



OHIO UNIVERSITY

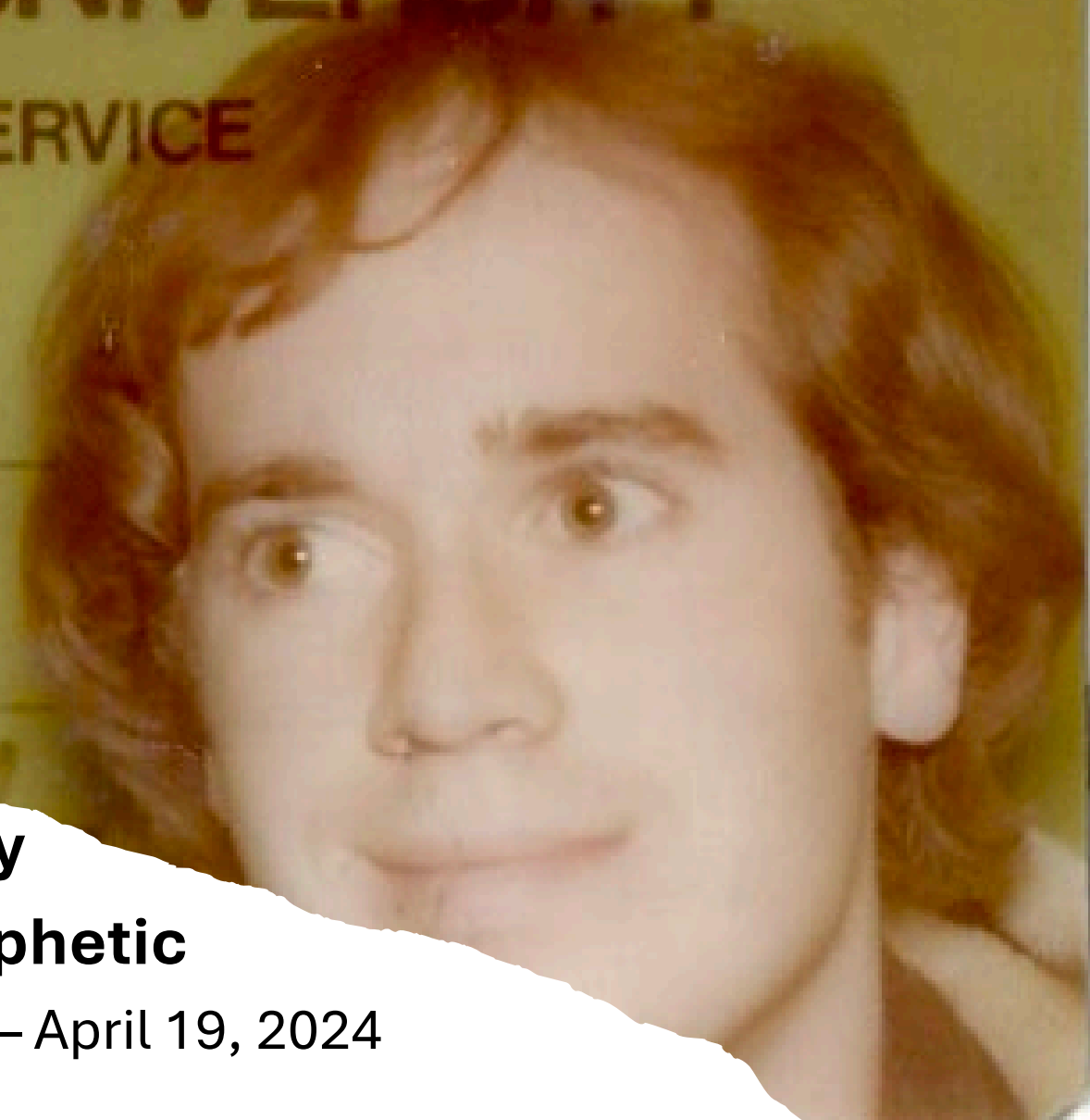
FOOD SERVICE

6352

NUMBER

John Corlett

NAME



Reflections on Policy & Advocacy

Balancing the Pragmatic with the Prophetic

Voinovich School Public Service Perspectives – April 19, 2024

OU Was My Foundation

- My career aspiration when I was an undergrad at Ohio University was to work for Planned Parenthood.
- Started as a journalism major but quickly made my way to my real love which was political science/campaigns & elections.
- Fall quarter of my sophomore year I worked fulltime on a State Rep. campaign in my hometown.
- Did multiple independent studies and internships (political activity)
- United Campus Ministry, Gay People's Alliance, Baker Student Center, and Bentley Hall were the center of my college life.



