



WINTER 2023

## New Year's Gift Card Surprise

The Akron Urban League, in partnership with an anonymous donor, distributed 250 Visa gift cards valued at \$197 each to families in the community from January 13-16. The gift cards enabled recipients to shop for food, necessities, and more for their families.

"Because of the current state of the economy, many individuals and families remain in need of basic necessities, and this gift card is just one way we wanted to step in and help. We were honored to be able to take part in this initiative. Helping the community is what we do, and it was our pleasure to get these gift cards into the hands of people that needed them. It was a great way to start the New Year by being a blessing to others," said Misty Beasley, MBAC Regional Director.

The gift cards were distributed at the AUL for select program participants and randomly at various grocery stores and retailers around Akron, including Aldi, Roush's Market, Save-A-Lot (two locations), and Family Dollar (three locations), Dollar General, Dollar Tree, and ACME.

*"What an awesome gesture made by passing out Visa gift cards at random locations around the City of Akron!"* ❤️ -Austin Davis

*"Shout out to Akron Urban League for blessing me with a gift card."* 🎁 -Amber Alexander

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## THE GUILD HOLDS SNEAKER SOIREE

Join us on Saturday, April 22, 2023, for a fun-filled evening of dinner, dancing, raffles, and refreshments hosted by the Akron Urban League Guild. The fundraiser benefits the 2023 Scholarship Fund and Guild Programming and will be held at 440 Vernon Odom Blvd., Akron, OH 44307.

Come out and connect with community members and be part of the movement of elevating our young scholars. It is an outstanding way to get involved and you just may leave inspired! Remember to wear your kicks. We hope to see you there. [Get your tickets today.](#)

## ANNUAL MLK BREAKFAST

On Monday, January 16th, the Akron Urban League (AUL) hosted our annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast at the Hilton Akron/Fairlawn. More than 400 guests gathered in person to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Dr. King's monumental "I Have a Dream" speech and listen to the remarkable life story of keynote speaker Dr. Michael Forbes, Chief Academic Officer at Akron Children's Hospital. The event raised more than \$50,000 for AUL's programs and services.

The program began with welcoming remarks from Teresa R. LeGrair (AUL President & CEO), H. Alan Rothenbuecher (AUL Board Chair), Greta Johnson (Assistant Chief of Staff and Director of Communications for Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro), who introduced a video from Executive Ilene Shapiro, Mayor Dan Horrigan, and newly elected Congresswoman Emilia Sykes. Pastor Larry Chadwick gave the Invocation, and inspirational musical selections were performed by The LeGrair Brothers and Mt. Calvary Baptist Church Worship Choir, led by Joshua Porter.

After a delicious buffet breakfast, Dr. Jennifer Ross (AUL VP of Diversity, Education & Engagement) introduced keynote speaker Dr. Forbes. A dedicated community leader and Black American from an immigrant family, Dr. Forbes provided a fascinating first-hand account of the variability of the American Dream. His personal journey served as an inspiration and demonstrated that anything could be accomplished if we worked hard and worked together. He received a unanimous standing ovation after his speech. Barb Greene (AUL Interim Director of Fund Development and Board Member) presented Dr. Forbes with a gift from Totally Tangled Creations as a token of our appreciation.

You do not want to miss this phenomenal event next year. Mark your calendar the 2024 MLK Breakfast on Monday, January 15, 2024. [See photos from the event!](#)

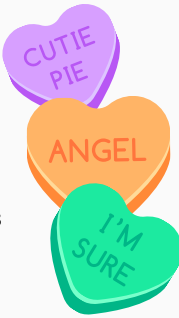




## CRAZY 4 U DONOR RECEPTION

The Akron Urban League's **Crazy 4U Donor Appreciation Reception** hosted by Huntington Bank took place Thursday, February 9th, in Huntington's downtown Akron Lobby. The Valentine's Day-themed event was an opportunity for the AUL to thank donors and partners who have significantly supported the mission, programs, and services we provide to the community. Their generosity is a large part of why we're in our 98th year of positively impacting the lives of those we serve.

