

WHAT WOULD MARCUS DO

ISSUE 3 | VOLUME 2 | MARCH 2025

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



ROOTED IN STRENGTH, RISING IN HOPE

To Spring on the Hilltop is more than just a change in the weather—it is a reminder that nothing stays buried forever. Think about the seeds beneath the sidewalk right now. They've endured the weight of the snow, the bite of the frost, and the darkness of the soil. They didn't grow by avoiding the struggle; they grew by pushing through it.

This is the Hilltop way. If you are coming out of a "winter" in your own life—if things have felt heavy, stagnant, or cold—let this season be your evidence that a turnaround is coming. You have the same resilience within you that brings the green back to our trees and the life back to our streets.

Three Ways to Bloom This Season:

- **Clear the Space:** Just as we rake away the dead leaves, take a moment to let go of a thought or habit that didn't serve you this winter. Make room for something new.
- **Seek the Light:** Spend ten minutes outside or reach out to someone who encourages you. Growth happens faster when we head toward the warmth.
- **Trust the Process:** You don't see the harvest the same day you plant the seed. Be patient with your progress.

At What Would Marcus Do, we believe that every resident of this neighborhood has a season to shine. If you need a little help finding your "sunlight," we are here to provide the resources and support to help you rise.

The ground is soft, the air is new, and the best is yet to come.

FEATURED ARTICLES

FROM OUR CEO

EVENT RECAP

A VIEW FROM THE HILLTOP

OPEN ENROLLMENT

RESOURCES



The M.P. Empowerment Academy Opening Day



About Us

What Would Marcus Do is a non profit organization with a mission to Provide Hope and Resources to the Hilltop Community and abroad. This mission is accomplished by WWMD providing various services throughout the Hilltop Community



OUR SERVICES

We support our community with year around services. Our goal is to simply meet their basic needs with a smile.

In doing so we believe we are able to be a beacon of hope to those in need.

While our focus is predominantly on the Greater Hilltop Area we service all areas of central Ohio.

Services we provide includes but are not limited to:

- Resource Navigation
- Neighborhood Pop ups
- Neighborhood Clean ups
- Laundry Services
- The Marcus M. Payne Scholarship
- Holiday Drives
- M.P. Empowerment Academy

OUR WHY...

On September 11, 2021 - As the world paid tribute to the attack on 9/11 our family suffered the major loss of our Marcus. He was robbed and gunned down in Victorian Village making him the 141st Homicide of 2021 in Central Ohio.

While we mourn his loss, we also celebrate his life, his love for family, friends, and providing support to those in need. Our goal is that this becomes an avenue to bring hope and resources to our community along with bringing a greater awareness to Gun Violence in the city of Columbus.

What Would Marcus Do
5820 Sullivant Ave. #152 Galloway, OH 43119 Phone: 614.969.7765
E: info@wwmd614.org | W: wwmd614.org



A Message from our CEO



To our Neighbors and Friends,

There is a specific kind of magic that happens on the Hilltop when spring arrives. As the grey of winter fades and the first greens begin to peek through the soil, we are reminded of the incredible power of resilience. Spring is nature's way of showing us that no matter how long or cold the season, life has a way of returning stronger and more vibrant than before. At What Would Marcus Do (WWMD), we see this same spirit in our community every single day.

This season, we aren't just watching the flowers bloom; we are actively planting seeds for a better tomorrow. Whether it's through our youth workshops, our community garden initiatives, or our direct resource advocacy, our goal is to provide the "sunlight" and "water" our neighbors need to reach their full potential.

In Marcus's memory, we are reminded that growth isn't always loud. Often, it's the quiet work—the small acts of kindness, the steady mentorship, and the showing up for one another—that yields the most beautiful results.