Balancing the Pragmatic with the Prophetic

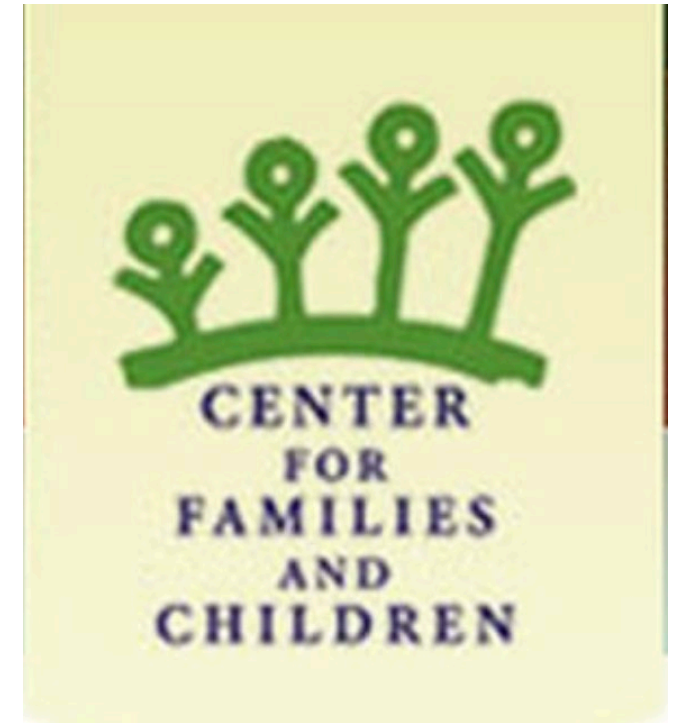
- First job with Planned Parenthood of Southeast Ohio; worked in reproductive health care for the next 15 years;
- Went from “fundraiser” to a “development director” to public affairs director;
- Four of my first five bosses were woman; very atypical;
- My employers invested a lot in training; particularly political and fundraising training;
- It was intensely personal and isolating; work life balance was hard.



Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio

Balancing the Pragmatic with the Prophetic

- In 1996, I joined Center for Families and Children as their Director of Government Relations; this marked my first real engagement with broader state policy making;
- George Voinovich was Governor, worked on my first state budget, engaged in state coalition work, developed key relationships;
- Worked on issues related to behavioral health, early learning, HIV, and poverty; led successful grassroots lobbying effort to secure \$7 million in first time state funding for an Ohio HIV Drug Assistance Program.
- Managed my first winning Cuyahoga County levy campaign.



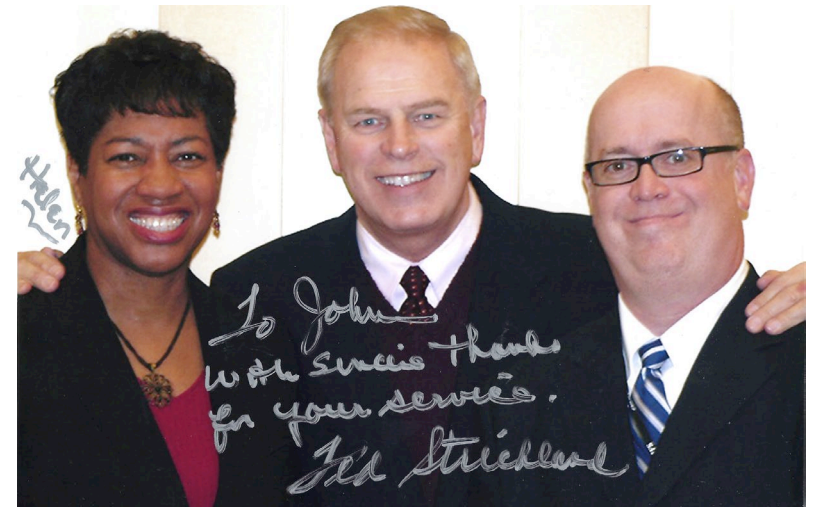
Balancing the Pragmatic with the Prophetic

- 1999, join the Federation for Community Planning as Senior Fellow and Director of Public Policy;
- Built an eight-member multi-disciplinary policy and advocacy team; tax policy, Medicaid, early learning, and federal budget policy – raised \$1 mil. annually;
- Took over leadership of Have a Heart Ohio and managed statewide campaign to defeat a potential constitutional amendment;
- Fellowship in DC offices of then Cong. Sherrod Brown;
- Unofficial advisor to gubernatorial candidate Ted Strickland.



Balancing the Pragmatic with the Prophetic

- Appointed Ohio Medicaid Director, December 2007; began the month the Great Recession began – this would shape my entire tenure.
- State government control split between Republicans and Democrats;
- Implemented one Medicaid budget and helped pass a Medicaid budget through the Ohio General Assembly.
- Controlling costs was major focus area.



Balancing the Pragmatic with the Prophetic

- Joined MetroHealth in February 2010;
- Developed support for a 1115 Medicaid demonstration waiver resulting in nearly 30K+ uninsured low-income residents obtaining Medicaid coverage;
- Worked with local/state government to secure a state funding and a piece of state property for site of new hospital;
- Prior to Supreme Court decision, worked with MetroHealth's legal department and county prosecutor to make it clear that MetroHealth had legal authority to offer same-sex domestic partner benefits to its employees;



Balancing the Pragmatic with the Prophetic

- Rejoined Community Solutions as CEO in 2015;
- Rebuilt and diversified organization; made big investments in Medicaid policy;
- We led several important successful policy efforts across both Trump and Biden administrations and Kasich and DeWine administrations to secure improvements in health and human service programs.
- Built a board of directors that was more racially and politically diverse.



Balancing the Pragmatic with the Prophetic

- Data: Understand local, regional, state and national data.
- Collaboration: Don't go alone, partners make change longer lasting.
- Community: Community voice is essential to good policy.
- Diversity: Your team/organization should be as diverse as your community (politically diverse as well)
- Expertise: Recruit team and partners based on knowledge and relationships
- Pragmatism: Develop practical solutions that are both bold and sustainable.