’s twice the statewide rate.

And if home ownership is the American Dream, then fewer than 40 percent of the city’s families have achieved the dream,

WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBER: Bill Killen is our newest member. Take a moment to say hello. And remember: We are counting on you to help recruit new members. Visit our website for a recruiting toolkit.

SPENCER AWARDS AN IMPORTANT NEW INITIATIVE

The Cincinnatus Association created a new award last year in honor of our long-time member, David Spencer, and his wife, Marian Spencer, an honorary member.

The Spencers have devoted 70 years to fighting racial injustices and moving our region toward greater inclusion.

According to our award description, “the sole criterion for selection of awardees is conspicuous and enduring contribution to fighting discrimination and advancing inclusion in the Greater Cincinnati community.”

The Spencer Awards will be granted annually, provided worthy candidates exist in each of these categories: a for-profit corporation; a non-for-profit organization; and an individual.

Mark your calendar: The first Donald and Marian Spencer Spirit of Freedom Awards will be given on May. 19, 2015, at the Cintas Center. Our master of ceremonies will be Curtis Fuller, an anchor at WLWT. The evening will feature a reception, dinner and the awards presentation.

The year 2015 will include many important initiatives and activities for Cincinnatus, but this award named for two legends in our community will be among the most important.

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how we might best build workforce pathways.

Our panelists, including Dan Hurley, the director of Leadership Cincinnati, will discuss Leadership Action, an effort to focus on a “single project grounded in community priorities,” including those set by Unite Way’s Bold Goals, which Cincinnati had endorsed.

Class One of Leadership Action is focused on workforce development, given that many of our regional employers are saying they have scores of high-paying jobs, especially in advanced manufacturing, that are going unfilled because workers are not educated and work ready.

Meanwhile, our local community colleges, Cincinnati State and Gateway, both offer degree tracts in advanced manufacturing. Cincinnati State advises prospective students that there are 600,000 advanced manufacturing jobs open nationally — and commits the col-

lege to pitching in to close that the gap between that demand and the short supply of workers.

Perhaps the initiative announced last week by President Obama to assure free community college education to all Americans will clear some of the obstacles to this pathway.

Meanwhile, the challenges of poverty continue to be real in our region. As Cincinnati Works (cincinnatiworks.org) points out, a mother with a child can work 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year and still find herself living below the poverty line.

The President’s community college proposal already had drawn some partisan fire. But politics aside, perhaps we can agree: Effective pathways to employment are one way we expect to realize the vision Vice Mayor Mann articulated for us: A Cincinnati were prosperity is not reserved for some and denied for others.

LISTEN TO ROBERT REICH ON INCOME INEQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY?

Watch this animated video with Professor Reich: youtube.com/watch?v=ik1y4ZNSjek

Thank you to our holiday host: Hebrew Union

If you missed our holiday reception last month, you missed a pleasant evening of catching up with your fellow members as well as the chance to bid on a bottle of rare bourbon, political memorabilia and other items in the silent auction.

Most of all, you missed a chance at an insider’s tour of true hidden gem in Cincinnati:

Hebrew Union College’s Skirball Museum, which house an impressive collection of Jewish archaeological artifacts, including art, photographs, books and Judaic objects.

The largest Jewish seminary in America, tucked along Clifton Avenue, proved to be a delightful host — and revelation.



A model of citizenship for all of us

U.S. District Court Judge S. Arthur Spiegel Jr. died New Year’s Eve at age 94. Many of our members attended his funeral last week at the Plum Street Temple, where friends representing his passions spoke on his life of art, the law, and aviation. From his time as a Marine under fire dur-

ing WWII (photo at right) to his 35 years on the federal bench, public service defined Spiegel, who was especially interested in civil rights.

Read an in-depth obituary written by Cincinnati member Bob Driehaus at WCPO.com.

STILL TIME TO SAVE OUR PIG ... WRITE YOUR CHECK TONIGHT FOR \$30

Thirty bucks. That’s all we’re asking from each member to help save “Lucky,” the statue that Cincinnati sponsored for the Big Pig Gig a few years back. Lucky hasn’t been so lucky. He needs some significant repairs before he can come out of city storage and return to public display on the riverfront. Write your check tonight. Let’s get this done!

New report coming soon on preschool

The Excellence in Education Panel is completing a new report on the benefits of preschool. A task force led by Larry Johnson, dean of the UC College of Education, Criminal Justice and Human Services, has wrapped up its research on a program in Denver. The results make a compelling argument for deeper investments in preschool initiatives.

Government study is on our website

There’s been a lively discussion in recent weeks of the Cincinnati report, *A Dysfunctional Region*, including pro and con commentary in the Enquirer. You read the full report on the Cincinnati home page — then decide for yourself whether its analysis is on the mark.

What’s happening across the river?

Our frequent partner in examining public issues, the Northern Kentucky Forum, is hosting a discussion with state legislators on Jan. 22 from 6:30 p.m. at the Campbell County Fiscal Court offices, 1098 Monmouth Street, Newport. Go to nkyforum.org to learn more and to RSVP (it’s free). The Forum will be our partner again in March, when we’ll examine governance of CVG

Like us on Facebook and then post often

For the last several years, we’ve had a Cincinnati Facebook page that allows us to discuss public affairs and share association news with each other. But here’s the rub: Social media only works if the audience participates. Our Facebook site lacks vitality. It needs you.

Recruit one member and we’re good

Our *Serious Problem, Simple Solution* campaign continues in an effort to enlist existing members to recruit new members. The problem of too few members (we should have a 100; we are under 80) is serious; but the solution is simple: If each of us recruits one new member, we are more than there. Or go to our new web page devoted to recruiting: cincinnatiassoc.org/recruit.