To the Cleveland community,

As I near the end of my three-year tenure as Chair of the Board of Directors of NewBridge Cleveland Center for Arts and Technology and because this is the first of what will be an Annual Report to the Cleveland community, this letter provides an opportunity to reflect on the beginning, growth, and future trajectory of NewBridge.

Moments of joy I won’t forget
On a purely personal note, among the most joy-filled events I have experienced is a NewBridge graduation of its adult students into careers in healthcare as phlebotomists and hospital nursing assistants. I am extraordinarily moved by the unlocked sense of self-esteem and self-worth which the students exude and by the pride which their cheering families and friends so obviously feel. It is the culmination of the rebirth of hope for so many. This would not have been possible in Cleveland but for the serendipitous introduction of Bill Strickland to Ronn Richard, President and CEO of The Cleveland Foundation. Bill’s inspirational message convinced Ronn to bring the Manchester Bidwell training programs to Cleveland. These programs train unemployed or underemployed adults for well-paying, available healthcare jobs in the community and provide arts training after school to high-risk high school students to engage them full in the process of learning, with the broad objective of graduation from high school.

A dedication to serving the underserved
NewBridge’s first group of high school students entered our brand-new spaces located at 3634 Euclid Avenue in October 2010, and they were able to select from arts programs in photography, ceramics, sound recording, and graphic design. Their artwork is on constant display in our Gallery. The high school youths were followed closely by our first adult class in Phlebotomy in April 2011, in which 14 entered and all graduated, and in Pharmacy Technicians in August of that year, in which 18 started and 15 graduated. Because the objective of NewBridge is to train adults for
available jobs in healthcare, a course alteration was made for adults in April 2016 when the Pharmacy Tech program was replaced by the training of Hospital Nursing Assistants for which there is strong demand among Cleveland’s esteemed hospital systems. These comprehensive adult programs, like those of our high school arts programs, are provided at no cost to the students, and they fill an important need as NewBridge serves a largely disenfranchised population whose families live at or below the poverty line.

Building a model that works
A very insightful article, “Time to Reboot Grantmaking”, published in Stanford Social Innovation Review, pointed out, as “organizations pour money and attention into social programs” they often overlook the need to build organizational infrastructure and financial health. The article introduces the concept of a Grantmaking Pyramid, in which non-profits first build strong foundational capabilities, then create “organizational resilience based on financial health”, and finally “deliver effective programs, the springboard for increasing impact.”

I am very pleased to report that the Directors and highly competent, professional staff of NewBridge seemingly anticipated the research revealed in this article by regularly examining its infrastructure and its financial capacity to reshape its staff and programs to meet an evolving understanding of community and market needs and the financial resources available to meet them. Consequently, the Hospital Nursing Assistants program replaced that in Pharmacy Technicians. To give our students more options, we are piloting new patient access (in conjunction with University Hospitals) and culinary training to address specific workforce needs. To support this recent expansion, NewBridge has formed a number of partnerships, including with Ohio Means Jobs, Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Ohio Guidestone, the Evergreen Cooperative and Towards Employment. This assists us as an organization in building greater financial sustainability through revenue based on fee for service. We expect as many as 186 adult students to be served in 2018.

However, the most significant change to date has been in our youth program. Beginning on October 2, this program will focus on 50 students from 5 Cleveland Metropolitan Schools District (CMSD). Identified by the symbol CLE/LEAD, it will provide a Social and Emotional Learning Leadership program infused with arts and technology. For 6 months, these students will come together after school to discover different aspects of their social and emotional lives while developing skills in ceramics, graphic design, and

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photography. Each student will have the opportunity to explore topics like Cultural Awareness, Interpersonal Communication, Personal Management and Responsibility. This will allow the students to understand, manage and communicate their emotions, feel and show empathy for others, increase self-awareness, improve relationships and increase self-efficacy. The program has been developed in close cooperation with executives from CMSD.

**Bright futures for NewBridge and most importantly its students**

I am brimming with optimism about the future of NewBridge and its manifest impact on our community as I am succeeded as Chair by David Legeay. We have benefited from the leadership of our predecessors, Connie Clore and Heidi Gartland. NewBridge will be steadfast in its adherence to its mission. With the continued extraordinary help of our community partners and generous funders, NewBridge will continue to create a positive narrative by making a significant difference in the community to which NewBridge has staked its future. With the thoughtful planning and guidance of our professional management and staff, NewBridge will confidently prepare its students to realize their potential and build personally rewarding futures.

Sincerely,

Oliver C. Henkel, Jr.
Chair, NewBridge Board of Directors
September 1, 2017