

# SENIOR CITIZENS HALL of FAME

INDUCTION CEREMONY

SEPTEMBER 19, 2024  
OHIO STATEHOUSE ATRIUM

PRESENTED BY



# Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame 2024 Inductees



**George D. Beelen, PhD**  
Canfield



**Beatrice C. Lampkin, MD**  
Cincinnati



**Ronald E. Kear**  
Avon



**Pastor Anthony L. Small, Sr.**  
Cleveland



**Chaplain Minister**  
**Marcia L. Harmon-Walker**  
Girard

# Welcome

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Since 1977, the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame has celebrated the many ways older Ohioans make their communities, our state, and our nation stronger. It honors Ohioans age 60 and older for their achievements and contributions to others; the roles they play in their communities or vocations; and what they do to promote productive and enjoyable lives.

Today's inductions bring the total number of members in the Hall of Fame to 514. They range in age from 68 to 90, and their stories represent lifetimes of dedication, ingenuity, perseverance, kindness, and compassion.

Leading our ceremony today are Ursel J. McElroy, director of the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA), and John Corlett, chairperson of the Ohio Advisory Council for Aging.

ODA would like to thank Governor Mike DeWine and his cabinet, the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Advisory Council for Aging, Ohio's area agencies on aging, and Ohio's aging network professionals for their service and advocacy on behalf of Ohio's older adults.



**Ursel J. McElroy**  
Director  
Ohio Department of Aging



**John Corlett**  
Chairperson  
Ohio Advisory Council for Aging



**George D. Beelen, PhD**  
**Canfield**  
Mahoning County

Dr. George D. Beelen believes in bringing people together.

In the late 1980s, he founded the Ohio Cultural Alliance (OCA), an organization dedicated to uniting the people of the Mahoning Valley by allowing them to explore the wide variety of cultures available to them.

For more than 30 years, Dr. Beelen brought distinguished speakers and artists to the area, helping OCA members learn about a variety of topics. He also introduced residents to different types of cuisines, produced four culture-related films, and created multiple written works. His most recent book, “Genius Knows No Boundaries,” is a 30-year history of OCA, showing that it is truly a community-building program.

OCA members gained a better understanding of their own cultures and those different from theirs. The result was empathy and understanding their fellow citizens and a recognition of the common threads in a diverse world.

“[OCA is about] helping myself and others to understand how people differ yet concluding that we are much more alike than we often believe,” Dr. Beelen said. “By experiencing talks, food, and cultural enrichment from the varied peoples of the Mahoning Valley, we learned so much about ourselves and others.”

Learning from others led to Dr. Beelen organizing study trips to Latin America, sharing the culture and history of the region with others.



His ability to connect with the community shines through every time he speaks at civic engagements or with school groups, whether that's in-person, on the radio, or on television.

OCA merged with the Mahoning Valley Historical Society in 2017, and the combined organization has held more than 300 meetings in its history with an audience of largely senior citizens. Older Ohioans' interactive experiences have provided Dr. Beelen with some of his favorite memories, as he delights in hearing positive feedback about people's involvement with the organization.

A lifelong educator, Dr. Beelen earned degrees from Youngstown State University (YSU), Western Reserve University, and Kent State University (KSU). He taught English and history at Poland High School and, based on a national competition, was selected as a John Hay Fellow in the Humanities – the most prestigious award open to high school teachers.

Dr. Beelen eventually became a professor at YSU, teaching there for 30 years and chairing the history department for 15 while also serving as a government relations liaison.



Throughout his time at YSU, he received the Watson Merit Award for Chairman in 1982, the Scholarship Award in 1988, and the Public Service Award in 1995. In 2006, he was honored with YSU's Heritage Award, the university's highest award that recognizes distinguished former faculty or staff whose contributions and long-term devotion to the university are important to its heritage and community.

Among the people who have inspired him throughout his life, Dr. Beelen lists his 12th grade English teacher George Opetza, who opened his mind to the rest of the world. He also wants to recognize professors Pauline Botty, Lawrence Kaplan, and Coburn Graves from YSU and KSU, and Charles Keller from the John Hay Program. Beelen also owes gratitude to Pepin Hernandez Laos, who first invited him to speak at a program in Guadalajara, Mexico, and challenged him to form the OCA.

Born in Campbell, Ohio, Dr. Beelen is one of four children. Dr. Beelen and his wife of 68 years, Betty, have three children, nine grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren. He has visited 49 states and 63 countries.



