



**Mike Crislip**  
AIA Ohio c.1995

**A Short Bio**

Mike graduated from Kent State University after receiving his Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1981. He joined Onyx Creative (formerly Herschman Architects) in 1984 after answering an ad in his local newspaper that read “small design-oriented firm seeks graduate architect”, where he later was interviewed by Jerry Herschman and Jud Kline. He became President and partner of the firm in 2004 and has provided leadership and guidance since, while being directly involved with the recruitment and hiring of most of our current employees. He goes out of his way to create a welcoming workplace environment by greeting everyone he passes, sharing motivational phrases on Mondays (Mike’s Monday Motivation), and celebrates Fridays by bringing in donuts from his local donut shop. Mike is currently responsible for strategic planning, business development, and financial budgetary oversight on all projects, while also providing daily leadership and professional development for Onyx Creative’s 90+ employees. He serves as the lead liaison with commercial developers and retail clients, many becoming long term relationships.

**Awards & Merits**

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
|             | <b>Crossroads/New Directions</b>  |
| <b>2014</b> | John Wolf Community Gratitude Award<br>Mike Crislip   |
|             | <b>Lake County ADAMHS</b>   |
| <b>2014</b> | Board Citizen Award, Mike Crislip   |
| <b>2006</b> | Jack Miller Award, Mike Crislip   |
|             | <b>Smart Business Network and Medical Mutual</b>  |
| <b>2012</b> | Northeastern Ohio Pillar Award Finalist for Non-Profit Board<br>Executive of the Year<br>Mike Crislip |
|             | <b>Sales and Marketing Executive of Cleveland</b>   |
| <b>2000</b> | Distinguished Sales and Marketing Award<br>Mike Crislip   |

**Mike believes in the inspirational power of giving back to our community.**

He is involved in the local community through several firm projects, educational institutions and non-profit organizations including:

- Being an active member in the mental health community of Lake County for more than twenty years, serving on the Board of Crossroads Health/New Directions. He has received numerous awards for his involvement.
- Sponsoring an Eagle Scout who is interested in architecture or engineering for a career every year for the past ten years.
- Participating in KSU’s Day of Service doing carpentry and repair at the Lake County Historical Society for the past five years.
- Being a volunteer fireman for Saybrook Township from 1979-1981.
- Donating professional services to numerous community projects throughout the life span of the firm including: Saint John School, Crossroads Health/New Directions, and the Cleveland Animal Protective League, among others.

**AIA Ohio Involvement**

Mike Crislip has been an AIA Ohio member since 1995, a total of 26 years. He is active in the AIA Ohio community having attended almost all AIA Ohio conventions during the past ten years and many national AIA conventions. He has participated in firm leadership breakfasts and firm roundtable conversations.





# Community Impact / Crossroads Health

**Crossroads Health**  
Restoring hope • Healing lives • Preserving futures

**Crossroads Health/New Directions** provides a continuum of quality life-changing behavioral health services for children, adolescents, young adults and families. Our President, Mike Crislip, served numerous years as the chairman and president of Crossroads/New Directions Inc., ultimately working to improve the efficiency of the organizations by integrating both board of directors. Mike and Onyx Creative have

donated professional services and technology numerous times to the organization while also helping the agency purchase and self-develop their facility. Mike worked with Crossroads and Beacon Health in Lake County on another merger while donating professional services for their re-branding in 2020. He is currently serving as Board Chair on their board of directors.

## Northeastern Ohio Pillar Award | Finalist for Non-Profit Board Executive of the Year

### DEFINING THE DIRECTION

How Mike Crislip implemented a restructuring plan for New Directions and Crossroads

NONPROFIT  
BOARD EXECUTIVE  
OF THE YEAR AWARD

**A**s the chairman and president of New Directions Inc., Mike Crislip has worked to improve the efficiency of his organization's ability to carry out its mission of providing life-changing treatment to chemically dependent adolescents.

