

WHAT WOULD MARCUS DO

ISSUE 3 | VOLUME 1 | JANUARY 2025

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



NEW YEAR, SAME HEART:

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER ON THE HILLTOP

To our Hilltop Neighbors, Partners, and Supporters. As the calendar turns to 2025, there is a unique energy in the air—a sense of renewal that always feels special here on the Hilltop. While the New Year often brings talk of "new versions" of ourselves, at What Would Marcus Do (WWMD), we are entering this year focused our commitment to you.

Looking back at the past year, we saw firsthand what happens when a community decides to look out for its own. We saw neighbors sharing resources, students finding their path through our programs, and families leaning on one another during tough times. Reflecting on Marcus's Legacy The question that drives us—What Would Marcus Do?—feels especially relevant as we start this new chapter. Marcus didn't wait for the "perfect time" to help someone; he acted with the tools he had, right where he stood.

A Message of Hope

To those of you who are starting this year with big dreams: We are rooting for you. To those of you who are just trying to take it one day at a time: We are standing with you.

The Hilltop has always been defined by its resilience. No matter what 2025 throws our way, we know that by sticking together and asking the right questions, we can overcome any obstacle. Thank you for being the heart of this organization. Let's make this year our most impactful one yet.

Happy New Year

FEATURED ARTICLES

FROM OUR CEO

EVENT RECAP

A VIEW FROM THE HILLTOP

OPEN ENROLLMENT

RESOURCES



WWMD Serving on Sullivant Ave.



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



New Year, New Me? Let's Try "New Year, Same Me—Just Growing"

The phrase "New Year, New Me" is everywhere right now. It's on our social media feeds, in gym advertisements, and likely echoing in our own heads as we look at the calendar. It's a catchy slogan, but at What Would Marcus Do (WWMD), we've been thinking a lot about what that actually means for our community on the Hilltop. The idea of a "New Me" implies that the "Old Me" wasn't good enough. But when we look at our neighbors, we don't see people who need to be erased and replaced. We see people who are already resilient, hardworking, and deeply valued.

The Power of the "Fresh Start"

Psychologists often talk about the "Fresh Start Effect." This is the idea that landmarks like New Year's Day allow us to distance ourselves from past mistakes or "imperfections" and focus on our aspirations. That feeling of a clean slate is powerful, and we should use it! But instead of an overnight overhaul, what if we focused on evolution?

Ditching the "All or Nothing" Trap

The reason most New Year's resolutions fail by February is that they are too big. We tell ourselves we'll never eat sugar again, or we'll save \$5,000 in a month. When life happens—as it always does on the Hilltop—and we hit a snag, we feel like we've failed the "New Me" and we give up.

What Would Marcus Do? Marcus didn't wait for perfection. He showed up as he was and did what he could. This year, we invite you to try a different approach: The 1% Rule.

- Don't reinvent the wheel: Instead of a "New You," how about a "Better-Supported You"?
- Small wins matter: If your goal is to get healthier, start with a 10-minute walk around the block.
- Ask for help: Growth doesn't happen in a vacuum. Whether you need help with a resume, a meal, or just a listening ear, WWMD is here to be part of your support system.

You don't need to be a completely different person this year. You just need the space and the resources to become the best version of the person you already are. Let's keep climbing, Hilltop!

Serving with a SMILE,



Mark E. Payne Jr.
President & CEO

2024 EVENT RECAP



The year of 2024 has been centered around growing our relationships with community partners and resource research to better serve the Hilltop Community. WWMD participated in multiple events below and made new friends along with working with our current friends in the community and City Officials.



The View from the Hilltop

A New Year's Promise

The View from the Hilltop: A New Year's Promise

The sun climbs up the Hilltop, Painting gold across the street, A brand-new year is waking up, With possibilities to meet.

We don't need a brand-new version, Or a person we don't know, Just the strength to keep on moving, And the grace to help us grow.

When the climb feels steep and heavy, And the wind begins to blow, Remember Marcus walked these paths, With seeds of hope to sow.

He'd say, "Don't fear the shadows, Or the stumbles on the way, Just reach a hand to someone else, And start again today."

So here's to every neighbor, To the dreams you're holding tight, To the quiet, steady courage, That carries through the night.

The Hilltop stands together, In the frost and in the sun, Because the best of who we are, Has only just begun.





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



JAN.

