2017-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW



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CATALYST FOR CHANGE

We are pleased to present an overview of the Oishei Foundation's third comprehensive strategic plan.

We've invested much thought and consideration into the creation of this framework. Before we put "pen to paper," we commissioned our third Grantee Perception Report from the Center for Effective Philanthropy; digested research on current trends in philanthropy; examined our regional environment; and evaluated our core capacities. We felt it crucial that we clearly understand the current climate in which we operate and the views and values of our partners and constituents before starting the planning process.

Over several months, we passionately discussed the community's most critical needs, our own past performance, Western New York's changing philanthropic landscape, best practices, lessons learned and more.

Key takeaways include:

- Our grantees continue to want more from us than just grantmaking they appreciate our expertise, guidance and efforts to convene and connect.
- It is critical that we remain nimble and retain our ability to act quickly and shift gears in order to address the urgent/ever-changing needs of our community.
- We need to ensure that our work improves overall outcomes while supporting equity across the community by linking our efforts with those of the Racial Equity Roundtable.
- The substantial long-term investments we've made in high-impact initiatives such as the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus will affect consideration of capital grants and constrain our grantmaking over the course of this five-year plan.
- The five key areas we have focused on over the past five years remain appropriate and continue to support our mission.

We look forwa<mark>rd to partnering with you to continue catalyzing positive change in this great region of ours</mark>.

With optimism,



Milladwatt

James M. Wadsworth Board Chairman



Robert D. Gioia *President*



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IDEOLOGY

OUR MISSION

The John R. Oishei Foundation enhances the economic vitality and quality of life for the Buffalo Niagara region through grantmaking, leadership and network building.

OUR VISION

The John R. Oishei Foundation envisions the Buffalo Niagara region as a safe, healthy, thriving, culturally rich and diverse community.

OUR VALUES

Respectful to Others: Treating all with honesty, integrity and the utmost regard.

Inquisitive and Communicative: Recognizing that clarity and transparency foster trust, professional relationships and effectiveness.

Collaborative: Acknowledging that partnerships along with collaborative efforts achieve broader results and greater impact.

Informed: Recognizing that critical issues in the region are best addressed through knowledgeable, passionate leadership.

Inclusive: Affirming that persons of disparate ethnicity, age, religion, economic status, and sexual orientation contribute meaningfully to our work.

Agile and Innovative: Understanding that these elements are keys to progress and important in addressing the ever-changing needs of the community.



OPERATING PRINCIPLES AND CORE CAPABILITIES

The Board and staff of the Foundation will:

- Serve as responsible stewards, balancing current community needs with a commitment to sustain and enhance the Foundation's assets through wise investment and prudent spending.
- Focus primarily on Erie and Niagara Counties and support efforts within WNY's remaining six counties by partnering with local funders and stakeholders.
- **Remain nimble** by supporting our mission with clear strategic goals while staying alert to changes in the community that warrant our immediate attention.
- Become more proactive in defining and communicating our objectives.
- Strengthen partnerships and alliances with funders and stakeholders.
- Serve as a convener to develop a shared agenda for advancing community initiatives.
- Assume a leadership role in attracting regional, state and national funders.
- Inform and strengthen our capacity to assess and engage in advocacy efforts that promote systemic change.
- Build a high-impact learning culture through data collection and analysis, research and robust evaluation systems that guide decision making.
- Improve our level of transparency and facilitate the open exchange of information.
- Expand our funding capabilities to identify and implement alternative solutions, e.g., PRIs and MRIs.
- Gain understanding of inequities in our community and work to right them with intentionality.







INTERRELATED FOCUS AREAS

While our focus areas remain unchanged from our previous strategic plan, objectives and strategies were fine-tuned to concentrate on today's most pressing current regional issues. Our goals are strongly interrelated and the approaches we'll be using to meet them continue to move from transactional to transformational. By employing an array of catalytic behaviors to support our focus areas, we are confident that the Foundation will continue to make a significant impact on Western New York.



