

THE COLLINS FOUNDATION 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

WISDOM IN THEIR WORDS

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# WISDOM IN THEIR WORDS

*One extraordinary person can make a remarkable difference in the world. This year we honor eight exceptional leaders as they transition from their roles at the helms of Oregon nonprofit organizations.*

*Each of these people leaves a lasting legacy, not only in terms of dollars raised and spent, facilities constructed, or even the people served. Each has left a positive, indelible imprint on our communities.*

*These leaders are inspiring, energetic, thoughtful, and creative. Each has spent more than two decades building an organization, sometimes from just an idea. In this report, we've asked them to share their perspectives on the past and the future, and to discuss some of the elements of their accomplishments. They talk about leadership and collaboration; strategies and vision.*

*The wisdom in their words is enlightening.*

# LEADERSHIP

“Be sensitive to how you do the work. How you do the work, at least in Lane County and this community, really matters. What you do is important – what your goals and aspirations are. But how you do it needs to be with decency, with integrity, with transparency, and with fairness. I think that matters very much. It allows you to draw good people to the work.”

**PRISCILLA GOULD**, UNITED WAY OF LANE COUNTY

*“Remember you’re not the most important person in the room. When you’ve got an issue to grapple with, you want the right people in the room. Everybody has a piece of the truth. Everybody sees the issue in a different way. One of the philosophies we have in the theater is the best idea in the room wins. I work to draw the best idea out and make sure we’re examining all of the options. I make almost no decisions in isolation any more. For any decision of significance I’m involving many, many more people than I used to.”*

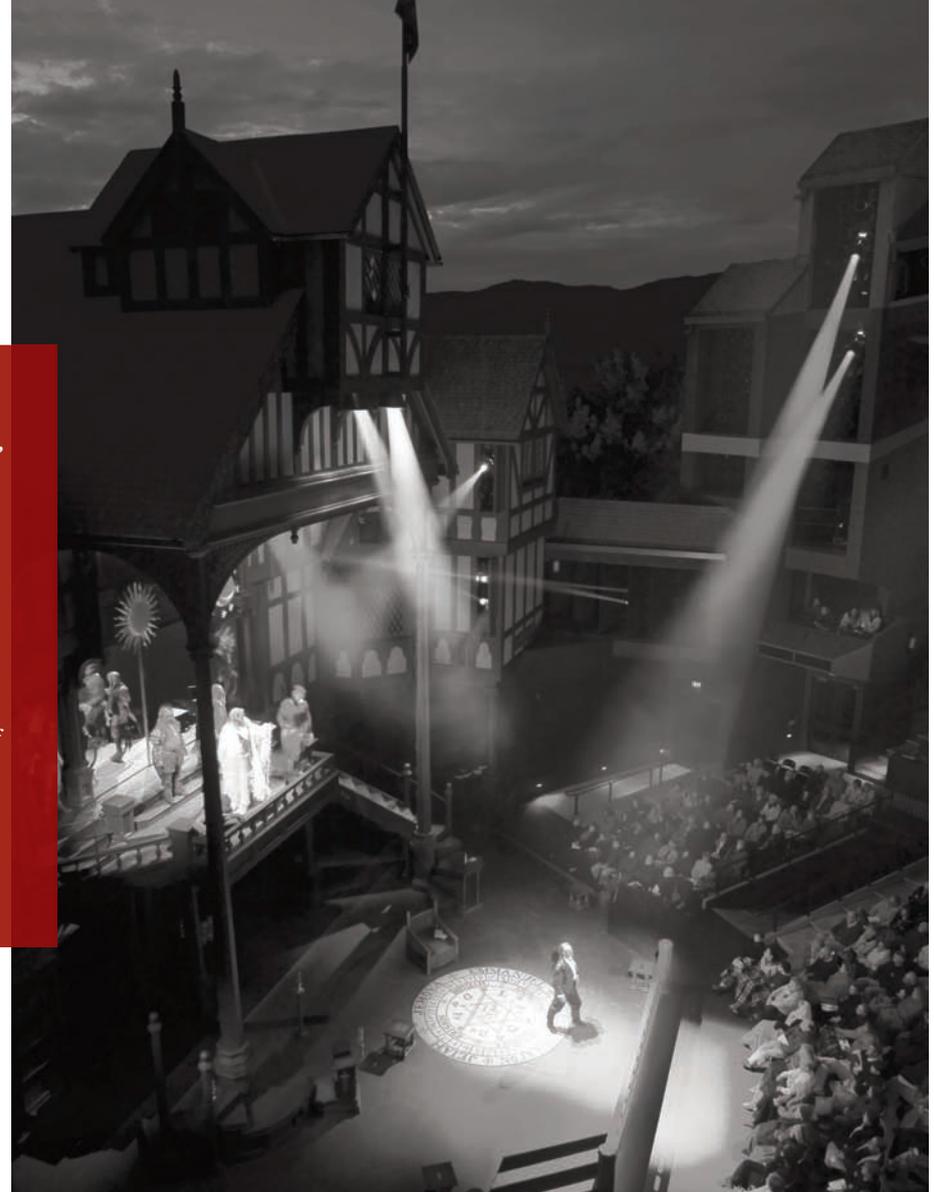
**PAUL NICHOLSON**, OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

