

# The Raymond John Wean Foundation

## Youngstown Community Revitalization

**Launched:** 2009

**Public Partners:** City of Youngstown, Ohio



The Raymond John Wean Foundation was established in 1949 as a family foundation and launched a transformational journey toward becoming a community asset in the early 2000s. The Foundation engaged PolicyLink, a national research institute, to undertake a strategic review process in 2006. The resulting recommendations provided the blueprint for the Foundation's evolution into a place-based grantmaker with a focus on serving economically disadvantaged communities in Trumbull and Mahoning Counties, Ohio.

Once composed primarily of family members, the Foundation's board evolved into one consisting almost entirely of community members, with the Foundation's efforts carried out by a staff of five. With assets as of 2012 at approximately \$72 million, this private foundation awarded \$2.6 million in 2012 in five issue priorities: early childhood development, educational opportunity, economic opportunity, community revitalization, and public and civic leadership.



IMAGE 3: Support from the Foundation and the City of Youngstown has enabled YNDC to strategically acquire and rehabilitate vacant homes in the city to produce new, affordable homeownership opportunities and stabilize neighborhoods.



IMAGE 2: Neighborhood residents standing front of a community-painted mural in Youngstown sponsored by The Raymond John Wean Foundation's Neighborhood SUCCESS and Leadership program with technical support from YNDC.

The Foundation has designed, launched and provided ongoing funding to several efforts to spur grassroots revitalization, including its Neighborhood

SUCCESS and Leadership, a grant program through which residents review and approve requests that support local neighborhood projects, and the Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative, a comprehensive community organizing initiative. In 2009, the Foundation formed a critical public-private partnership with the City of Youngstown to establish the city's first neighborhood-focused community development corporation, the Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC), to achieve major progress toward stabilizing transitional neighborhoods and to implement the City's comprehensive plan.

### **The Raymond John Wean**

**Foundation:** The foundation's vision is to provide a combination of financial, technical and training support across a limited number of high-priority issues with a focus on achieving resident engagement, organizational excellence and networks for collective impact.

[www.rjweanfdn.org](http://www.rjweanfdn.org)