GOALS AT-A-GLANCE

	GOAL	WILL BE MET BY
EDUCATION	STRENGTHEN THE P-20 EDUCATION CONTINUUM	identifying and supporting best practices that benefit students so they can enter school ready to learn and successfully graduate from college or post-secondary programs, prepared to enter the workforce.
SELF-SUFFICIENCY	ENHANCE OPTIONS FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY	supporting efforts that focus on the individual by providing basic human needs, enhancing options for self-sufficiency and empowering underserved communities to remove barriers to escaping poverty.
STABLE NEIGHBORHOODS	BUILD LIVABLE, STABLE NEIGHBORHOODS	creating strong, stable neighborhoods that are physically safe and attractive, providing access to healthy food, reliable transportation, quality healthcare, safe and affordable housing, vibrant commercial districts, quality schools and meaningful employment opportunities.
HEALTHCARE	PROMOTE HEALTH AND IMPROVE SYSTEMS OF CARE	supporting primary care, behavioral/mental health and developmental/intellectual disabilities (DD/ID), with a priority for at-risk and underserved populations. Additional focus is placed on providing education and assistance as appropriate to community partners regarding changing healthcare delivery and reimbursement infrastructures.
ARTS & CULTURE	EXPAND THE ROLE OF ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT	supporting efforts to increase the number of local visitors and tourists to stimulate economic development through arts, culture and heritage. In addition, we support the integration of the arts across all of our focus areas with an emphasis on education, healthcare, civic engagement and neighborhood stabilization.



CATALYTIC BEHAVIORS

We will catalyze change in Western New York through...

GRANTMAKING

- Supporting well-led, effective nonprofit organizations.
- Encouraging collaborative funding partnerships to stretch grant dollars.
- Sharing the expertise of our program officers; providing guidance to form ideas and innovative approaches.

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

- Strengthening nonprofit Boards by acquainting them with essential and leading governance practices.
- Strengthening and enhancing nonprofit management practices in organizational infrastructure and program delivery.
- Enhancing meeting/learning opportunities for leaders to refresh and forge new relationships among their peers, creating new paths towards building a collaborative nonprofit sector.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

- Building our capacity to become a robust resource for community information needs.
- Engaging and empowering partners/stakeholders to use research and information to guide decisions around community issues, challenges and opportunities.
- Transitioning evaluation practices away from simple data collection to the creation of a shared learning environment that helps reveal true progress, outcomes and long-term impact.



COMMUNICATIONS

- Developing and implementing a comprehensive communication plan that effectively communicates our goals and activities to the community.
- Providing nonprofit organizations with general communications guidance, sharing expertise and providing hands-on support.
- Promoting our grantees' and partners' efforts.
- Sharing knowledge, best practices, research and lessons learned.

ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOLUTIONS

• Exploring opportunities to utilize alternative funding solutions, which include PRIs, Loan Guarantees and MRIs.

LEADERSHIP & NETWORK BUILDING

- Identifying, evaluating and developing positions on time-sensitive issues impacting our community.
- Enhancing opportunities for network building and collaboration among community stakeholders by convening and providing expertise, guidance and support.







STRENGTHEN THE P-20 EDUCATION CONTINUUM

By identifying and supporting best practices that benefit students so they can enter school ready to learn and successfully graduate from college or post-secondary programs, prepared to enter the workforce.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education from cradle to career to strengthen the education pipeline.
- 2. Build connections across the education system and with outside partners to enhance the education pathway with seamless points of transition.
- 3. Strengthen the capacity of providers to address the complex challenges facing students and their families.
- 4. Enhance training, leadership development and engagement opportunities for teachers and parents to increase professional development and collaboration.

Our work will be studentfocused, removing barriers to learning and strengthening partnerships to encourage education reform.

5. Share best practices and create mutual advocacy platforms to strengthen opportunities for learning, and encourage policy change.







ENHANCE OPTIONS FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY

By supporting efforts that focus on the *individual*, by providing basic human needs, enhancing options for self-sufficiency and empowering underserved communities to remove barriers to escaping poverty.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. Empower, support, structure and guide communities in developing effective strategies to address complex community issues.
- 2. Enhance training and skill development opportunities to improve employment access and challenge current workforce paradigms.
- 3. Improve access to dependable transportation options to increase mobility and promote livable communities.
- 4. Improve access to safe, fair and affordable housing options to promote healthy communities.
- 5. Strengthen resettlement and acclimation efforts to enhance the integration of immigrants, refugees and asylees into our community.
- 6. Improve access to services by convening diverse stakeholders to shape public policy.

