

Ford, Cutright honored by North Central Workforce Alliance of Ohio

By JESSICA SPEWEIKE / Staff Writer, Posted Sep 26, 2018 at 5:09 PM, Updated Sep 26, 2018 at 9:58 PM



Ashland Mayor Matt Miller (left), Stephen Rowen, James Cutright, Lucille Ford, Troy Snyder and Erv Howard pose together after Ford and Cutright receive their public service awards from the North Central Workforce Alliance of Ohio on Wednesday. - [Jessica Speweike, Times-Gazette.com](#)

Lucille Ford and James Cutright were presented public service awards for their work with the Ashland County Community Foundation by a Cleveland Foundation official Wednesday during the North Central Workforce Alliance of Ohio summit at Ashland University's Convocation Center.

Ashland Mayor Matt Miller said one of the highlights of the annual NCWA workforce summit has been presenting a public service award to a local organization "for making a difference not just in this area, but around the region."

"Today we have two individuals that we want to recognize," Miller said. "Two individuals who represent an organization that continues to transform our county, our city and our regional community with their generosity."

Stephen Rowen was invited onstage to introduce himself and the Cleveland Foundation, where he has been assistant director of development and program officer for economic development. He has been the senior pastor at Bethany Baptist Church in Cleveland since 1999 and earned his doctorate in ministry at Ashland Theological Seminary.

"One of our themes is to advance the quality of life and enhance the quality of life ... and you in Ashland have been doing a great job," Rowen said. "And that's why it was such a pleasure for me to be asked to come here today."

Rowen said the Community Foundation has made a "tremendous difference" in the Ashland community and advised it not to "grow weary in well-doing."

Miller presented the first public service award to Ford, the founder of the Community Foundation. Ford described the award as a “tremendous honor” as she learned early on what it meant to work hard.

“Work is a privilege,” she said. “We do not live by bread alone, but my friends, we do not live without bread, and it is the workforce of this country that makes us who we are.”

“We all know that once you lay a magnificent, strong, enduring foundation, then someone else comes along and they begin to build on that foundation,” said Miller.

Cutright was also presented with his public service award as he took the podium to offer his thanks. In 2012, he served on the board of the Community Foundation before becoming the executive director.

He joked that he was a “reluctant award recipient” and did not “crave this sort of public attention.”

“I know so much of the work that we do at the Community Foundation is a collective effort,” Cutright said. “Much of our success comes from the nearly 7,000 donors who have made individual gifts ... we’re grateful for the 45 men and women who have served on the board at the foundation.”

He closed his comments by thanking his fellow staff members Kristin Aspin, Mindy Howman, Brittaney Reep and Lanie Hartge for their dedication.