Spring Highlights at WWMD:

- *Community Clean-Up Days: Join us as we roll up our sleeves to refresh our local parks and streets.*
- *Expansion of Resources: We are introducing new career-readiness tools and mental health workshops this quarter.*
- *The Hilltop Block Party: Stay tuned for our upcoming celebration of the people who make this neighborhood home.*

If you've been feeling stuck or weathered by the winter months, let this season be your invitation to start fresh. Growth is rarely a straight line, but it is always possible.

Thank you for being part of our garden. Together, we are ensuring that everyone on the Hilltop has the chance to bloom.

With hope and momentum,

Serving with a SMILE,

Mark E. Payne Jr.
President & CEO



THE M.P. EMPOWERMENT ACADEMY



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**

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

We Kicked off our Spring Program March 29, 2025. We had over 62 Participants. Several activities were done centered around conflict resolution, financial literacy and life skills. We cant wait to continue our Spring Program over the next two months.

The View from the Hilltop

The Hilltop in Bloom

The winter chill begins to break, As Hilltop streets start to awake. The frost that held the ground so tight, Is yielding to the morning light.

Through cracks in concrete, green appears— The quiet end of winter's fears. For every seed that's slept so long, Now rises up, resilient, strong.

What would Marcus do today? He'd clear the brush and lead the way. He'd plant a hope in tired soil, And bless the hands that join the toil.

It's not just flowers in the park, Or birds that sing before the dark; It's neighbors opening their doors, And spirits learning how to soar.

The season turns, the air is new, There's work to start and dreams to do. On every corner, every block, We build our future on this rock.

So breathe it in—this fresh, green start, With steady hands and open heart. For on the Hill, we know it's true: When we plant hope, the world grows too.





WWMD®
WHAT WOULD MARCUS DO

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



@WWMD614



Community

RESOURCES



MAR.

RESOURCES FROM OUR HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON

Wednesdays with Wyche – March 5

Join Councilmember Christopher Wyche for open community office hours on Wednesday, March 5 from 4-7pm at the Northwest Library (2280 Hard Rd, 43235). The event is open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome. For questions or to RSVP, contact Chelsea Golterman at CLGolterman@columbus.gov or call 614-645-3091.

Monthly 'Trivia for Adults' at the Hilltop Library

Wednesday, Mar. 5 | 6-7 p.m. | Ages 18+

Join us every first Wednesday from 6-7 p.m. for an evening of trivia, fun, and prizes. Bring a team or come solo and connect with other players. This is an in person event. No registration required.

Serving People More Sustainably Panel Discussion– March 13

Highland West Civic Association is launching their 2025 Community Empowerment Series with the event “Serving People More Sustainably” on Thursday, March 13 at 7pm at the Hilltop Library. The discussion will be moderated by former Greater Hilltop Area Commissioner Malik Moore. Come to hear the perspectives of organizations addressing food insecurity, addiction, and homelessness in the Highland West community and explore how the community can come together to incorporate sustainable practices into their work.

Apply for the Columbus Advisory Commission on Disability Issues – Deadline March 14

The establishment and codification of a Columbus Advisory Commission on Disability Issues will provide a formal mechanism for the City to receive input and recommendations from individuals with disabilities and other stakeholders.

- What You'll Do As A Commissioner
 - o Advise the Mayor's office, City Council, and City departments on policies, programs, and services that affect individuals with disabilities.
 - o Advocate for the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities within the community.
 - o Promote awareness and understanding of disability issues among residents and businesses in Columbus.
 - o Recommend strategies to improve accessibility and inclusivity in public and private spaces.
- Expectations
 - o This is a voluntary position.
 - o Commissioners will be required to attend regular meetings as frequently as monthly.
 - o Commissioners will serve an initial term for one to three years and thereafter appointments shall be for three-year terms.
- Why Join?
 - o The City of Columbus desires to better understand individuals with disabilities, the disability landscape, and the needs of individuals with disabilities in order to better the quality of outcomes in service delivery and to extend the conversation about disability issues within the City.
- Who Can Apply?
 - o Members shall include individuals with disabilities, family members of individuals with disabilities, representatives from disability advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders with relevant expertise and experience.

