

**While living through the challenges of two world wars and the Great Depression, Lilly Endowment founders, J.K. Lilly Sr. and his sons, Eli and J.K. Jr., dedicated themselves and their company to helping meet the immediate needs of their employees, community and country while they continued to plan and build for the future. During the past extraordinarily challenging year, the Endowment attempted to follow their example by working to help meet various urgent needs in our city, state and country arising from the COVID-19 pandemic while continuing to help build brighter futures for individuals, families, organizations and communities through our ongoing grantmaking in community development, education and religion, the areas of focus established by our founders when they created the Endowment in 1937.**



**The Endowment's COVID-19-related grantmaking in 2020, which totaled nearly \$208 million, supported the inspirational efforts of hundreds of organizations that worked diligently to help meet urgent needs in Indianapolis, throughout Indiana and across the nation. This grantmaking also included funding for several organizations to make pandemic-related adjustments needed to continue to operate their important programs safely. Stories about several of these efforts are featured in the accompanying COVID-19 supplement to this annual report.**

As the pandemic unfolded, its disproportionately negative impact on African Americans in our community and around the country became increasingly clear. Moreover, various other tragic events further revealed and dramatically demonstrated how the quality of life for African Americans has been diminished by longstanding racial inequities, which have limited their access to educational and economic opportunities that others often take for granted. The Endowment felt compelled to add in a substantial way to our ongoing support of efforts to improve the quality of life and promote the future prosperity of African Americans in Indianapolis. Through our conversations with African American leaders, we concluded that the best approach was to develop a strategy whereby the Endowment would provide funding to African American-led organizations so they could deploy resources in accordance with priorities they established after receiving input from a broad cross section of the African American community.

Because of our decades-long relationship and history of support with the National Urban League and the Indianapolis Urban League, the Endowment approved in July a \$100 million grant to the National Urban League for the Indianapolis African American Quality of Life Initiative. For this initiative, the National Urban League is collaborating with the Indianapolis Urban League and the African American Coalition of Indianapolis. A story about this grant and the initiative's progress is featured in this report.

Although we believe progress will be made through the Indianapolis African American Quality of Life Initiative, we acknowledge that much more will need to be done for many years to come to address these longstanding inequities and inequities that negatively affect other communities of color. To that end, we have indicated that our support for this initiative is additive to the Endowment's continuing support of other efforts with similar aims.

**This annual report also highlights other grants** the Endowment approved in 2020 that support promising endeavors to build brighter, more prosperous futures for young children and college students in Indiana and that enhance the future vitality of the community of Indianapolis and communities throughout the state, as well as congregations and seminaries around the country.

More specifically, stories in the report feature the efforts of **Early Learning Indiana** to improve the quality and accessibility of early learning opportunities throughout Indiana and the innovative work of the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership’s Ascend Indiana initiative to strengthen the state’s workforce by helping prepare and connect Indiana college students with attractive jobs and careers with Indiana employers. For both organizations, there is a special focus on increasing the diversity of those benefiting from these programs.

The report also includes a story about **Project Amplify**, an effort led by the Indy Chamber to depict in authentic ways what it’s like to live and work in the Indianapolis region. Through a search-optimized website, Project Amplify provides information about the community’s neighborhoods, workplaces, amenities, schools and overall quality of life. There also is a story on Phase VII of the Endowment’s 30-year **Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT)** initiative for Indiana community foundations that highlights the large-scale efforts two community foundations are leading to address high-priority needs and opportunities in St. Joseph and Dubois counties.

Regarding the Endowment’s religion grantmaking at the national level, the report features a story on its **Thriving Congregations Initiative**, through which the Endowment has approved more than \$117 million in grants to 115 organizations that are working with hundreds of congregations to help them think deeply about their missions and what they should do to further those missions and enhance their vitality in the context of significant cultural and demographic changes. There also is a story on Endowment grants to the **Forum for Theological Exploration** and to fund Princeton University’s Hispanic Theological Initiative to provide support for African American and Hispanic theologians as they pursue their doctorates so that in the future there will be more African American and Hispanic faculty in the nation’s seminaries and theological schools.

In reflecting on 2020, it would have been easy to be overwhelmed by the challenges it presented for individuals, communities, our state and country and the world at large. My colleagues and I, however, are blessed by the privilege we have to learn about and help support the multitude of

individuals and organizations of good will—like those featured in this report—that passionately and thoughtfully mobilize to help others in need and foster a more just and equitable future for all. They engender in us much hope for the future.

IN CLOSING, it is important to note a couple of staff transitions. After 14 years of service to the Endowment as a program director in education, **Clarence Crain** retired at the end of August 2020. He played a key role in the development and oversight of grants to all of Indiana’s 38 colleges and universities, and he also administered many of the Endowment’s grants to community organizations that serve African American youth, including Center for Leadership Development, Indiana Black Expo, Indianapolis Urban League and Fathers and Families. At the national level, he represented the Endowment with respect to major grants to support the Smithsonian Institution’s Museum of African American History and Culture, National Urban League and UNCF. Although we will miss him on a daily basis as a staff colleague, we are most pleased that in March 2021, he joined the Endowment’s board of directors.

It is with deep sadness that I also note the death in June 2020 of **Dr. John Wimmer**, one of the Endowment’s program directors in religion. The founding director of the Indianapolis Center for Congregations, John began his tenure at the Endowment in 2002. A United Methodist pastor for 40 years, John helped shepherd the Endowment’s efforts to support the thriving of pastors throughout the country. An accomplished author, theologian and public speaker, he is deeply missed by his colleagues and friends at the Endowment and throughout the country.



N. Clay Robbins  
Chairman, President & Chief Executive Officer