*“What’s essential is being able to represent the organization to the community in a way people can understand how important this work is. Always remember where you need to go to learn what you need to learn. For us, it’s the parents – always staying in tune with the people we’re here for, listening to their stories. There’s so much richness in working with families.”*

**MINALEE SAKS**, BIRTH TO THREE

*“There’s a lot of pressure on executives to be fundraisers. That can be pretty intimidating. But it’s really about engaging people in the mission. If you keep that in mind, it’s fun. There’s joy in finding the connections when you have so many stakeholders, like we do.”*

**RACHEL BRISTOL**, OREGON FOOD BANK



A SUMMER NIGHT ON THE ELIZABETHAN STAGE IN ASHLAND

“All of the performing arts are a team effort — they’re built on that. A good leader needs to be able to articulate a solid vision, be able to connect the organization to the mission, but also be able to adapt to new artistic challenges and new opportunities. A leader needs to be able to inspire the organization, the staff, the board, and the artists to challenge themselves to do their very best work.”

**ALLEN NAUSE**, ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

“Looking at Portland, one of the unique qualities of nonprofits here is the spirit of collaboration. When I started out, it was more of a competitive environment. You were trying to get the contract or get the grant or only highlight your own agency. But now there really is this spirit of cooperation. You look at how to best serve the community. What does each organization bring to the table and how do we get the results? I think that’s very commendable. It best serves the public by utilizing the strengths of the nonprofits.”

**DENNIS KEENAN**, CATHOLIC CHARITIES

“A quote that keeps me going is one from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: ‘Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.’ My role is to be an advocate and entrepreneur, setting an example while supporting and cultivating others to be leaders. It’s my job to say, ‘We need to go there,’ even if it means taking risks and stretching our capacity. Staff and others must know that if they take risks, you are there to support them.”

**SHARON MILLER**, NEIGHBORIMPACT

“We have two kinds of customers: first, our clients and participants in our programs. And because our programs serve low-income people who can’t pay, those programs are paid for by others: foundations, governments, and donors. They’re our customers, too. So we have these two big groups of customers that don’t have the same goals. It makes our work especially complex and challenging. You have to be sort of multilingual and flexible and deal with stakeholders with different goals, cultures, styles, and needs.”

**KRISTA LARSON**, METROPOLITAN FAMILY SERVICE

“I do believe theater can change people’s lives. It can change the way people see the world and the way they see themselves.”



**PAUL NICHOLSON**  
33 years

Retiring end of 2012

**OREGON  
SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL  
ASHLAND**

Founded in 1935, the Tony Award–winning Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) is among the oldest and largest professional nonprofit theaters in the nation. Each year OSF presents an eight-and-a-half-month season of eleven plays in three theaters plus numerous ancillary activities, and undertakes an extensive theater education program.

Budget 1980: **\$2.6 MILLION**  
Budget 2011: **\$29.1 MILLION**

Audience members 1980: **240,000**  
Audience members 2011: **410,000**

“Retire sounds like you’re quitting everything. I’m using ‘graduate.’ It just means I’m leaving here and going out to do something else.”



**KRISTA LARSON**  
19 years

Graduating June 2012

**METROPOLITAN  
FAMILY SERVICE  
PORTLAND**

Metropolitan Family Service (MFS) is dedicated to building stronger communities by providing an array of prevention-based services and programs. MFS invests in individuals and families that struggle with the many barriers associated with cultural and economic disparities, including inadequate education, health issues, isolation, unemployment, and poverty.