Applications will be accepted until March 14, 2025.

Application Link: [\[bit.ly/CACDI-APPLY\]](https://bit.ly/CACDI-APPLY)bit.ly/CACDI-APPLY

LINC Academy Kindergarten Enrollment Fair - March 15

LINC Academy, located at 33 N Grubb St, is hosting an Enrollment Fair on Saturday, March 15 from 10am-12pm, for families with a child going to Kindergarten in Fall 2025. They will have resources available to ensure the child is ready by August for Kindergarten. There will be door prizes, specialized resources, school tours, a chance to meet with LINC teachers and families, and light refreshments.

They are also looking for additional vendors to participate in the Enrollment Fair. For more information, please contact Stephanie Hamburger at shamburger@lincncolumbus.org.

2025 Community Garden Grants – Deadline March 21

The City of Columbus, Franklin County/Franklin Park Conservatory and Scotts Miracle-Gro is pleased to announce the 2025 Community Garden Grant application! The Columbus Foundation assists these funding partners in administering this grant application and payment process. TCF launched a new application platform in 2024, so please read the following information carefully before you begin the application process.

- If your organization has received a grant from The Columbus Foundation in the past for any type of grant, your organization already has a profile. If you believe your organization already has a profile to apply for grants, please contact grants@columbusfoundation.org to set up your account. Be sure to include your first and last name, email address organization's name and tax ID number (EIN) in the message.
- If you know your organization's login, please enter your credentials and log in. If you forgot your password, please use the Forgot Your Password link.
- If your organization is working with a fiscal sponsor to apply for grants it is now required that the fiscal sponsor submits your applications. This means that a representative from your fiscal sponsor must register their organization first and then invite you to collaborate on appropriate applications so you can provide information about your project or program. If you have questions about this process, please email grants@columbusfoundation.org.
- If your organization is new to The Columbus Foundation, you may create your organization's profile in the link below.
- Please send all log in and technical questions to grants@columbusfoundation.org.

Community

RESOURCES



MAR.

RESOURCES FROM OUR HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON

Highland Youth Garden Spring Garden Club – Begins April 8

Sign your children up for our FREE Garden Club, a weekly afterschool club for grades K-6 students who attend school and/or live in the Hilltop area or Franklinton. Children who participate get to garden, plant seeds, harvest produce, cook food, enjoy garden-based activities, and explore the arts.

Tuesdays OR Thursdays

Dates: April 8th - May 20th

Hours: 3:30PM - 5:30PM

Garden Club teachers are happy to walk students to the Garden from Highland Elementary, the Educational Academy for Boys and Girls or the J Ashburn Center, upon request.

Learn more and register: https://www.highlandyouthgarden.org/programming?blm_aid=57800704

Highland Youth Garden Green Teens Program – Deadline April 11

Green Teens is a paid, summer work program at Highland Youth Garden for young people in the Hilltop or Franklinton areas ages 14-19. Students will gain job experience through gardening, money management, food justice, cooking and so much more, all in their neighborhood!

Youth are encouraged to apply by the April 11th deadline!

Learn more and register: https://www.highlandyouthgarden.org/programming?blm_aid=57800704

Highland Youth Garden Summer Camp – Register Now!

Join us for Summer Camp at Highland Youth Garden! Our campers will have a fun-filled week of outdoor play, learning with nature, exploring the arts and eating healthy food!

For ages 6-13, camp will run from 9:00 am - 3:30 pm, Monday-Friday. Healthy snacks and lunch will be provided. HYG Summer Camp is open to children living or going to school in the Hilltop and Franklinton areas. A fee of \$25 is required to hold your child's space but this is refundable with good attendance.

Week 1: June 16th - 20th

Week 2: June 23rd - June 27th

Week 3: July 7th - July 11th

Week 4: July 14th - July 18th

Learn more and register: https://www.highlandyouthgarden.org/programming?blm_aid=57800704

Ohio Traffic Safety Summit - May 19-20

Registration for the Ohio Traffic Safety Summit is now open. The event will take place May 19 and May 20 at The Ohio Union at OSU.

