

MANHATTAN INSTITUTE PRESENTS

2020



— TOCQUEVILLE PROJECT —

CIVIL SOCIETY
AWARDS

OCTOBER 29, 2020

5:00PM EDT

EVENTCAST

Letter From The Director

This is a profoundly difficult year for America. Our communities are still struggling with the pandemic, and life looks different with masks, lockdowns, and remote learning. But in other ways, we have been reminded of our nation's essential character. We should not be surprised at the outpouring of "mutual aid"—the help that neighbors provide one another and the spontaneous organization of groups that provide assistance through volunteers. Such are the signs of a vital civil society, which we celebrate with Manhattan Institute's Civil Society Awards.

The roots of mutual aid run deep in America, as Alexis de Tocqueville observed when he traveled here almost 200 years ago. It's something we do not only during a crisis but also to avert crisis. Our institutions of civil society should not be taken for granted. Other societies lack and even prohibit them. But in the United States, we celebrate their transformative work.

The 2020 awards recognize nonprofit organizations working in New York, Los Angeles, rural New Mexico, a Texas border city, and small-town

Ohio. Some have responded heroically to provide for high-risk neighbors during the pandemic. Others have adjusted their programs to address additional needs, while continuing to serve immigrants, foster children, an isolated village, and those living with a life-threatening disease. All have taken it upon themselves to serve, sewing the fabric of our communities in the process.

It is that very spirit of community—an exceptional American attribute—that we celebrate with these awards. Our individual freedoms, federalist system, and local leaders help us address the limits of government, while creating bonds of friendship and mutual aid. These civic institutions—neither government nor business—are a lifeline for a healthy society. It is our honor to recognize a few worthy causes. I hope that you join us in supporting them.

- HOWARD HUSOCK

DIRECTOR, TOCQUEVILLE PROJECT
& CIVIL SOCIETY AWARDS
MANHATTAN INSTITUTE

2020 Awardees

THE MANHATTAN INSTITUTE IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE OUR
\$25,000 CIVIL SOCIETY AWARD WINNERS

SHEL NEYMARK

EMBUDO VALLEY LIBRARY & COMMUNITY CENTER
DIXON, NEW MEXICO

RUTH ELLEN JACOBSON

TOCANDO MUSIC PROJECT
EL PASO, TEXAS

LIAM ELKIND, SIMONE POLICANO & HEALY CHAIT

INVISIBLE HANDS
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

CAROLE KLINGLER

LIFE: A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY FOUNDATION
LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO

DARRYL “DMC” MCDANIELS & SHEILA JAFFE

THE FELIX ORGANIZATION
GREATER NEW YORK CITY AND LOS ANGELES AREAS



AWARDEES



SHEL NEYMARK
EMBUDO VALLEY LIBRARY
& COMMUNITY CENTER
DIXON, NEW MEXICO

 /EMBUDOVALLEYLIBRARY

Shel Neymark is one of the founders and board members of the Embudo Valley Library & Community Center, a nonprofit public library and the local hub for educational, cultural, and recreational resources in rural New Mexico's Rio Arriba and Taos counties. With the help of more than 60 volunteers, the library offers a multitude of community events and critical services—including the only free, public computers and internet connection available in the area—to more than 900 local residents and 8,500 people in the broader region. The library also provides robust children's programming, including an early literacy program, after-school enrichment and tutoring for K-6th grade students, and a STEM program that offers students 3D printing and robotics classes. Participants in the youth STEM program have shown significant gains in technology-related skills and confidence, which highlight how opportunities for local school children have increased due to library programming and assistance from its staff.



THE EMBUDO VALLEY LIBRARY & COMMUNITY CENTER offers much more than a library; it provides critical services to New Mexico's rural Rio Arriba and Taos counties. With the help of more than 60 volunteers, the library has transformed a remote village into a hub for educational, cultural, and economic resources.

From increasing opportunities for area school children to sponsoring the town's only grocery store, the library is a vehicle for bringing people together, building community, and addressing a variety of local needs.





THE TOCANDO MUSIC PROJECT provides immersive music education, academic support, and cultural formation to children growing up in challenging conditions along the U.S.-Mexico border. With the help of volunteer music instructors and mentors, national partnerships, and dozens of community volunteers, Tocando's programs are provided at no cost to the students, offering them opportunities they would not have otherwise. Tocando's mission is not primarily to "make musicians" but to help students gain the confidence and motivation needed to expand their horizons and succeed in life.



