



Quarterly

NEWSLETTER

Issue 4 | Volume 1 | January 2026

Featured Articles



From our CEO

Read an inspiring message from our CEO Mr. Mark Payne Jr. about our upcoming year, our direction filled with hope and encouragement.



2025 Event Recap

What a year we have had in 2025. Explore a snap shot of many of the events for WWMD last year.



Resources

Our goal is to always provide resources with a smile. Take a look and share the featured resources in this edition.

A New Look

Check us out we are new and improved. We have updated our website with even more updates coming soon.

Visit us at wwmd614.org

DID YOU KNOW We're on social media?

Catch us real time below.



@wwmd614





STEPPING INTO 2026:
**A MESSAGE
OF
MOMENTUM**

MARK E. PAYNE, JR
President & CEO



Happy New Year! As the clock struck midnight and we officially entered 2026, I found myself reflecting on the incredible journey we've shared over the last twelve months. Standing here at the start of a new chapter, my heart is full of pride for what this neighborhood represents: grit, growth, and grace. At What Would Marcus Do (WWMD), we don't view January 1st as just a date on a calendar. We view it as an opportunity to double down on the promises we've made to this community.

Honoring the Past, Building the Future

The question "What Would Marcus Do?" is a living, breathing guide for us. Marcus didn't wait for the "right time" to lead; he understood that the best time to act is always now. As we look at the year ahead, we are carrying that same urgency into our work.

Our resolution for 2026 is simple: To be a bridge. * We will bridge the gap between potential and opportunity through our M.P. Empowerment Academy.

- We will bridge the gap between crisis and stability through our Neighborhood Pop-Ups.
- We will bridge the gap between isolation and community by ensuring every resident knows they have a place here.

A New Year for Every Neighbor

Whether you are starting this year with a clear set of goals or you are just trying to find your footing, I want you to know that WWMD is in your corner. We aren't just an organization; we are your neighbors. We celebrate your wins and we stand with you in the lean times.

This year, I encourage you to look at your own "Hilltop." What is the one small step you can take today to move toward the life you want? Remember, Marcus's legacy wasn't built in a day—it was built through consistent, small acts of courage and kindness.

Thank You for Being the Heart of WWMD

To our donors, volunteers, and partners: Your belief in our mission is what turns our vision into reality. Because of you, 2026 will be a year of unprecedented impact on the Hilltop.

Let's make this year one of connection. Let's look out for each other, keep our eyes on the street, and keep asking the right questions. Here's to a year of health, prosperity, and purpose.

JANUARY 2026

2025 ENGAGEMENT RECAP

We have have been so blessed to reach many amazing people within the year of 2025. We are happy to report that we have empowered 515 youth, reached 6k individuals with resources, and established and maintained 31 community partnerships. We attended and supported many events out side of our own which included: Care Connection meetings, Care Coalition Meetings, Wisdom Committee Meetings, Trauma Response Care Training, Care Coalition Caregivers Retreat, 10 TV community Town Hall, Hilltop Community Town Hall, Envision Hilltop Community, Highland 130th Birthday Carnival, Hocking Hills Healing Hike (MOMCC), Under Triple Digits Stakeholders meeting, The State of Black America 2, African American Wellness Walk, West High School Back to School Bash, P.L.A.N -Prevent, Listen, Act, Navigate Town Hall, 2025 Neighborhood Best Practice, West High School Awards Assembly- gave out scholarships, West High School First day of School Clap in, Care Coalition Vigil Resource Fair, All of Us Block Party - Dontavius L. Jarrells, Ohio Attorney General Crime Victim Services Bs Regional Training, Franklinton Tree Giveaway, Night Nation Run, Columbus Community meeting- Galloway Ridge School, Care Coalition Fall Connection Fair, Hunted Hilltop Spooktacular, Hot Chocolate Run, Who's Who in Black Columbus, Press Conference Under Triple Digits, Community Resilience Certifications. We had an amazing year and look forward to 2026.







FROM THE DESK OF OUR C.O.O.

NEW MERCIES

A Divine Reset for 2026

DEVYN A. COLEMAN, SR.

Chief Operating Officer

As we watch the sunrise over the Hilltop this January, I am reminded of the promise found in Lamentations 3:22-23: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

The world is currently shouting "New Year, New Me." We are told we must reinvent ourselves, hustle harder, and erase our past to be worthy of the future. But in our walk of faith, we know a different truth. You don't need to be "new" to be loved, and you don't need to be perfect to be used by God.

