

Crane Family Invests in Future of The Buckeye Ranch Foster Care – 8/5/20

The Crane Family, with a lead gift from Mike and Paige Crane, and Crane Group Co. will make a \$1,000,000 investment in the future of The Buckeye Ranch's Foster Care program over the next five years. This investment is a continuation of The Crane family's long-standing partnership that began in 1965. "We recognize that a safe and nurturing home environment is best for children when they are unable to be with their parents. Community is one of our core values, and we believe we have a role to play in seeking to improve the quality of life for all and to ensure that children have the opportunity to thrive despite circumstances they may face," said Mike Crane. This investment will increase foster homes available to meet the rising demand through the development of a centralized team, dedicated solely to the marketing, identification, engagement and licensing of foster homes in Ohio.

Foster care across the country is largely paid for by federal Title 4E dollars; Ohio also draws down federal dollars to support local funding. This funding is designed to focus on the safety of children *once they enter* out of home care. The dollars do not focus on how child welfare organizations create safe and loving foster homes to care for them. This distinction, while seemingly small, forces child welfare organizations to apply limited resources where the funding dictates, restricting opportunity to invest in growth and creation of foster homes. This seed money will aid The Buckeye Ranch in the growth of a necessary business: providing children with a safe place to sleep, free from neglect and abuse.

The Crane Family and Crane Group investment also allows The Buckeye Ranch to change the current practice and create opportunities to support systemic reform, such as Governor DeWine's foster care initiative, through advocacy and public policy.

The need is great in Ohio with the foster care population on the rise. While Governor DeWine's focus on reform will impact this, today we must respond to the demand for safe homes for children. The Buckeye Ranch received requests to care for over 3,400 children last year. Today, they have 242 foster homes and cannot meet the demand. This investment will ease higher cost placements, such as children currently living in residential or hospital care. The increased demand and longer stays in such care are due in part to a lack of foster homes and not necessarily because it is the best placement option for a child. An increase in foster homes can provide more opportunities for children to safely reside in a family environment.

In recognition of this investment, The Buckeye Ranch will name its new Whitehall location the Michael & Paige Crane Center for Children and Families.