



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MEDIA ADVISORY

**WHAT:** Launch of \$1.5M Fund Addressing Criminal Justice Reform in Ohio

**WHEN:** September 16, 2015

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Ohio Transformation Fund Announcing Launch of \$1.5 Million Fund  
Addressing Criminal Justice Reform Opportunity in Ohio;  
*Fund and Practitioner Partners Seek Community-Driven Policy Solutions in Cincinnati and Beyond*

(Cincinnati, September 16, 2015) – “With the deaths of Samuel DuBose in Cincinnati, Tamir Rice and Tanisha Anderson in Cleveland, and John Crawford in Beavercreek, Ohio is in the foreground of conversations about policing, criminal justice reform, and racial justice,” said Ohio Transformation Fund Executive Director Judy Wright. “The challenge is determining strong, lasting solutions to bring health and safety to our communities.”

Today, the Ohio Transformation Fund (OTF), a newly launched funding collaborative of local and national funders to address criminal justice reform, awarded the first grants of at least \$1.5 million to be distributed by 2017 aiming to reduce the number and racial disparity of youth and adults incarcerated in Ohio.

Notable in the process is a partnership with a statewide network of community organizing and policy organizations and funders including leaders in Cincinnati that are actively responding to immediate and long-term needs brought to light again with the shooting of Samuel DeBose. Working collaboratively, **Ohio Justice and Policy Center** and **The AMOS Project** engage formerly incarcerated or convicted individuals, and clergy, community leaders, legal experts, and business leaders to advocate for policies that restore justice and ease racial tension in a justice system fraught with racial disparity.

Grant recipients throughout Ohio include: The ACLU of Ohio, Akron Organizing Collaborative, Juvenile Justice Coalition of Ohio, Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative, the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, the Ohio Students Association, and Toledoans United for Social Action.

### **About the Ohio Transformation Fund**

Formed in 2015, the Ohio Transformation Fund includes local and national funding partners. The Fund was created to leverage a significant investment in Ohio by the Ford Foundation. Following extensive research of criminal justice reform, the Ford Foundation identified Ohio as a state with strong policy advocacy capacity, organizing capacity, grassroots strength and momentum, a political climate in which reform is possible, and a committed array of local donors. With a strong infrastructure now in place, the OTF is uniquely positioned to work toward policy change in a wide range of areas, including but not limited to addressing exclusionary school discipline policies, fair hiring and housing, and rates and racial disparity of incarcerated youth and adults.

Ohio-based partners include The George Gund Foundation, The Raymond John Wean Foundation, and The Needmor Fund. National partners include the Center for Community Change, the Ford Foundation, the Partnership/Partnership Action Funds, and the PICO National Network. Membership in the OTF is open to local and national foundations and individual donors with an interest in addressing the impact of our current adult and youth justice systems on Ohio communities. The OTF welcomes additional partners to be part of this exciting project.

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