Teresa R. LeGrair, AUL President & CEO, and host Nicholas Browning, Regional President, Mahoning Valley/Akron/Canton (MAC) of Huntington Bank and Fund Development Chair of AUL's Board of Directors, welcomed guests to the event and updated them on the AUL's current milestones. Dr. Jennifer Ross, AUL's VP of Diversity, Education, and Engagement, shared a recent experience partnering with Huntington on the hugely successful "Seeds for Growth" event last September. Joni Fitch, Director of Community Affairs & Engagement at The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, shared why Goodyear enjoys supporting and partnering with the AUL and its positive impact on Goodyear's team and the community. Barb Greene, AUL's Interim Development Director, and long-time Board Member, introduced the AUL Development Team and our new VP of Fund Development & Marketing, Amina Hall, who joined our organization on February 20th. The event was rounded out with a champagne toast by Nick Browning as everyone raised a glass in celebration of our generous donors and partners!



## TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR MCCAP

**We are now recruiting quarterly for the Minority Contractor Capital Access Program (MCCAP).** The program is a collaboration between the Western Reserve Community Fund and the Akron Urban League that provides financial and technical assistance to Akron and Summit County-based minority, women, LGBTQ+, Veteran, and Disabled-owned businesses in the construction trades. Apply today to be a part of the next cohort.



## SCHOLARSHIP & ANNUAL MEETING LUNCHEON TICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW



Save your seat and buy your tickets today for April 4, 2023, at the Hilton Akron/Fairlawn, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM. For sponsorship opportunities contact Melanie Korman at 330-434-3101.

## OUR SCHOLARS SHINE

Our Scholars have been engaging in several workshops and volunteer activities over the last few months. They have learned about self-care and mental health awareness using the Calm and Headspace apps.

They also understand that *money matters!* They learned how to budget their first-year college finances along with knowing the do's and don'ts around credit card awareness. Their most recent session was about understanding your public and private self. They discussed professionalism from the perspective of multi-generations, appropriate interview dress, and, most importantly, social media awareness and their digital footprint. Our Scholars are truly learning life lessons that will get them through college and beyond.

We are excited for everyone to meet them at our Scholarship & Annual Meeting Luncheon on April 4, 2023.





## MCCAP REPORTS TO THE BIG LEAGUES

The Cleveland Guardians selected APB & Associates, Inc. (APB) as its program manager, providing owner's representation and community engagement in renovating its ballpark. APB is a Cleveland-based minority and veteran-owned company specializing in management and project controls of significant land development and complex construction projects.

They are building upon the City of Cleveland's 2013 Community Benefits Agreement with local business, civic, labor, and trade organizations. The Guardians and APB pledge to set even higher standards for recruiting local and minority workers, contracting with diverse firms, growing training programs, and researching best practices for enhancing diversity and inclusion in the construction sector. By supporting small businesses, particularly veteran-owned, minority-owned, and female-owned, to grow and provide the groundwork necessary to become the "go to" company on future projects, the Guardians have the chance further to unify Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and Northeast Ohio.

APB's President, Andre Bryan, is a long-time supporter of the Akron Urban League **MCCAP** Program. He has provided access to construction projects and conducted professional development workshops for MCCAP participants. With the Guardians project, Andre will continue to guide Akron-based small businesses in capacity building while exposing them to great opportunities. Renovations at Progressive Field are scheduled to start immediately following the 2023 season.



## MBAC CELEBRATES PROVETS' MILESTONES



MBAC commends Gerald Zachary, owner of ProVets, LLC, for obtaining the State of Ohio Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Veteran-Friendly Business Enterprise Certifications (VBE), and the Encouraging Diversity, Growth, and Equity (EDGE) Certification. These certifications will help his business secure future contracts.

ProVets, LLC is a professional hauling service that uses dump trucks to haul raw materials like broken concrete and asphalt. They move gravel, sand, dirt, and more. *Finish the story.*

# DONOR THANKS



Thank you to our generous **December and January** donors. It is donors like you that help keep our mission alive. Your contribution supports education in our STEAM and scholarship programs, connects jobseekers to employers with Workforce Development, joins together small businesses with resources in our Entrepreneurship Empowerment Center, and so much more. Thank you for helping us be of service to Summit County!

## *December Donors*

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# DONOR THANKS



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Thank you!