This year isn't about an overhaul; it's about a reveal. It's about letting the light of Christ shine through the person He already created you to be.

The Power of the "Fresh Start" God is the author of the fresh start. From the burning bush to the empty tomb, our faith is built on the foundation of transformation. On the Hilltop, we see this transformation every day—in the neighbor who chooses forgiveness, the student who chooses discipline, and the leader who chooses service.

But remember: growth in the Spirit is rarely an overnight "glow-up." It is a steady, daily walk. If you stumble in January, His mercies are still there in February. The "New Me" isn't a destination you reach; it's a relationship you cultivate.

What Would Marcus Do? (Faith in Action)

Marcus Marquis Payne didn't just talk about faith; he lived it out on these very sidewalks. He understood that spiritual encouragement isn't just a feeling—it's a hand reached out to a brother or sister in need.

When we ask, "What Would Marcus Do?" we are really asking how we can be the hands and feet of Jesus on the Hilltop. Marcus knew that:

- Faith without works is dead.
- Every person carries the Imago Dei (the Image of God).
- Service is the highest form of worship.

Three Spiritual Anchors for your 2026

As you navigate this month, I encourage you to drop these three anchors into your daily life:

1. Seek the Kingdom First: Before you check your phone or the news, check in with the Creator. Five minutes of prayer sets the tone for a day led by peace rather than anxiety.
2. Walk by Faith, Not by Sight: The Hilltop has its challenges, but our God is bigger than any zip code. Trust the path He has set for you, even when the fog hasn't lifted yet.
3. Be a Living Testimony: You might be the only "Bible" someone on your block ever reads. Let your kindness, your integrity, and your hope be an invitation to others.

Our Prayer for You

At What Would Marcus Do (WWMD), we are praying that 2026 is a year of "overflow" for you—not just in your finances or your health, but in your spirit. We are here to support you, to lift you up, and to remind you that you are a child of the Most High. The calendar has turned, the page is blank, and the Spirit is moving. Let's walk into this year with our heads held high.

In His Service,





WWMD®
WHAT WOULD MARCUS DO

APPLICATION OPENS
MARCH 1, 2026

THE MARCUS MARQUIS PAYNE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scholarship Guidelines

- Applicant must be pursuing college studies. Scholarship applications must be submitted during the student's senior year at West High School. Students may complete our scholarship forms online.
- Applicant must be a U.S. Citizen or a legal permanent resident with a permanent resident card or passport.
- Applicant must be a resident of the Greater Hilltop Area or zip code 43222, 43223 or 43204. Applicants are considered a resident of one of these zip codes if they currently live within that area or have lived within in the zip code for at least one year at any time within the last five years.
- Applicant must be a current student at West High School with a 3.0 or higher GPA
- Two letters of reference must be signed and added to the application.
- Short Essay—Please explain the importance of giving back to the Hilltop Community in your academic studies and how you plan to incorporate a practical application for use in your future career must be 911 words.
- Optional Video— If you would like to add your voice to your application, you have the option to submit a video presentation showcasing your work and qualifications for the WWMD scholarship. Video must be in English and a maximum of 2 minutes long. Please address these two questions: What is your passion and how are you currently pursuing it? How do you plan to use your passion to create a positive change in the Hilltop community?
- Instructions must be followed accurately to make certain that your application is considered. If you have any questions, call the What Would Marcus Do at 614-969-7765 for guidance.
- All decisions by the review committee are final, and any attempts by applicants to lobby or persuade the committee during the process will result in immediate disqualification.

For More Information :
wwmd614.org/marcusmarquispaynescholarship



Meet the team

SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM LEADER

As a graduate of West High School, Maurice has mastered the art of interrelation in the Hilltop Area. His compassion for humanity has gained him access to build relationships with many leaders and residents of the Hilltop. He possesses over 12 years of community volunteer experience.

Maurice's educational toolbox comprises a College Preparatory Degree from West High School, Continuing Education: Early Childhood Development & Education, Columbus State Community College, Web design/development, in addition to various on the job training programs.

His ability to understand generational diversity through social media platforms, along with his technical background allows our team to remain relevant and in touch with the many changes each platform presents.

He has a drive to help those in need and assist with promoting resources for our community through creative media expressions.

A portrait of Maurice Payne, a man with a beard and short hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt and a gold chain with a circular pendant. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a warm, orange-toned wall.

