

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ILENE SHAPIRO**  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



**AKRON  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**  
ENRICHING LIVES SINCE 1955

**Contact:** Greta Johnson  
Assistant Chief of Staff  
Office of County Executive Shapiro  
[ExecutivePress@summitoh.net](mailto:ExecutivePress@summitoh.net)  
330-643-2656

Tracy Burt  
VP, Marketing and Communications  
Akron Community Foundation  
[TBurt@AkronCF.org](mailto:TBurt@AkronCF.org)  
330-436-5619

## **County Executive and ACF establishing Summit Health and Safety Innovation Fund**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—With County Council’s support secured, County Executive Ilene Shapiro is establishing the Summit Health and Safety Innovation Fund, a separate, tax exempt, charitable organization of Akron Community Foundation, known as a Supporting Organization. The Fund will benefit the long-term health and safety of Summit County residents, and it will receive an initial contribution of \$45 million of the County’s opioid litigation settlement funds.

In establishing the Fund, Executive Shapiro intends it to support innovative approaches designed to improve health and safety outcomes, while also acting as a convener to attract other funding and partners for successful projects. She also expects it to have the flexibility to respond to new and emerging health and safety concerns by providing seed funding for new and creative programming for prevention and treatment.

The Fund will be permanently endowed and invested according to policy which may mirror Akron Community Foundation’s investment policy. The community foundation’s investment policy focuses on minimizing risk and maximizing grant distributions while promoting long-term growth.

“When we filed our lawsuits in 2017, we never expected to receive a single penny. We did it to send a message to the opioid manufacturers and distributors who wreaked havoc in our community and so many others. We were fortunate to be chosen as the bellwether, and our hard work in making our case resulted in a significant financial settlement. We have since been diligent in funding needed programming and grassroots organizations. This supporting organization ensures these funds are available, in perpetuity, to respond to whatever future health and safety crisis presents itself in our community,” said County Executive Shapiro. “I am confident the Summit Health and Safety Innovation Fund will support the community for generations to come. I am exceptionally grateful to Akron Community Foundation and its President & CEO John Petures for being incredible partners since day one. Together, we will help safeguard our community for decades to come with this endeavor.”

While the Fund will exist at ACF, it will operate as its own Ohio nonprofit corporation and will have its own Board of Directors charged with management of the organization, grantmaking and more. The Board of Directors will have 13 members, with seven appointed by ACF and six appointed by the

County. Members of the board will bring fiduciary expertise and be subject matter experts in the areas of substance use, mental health and public safety. The Board will have a minimum of four committees: Investment, Grantmaking, Audit and Finance, and Operations.

“As our community has changed and evolved over time, so too have the needs of its residents,” said John T. Petures Jr., president & CEO of Akron Community Foundation. “We’re so pleased that Summit County and County Executive Ilene Shapiro had the vision to establish this historic supporting organization, which will preserve and grow the value of this investment for the community today, and for generations to come.”

The process to formally establish the Fund is expected to take several more months. In the meantime, Executive Shapiro and the Opiate Abatement Advisory Council (OAAC) will use the remaining settlement dollars to evaluate and recommend funding for programs that address directives of the abatement plan, including physician training, harm reduction and more. Learn more about the OAAC at <https://summitoaac.org/>.

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