



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LICKING COUNTY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP
Mike Schmidt will assume the role of President in October**

NEWARK, Ohio (September 6, 2023) – The Governing Committee of the Licking County Foundation (LCF) announces the appointment of Mike Schmidt as the organization’s next President. Schmidt will begin serving in the role on October 2, 2023 with transition support from Connie Hawk who will retire on December 31, 2023 before shifting to a consulting role to oversee the final phase of the Louis Sullivan Building of Newark restoration and adaptive reuse project.

A proven and dedicated philanthropy professional with over 27 years of experience, Schmidt comes to the Foundation from Cramer & Associates, a regional nonprofit consulting firm serving a variety of nonprofit sectors and institutions. As an Executive Vice President & Partner, he was responsible for driving nonprofit campaigns, crafting unique volunteer structures, facilitating custom strategic planning processes, creating strategic plans, and developing educational presentations.

Following deliberate succession planning, the robust four-month executive search process was conducted by an internal Search Committee guided by Business Volunteers Unlimited, a nonprofit consulting firm that specializes in coaching nonprofits through leadership transition. Comprised of six Licking County Foundation Governing Committee members and a community member, the search committee focused on finding a talented, experienced leader who recognizes the importance of philanthropy and the role it plays in enhancing the vitality and opportunity in Licking County. The full Governing Committee unanimously appointed Schmidt to the President’s role.

“Our Search Committee and the Governing Committee had a difficult job to do in finding a successor to Connie Hawk,” noted LCF Governing Committee Chair Molly Ingold. “Thanks to the dedication of our Search Committee and skilled facilitation from the Business Volunteers Unlimited team, we led a dynamic and competitive search that resulted in the selection of our next leader who brings everything we were hoping for including love of our community, a passion for philanthropy, and vision for helping LCF continue to improve lives as our community changes.”

Regarding his appointment, Schmidt noted, “All of my encounters with the Licking County Foundation have inspired me. It’s such an honor to be selected to serve an organization so deeply respected in our community – and at a time of such tremendous forward motion for Licking County.”

Licking County Foundation Secretary/Treasurer Joan Franks, who heads human resources at Matesich Distributing, chaired the Foundation’s Search Committee. “Our competitive process was highly structured and intentional. We received both local and outside interest, which speaks highly of the Foundation,” Franks said. “We were incredibly fortunate to have such a strong pool of candidates who met or exceeded our expectations. And our Board truly stepped up and remained fully engaged during the final, very intensive period of selection. We could not be more thrilled with the result, as Mike brings not only the technical skills but the passion, excitement, and enthusiasm for leading our organization into the future.”

Schmidt has considerable experience with advancing the area’s nonprofit and philanthropic community. He has helped a wide variety of organizations and their donors achieve positive outcomes, including the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium, Habitat for Humanity MidOhio, Licking County Humane Society, Licking County Family YMCA, Licking County Library, The Ohio State University (Fisher College of Business), Ronald McDonald House Dayton, St. Vincent Haven, and The Works.

Schmidt is also a committed community volunteer and has served on the boards of The Midland Theatre, the Granville Community Foundation, and the Granville Public Library. He is a graduate of the AAFRC Consultant’s Academy and a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE). He received a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of Southern Mississippi. He lives in Licking County with his wife Dawn and their two children.

Over the next three months, retiring President Hawk and new President Schmidt will work closely together—and with the Foundation’s Governing Committee and staff—to ensure a seamless transition and look forward to conversations with the Foundation’s donors and community partners.

About the Licking County Foundation

Licking County Foundation is a public charitable organization made up of a diverse collection of funds given by caring individuals, families, businesses and organizations that have a common concern for the well-being of the people living, working, learning, and growing in Licking County. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Licking County. Established in 1956, LCF has grown to nearly \$130 million in assets thanks to generations of gifts made by compassionate donors. Their investments have changed the lives of thousands of people by allowing the Foundation to distribute more than \$4 million annually to the community through grants to organizations that meet a wide range of needs, and scholarships to allow students to pursue training and education. To find out how you can turn your compassion into action, call 740.349.3863 or visit www.theLCFoundation.org.

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