**MAURICE
PAYNE**



COLUMBUS[★] WATER & POWER

The Columbus Water & Power (CWP) discount program is a utility assistance program for CWP customers. It is aimed at creating more affordable and equitable access to public utilities for Columbus residents. If eligible, power customers can receive a one-time \$50 credit and a 25% discount on their power usage. Water customers who are eligible can receive a one-time \$65 credit and 25% discount on water usage. Seniors 60 and older can also qualify to have their service charges waived.

Power Discount

- One-time \$50 credit
- 25% off your monthly power usage

Water Discount

- One-time \$65 credit
- 25% off your monthly water usage

Who Qualifies?

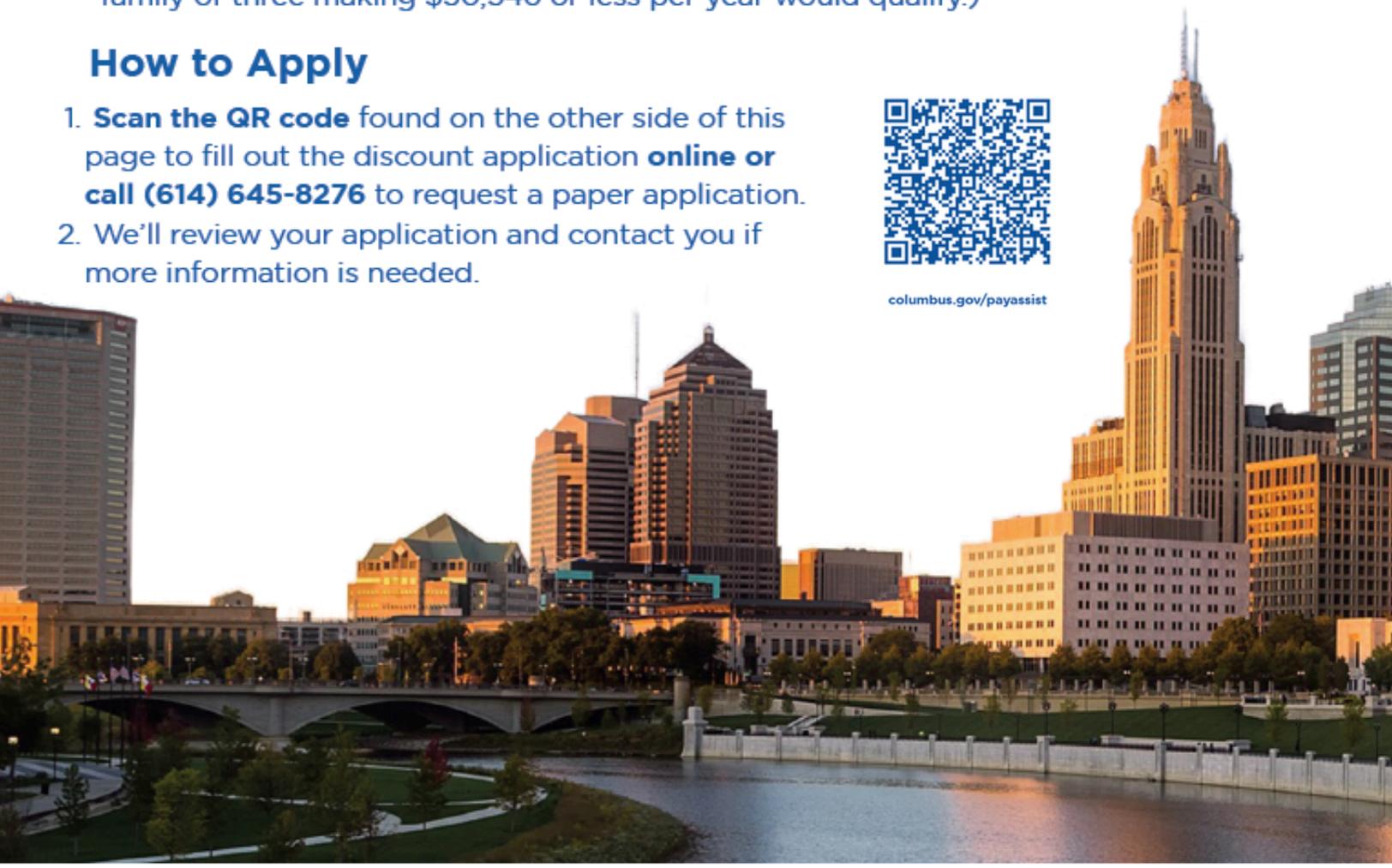
- Any active CWP customer who is already enrolled in qualifying assistance programs such as: SNAP, Ohio Medicaid, HEAP, or public housing benefits.
- Any household with income below 200% of the federal poverty level (example: a family of three making \$50,546 or less per year would qualify.)