- The Summit is FREE and lunch is included.
- Topics for the Summit this year include seat belt use, distracted driving & youthful drivers, enhanced media coverage, and law enforcement.
- Keynote speakers will be Rick Birt from the Highway Safety Office and Darrin Grondel of the National Alliance to Stop Impaired Driving.
- Descriptions of the workshops are available as part of the registration process.

Registration link: - <https://trafficsafetysummit.com/#schedule>

Sports Camp Spots Still Open at Columbus Rec & Parks – Register Today!

Keep your child active, and build skills this summer with our sports camps! There are spots available in several sports-themed summer camps. Jump Start Your Game will offer your child a week of drills, skills and games in multiple sports like baseball, basketball, soccer and more; it's perfect for both beginners and intermediate athletes. In Coach Reggie's Dynamic Agility Sports Camps, your child will learn various sports and compete in tournaments on Fridays; full-and half day options offer you flexibility!

Learn more, and register now for a summer of active fun!

Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio – Register for their newsletter

Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio (LASCO) offers a vast array of programs, services and resources especially in Foreclosure Prevention. During these challenging times, many low-income families are at-risk of losing their home, equity, legacy and a prosperous life due to foreclosure. LASCO offers free non-criminal legal help in 36 Ohio counties to income eligible residents especially veterans, disabled, and the elderly, who want to save their homes and avoid becoming homeless.

Help us, help others protect their most valued asset by referring them to us for legal advice, guidance or representation. For more information, don't delay and call (1-888-246-4420) or visit (www.lasco.org/consumer) today!

Community

RESOURCES



APRIL

RESOURCES FROM OUR HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON

New Resource for Older Adults – Adultdayohio.org

AdultDayOhio.org includes information about the service – including frequently asked questions and guidance for caregivers, health care providers, and referral sources. It also features a comprehensive directory of adult day centers across the state.

Free Tax Preparation Services with Tax Time

Tax Time brings together the United Way’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program and AARP’s Tax Counseling for the Elderly program under one comprehensive initiative. This tax season, residents can access free tax preparation services both in person and virtually at multiple locations across Franklin County.

Households, earning less than \$67,000 last year are eligible for free preparation services. United Way Program and Grants Coordinator Brandi Cunningham reported that Tax Time has helped more than 2,000 in Franklin County this season.

Residents can learn more and sign up for appointments by calling 211 or visiting liveunitedcentralohio.org/tax-time

Nationwide School-Based Health Centers

Central Ohio students can get health care at Nationwide Children’s School-Based Health Centers, open to all students and their siblings. For a complete list of Health Centers and services provided, please see the attached flyer.

First Phase of VEO Launch Now Underway!

The City of Columbus and Veo have partnered to introduce a diverse fleet of shared electric scooters, bikes and pedal bikes to the community to launch the new Columbus and Central Ohio Shared Mobility Program. Once fully deployed, Veo will offer the city’s most extensive range of vehicle options to date, featuring five distinct vehicle types. The first phase of deployment will launch on March 15 with 500 vehicles, kicking off the spring season, with more to come in the following months.

Launch promotion: Riders can get \$5 in free credit with the promo code CBUS25 through April 30.

VeoPlus: VeoPlus offers monthly and weekly subscriptions for discounted rides.

Offer for former CoGo members: Veo will offer 6-month memberships to VeoPlus to all qualifying former CoGo members (a \$48 value). Riders can [learn more and sign up here](#).

Veo Access: Riders with low incomes can visit <https://www.veoride.com/veo-access/> to apply for a discounted rate.

Veo’s team will be in the community every day, swapping out e-scooter and e-bike batteries and ensuring vehicles are properly parked to keep streets and sidewalks accessible.