AWARDEES



**RUTH ELLEN
JACOBSON**

TOCANDO MUSIC PROJECT

EL PASO, TEXAS

f /TOCANDOMUSICPROJECT



Ruth Ellen Jacobson is the executive director of the El Paso Symphony Orchestra and founder of its Tocando Music Project, which empowers children growing up in challenging social and economic conditions in and near El Paso, Texas, to transform their lives through music. Inspired by Venezuela’s “El Sistema,” an international youth orchestra movement, Tocando’s immersive music education provides its students, many of them children of first- and second-generation immigrants, with a strong sense of community and an opportunity to gain the tools, confidence, and motivation to succeed in life. With the help of strong community and philanthropic support, Tocando has touched the lives of nearly 300 students, helping them build valuable life skills—such as teamwork, leadership, and discipline—that pave the way for future academic and career achievements.

AWARDEES



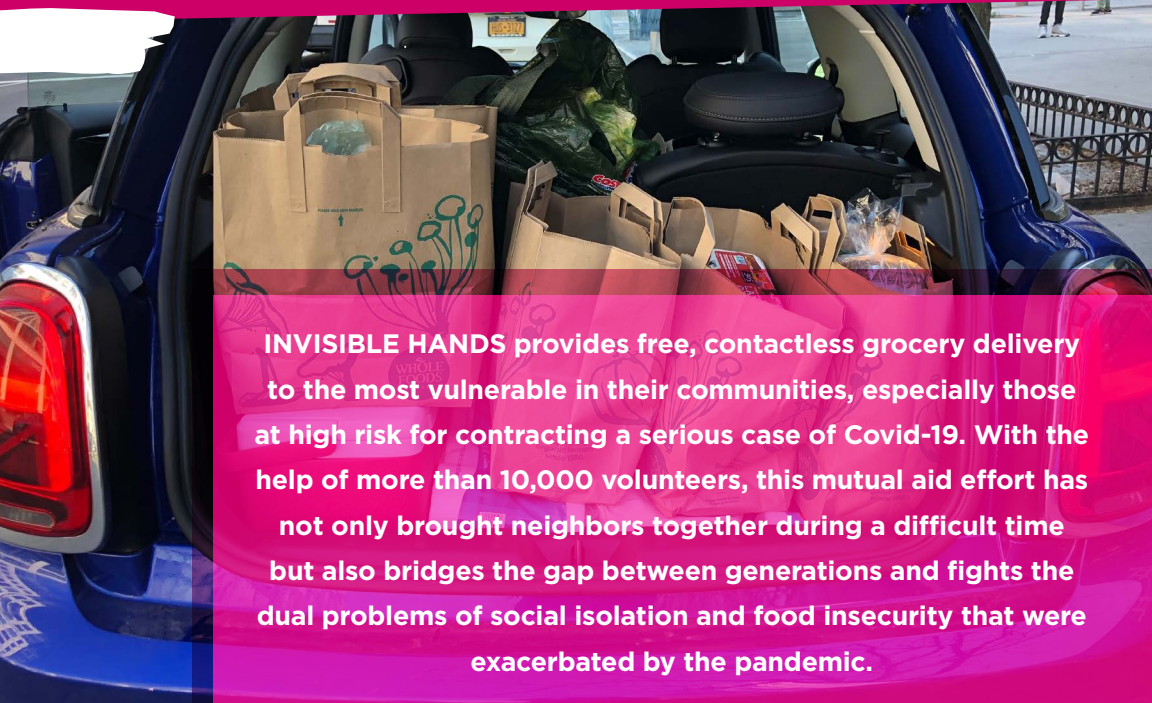
LIAM ELKIND, SIMONE POLICANO & HEALY CHAIT

INVISIBLE HANDS

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

f /INVISIBLEHANDSDELIVER

Liam Elkind, Simone Policano, and Healy Chait are the three founders of Invisible Hands, a New York City-based nonprofit founded in March 2020 while the city was struggling to combat the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic. With the help of thousands of healthy neighborhood volunteers, Invisible Hands provides free, contactless delivery of food, medicine, and other necessities to their communities' most vulnerable, especially those at high risk for contracting a serious case of Covid-19. Their efforts have bridged the gap between generations, brought neighbors together during a challenging time, and fought the dual problems of food insecurity and social isolation that were exacerbated by the pandemic. In just five months, Invisible Hands amassed more than 10,000 volunteers, who have delivered more than \$1 million in groceries to those in need. Recently, the group expanded to cities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.