How to Apply

1. **Scan the QR code** found on the other side of this page to fill out the discount application **online or call (614) 645-8276** to request a paper application.
2. We'll review your application and contact you if more information is needed.



columbus.gov/payassist





LEGAL AID
of Southeast and Central Ohio



FREE LEGAL ADVICE CLINIC*

**Do you have legal questions but
cannot afford an attorney?**

Worried about getting your security deposit back?

**Trying to get your criminal record expunged? Working on getting
custody or visitation? Considering bankruptcy?**

**HELD ON ONE THURSDAY EACH MONTH 5:30PM-7:30PM:
WE RECOMMEND ARRIVING AT 5:30PM.**

October 16

November 13

December 11

January 15

February 19

March 12

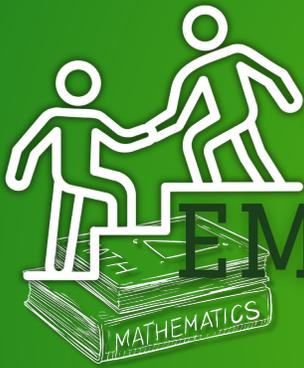
April 9

Upper Arlington Lutheran Church, 3500 Mill Run Dr. Hilliard, Ohio 43026

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY:

*To receive free advice, you must have a gross household income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Please be prepared to show proof of immigration status (if a non-citizen). Attorneys are available to answer questions only, and they will not attend court with you. If you have any upcoming court deadlines, you should contact Legal Aid Intake at 614-241-2001.

Updated September 2025



THE M.P. EMPOWERMENT ACADEMY

COMING
SOON
Stay Tuned

The M.P. Empowerment Academy is a Practical Educational Program provided by What Would Marcus Do, a 501 (c)3 offering Financial Literacy, Job Coaching, Leadership and Life Skills programming for all ages. Our practical interactive curriculum empowers individuals to develop and sharpen skills in their everyday life. Our main objective is to provide empowerment in the following areas:

- FINANCIAL LITERACY
- LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMMING
- CAREER, LEADERSHIP AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
- CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Participants will receive a Certificate of Completion for completing this program with a graduation ceremony.



Mark Payne Jr.
The M.P. Empowerment Academy
Chancellor

Deryn Coleman Sr.
The M.P. Empowerment Academy
Administrator

WWMD614.ORG





WWMD
WHAT WOULD MARCUS DO

Happy **BIRTHDAY**



MARK JR.
JAN. 25



Vicky
JAN. 28TH



Maurice
FEB. 1ST

Become a WWMD Financial Supporter



BECOME AN
Elite Supporter

Visit our website wwmd614.org

What Would Marcus Do is a non profit organization with a mission to Restore Hope and Resources to the Hilltop Community and abroad. This mission is accomplished through:

- Resource Navigation
- Community Clean Up, Pop Ups
- Holiday Drives
- The Marcus M. Payne Scholarship Fund
- The M.P. Empowerment Academy and more.

Your financial contributions assists with the continuance of this mission. All donations are tax deductible.

BECOME A SILVER SUPPORTER

Make a
\$250

One Time Donation
Status valid for 1 Calendar Year

BECOME A GOLD SUPPORTER

Make a
\$500

One Time Donation
Status valid for 1 Calendar Year

BECOME A PLATINUM SUPPORTER

Make a
\$1,000

One Time Donation
Status valid for 1 Calendar Year

BECOME A EMERALD SUPPORTER

Make a
\$1,500

One Time Donation
Status valid for 1 Calendar Year

BECOME A MONTHLY SUPPORTER

MAKE A \$32.00

*Reoccurring Donation
in honor of Marcus' 32ND Birthday
Status valid for 1 Calendar Year*

Other Monthly Donation Options include:

\$5.00 \$10.00 \$25.00
\$30.00 \$50.00 \$100.00



Make your
tax deductible contribution today online

For more contribution
options call us at
614-969-7765



*In Loving Memory of
Marcus Marquis Payne
May 25, 1994 - September 11, 2021*

