



THE CITY CLUB OF CLEVELAND

For Immediate Release
July 28, 2023

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The City Club of Cleveland Announces the Guardians of Free Speech Campaign

With the announcement of the public phase of this transformative campaign, the City Club invites all community members to become Guardians of Free Speech

Cleveland – The City Club of Cleveland opened the public phase of its historic Guardians of Free Speech campaign today, with an announcement of more than \$9 million raised towards a \$12 million campaign goal. The Guardians of Free Speech Campaign advances the organization’s vision to bring more civic dialogue to more people by moving to a new home at Playhouse Square and growing the City Club’s endowment to help sustain the civic institution for generations to come. This is the largest expansion and campaign effort in the City Club’s history.

“On behalf of The City Club of Cleveland staff, Board of Directors, and campaign committee, we are deeply grateful to our donors for their contributions to date,” said Kristen Baird Adams, campaign co-chair and president of the City Club Board of Directors. “As we prepare for the move to our new home in Playhouse Square, we invite community members to join the campaign and support our unwavering commitment to convening conversations of consequence that help democracy thrive.”

The campaign will bring the City Club to its new home at 1317 Euclid Avenue at Playhouse Square, with street front visibility in the heart of downtown’s arts and culture district, increase capacity by 50%, and incorporate upgraded and specialized production equipment for broadcast, livestream, and archival purposes. With the campaign, the City Club is focused on:

- Prioritizing diversity and access, transcending geographic, economic and cultural boundaries;
- Stewarding community partnerships and ensuring racial and economic inclusion, now and into the future;
- Securing the future with of the City Club by growing our endowment, cultivating a community of engaged citizens and supporting programs that meet the evolving needs of our community; and,
- Elevating our profile with a national advisory board, building national media relationships and cultivating our role as a national champion of free speech.

“Gifts to the Guardians of Free Speech Campaign help further our commitment to one of our most fundamental human rights: free speech,” said Dan Moulthrop, City Club CEO. “It is our responsibility to encourage important and sometimes difficult conversations, while welcoming new voices to be heard. Our new home will be a place that continues to welcome audiences to break bread together, encourages authentic community connections, and creatively integrates digital innovations that will expand access and engagement to all people.”

Among the over 100 gifts to the campaign during the quiet phase are commitments of \$1 million from Cleveland Foundation, Char and Chuck Fowler, The George Gund Foundation, and The Siddiq Family, and \$500,000 investments from Haslam 3 Foundation, Key Bank Foundation, and the Thomas F. Peterson Charitable Trust.



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“Chuck and I are most happy to contribute to the City Club’s Guardians of Free Speech Campaign,” said Char Fowler, honorary campaign co-chair and one of the campaign’s lead donors. “The City Club has given much to us, and to Cleveland, in thoughtful, challenging, and entertaining programming that enriches our lives.”

The City Club plans to begin programming from its new location in September. During the month of August, they will host free forums in the community, including [a conversation with Krayzie Bone of Bone Thugs n Harmony](#) at Morning Star Baptist Church on August 10 and a series of free, lunchtime Friday Forums at U.S. Bank Plaza in Playhouse Square at the corner of E. 14th Street and Euclid Avenue. The first is August 4, with [a discussion about BorderLight, Cleveland’s Fringe Theatre Festival](#)

As Guardians of Free Speech, those who participate in this campaign are guardians of progress, of curiosity, and most of all of hope. Contributions of all sizes are appreciated and will help ensure there will always be a home for challenging ideas, new voices, and creative solutions. To make a gift and to learn more about the campaign, go to guardiansoffreespeech.org.

For media interested in a tour of the City Club facility, please contact Noelle Celeste at nceleste@cityclub.org.

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The City Club of Cleveland creates conversations of consequence that help democracy thrive. For more than 100 years, our speakers – more than 7,000 in total, from sitting heads of state to local community activists – have answered unfiltered, unrehearsed questions directly from the audience. We are the place where speakers and ideas are challenged and tested, where citizen voice is prized, and where our community grows stronger. In the midst of declining civic engagement, we remain committed to being a “citadel of free speech” and to ensuring there will always be a home for civil, civic dialogue. More info: cityclub.org