Budget 1996: **\$ 1.6 MILLION**  
Budget 2011: **\$ 7.4 MILLION**

People served 1998: **9,000**  
People served 2011: **37,000**

# ADVICE

*“Be bold. Ask good questions. And even more — listen. Speak out about what you believe in and find the point of agreement. It’s hard to argue whether or not we should do something about hunger, but we may have many different ideas about what to do about it. Look for places where there are points of agreement. Use that to build support and identify new opportunities and new ways of thinking about the issue that you may not have come to on your own.”*

**RACHEL BRISTOL**, OREGON FOOD BANK



KAISER PERMANENTE VOLUNTEERS ON MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY OF SERVICE IN PORTLAND

*“It’s important to find complementarity. It’s important to have other leaders within the organization who have a skill set that’s different than your own. You’re looking for people who will challenge you on occasion. Don’t be afraid of that.”*

**DENNIS KEENAN**, CATHOLIC CHARITIES

*“Develop your listening skills. Delegate, but make the tough decisions when you have to. It’s a tough balance. People want to follow a strong leader. They want a leader with vision, a leader they can believe in. But they want and need to be heard. One person can’t have all the answers. My job is to find the answers wherever I can.”*

**ALLEN NAUSE**, ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

*“My advice to new leaders? Read a lot. Read in your field. Read in your funders’ fields. Read in your donors’ fields. Read in related fields. For example, read the *Wall Street Journal*. Read things that might not look like they have anything to do with your field. Read what the people who are important to you are reading.”*

**KRISTA LARSON**,  
METROPOLITAN FAMILY SERVICE

*“Relationships are everything: relationships with parents, funders, relationships with staff, relationships with your board. The things that get done are through relationships. Funders and foundations need to feel the possibilities of what their dollars can do.”*

**MINALEE SAKS**, BIRTH TO THREE

PACIFIC CONTINENTAL BANK EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATE IN A DAY OF CARING EVENT IN EUGENE



*“Clarity of mission, vision, and values: You have to begin there if you’re going to be a good leader. The vision needs to be rooted in the aspirations of the community, especially if you’re doing the kind of work United Way is doing — or any nonprofit organization. The vision needs to be rooted in the very sincere dreams and hopes of the people you’re serving.”*

**PRISCILLA GOULD**, UNITED WAY OF LANE COUNTY

*“We’ve done a great deal of strategic planning over the years. That has very much shaped the way the organization is today. If you look at the facilities we have, the work on stage, the audience, the diversity, the financial health, the facilities — they’re not the result of coincidence. They’re the result of making decisions about what we want to accomplish, deciding how we are going to go about accomplishing it, and then doing it.”*

**PAUL NICHOLSON**, OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

*“Measure success by results. Set the bar high, but do it in steps. Don’t kill yourself and everyone around you. Give others room to do it their way. Be the change agent, but be conscious of the pressures on others. Leading, at times, is like being a parent: knowing when you need to nurture and when to let go and trust.”*

**SHARON MILLER**, NEIGHBORIMPACT

*“I love this community. I love the people in it, the idiosyncrasies of it, the quirks and the beautiful aspects of it.”*



**PRISCILLA GOULD**  
30 years  
Retired February 2012

**UNITED WAY OF LANE COUNTY  
SPRINGFIELD**

United Way has been working to improve lives in Lane County for more than 60 years. Its 10-year goals set around education, income, and health are based on comprehensive strategies developed by hundreds of community partners, along with United Way, aimed at creating long-lasting change.

Budget 1990: ~ **\$1.6 MILLION**  
Budget 2011: ~ **\$5.5 MILLION**

*“While I am very proud of the OFB Network model, I didn’t want to build one of the largest food distribution networks in the country. I want to end hunger.”*



**RACHEL BRISTOL**  
29 years  
Retiring end of June 2012

**OREGON FOOD BANK  
PORTLAND**

Oregon Food Bank (OFB) is a nonprofit charitable organization that works to help low-income families eliminate hunger and its root causes throughout Oregon and Clark County, Washington. The OFB Network of 20 regional food banks and 900-plus partner agencies helps nearly one in five households in Oregon fend off hunger through distributing food from a variety of sources, education programs, and outreach.