INVISIBLE HANDS provides free, contactless grocery delivery to the most vulnerable in their communities, especially those at high risk for contracting a serious case of Covid-19. With the help of more than 10,000 volunteers, this mutual aid effort has not only brought neighbors together during a difficult time but also bridges the gap between generations and fights the dual problems of social isolation and food insecurity that were exacerbated by the pandemic.





LIFE: A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY FOUNDATION is a faith-based nonprofit that provides resources, education, and community engagement for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers. Through weekly programming and a robust support network, LIFE breaks down social isolation, builds community, and improves the overall quality of life for families who have been touched by dementia.



AWARDEES



CAROLE KLINGLER
LIFE: A DEMENTIA
FRIENDLY FOUNDATION

LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO



Carole Klingler is the CEO and cofounder of LIFE: A Dementia Friendly Foundation, a faith-based nonprofit that provides life-changing resources—education, training, and engaging activities—to individuals living with dementia and their caregivers. Located in Lorain County, outside of Cleveland, Ohio, LIFE offers weekly programming in a safe, stable, and familiar environment at no cost to participants and a network of support for their family members. With the help of dozens of volunteers, local businesses, health-care professionals, and strong community support, LIFE has served more than 150 participants and caregivers since 2016 with love and dignity, helping them care for one another and improving their overall quality of life.

AWARDEES



DARRYL “DMC” MCDANIELS & SHEILA JAFFE

THE FELIX ORGANIZATION

**GREATER NEW YORK CITY
AND LOS ANGELES AREAS**

f /FELIXORGANIZATION

Rock ‘n’ Roll Hall of Famer Darryl “DMC” McDaniels of Run-DMC and Emmy Award-winning casting director Sheila Jaffe, both of whom were adoptees themselves, founded The Felix Organization to provide inspiring opportunities and life-changing experiences for children growing up in the foster-care system. Since 2006, the organization has served more than 10,000 foster children through five summer camps in the Los Angeles and New York areas, while also providing year-round programming, including cultural and sporting events. With the help of more than 100 volunteers, community partnerships, and generous philanthropic support, The Felix Organization empowers youth to realize their full potential, grow in self-confidence, build healthy relationships, and make positive decisions for their futures.



THE FELIX ORGANIZATION empowers children in foster care by providing life-changing experiences through five summer camps, year-round programming and support, cultural activities, and more. With more than 100 volunteers, their programs have helped thousands of young people realize their full potential and grow in self-confidence—providing stability and care for those whose lives are marked by trauma and uncertainty.



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



ROBERT D. PUTNAM
PROFESSOR AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY AND
COAUTHOR OF *THE UPSWING*

Robert D. Putnam is the Malkin Research Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University, having retired from active teaching in May 2018. Raised in a small town in Ohio, he was educated at Swarthmore, Oxford, and Yale. He has received 16 honorary degrees from eight countries, including the University of Oxford. In recent years, Putnam has been awarded the Skytte Prize, the world's highest accolade for a political scientist, the National Humanities Medal, and the Karl Deutsch Award from the International Political Science Association.

Putnam has written 15 books, which have been translated into 20 languages, including *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Italy* and *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, both bestsellers and among the most cited social science works in the last half century. His latest book, *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again*, is a study of broad 20th-century American economic, social, political, and cultural trends and was published in October 2020.



SHAYLYN ROMNEY GARRETT

COAUTHOR OF *THE UPSWING*

Shaylyn Romney Garrett is a writer and award-winning social entrepreneur. She is coauthor of *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again* and a founding contributor to *Weave: The Social Fabric Project*, an Aspen Institute initiative. She also contributed to Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell's *American Grace*. In 2011, she was honored with the prestigious Draper Richards Kaplan Social Entrepreneurship Fellowship and was a finalist in the global Echoing Green Competition. Garrett holds a degree in government from Harvard University and is a returned Peace Corps volunteer.

Interviewed By Howard Husock

Howard Husock is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and a *City Journal* contributing editor. He also directs the Institute's Tocqueville Project, which includes its Civil Society Awards and Civil Society Fellows programs. He is the author of the 2019 book *Who Killed Civil Society? The Rise of Big Government and Decline of Bourgeois Norms*.



Husock served as the Institute's vice president for research and publications from 2006 to 2020. He has written extensively on philanthropy and civil society, including in his book *Philanthropy Under Fire*.