RESOURCES FROM OUR HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON

Columbus Gas Heating Assistance Resource Guide

Please see the attached information sheet for energy assistance resources.

Southeast RREACT Calendar

See the attached outreach calendar for January for Southeast RREACT.

Winter Warrior Watch

Wondering if your street has been plowed or what priority category your street is? [Visit Columbus Warrior Watch](#), and don't forget if you're out and about, don't crowd the plow! Don't tailgate and try not to pass, if you must pass, be cautious! Follow Columbus Department of Public Service on social media for more updates and tips as their team is hard at work!

Want Free Bus Rides? COTA Offering 31 Free Rides by Going Digital

For a limited time only, the [Central Ohio Transit Authority \(COTA\)](#) is offering 31 FREE bus rides to customers who trade in their key card and switch to one of their digital fare options.

To get the free rides, individuals will need to follow these three easy steps:

1. Bring your key card to the COTA Customer Experience Center located at 33 N. High Street.
2. Choose your digital option: Switch to the COTA Transit app on your smartphone or get a COTA smartcard for easy fare payments. (NOTE: You will need an email and password to sign up.)
3. Enjoy your free rides: Once you're set up, enjoy 31 free rides on COTA's fixed-route services.

Why should you go digital? Digital fare payments ensure you're never charged more than \$2.25 per day or \$31 per month. You can also manage your account and reload your fare on your phone or Smartcard account. Lastly, you'll no longer have to carry cash or worry about keeping track of passes.

Have questions or want to learn more? Contact COTA's Customer Care at (614) 228-1776 or visit cota.com/keycard.

Rec & Parks Winter Programming Registration Now Open

The weather outside may be frightful, but you can move the fun indoors at your local community center! Winter session programming runs from Jan. 13 - March 15 and registration opens on Tuesday, Jan. 7. [Don't forget to sign up.](#)

[View your local community center's schedule to find the right activity for you.](#)

Franklin County Board of Revision (BOR) Mobile Filing Events – January 11

The Franklin County BOR is holding in-person filing events to answer questions regarding property values and assist homeowners in filing a complaint if they believe their value is incorrect. They will be at the Hilltop Library on Saturday, January 11 from 9:30am-12:00pm. See the attached flyer for the full list of dates, times, and locations.

Get Active Wellness Expo – January 11

Columbus Recreation and Parks Department is hosting a free family fitness event at Schiller Community Center (1069 Jaeger St., Columbus, Ohio 43206) from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. on January 11, 2025 aimed to educate the community to experience and enjoy fitness on every level.

Columbus Recreation and Parks' mission is to connect the people of our community through the power of nature, wellness and creativity. Come to the Get Active Wellness Expo and learn more about the Get Active Fitness Centers, fitness classes, wellness programming offered through Columbus Recreation and Parks, and the health benefits of becoming active, staying active, and being fit in everyday life. You'll even get to sample some classes and participate to win prizes!

Blood Drive @ The Church of Scientology - January 18

Blood donors make a difference! The Church of Scientology is hosting a blood drive on Saturday, January 18 from 9am-2pm in their Chapel, located at 1266 Dublin Rd, 43215. To schedule an appointment, visit RedCross.org, sponsor code: COS. You'll be automatically entered for a chance to win an exciting trip for you and a guest to Super Bowl LIX in New Orleans! Includes travel, hotel, \$1,000 gift card, pre-game activities, and more! Terms apply, visit RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl.

Community

RESOURCES



JAN.

RESOURCES FROM OUR HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON

Martin Luther King Jr. Day March & Program – January 20

We are excited to invite you to the City of Columbus Annual Martin Luther King Jr. March and Program as we come together to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Theme: “Honoring the Legacy, Uniting the Future”

Keynote Speaker: Lead Pastor Mike Young of City of Grace

Event Details: January 20, 2025

- March Kickoff: 3:30 PM
- Program Start: 5:00 PM

Location: Historical Lincoln Theatre

This inspiring event will honor Dr. King’s enduring impact and highlight the importance of unity as we look toward the future.

We hope you’ll join us as we reflect, celebrate, and commit to building a brighter tomorrow.

Mark your calendar and spread the word!

