

evanston!communityfoundation

Meet two of our newest board members

For NOW, we'd like you to meet two of our newest board members—Tania Margonza and Bryant Wallace. Tania serves as a member of the Philanthropic Engagement Committee and Bryant serves as Chair of the Governance & Sustainability Committee.



TANIA MARGONZA



BRYANT WALLACE

Why did you want to join the ECF Board?

Tania: Well first, I'd like to thank Bryant Wallace for nominating me and encouraging me to participate. He is a good friend of mine and of my husband. Ultimately, my decision came down to ECF being a leader. ECF leads the way in fundraising, grantmaking, community investments, supporting the community, and equity work—work that has brought our community closer together. ECF has acknowledged inequities and discrimination that our neighbors face. It's partnered

in so many ways with so many people and organizations. I believe if you see a gap, you fill it. That is how I live my life and it's aligned with ECF's values. The staff and board step into these spaces, helping smaller organizations and businesses survive. I am so proud to talk about this work.

Bryant: I moved to Evanston to be part of a community. Participating in Leadership Evanston, root2fruit, Celebrate Evanston, I was able to see ECF as a true hub of the community. I enjoy meeting people, making connections, and building collaborations to extend the impact of our advocacy and action in the community. We go farther when we work together.

I admire the Foundation's work and I care about the community. The opportunity to work alongside experienced, similarly passionate board members and staff to foster community partnerships and to get to know our donors is the most rewarding investment of my time, talent and creativity in my professional life. It's invigorating. I invite everyone to join us and challenge us with new and helpful perspectives. We are always learning.

What are your hopes for Evanston?

Tania: True, authentic, genuine inclusion of all community members. My main focus has been on students. How can we empower our kids to become allies for one another? Images and news stories of children being mistreated are heartbreaking. I wouldn't want anyone to harm my children. I want my kids to be the good that we need. I want all of our kids to be the good that we need. We have young people who are working toward building inclusion and acceptance—Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ—I do believe that we will get there one day. Acceptance is a beautiful thing.

Bryant: At ECF, I see first-hand how we build an inclusive community for thriving non-profits, for-profits, institutions, and citizens. I see the impact through our grantmaking to quickly address the basic needs of the vulnerable and adapt to a more diverse and connected world through our advocacy for equitable access to resources, through our community conversations, and through our collaborations with community partners. We are a group of passionate people working tirelessly

on behalf of our mission to make Evanston a good place for all. We can go farther and accomplish more with your help.

What should community members know about you?

Tania: As an Evanstonian and Latina, I know that there are gaps that need to be filled. I am in a position to help fill that gap. I want to connect families of color to all the resources and opportunities that exist in our community. This is one of my favorite things to do. I love meeting other parents, business professionals, and learning about how we can support each other and how we can strengthen our community bonds. If someone wants to brainstorm on how to be involved with families, with people of color, to build community, and be allies to each other, no matter what our socioeconomic status is, we need to talk. I am here.

Bryant: I am an advocate for small business, which is the driving force in the local economic ecosystem. The Evanston Local Marketplace is an inclusive economic ecosystem of institutions interconnected with local small businesses to keep dollars in the local economy. The concept was sparked while I was in Leadership Evanston, where I talked to local business owners with an interest in identifying new ways to collaborate and connect. They wanted to participate more fully in the local economy, while continuing to contribute to the community in concrete and quantifiable ways. The Evanston Local Marketplace is here to increase community economic health, create strong community bonds, and keep our money in Evanston.

I grew up working in my cousin's health food store. I had firsthand experience understanding the impact of small businesses on the local community. They hire local, support the local baseball team, help schools – things that large conglomerates may not do. Because of what I learned growing up, I enjoy encouraging people to go after their dreams, no matter how big or unattainable they think they are.

I grew up in a community that looked out for everyone. I had mentors in my neighbors, at the corner grocery stores, my teachers, the barber; the community was invested in everyone. Now I live in Evanston, I truly care about the people, the

community, and the businesses. I'm glad to be a part of a board that feels the same way.

For additional information about the Evanston Local Marketplace, please send emails to bryant@wallscottssolutions.com.

Highlights & Community Investments

For NOW, learn where ECF is headed and also what was accomplished in 2020.

The Programs Team announced new grantmaking guidelines with a focus on the following opportunities:

- [Community Innovation Grants](#) invest in programs and projects that have been developed by, or with significant input from, those most impacted by structural racism.
- [Organizational Growth & Sustainability Grants](#) provide operating support to Evanston serving nonprofits, as well as projects that contribute to an organization's long-term growth and sustainability.
- **Collective & Enduring Initiatives** are developed by community task forces that work to identify long-term solutions to community challenges.

During the challenging 2020 pandemic year, the Evanston Community Foundation worked closely with our network of nonprofits, leaders, small businesses, and donors to identify high-impact investments to bring relief to our neighbors and maintain Evanston's vitality. Here are some of the highlights from 2020:

- We provided more than \$1 million in operating grants to protect Evanston's vital nonprofit infrastructure so that it could continue to serve our community during and after the pandemic crisis.
- We addressed food insecurity and invested in historically divested neighborhoods by providing more than \$1.25 million in programmatic support to small businesses who hold trusted relationships with community members. Small businesses delivered meals, groceries, and/or set up pop ups to pass out meals to individuals and families in need.

- We co-created the [Evanston Care Network](#), an online platform, that helps more than 1,000 residents each month find needed services. In collaboration with City of Evanston 311, City of Evanston Health and Human Services, Amita Behavioral Health, and Evanston Public Library, city residents and institutions now have a shared database of available social services.
- We acted as a funding bridge throughout the pandemic to our homeless services community, to move unhoused residents from communal living shelters into hotels and then into more permanent housing. When government funds were fully tapped, we replenished Connections for the Homeless' eviction prevention fund, which prevented more than 90 evictions.
- When undocumented and mixed status residents were left out of the federal economic stimulus package last summer, we pulled together community organizations to provide equivalent lost wage relief to 180 families, totaling \$575,000.
- ECF purchased PPE and specialized cleaning equipment on behalf of fifteen early childhood centers, working with the Evanston Chamber of Commerce to manage collective purchasing. We also worked with Evanston Cradle to Career to collectively purchase 22,000 diapers and 550 containers of wipes to benefit 650 families. To manage distribution, we called upon Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse to provide workforce development staff and their brand-new loading dock.

Leave a lasting legacy

Forever. The founding members of the Evanston Community Foundation made their gifts of \$1000 or more 35 years ago this fall, they were giving to the community as a whole and counting on others to help build a fund for Evanston's future.

Leaving a legacy gift can create tremendous opportunities for the Evanston Community Foundation to flexibly meet the needs of the community, and allow Evanston to be a more vibrant, inclusive, and equitable city for future

generations. Legacy gifts can be structured to offer tax benefits and allow flexibility should your circumstances change. We invite you to explore how a legacy gift can help you realize your financial goals while creating a brighter future for Evanston. Contact our Gift Planning team members:

Joi-Anissa Russell
VP, Philanthropy & Communications
russell@evanstonforever.org

Rebecca Parmet
Donor Relations Manager
parmet@evanstonforever.org

Thank you for helping to make Evanston a vibrant, inclusive, and equitable community. We couldn't do it without your support!