Budget 1983: ~ **\$150,000**  
Budget 2011: **\$57.9 MILLION**

Pounds of food distributed 1983:  
~ **2 MILLION**  
Pounds of food distributed 2011:  
**45 MILLION**

# PERSPECTIVE



PARENTS AND SON IN A BIRTH TO THREE INCREDIBLE INFANTS® GROUP IN EUGENE

*“Parents everywhere love their children, want to do the best they can, and welcome support and information. I wouldn’t have known that what we created in Eugene, Oregon, would help children living in the inner city of East Orange, New Jersey, or in Bucharest, Romania. The concepts that we’ve identified are universal. Even if we don’t know a culture very well, parents want to know what we have to tell them. They figure out how to make it work for them.”*

**MINALEE SAKS**, BIRTH TO THREE

*“We take the role of diversity and inclusion very, very seriously. For example, we offer more employment to actors of color than any other theater in the United States. That’s pretty amazing. Here we are, in a small town in Southern Oregon, and we can absolutely claim that. We are really pushing the diversity issue in terms of employment and audience — and in terms of the art we produce.”*

**PAUL NICHOLSON**,  
OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

*“When I was growing up, my family was relatively poor, so I know how important it is to help people see that they have the capacity to do more than their current life circumstances. It’s a sense of empathy and compassion for people who are disadvantaged.”*

**DENNIS KEENAN**, CATHOLIC CHARITIES

*“You need a passion for the mission and then a vision of what’s possible to achieve, constantly looking for leaders within the organization and bringing on the right staff that can help move the organization forward with fresh ideas. In our work, it’s really a sense of community. It’s a community mission and it’s a community solution that’s required.”*

**RACHEL BRISTOL**, OREGON FOOD BANK



*“Part of our vision is to connect with our community. The world has shrunk. We need to think of our community in a broad way — we’ve done international tours, we’ve invited international artists to work with us, and we’ve created relationships with arts organizations in other countries. We’re part of a world community.”*

**ALLEN NAUSE**, ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

2011 PRODUCTION OF *SUPERIOR DONUTS* IN PORTLAND

*“We’re seeing many more funding models that are giant collaborations, systemic collaborations where people don’t just partner on a grant but meet regularly for years, forming very tight partnerships. It’s a mixture of different organizations, not just providers: school systems, governments, and businesses. Many diverse kinds of organizations are coming together to work on funding and collaboration for service at a larger level.”*

**KRISTA LARSON**, METROPOLITAN FAMILY SERVICE

*“Today, everyone is juggling multiple roles, working longer hours. The requirements for compliance and accountability have grown exponentially. Head Start, one of my favorite programs, has over 3,500 performance standards! Remember: Lift up your head from the day-to-day requirements and focus on the outcomes and results. Remember your mission.”*

**SHARON MILLER**, NEIGHBORIMPACT

*“It’s the quality of people I get to work with, whether they’re donors, volunteers, agency leaders, board members, or partners. The quality of people continually inspires, challenges, and delights me and keeps me coming back.”*

**PRICILLA GOULD**, UNITED WAY OF LANE COUNTY

*“Every play, every day, every season, every budget presents its own challenges.”*



**ALLEN NAUSE**  
24 years

Retiring end of 2013

**ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE PORTLAND**

Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theater in Portland. Artists Rep takes on challenging and provoking, premiere plays true to its mission of striving to challenge artists and audiences with plays of depth and vibrancy, and exploring the strengths, frailties, and diversity of the human condition.

Budget 1988: **\$100,000**

Budget 2011: **\$2.2 MILLION**

Subscribers 1988: **UNDER 200**

Subscribers 2011: **4,000**



**MINALEE SAKS**  
34 years

Retiring July 2013

**BIRTH TO THREE EUGENE**

Minalee Saks co-founded Birth To Three and has developed it into a nationally recognized parenting program providing local services and support for parents internationally. Birth To Three has served nearly 90,000 Lane County parents and has become an integral part of the prevention services network for at-risk families across Oregon. Its mission: Every child will be raised by nurturing, skilled parents.

Budget 1978: **\$27,000**

Budget 2011: **\$1.3 MILLION**

Families served 1978: **45**

Families served 2011: **1,500**

# CHANGE

“When the economy suffers our families suffer: hunger, homelessness, family violence, substance abuse — all the community ills go up as the economy suffers. The erosion in support for human services at a time when the demand is skyrocketing is really an important issue. I look at the organizations we work with. They’ve been running on fumes for a couple of years, and I don’t see it changing. I see a significant shift in how our communities deliver human services and what we can deliver. As a nation and as a community we have to keep paying attention.”

**PRISCILLA GOULD,**  
UNITED WAY OF LANE COUNTY

“If ever there were an opportunity to change federal policy to ensure that people’s basic needs are met — including food, which is essential to our kids’ ability to learn and to an adult’s ability to work and be productive — that time is now. We have 50 million people on food stamps or eating out of emergency food boxes. That’s just not right. My hope is that Oregon Food Bank will continue to be bold in its policy work, recognizing that not everyone agrees with everything we support, because the social and economic costs of hunger are tremendous and require national policy solutions.”