We look forward to seeing you there! [Click here to RSVP!](#)

MLK Day Breakfast at WAV - January 20

When: Monday, January 20th, 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Where: We Amplify Voices Studio, 1327 Sullivant Ave

Who: All ages

What: Join Us for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast: “Dream Casting Through Creative Expression.” This free community breakfast invites you to connect with neighbors, share dreams, and explore visions for the future through creative activities inspired by Dr. King’s legacy.

Community Connects with the Franklin County Auditor’s Office – January 23

In 2025, the Franklin County Auditor’s Office will be kicking off a series of monthly events called Community Connects where you can interact with experts from different departments to learn more about what your Auditor’s office can do for you. The first event will be held January 23, from 5:30pm – 7pm at the CML Hilltop Branch, 511 S. Hague.

Sanctuary Night Community Discussion – January 28

You and your neighbors are invited to share your honest thoughts, ask your hard questions, and learn about what’s going on at Sanctuary Night on Tuesday, January 28 from 5:30-7:30pm at St. John’s Episcopal Church. The event is co-hosted by Sanctuary Night and St. John’s Episcopal, and co-facilitated by Trent Smith and Becca Brown. Dinner will be provided by Sanctuary Night Staff – come at 5:30pm to enjoy a taco bar! The meeting will start promptly at 6:00pm. [Register here!](#)

Everybody’s a Comedian with Travis Hoewischer – Begins January 30

When: Thursdays 5:30-7:00 PM, Jan. 30th-Apr. 17th

Where: We Amplify Voices Studio, 1327 Sullivant Ave

Who: Adults, Teens, and Seniors

What: Find your voice through humor in this “choose your own adventure” approach to comedy. Step out of your comfort zone through stand-up, joke writing, sketch, and satirical writing in this workshop!

[RSVP HERE:](#)

[Add a little bit of body text](#)

Community CREATurEs with Charlotte McGraw and AJ Vanderelli – Begins January 31

When: January 31st, the last Friday of the month, 3:00-5:00 PM

Where: We Amplify Voices Studio, 1327 Sullivant Ave

Who: All ages

What: Our Community CREATurEs collage workshop is back in 2025! Craft and connect with us featuring a new theme each month. January’s theme is “Vision,” an invitation to reflect on your aspirations, goals, and dreams for the year ahead.

[RSVP HERE](#)

[Add a little bit of body text](#)

Dog Licensing Season – Deadline January 31

Between now and January 31, you can purchase your dog license online or in-person at the Franklin County Auditor’s Office. For more information, visit [Add a little bit of body text](#). See the attached flyer for more information.

Community

RESOURCES



FEB.

RESOURCES FROM OUR HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON

Djembe Drumming with Khadyjah Harper-Alleyne – Begins February 4

When: Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00 PM, Feb 4-March 25

Where: We Amplify Voices Studio, 1327 Sullivant Ave

Who: All ages

What: The word “Djembe” derives from the phrase “Anke djé, anke bé,” in Bambara, which means “Everyone gather together.” Sign-up to experience the profound connection between rhythm, gathering, and healing.

RSVP HERE

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RSVP HERE

Add a little bit of body text

Building Safer Communities: A Forum with Central Ohio Police Chiefs – February 25

On Tuesday, February 25th, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, State Representative Humphrey, in collaboration with Columbus Police Chief Elaine Bryant and Whitehall Police Chief Mike Crispin, will host a Public Safety Discussion at the Barnett Community Center (1184 Barnett Rd, 43227). This event will bring together community members, law enforcement officials, and local leaders to discuss strategies for making our neighborhoods safer. Food will be provided, and this is a valuable opportunity for attendees to voice their concerns, ask questions, and learn about public safety initiatives.

Register here: [Columbus Gas Heating Assistance Resource Guide](#)

Please see the attached information sheet for energy assistance resources.

Westhaven Apartments Seeking Winter Coat Donations

Westhaven Apartments, a family-oriented housing community on the west side of Columbus, is calling for donations to support residents as winter approaches. Many of the families we serve are experiencing financial hardship and are in need of winter coats for adults and children.

Donations of new or gently used coats in all sizes are greatly appreciated. To contribute, please contact us at WesthavenTSM@upholdings.net. Your generosity will make a direct impact in helping families stay warm this winter.

My Project USA Winter Meal Drive – Donate or Volunteer!

MY Project USA is partnering with Community Shelter Board to offer warm shelter and meals to our homeless neighbors from December 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025. We'll be hosting 40 adult guests 24/7 for 105 days, and we need your support to ensure they receive nutritious, warm dinners each evening.