Civil Society Fellows Program

Manhattan Institute's Civil Society Fellows Program calls attention to how civil society can address and prevent social challenges and bring people together to work toward a common purpose. Our fellows are real-life examples of how civil society helps people change the course of their lives, strengthens communities, and keeps our social fabric from fraying. Not only do their stories help the public better understand what civil society is, but their accomplishments illustrate why nonprofits are better positioned than government to do this work. By sharing our fellows' success stories, we hope to inspire other Americans to get involved in their own communities and convince them that civil society organizations are critical to the foundation of American life and character—and to the future of our democracy.



BRANDON CHROSTOWSKI

A classically trained chef and sommelier, Brandon Chrostowski is on a mission to change the face of reentry in the United States as the founder, president, and CEO of EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute in Cleveland, Ohio. Founded in 2007, EDWINS is a nonprofit that provides formerly incarcerated individuals a pathway to success through an elite culinary education and leadership training.

EDWINS's programs graduate nearly 100 students each year, resulting in an astounding 95% employment rate and a mere 1% recidivism rate after graduation.



MEGAN ROSE

Based in Naples, FL, Megan Rose is the CEO of Better Together, an organization that strengthens families and communities by promoting work, protecting children, and supporting families in crisis, with the help of hundreds of volunteers and church communities. Founded in 2015, Better Together provides a voluntary and preventive alternative to foster care through its Better Families program, serving more than 2,500 children and keeping 98% of them out of the system. Additionally, the organization's Better Jobs program has helped nearly 28,000 job seekers through church-based job fairs across 20 states.



ELOISE SAMUELS

A former telecommunications business executive, Eloise Samuels is the cofounder and president of the New Jersey Orators, Inc., an all-volunteer, nonprofit youth organization founded in 1985. New Jersey Orators teaches the art of public speaking and an appreciation for literature, reading, and media arts literacy to children, particularly African-Americans, from 7 to 18 years of age, while also providing training in civic engagement, college readiness, and life skills to prepare them for success in college and beyond. With the help of 200 volunteers supporting 22 chapters in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, New Jersey Orators has been able to serve more than 5,500 young people.

THANK YOU

The Manhattan Institute is honored to be able to recognize this year's winners, and we thank those who help make the Tocqueville Project and its Civil Society Awards possible, especially The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation. We are also grateful for the generosity of the John Templeton Foundation, the Ohnell Family Foundation, and the many years of support from the William E. Simon Foundation. Thank you for your deep commitment to reviving and sustaining American civil society.

" PRIVATE PHILANTHROPY AND THE ORGANIZATIONS IT SUPPORTS ARE PART OF THE LIFEBLOOD OF AMERICA— AIDING AND UPLIFTING THOSE IN NEED, IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING PROBLEMS THAT OTHERS, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT, HAVE NOT YET EVEN RECOGNIZED. "

- HOWARD HUSOCK

The Selection Committee

The Manhattan Institute thanks the members of our Civil Society Awards Selection Committee for their guidance and assistance:

**Annie Dwyer · Howard Husock · Cheryl Keller · Leslie Lenkowsky · Alicia Manning
Vanessa Mendoza · Adam Meyerson · James Piereson · Reihan Salam**

Tocqueville Project

“ AMERICANS OF ALL AGES, ALL CONDITIONS AND ALL DISPOSITIONS, CONSTANTLY FORM ASSOCIATIONS... RELIGIOUS, MORAL, SERIOUS, FUTILE, ENORMOUS OR DIMINUTIVE. ”

- ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE

For nearly 20 years, Manhattan Institute has sought to advance America's long tradition of civil society by supporting nonprofit leaders who address and prevent some of our nation's most pressing public problems.

The project is named after 19th-century French writer Alexis de Tocqueville, whose book *Democracy in America* identified a strong civil society as critical to a flourishing democracy. It features two programs—the Civil Society Awards and the Civil Society Fellows Program—that recognize local leaders around the country whose work strengthens our communities and keeps our social fabric from fraying.

With the help of philanthropy and volunteers—rather than government support—civil society organizations empower the poor and disadvantaged, build caring relationships to support those in crisis, prepare the next generation to realize their full potential, restore and revitalize struggling neighborhoods, and much more.

To learn more about the Civil Society Awards or the 2020 winners, please contact: civilsociety@manhattan-institute.org.

FUND THE CAUSE



Our work to recognize and promote civil society organizations is made possible by the generosity of our supporters. Want to join us in this effort? Please consider making a donation at: www.manhattan-institute.org/donate.



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