**Beatrice C. Lampkin, MD**  
Cincinnati  
Hamilton County

Despite being diagnosed with polio at 7 years old, Dr. Beatrice C. Lampkin never let the disease slow her down.

Dr. Lampkin was inspired throughout her childhood by her parents, her physician grandfather, and the orthopedic surgeon who performed multiple surgeries she needed.

Then, she became an inspiration herself.

After receiving those successful surgeries as a child, Dr. Lampkin paid it forward, pursuing a medical degree and changing outcomes for children diagnosed with leukemia and other cancers.

Dr. Lampkin served as the director of the Hematology/Oncology Division at Cincinnati

Children's Medical Center from 1973 to 1991, then worked at the Cancer and Blood Diseases Institute at Cincinnati Children's Hospital until she was 81 years old. In those roles, she has helped countless children and adolescents with cancer or blood diseases.

She was also a founder of the Ronald McDonald House in Cincinnati. Over the last 25 years, that program has more than tripled in size and now has 177 beds to become one of the largest Ronald McDonald houses in the world.

"I thank the good God for his great help throughout my life," Dr. Lampkin said. "I could not have done what I have done and continue to what I do without His great help."

During her career, Dr. Lampkin pioneered





treatments in childhood cancer that gave hope to patients and families rather than wishing them well and sending them on their way.

She has been described as determined, inspiring, caring, remarkable, intelligent, and trailblazing. She consistently stands up for others who find themselves in a vulnerable place. Whether it's those affected by cognitive loss, addiction, or a life-threatening illness, she's been improving circumstances for people in every aspect of her life.

Crucially, she also founded the Giving Life a Dream (GLAD) House in Cincinnati. A not-for-profit organization, GLAD House breaks the cycle of addiction by supporting children of parents struggling with addiction. The organization just celebrated 25 years of service.

Since leaving Children's Hospital in 2015, she has also made an impact on the Twin Lakes retirement community in Cincinnati by starting the unique "Rhythm and Songs Band" for Twin Lakes' memory care units. Residents in the band use rhythm sticks to

I thank the good God for his great help throughout my life.

play and sing along with John Philip Sousa marches. The program greatly helps the residents with memory problems.

"I will continue, as long as I am able, to be the leader of this band," Dr. Lampkin said. "I select the marches and songs for the programs with input from the volunteers and have sheets of paper copied with the words provided to the participants."

An active pinochle player and avid fan of the Cincinnati Symphony, Dr. Lampkin is the third of five children. She grew up in Alabama, where her father was the postmaster for the University of Alabama Post Office for 50 years and her mother taught elementary school for 30 years.

She is a member of the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church, serving briefly as a Stephen Minister and serving on its Session, the governing body of the Church.





## Ronald E. Kear

Avon

Lorain County

For Ronald E. Kear, there's nothing quite like watching families move into the homes he has built.

With more than 27 years volunteering for Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity – longer than any of their current paid staff – Mr. Kear has gotten to experience that joy frequently. He has helped build and repair more than 80 homes for northeast Ohio families, and more than 200 children have moved into homes because of his efforts.

After he completed a house for a family who had repeatedly moved from one substandard house to another, Mr. Kear will always remember what the mother said to her son.

“When they finally got their Habitat home,

the mother told her 9-year-old son that ‘now you can memorize our address,’” Mr. Kear said. “It struck home to me how much of a difference it makes to a family to have a home to be safe and permanent.”

Since 1998, Mr. Kear has been volunteering more than 20 hours per week with Habitat for Humanity. He oversees construction or repair of several houses at one time, and he is currently the site supervisor for all six homes on a single Cleveland street.

When Greater Cleveland Habitat embarked on a strategic plan to provide affordable home ownership for 125+ families by offering both newly constructed and fully rehabbed homes in 2019, Mr. Kear's experience was invaluable.



Kear's expertise was crucial when Habitat decided to start constructing single-family homes again. That expertise resulted in 25 new homes built and sold to families earning between 30-80% of the area median income.

A retired civil engineer, Mr. Kear sets an example for his peers and demonstrates that retirees can be active and energetic. Simply put, Greater Cleveland Habitat would not be the organization it is today without Ron Kear.

In addition to their church and Habitat, Mr. Kear and his wife, Becky, have contributed to Orphan Medical Network International (OMNI), an organization that helps the poorest of people in Zambia. Mr. Kear made one medical mission trip himself, assisting more than 400 people every day who walked 10 miles to see a doctor. Not a medical professional himself, Mr. Kear continues to fund physician travel for the organization.

Mr. Kear has been inspired by his wife's aunt Vera, the most selfless person he has ever known.

"As a retired teacher, she lived her life giving to others," Mr. Kear said. "She gave to missionaries, incarcerated men, friends who might need a little help, and her



**It struck home to me how much of a difference it makes to a family to have a home to be safe and permanent.**

church. What I give is small compared to her generosity, but my Habitat work is my gift to families in need."

Mr. Kear believes a successful aging experience relies on "action and interaction," which he practices with his Habitat work and plenty more.

All of Mr. Kear's family lives in Florida, Washington, and New Mexico, but the people of Cleveland have become his family over time. Mr. and Mrs. Kear have been to 53 countries and many U.S. states, and their time abroad includes a two-year stint living in the Philippines as an officer in the U.S. Navy.



**Pastor Anthony L. Small, Sr.**  
Cleveland  
Cuyahoga County

Pastor Anthony L. Small, Sr. is a passionate and dedicated servant to others through spiritual guidance, empowerment, and community engagement. If there's a way to advocate for improvements to the lives of those in his community, he will find it.

Whether that means combatting food deserts, improving his youth ministry, or helping Clevelanders get vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic, Rev. Small seems to have a hand in just about every good deed being done in his part of the world.

His philosophy is simple. "Just being there and caring for others," Rev. Small said. "Showing that same love that Christ showed me. It is my belief that if you have compassion for others, He will bless you."

His service to others began more than 30 years ago when he became a member of the City of Cleveland Safety Force. He retired in 2013, but retirement only enhanced his motivation to serve and protect.

One of the biggest ways that Rev. Small has made a difference is ensuring that Clevelanders have access to the healthy, nutritious food they need. As pastor of Starlight Baptist Church, he has built a bursting-at-the-seams food pantry to the people of his church, and the church gives away food twice a month at its parking lot. In an area with no grocery store, that makes a huge difference.

Rev. Small also convinced Walgreens – which was intending to leave his community – to instead move to a smaller location so people



would not lose access to their pharmacy services.

He has taken interest in older and younger Ohioans at Starlight, establishing a special recognition day for seniors at church and rejuvenated the youth ministry with field trips, bike giveaways, and more.

He organized Straight Talk, an empowering activity for youth and their parents to approach problems that arise out of everyday life. Rev. Small also served on the transition team for current Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb, and he is a member of the Mayor's Safety Committee. He is also currently Dean of Christian Education for the Union Missionary Baptist District Association of Ohio.

A proud graduate of the Cleveland Public School System, he attended Central State University in Wilberforce and is a graduate of the Cleveland Baptist Bible Institute and the Moody Bible College where he received a master's degree in Christian education.

Rev. Small and his wife of 40 years, Carol, have three children: Audriunna, Aleisha and Anthony Jr. He is one of six children, and all three of his brothers – Charles (deceased), Carl, and Michael – became pastors as well.



“God isn’t through with me yet. God has given me a vision to do more.”

The brothers modeled their faith after their pastor father, Rev. Dr. Edward Small.

Rev. Small enjoys riding his Honda GL1800 motorcycle, calling it his “stress tool.” He also finds peace by sitting near bodies of water and meditating on what God needs him to do next.

As he nears his 70th birthday, there’s still plenty left for Rev. Small to accomplish. He is president of the East Cleveland Concerned Pastors for Progress organization, who he led during the COVID-19 pandemic to help ensure Ohioans in his area had access to vaccinations. He also remains the spiritual advisor for the Cleveland Police Department Third District.

“God isn’t through with me yet,” he says. “God has given me a vision to do more.”



## Chaplain Minister Marcia L. Harmon-Walker Girard Trumbull County

Chaplain Minister Marcia L. Harmon-Walker can describe her calling in one word: *servanthood*.

Whether that means advising residents of a downtown Youngstown apartment building, helping to keep drug dealers off street corners, ordaining marriages, or eulogizing funerals, Ms. Walker has lived her life in service of others.

Ms. Walker is one of the first women in Youngstown to become president of the police chaplain corps. In that role, and in many others over the years, the impact she has made in her community continues to reverberate to this day.

A former employee for the Juvenile Justice Center in Youngstown for nearly a decade,

Ms. Walker says that hearing from the people whose lives she impacted is incredibly meaningful. She is selfless and loves to serve her public without asking for anything in return.

“After working with at-risk youth for almost a decade, I still have young women and men who reach out to me to let me know how their lives were changed after meeting me because they were taught how to change their thinking,” Ms. Walker said. “These are victories.”

In the 1990s, as a chaplain with the Youngstown Police Department, Ms. Walker began what she believes is her calling: getting drug dealers on Youngstown street corners to consider changing their ways while also introducing religion to their lives.



A licensed minister since 2001, she also took a course from the Youngstown Citizen's Police Academy to help bridge the gap between her community and the police. She understands linkage and being a community voice to advocate on both sides of the coin.

She also represents the Youngstown Police Department at funerals in the city, attending as a chaplain and in her role as her church's associate minister. She has served on the prison ministry at New Bethel Church and is on the board of the Home For Good reentry program. She regularly visits the sick and isolated people in her community, bringing them home-cooked meals.

At the International Towers apartment building, she assists with, donates to, and spiritually advises the residents who requests her services. When a bank explosion hit downtown Youngstown in May 2024, impacting the residents of International Towers, she assisted with blocking off streets and keeping families calm during what was a hugely disruptive event to their daily lives.

Ms. Walker has three children and has raised four more during the years, but her



ability to connect with everyone around her makes her say that she has “a close family no matter where I live in the world.” She was most inspired in her life by retired detective Delphine Baldwin-Casey, Dr. Alison Harmon, Chilita Grace, and Faye Thornton.

She has an associate's degree in criminal justice from Eastern Gateway Community College that she earned while in her 60s, and she has a degree in juvenile criminal justice. She also attended Bradley Bible College.

Ms. Walker is also a licensed cosmetologist, has licenses to be a teacher, manager, and a business owner, and is a part of the International Ministerial Alliance. In 2015, she received the Schultz-Mills Scholarship from the Ohio Warren Junior Women's League, and she completed a nine-week course from the Youngstown Citizens Police Program to help bridge the gap between police and the community.

Through every step of her life, she has been a selfless servant for the people of her community. What does she feel is the key to a successful aging experience?

“Live life with a purpose and be of service to others,” Ms. Walker said.





**MISSION:**

*Ohio - The best place to age in the nation.*

**VISION:**

*Foster sound public policy, research, and initiatives that benefit older Ohioans.*

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The Department of Aging administers programs and services to meet the needs of older Ohioans. These programs are funded by the federal Older Americans Act, Medicaid, and other sources.

Most of our programs and services are coordinated locally by contracted area agencies on aging.

For more information about healthy lifestyles and aging services, contact Ohio's aging network:

**1-800-243-5678**  
**[Aging.Ohio.gov](http://Aging.Ohio.gov)**



In the Name and by the Authority of  
**THE STATE OF**  
**OHIO**



**WHEREAS**, each year, the Ohio Department of Aging celebrates the continued contributions and accomplishments of older adults by inducting individuals into the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame honors and recognizes the role older adults play in their communities, state, and nation while it also promotes the benefits of active, productive, and purposeful lives throughout the lifespan; and

**WHEREAS**, hundreds of outstanding older Ohioans have been inducted to the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame since it was founded in 1977; and

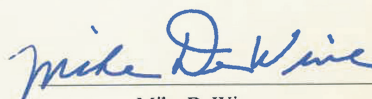
**WHEREAS**, individuals selected for the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame lead lives not defined by age or barriers, and possess values we should all strive to emulate, such as dedication, creativity, kindness, and compassion; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2024 inductees to the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame are a diverse group of accomplished educators, chaplains and church leaders, engineers, non-profit founders, volunteers, and more.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, We, **Mike DeWine and John Husted, Governor and Lieutenant Governor of the State of Ohio**, do hereby recognize and congratulate the inductees to the

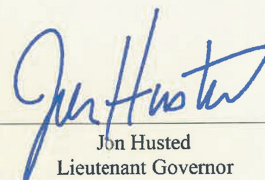
## **2024 OHIO SENIOR CITIZENS HALL OF FAME**

On this 19<sup>th</sup> day of September 2024.



Mike DeWine  
Governor





John Husted  
Lieutenant Governor

Governor Mike DeWine  
Director Ursel J. McElroy



The Ohio Department of Aging is an equal  
opportunity employer and service provider.