With limited funding, we can provide two meals a day, but additional help is needed for a third meal. We are accepting cooked meal donations, monetary contributions for in-house meal prep, and volunteers to help distribute meals.

Join us in making a difference this winter!

Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/MYPwarmingcentersignup>

Enroll in Free Credit Monitoring Services Today! – DEADLINE EXTENDED!

Taking action to protect the community from the recent cyber-attack on the city's IT infrastructure, the City of Columbus announced it will offer free Experian credit monitoring to all residents and impacted individuals. All Columbus residents and non-residents whose personal information was shared with the city or municipal court will be able to sign up for two years of free Experian monitoring, which includes \$1 million of protection against fraud and identity theft. To sign up, individuals can go to www.columbus.gov/cyber or call 1-833-918-5161 with the code B129833 by March 31st, 2025. Service begins upon enrollment.

2024-2025 City of Columbus Winter Warming Centers

The Community Shelter Board has released their list of Winter Warming Centers for 2024-2025, which will be operating from December 1, 2024-March 31, 2025. The west side locations include:

- My Project USA
- Jordan's Crossing
- Hilltop Library
- Dodge Community Center
- Glenwood Community Center
- Holton Community Center
- Sullivant Gardens Community Center
- Westgate Community Center

Hours of operation can be found on the attached full list. Note that interested individuals must call the Homeless Hotline at 614-274-7000 for access. The hotline will direct them to locations that have beds available. The selling point of the warming centers outside of a safe warm place with less restrictions than traditional shelter are the population is smaller 30 to 40 beds/cots, etc. couples stay together and are not separated, and two locations have space to board a limited number of pets.

Hilltop YMCA - Find Your Y! Membership Drive

You can count on us to build strong communities where all people reach their full potential. Membership at the YMCA gives you all the tools, resources, and support you need to become your best self while positively impacting the community. YMCA members and program participants experience a feeling of belonging that can't be found anywhere else! Join online by scanning the QR code on the attached flyer or visit the Hilltop YMCA to enroll in person.

AEP's Ohio Savings Tips:

As the colder weather looks to be here to stay this season, attached are fall/winter savings tips from AEP. Additionally, the AEP Ohio Neighbor to Neighbor program is open as of November 1 until March 28, 2025. This program provides eligible customers with a utility assistance grant applied directly to their bill. Here is a link for more details - [Neighbor to Neighbor](#)

Meet Our Team



Mark E. Payne Jr.
President & CEO

Mark Payne Jr. is a Senior Entrepreneurial Executive with extensive experience in strategic business development, sales, operations management, and team leadership. He possesses leverage expertise in optimizing pre-attentive efficiency, increasing productivity, and exceeding target sales goals.

His “lead by example” management style with intuitive sales and market strategies maximizes efforts and boosts profits and productivity. His steadfast approach to keeping current on industry standards and market factors, successfully translates our Mission to meet the needs of our community.

As a graduate of The Ohio State University, majoring in Consumer Family Financial Services, his desire to help people started long before his college career. As a grade school scholar, he has participated in many different mentorship programs and public speaking engagements on the importance of education and finance. These engagements spanned from various schools, non for profits and numerous corporations.

A longtime member of the J. Ashburn Jr. Youth Center, Mark was the first ever to receive the Lawrence Funderburke Award along with many other community service awards. His over 14 years of experience in the corporate, non-profit and educational area has granted him the tools needed to be an effective leader and manifest the true mission and vision of WWMD.





What Would Marcus Do

OPEN HOUSE & SPRING PROGRAM LAUNCH



"What Would Marcus Do" is a movement. It's not just a program or an initiative—it's a call to action born from the lived experience of a young man who saw the cracks in his community and chose to fill them with hope, resilience, and opportunity. Marcus is the embodiment of what Hilltop youth can achieve with the right support. His journey from struggling to find financial literacy and career development resources to becoming a college student and community leader is a beacon of hope for others. His story shows that investing in youth pays dividends—not just for individuals but for entire neighborhoods. Come out to learn about all things WWMD and Celebrate our Spring Program Launch.

March 29, 2025

4:30pm – 5:30pm

Columbus Metropolitan Library: Hilltop Branch
511 S Hague Ave, Columbus, OH 43204

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

Must Register at wwmd614.org/events

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*