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**CONTACT:**

Gay Games: Ann M. Gynn  
216.235.4566, agynn@GG9CLE.com  
Gay Community Endowment Fund: John Grafton  
330-388-2052, grafwick@yahoo.com

## **Gay Community Endowment Fund of Akron Community Foundation supports Gay Games at elite level**

### *Fund becomes Host Sponsor of 2014 Gay Games Sports in Akron and Summit County*

AKRON, Ohio (October 30, 2013) – The Gay Community Endowment Fund of Akron Community Foundation has made a \$100,000 commitment to help make the 2014 Gay Games presented by the Cleveland Foundation a great success for Summit County. Gay Games officials announced the commitment today during a welcome rally at the University of Akron.

With its elite-level support, the Gay Community Endowment Fund of Akron Community Foundation is now recognized as the Host Sponsor of the 2014 Gay Games Sports in Akron and Summit County.

Events will take place Aug. 9-16, 2014. About one-third of the expected 10,000 Gay Games participants will compete in Summit County events, including:

- Golf, which will be at Firestone Country Club
- Marathon, which will use the first half of Akron Marathon course
- Martial arts at the John S. Knight Center
- Softball, Firestone Stadium and nearby fields
- Soccer at Copley Road fields
- Track and field at the University of Akron

“Akron and all of Summit County have been strong supporters of the Gay Games since the very beginning. We’re excited to have that strengthened even further with the financial support of the Gay Community Endowment Fund of Akron Community Foundation,” said Steve Sokany, co-chair of the 2014 Gay Games presented by the Cleveland Foundation.

Gay Community Endowment Fund board chair Judge Mary Margaret Rowlands said, “The Gay Games coming here gives us the wonderful opportunity to show the world and our own neighbors what a strong and supportive LGBT and ally community we have.”

Akron Community Foundation committed \$35,000 to the fund’s sponsorship. John Garafalo, vice president of community investment for the community foundation, believes the Gay Games’ impact will extend far beyond the one-week event next August. “The Gay Games is a catalyst for change, and our entire region will be the beneficiary of that change for years to come,” he said.



Cindy Christman, chair of the 2014 Gay Games Akron Task Force said she is pleased to have the Gay Community Endowment Fund come on board in such a unique way. “Their contribution demonstrates one more reason why Summit County is such a great place to live and work. We want to unite individuals, businesses and organizations to share that great experience for all the Gay Games participants who will be coming to the Akron area next August.”

#### **About the Gay Community Endowment Fund**

Founded in 2001, the Gay Community Endowment Fund is a permanent philanthropic endowment of Akron Community Foundation. It facilitates and perpetuates philanthropy by supporting programs and services that support or positively impact the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, as well as the entire greater Akron community. The fund has reinvested more than \$183,000 in the community since its inception. For more information, visit [www.gaycommunityfund.org](http://www.gaycommunityfund.org).

#### **About Akron Community Foundation**

Celebrating 58 years of building community philanthropy, Akron Community Foundation embraces and enhances the work of charitable people who make a permanent commitment to the good of the community. In 1955, a \$1 million bequest from the estate of Edwin Shaw established the community foundation. Today, it is a philanthropic endowment of more than \$160 million with a growing family of more than 430 funds established by charitable people and organizations from all walks of life. To date, the community foundation’s funds have awarded more than \$108 million in grants to qualified nonprofit organizations. For more information, visit [www.akroncf.org](http://www.akroncf.org).

#### **About the Gay Games**

The Gay Games is an international sporting and cultural event held every four years under the founding principles of Participation, Inclusion and Personal Best™. Launched in 1982, the Games invite participation from everybody, regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political beliefs, athletic or artistic ability, age, physical challenge or health status.

The Games are intended to bring a global community together in friendship, to experience participation, to elevate consciousness and self-esteem, and to achieve a form of cultural and intellectual synergy. The Gay Games is open to anyone 18 years or older. About 10 percent of participants are from outside the LGBT community.

The 2014 Gay Games presented by the Cleveland Foundation will be August 9-16, 2014, in venues around Cleveland and Akron, Ohio, in the United States. More than 35 sports and culture events will be held, with more than 11,000 people from more than 60 countries expected to participate. For more information, visit [www.GG9CLE.com](http://www.GG9CLE.com).