**RACHEL BRISTOL,** OREGON FOOD BANK



CLARK FAMILY CENTER IN PORTLAND

“One of the beauties of working with the private sector is that it provides a greater opportunity for innovation. You can look at a new approach to something, an unmet community need. It might be something that’s off the radar screen, something that’s not as politically popular. You can design an approach and test it. Society changes quickly. The social environment is changing all the time. It’s important to try new strategies. The private sector allows you the flexibility to do that.”

**DENNIS KEENAN,** CATHOLIC CHARITIES

“In the ’70s, when we founded Birth to Three, there were government dollars for social services and for creating innovative programs. We don’t see that any more. Instead we’re seeing the erosion of existing programs. Until the last 12 or 13 years, Birth To Three was mostly government funded, but now government funding for our parenting groups is essentially zero percent of our budget. Government funding for this kind of prevention has really fallen away.”

**MINALEE SAKS, BIRTH TO THREE**



VOLUNTEER LEADERS LAUNCH THE CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND FOOD BANK FACILITIES IN REDMOND

“Back in the ’70s and ’80s, people would go into theater knowing that they were never going to make any money, but knowing that it was an important value in society to have theater. We were idealists. We thought we could change the world through theater. People who go into arts training now see it more as a career or a job, not as an ideal. I’m not saying that’s a bad thing, but it’s a thing. It changes the way they work and how the work can get done.”

**PAUL NICHOLSON,**  
OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

*“When I started we had one IBM Selectric typewriter with autocorrect. When we ‘cut and pasted’ reports, we used scissors. In terms of how people find us, how we communicate, and the wealth of information that’s available — the Internet has revolutionized our work. Today, services must be based on best practices and research-based outcomes. But with all of the technology and communication tools, funders have come to think that if you can report on it, you will. So there’s more bureaucracy.”*

**SHARON MILLER, NEIGHBORIMPACT**

*“My work is my avocation. Since the day I was hired, it has allowed me to fulfill my beliefs about social justice and equal opportunity.”*



**SHARON MILLER**  
**26 years**  
Retiring fall 2012

**NEIGHBORIMPACT**  
**REDMOND**

Founded in 1985, NeighborImpact is dedicated to empowering individuals and families to succeed and become engaged citizens in the community. It is broadly recognized as Central Oregon’s primary provider of emergency and hunger relief services, transitional housing, Head Start, housing counseling, and home energy conservation programs.

Budget 1986: **\$433,937**  
Budget 2011: **\$16.1 MILLION**

People served 1986: **2,459**  
People served 2011: **60,000**

*“I’m a life-long Catholic and believe in the social mission of the church, bringing compassion and dignity to everyone.”*



**DENNIS KEENAN**  
**22 years**

Retired December 2011

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES**  
**PORTLAND**

Since 1933, Catholic Charities has been bringing hope, resources, and advocacy to the poorest and most vulnerable throughout Oregon, regardless of faith, race, marital status, or condition in life. The organization serves as the professional social service arm of the Archdiocese of Portland, yet is funded completely through grants and donations.

Budget 1989: **\$100,000**  
Budget 2011: **\$12 MILLION**

People served 1989: **~ 1,000**  
People served 2011: **39,000**

# TRENDS



IN PORTLAND, EXPERIENCE CORPS MENTORS WORK WITH STUDENTS TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION

*“The future will bring major swings in funding and social policy. Folks need to be very savvy in positioning their organizations for new opportunities, assessing the relevance of current services, and facing the possibilities of letting go of or merging their organizations.”*

**SHARON MILLER**, NEIGHBOR|IMPACT

*“We hear a lot about wealthy baby boomers and people who are well off who have the opportunity to make donations or work as volunteers or go back and work as staff at nonprofits. But there’s going to be a large, increasing population of older adults that don’t have resources, as well.”*

**KRISTA LARSON**, METROPOLITAN FAMILY SERVICE

*“We’re now into the second generation of kids who have not had any education in the arts, whether it be theater or music or the visual arts, sculpture or painting. Because of the elimination of arts education in the schools, they lack the cultural literacy or vocabulary for the arts. That’s something we’ve had to deal with. It’s had a huge impact on our ability to reach out to younger audiences.”*

**PAUL NICHOLSON**,  
OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

*“Audiences want more flexibility. They live in a mobile society and make decisions last minute, checking smart phones to see what’s playing and bargain hunting. They have so many options. We have to be able to adapt quickly and get information to them.”*

**ALLEN NAUSE**, ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE



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