

**Ronn Richard Closing Remarks**  
**Fall Conference for Community Foundations**  
**Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2014**

Thank you, Dick Ober. You served so diligently on the conference Advisory Group, which is characteristic of such a supportive colleague.

Thanks to you as well, David Brooks. I feel the pressure of the actor who has to follow an inspired performance – but, even so, I wouldn't have missed this opportunity to see the future through your eyes.

Two days ago, the Ohio delegation got this conference started with a rousing welcome. Since then, what a rewarding experience it has been for us to host this gathering!

Did you enjoy the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame? Did you have a chance to explore our art museum? Did you have fun discovering our city on your own last night?

Everywhere I've gone these past few days, you've told me what a great time you've had in Cleveland. I've been overwhelmed by your gracious comments. All of us at the Cleveland Foundation have been so pleased and proud to share and showcase our community for you.

As you return to take up your regular responsibilities again, I hope you will carry fond memories of Cleveland and Ohio in your hearts. I hope, too, that you feel you made some new friends and gained knowledge you can apply in tackling the issues we will all face in the second century of community philanthropy.

Let's reflect for just a moment on what we've heard during this time together:

- From Ambassador Jim Joseph, an eloquent appeal to remember the centrality of community in the civic narrative
- From Vikki Spruill, a warning about policymakers who question the value of endowed philanthropy itself
- From Alberto Ibarguen, a reminder that people live safer, healthier lives when they're well informed

- And from Gabriel Kasper, a provocative question: Are the systems that help us thrive today the ones we will need to meet community challenges in the future?

To me, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of community philanthropy offers us an irresistible opportunity to relaunch and reboot. If not now, when? A centennial is only as good as the future it prepares us for.

Of course, these gatherings always get me fired up to do more because they make me realize there is so much more we should be doing. But, in the midst of the many weighty concerns we face, let's remember to kick up our heels.

Even as the Cleveland Foundation and our field wrap up this joint centennial celebration, six other great U.S. community foundations are anticipating their own 100-year commemorations next year. Please rise and accept our congratulations if you represent:

- The Boston Foundation
- The California Community Foundation
- The Chicago Community Trust
- The Greater Milwaukee Foundation
- The Minneapolis Foundation
- And the Greater St. Louis Foundation

May you enjoy your own special year as much as we in Cleveland have savored ours.

Many more centennial celebrations will follow in the years to come. We can all rejoice in the continuing growth of our resilient field. Such is the power of a simple idea. We are the trustees of an honorable legacy, and we must never lose sight of it.

As we adjourn this meeting, we can look forward to reconnecting just six months from now, when the council's 2015 annual conference convenes in San Francisco. I will defer to Vikki on the details of this gathering, but I hope you've been so energized by these past few days that you're already making plans to attend.

In closing, thank you so much for coming to Cleveland and doing your part to make this event rise to centennial-level heights. Please travel home safely.