If you have a question, would like to suggest a location for a micromobility parking hub, or need assistance, please contact the City’s 311 Service Center at columbus.gov/311 or reach out to Veo at 855-836-2256 or hello@veoride.com.

Visit Cup of Purpose Recovery Café – Now open on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Cup of Purpose Recovery Café is a nonprofit on the West Side supporting those in recovery from homelessness, mental health challenges, addiction, etc. We offer a meal, recovery circles, and workshops to support the healing process. We are open on Tuesdays from 5:30-8:30 and Thursdays 5:00-7:30pm. We are located at 61 S Powell Ave, inside the Westgate United Methodist Church. All are welcome!

Registration for Spring Session at Community Centers Now Open

Our community centers offer various captivating classes and activities, from fun ways to exercise to inspiring arts and crafts. Registration for spring programming is now open, and the session runs from March 24 - May 24.

View your [local community center's](#) spring class schedule to see all it has to offer. Expand your horizons and ignite your passion by registering today!

Registration for School's Out Spring Opens March 25

School may be out for spring, but your [local community center](#) is there for you! [School's Out Spring](#) opens community centers for extended hours during Columbus City Schools’ spring break. Registration opens on Tuesday, March 25, at 12:30 p.m. so [make sure you sign up!](#)

South Side Job Fair – March 26

South Side Thrive, in partnership with the Reeb Center, is hosting a job fair on March 26 from 1-4pm at the Reeb Center (280 Reeb Ave, 43207). Employers participating include: Cintas, City of Columbus, Donatos, FedEx UPS, Westlake, Franklin County Board of Commissioners, Southeast Healthcare, Goodwill, Wasserstrom, Optalis Health & Rehabilitation, Nationwide Children’s, and more! Register using the QR on the attached flyer.

Franklin County Office on Aging Ambassador Program – March 26 or April 2

The Franklin County Office on Aging is excited to launch an “Ambassadors” program in 2025. As the number of older adults in our community continues to rise and their needs change, we are keenly aware that we need assistance with sharing information and making sure residents are aware of the valuable resources available through the Franklin County Office on Aging. “Ambassadors” will help us do that! Our goal is to create a unified voice that reaches a broader audience across generations. Franklin County Office on Aging “Ambassadors” will focus on spreading awareness about the services that the Franklin County Office on Aging offers and promote its mission and vision within their community.

Meet Our Team



WWMD®

WHAT WOULD MARCUS DO



Devyn A. Coleman Sr.
President & CEO

As a Certified Executive for Assisted Living, Devyn specializes in over 16 years of Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Human Resources and Event Planning. Studying Business Administration, concentrating in Healthcare Management at DeVry University in addition to his corporate experience, has given him the experiences with accounting, fundraising, general administration, and city event planning (Grove City, Pickerington, Gahanna and Columbus).

Devyn has deep passion serving in his local church as an Ordained Minister. He assists in community service initiatives offering hands-on, logistics and administrative support. He has also served as an active finance, fundraising, and donations teams member.

He is a devoted and loving husband as well as a beautiful father to their 3 children.

Devyn believes our mission in life is to honor God by loving people. In doing so, we shine a light of hope to our family, friends, and community. Everything else will always work itself out.





What Would Marcus Do | The M.P. Empowerment Academy

SPRING PROGRAM

In partnership with
THE CITY OF COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR
OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION



Program Dates:

April 4th, April 11th, May 2nd
May 9th, May 16th, May 23rd

Program Time:

5:30pm-7:00pm

Program Location:

J. Ashburn Jr. Youth Center
85 Clarendon Ave, Columbus, OH 43223

THE ACTIVITIES

- Creative Fine Arts
- Food
- Financial Literacy
- Life Skills
- Games, Prizes & More

AGES 5-18

**FREE!!!
REGISTER NOW**

wwmd614.org/mpea

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 \$30.00

*Reoccurring Donation
in honor of Marcus' 31st 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

 
@WWMD614

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



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