

OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL FUNDRAISER AWARD

Marlene Dunford

POSTHUMOUS INDUCTION



Marlene Dunford truly left her mark on the greater Akron area with her amazing fundraising skills. At the age of 50, she started her career as the first Director of Development for St. Vincent - St. Mary High School. Her career in fundraising continued on to Rockynol Retirement Community (now Ohio Living Rockynol), Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services Foundation, Our Lady of the Elms, and Summa Health System. In 1995, Marlene was hired by United Way of Summit County as Director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving. She developed four new and distinct fundraising programs, including the Women's Initiative and Young Leadership Club.

After 21 years of professional fundraising in major and planned giving, Marlene "retired" and then founded Leave a Legacy Summit, Portage, Medina in 2002. Her goal was to create a regional collaborative of nonprofits and allied professionals whose mission was to encourage people from all walks of life to leave a bequest or planned gift to their favorite charity. During Marlene's tenure, more than 2,500 wills were written free of charge by attorneys who participated in "Write a Will Month."

After she retired from Leave a Legacy, Marlene founded the Widows of Faith, Hope and Charity Ministry to bring widows together and remind them that they are not alone.

Marlene was a founding member of the Board of Directors of the Akron Chapter of the National Society for Fundraising Executives in 1994, which changed its name to the Association of Fundraising Professionals in 2001. She served as president of the Chapter in 1994.

Marlene passed away in 2015, but her legacy lives on in the strength of our Chapter, Leave a Legacy, Widows of Faith and the many other organizations she had served.

nominated by
**The AFPNEO
Board of Directors**