Our work will be focused on providing supports that economically stabilize and sustain individuals and families in the short-term,

and transition them out of poverty in the long-term.





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BUILD LIVABLE, STABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

By creating strong, stable neighborhoods that are physically safe and attractive, and providing access to healthy food, reliable transportation, quality healthcare, safe and affordable housing, vibrant commercial districts, quality schools and meaningful employment opportunities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. Enhance connections between existing neighborhood revitalization efforts and new opportunities to address long-term issues with interrelated activities and focus.
- 2. Strengthen coalitions through support and guidance to build consensus and facilitate solution-based outcomes.
- Empower residents to create neighborhood change and build sustainable communities; partner with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to develop shared action plans.

Our work will be in partnership with nonprofits that have direct ties with neighborhood residents, encouraging collaboration to create a shared vision that drives community change and maximizes impact.

4. Build the capacity of organizations leading change to expand their influence in the community and create a positive ripple effect for systems change.



PROMOTE HEALTH AND IMPROVE SYSTEMS OF CARE

By supporting primary care, behavioral/mental health and developmental/ intellectual disabilities (DD/ID), with a priority for at-risk and underserved populations. Additional focus will be placed on providing education and assistance as appropriate to community partners regarding changing healthcare delivery and reimbursement infrastructures.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. Improve healthcare clinics and outreach efforts to broaden the scope and raise the quality of healthcare for individuals and families in community settings.
- 2. Enhance the employment pipeline to place more community health workers, home health aides, nurses and doctors in neighborhood settings.
- 3. Strengthen family supports to protect children and assist parents with solving complex problems that can lead to violence, abuse and neglect.
- 4. Promote opportunities for independent living to control healthcare costs and ensure that the elderly age in place with comfort, safety and dignity.
- 5. Develop and expand existing education and training opportunities for providers to improve healthcare delivery and reimbursement.
- 6. Strengthen systems of care by convening diverse stakeholders to shape public policy.

Our work will focus primarily on community- and neighborhood-based clinics and programs and secondarily on larger institutional settings.





EXPAND THE ROLE OF ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By supporting efforts to increase the number of local visitors and tourists to stimulate economic development through arts, culture and heritage. In addition, we support the integration of the arts across all of our focus areas with an emphasis on education, healthcare, civic engagement and neighborhood stabilization.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. Strengthen arts organizations through capacity building and leadership development to ensure their vibrancy and ability to contribute to the sustained growth of the region.
- 2. Integrate arts and cultural experiences with other strategies to ensure that communities with limited access will benefit and grow.
- 3. Enhance economic development by strengthening the ability of arts organizations to attract national and international tourists.
- 4. Protect and restore existing natural and heritage assets to ensure regional identity.
- 5. Strengthen regional assets by convening diverse stakeholders to shape public policy.

Our work will broaden the overall scope and quality of offerings for all residents and visitors, with particular attention to the use of smalland mid-sized organizations to build community among younger/ more diverse populations.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Florence M. Conti, William G. Gisel, Jr. (co-chair), Luke T. Jacobs, Ann M. McCarthy and James M. Wadsworth

STAFF

Robert D. Gioia, Paul T. Hogan, Blythe T. Merrill, Curtis W. Robbins (co-chair) and Karen L. Spaulding

FACILITATORS

Fernando Chang-Muy, Thomas O'Boyle Lecturer in Law, University of Pennsylvania School of Law; Graduate School of Social Policy and Practice; and Executive Education Program; Principal and Founder of consulting firm, Solutions International

Susan Decker, Master of Leadership Development, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and Senior Governance Consultant, BoardSource

CONNECT WITH US

We welcome your thoughts and suggestions. Simply send to Sally Crowley, Chief Communications Officer, at scrowley@oishei.org or call 716-541-0113.



726 Exchange Street, Suite 510, Buffalo, NY 14210 TEL: 716 856 9490 www.oishei.org

Connect with us on:

