

Central Community House Celebrates 80 Years of Service at the Annual Village Maker Awards Gala

This year marks a special occasion for the staff and volunteers at Central Community House. It is their 80th year of service to the children and families of the city's near east neighborhoods. On July 20th, they hosted their fourth annual Village Maker Awards gala at The Bluestone in downtown Columbus to celebrate this major milestone.

The Keynote Speakers for the event were Alice and Antonio Daniels. Mr. Daniels is a Columbus native who started his career in basketball at St. Francis DeSales High School and eventually became a standout in the NBA, winning a championship with the San Antonio Spurs. His career spawned thirteen seasons. He is currently a Fox Sports analyst for the Oklahoma City Thunder. His mother, Alice, is a Licensed Social Worker, who has spent decades of service to the Columbus community, including working at Central Community House. She currently heads Daniels Consults, which she guides others to create positivity within the community and their own lives. They both received the Community Heroes Award at the gala.

Dave and Suzanne Fisher of F&W Properties received the Village Maker Community Business/Organization Award. They are recognized for instilling a company-wide mission to promote a sense of community among residents. They are responsible for the purchase and renovation of Clifton Woods Apartments, formerly known as Woodland Green. The Fishers worked with police and neighbors to take a tougher approach to end criminal activity in the area. They strive to ensure the safety and comfort of their residents in all of their properties. The Fishers are also active in the maintenance of the Olde Towne Community Garden and supporting Huckleberry House and Amethyst.

James Flannery and Mari Sunami received Individual Village Maker Awards. Flannery is the president of the Franklin Park Civic Association. In his time in this position, he has created the Trolley Barn Block Watch and has been the chief force behind the Jingle Mingle at Franklin Park Conservatory and neighborhood clean-ups. Sunami is the former Executive Director of South Side Settlement House from 1993-2009. Her diligent advocacy for the homeless and poor came from her experiences in traveling and being a life-long student of cultural diversity. She is a part of the CCH Afterschool and Summer Youth programs where she tutors children and helps build their confidence for scholastic success.

Central's Board of Trustees acknowledged Pam McCarthy, their Executive Director, for her twenty-five years of service to the organization. She was presented a gift in her honor. The Ohio Children's Foundation surprised everyone by giving a special \$25,000 grant to recognize her dedication and leadership. The gala also hosted a silent auction to help raise funding for Central. They would like to thank their local neighbors Black Creek Bistro, Camelot Cellars, Franklin Park Civic Association, Black Arts Plus, Cornerstone Craft Beer and Wine, and Trolley Barn Block Watch who donated wonderful items for the auction. These businesses truly helped make the Village Maker gala a success.