Beginning in 2009, Crislip helped spearhead a joint consolidation effort between his organization and Crossroads — part of a pilot program conducted by Cuyahoga County Human Services. The pilot program was a collaborative effort among 18 local foundations, facilitating a three-phase project consisting of education, assessment and negotiations.

**Mike Crislip**  
chairman and president  
New Directions and Crossroads  
(216) 591-0324 | [www.newdirect.org](http://www.newdirect.org)

As part of the effort to restructure New Directions and Crossroads, Crislip led the boards of directors for both organizations in more than 30 hours of negotiations, culminating in an integrated board of directors to serve both organizations.

In January 2011, the board of directors for New Directions and Crossroads both voted to approve the consolidation, allowing the organizations to share a single governing board, CEO and senior management team. The organizations remain separate entities regarding their missions, 501(c)3 status, accreditation and donors.

The innovative consolidation initiative has helped two community organizations conserve resources as they continue to make a positive impact in the communities they serve — spanning two counties — and has helped the leaders of both organization align their strategic planning processes to more efficiently and effectively reach their goals and realize their missions.

Following the completion of the consolidation process, Crislip volunteered to host the board members and senior staff of both companies in his office during a six-month strategic planning process — while still serving as president of Herschman Architects Inc. Crislip's dedication to this initiative underscores his passion for New Directions and Crossroads and the missions of both organizations in the community. ■



December 2012 | Smart Business Cleveland 57

I N S I D E  
D E S I G N



**ADAPTABLE AREA** A large multi-purpose room, decorated in bright reds, yellows and blues, is versatile enough to serve 40 different functions for 15 different programs.

## Creating Crossroads

Generosity and collaboration lead to remodeled children's center

By Jeanne Bluffstone | Photos courtesy of Herschman Architects

**I**t took nearly two years and a mighty collaboration of staff, volunteers, government and the city of Painesville to locate, purchase and transform what had been a lumber company showroom into the new Crossroads Early Childhood Services Center at 1083 Mentor Ave.

The new facility enables Crossroads, a non-profit organization providing behavioral health services to children, adolescents and families, to expand and consolidate services for children up to age five. The services previously had been split among three facilities in Painesville and Mentor.

Mike Crislip, president of Crossroads board of directors and president of Herschman Architects (HA), says when Crossroads first began to offer the Early Head Start program (now part of the Early Childhood Services Center), the program shared space in a Painesville

church and then relocated to the basement of a building.

"It was one of the better performing Crossroads programs and needed new space," Crislip says. Wayne Lindstrom, the chief executive officer of Crossroads was interested in potential ownership of a new facility and asked Crislip to look at several possibilities in the area since most of the people being served were from the city of Painesville.

### Finding and financing

The search for a suitable building began in August 2008. Crislip visited

several sites, none of which was suitable, and then suggested contacting Rita McMahon, Painesville's city manager, who had two locations in mind. One was a 10,000-square-foot showroom of a lumber company going out of business. The building needed renovating, but the space was a good fit with Crossroads' needs. It was situated on 3.5 acres and had an attached 7,000-square-foot warehouse, which offered a multitude of options for future growth and new activities.

After receiving board approval, Crisip and Lindstrom negotiated the purchase of the property and worked closely

[www.propertiesmag.com](http://www.propertiesmag.com)



Community Impact / Crossroads Health, Cont.



**MAKING A DIFFERENCE** The \$1.8 million project, which provides a home for a children's behavioral health services organization, included renovating the building inside (left) and out (right).

with the USDA Rural Assistance Loan Development Department program to obtain stimulus money for the renovation and amenities. They also applied for and received an \$80,000 ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) stimulus grant for a new roof, skylights, exterior painting and landscaping, and obtained a low interest loan to purchase the property.

As board president, Crislip couldn't contract for his company to do the design and engineering of the new building, so he and HA partner Carole Sanderson decided to volunteer the firm's services as a donation to keep their staff busy during the recession and also gain experience in working on a publicly funded project.

HA donated all of the architectural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and structural engineering required, and one of its national vendors donated light poles and fixtures for the parking lot. Jocelyn DeAngelis, an architect who had been downsized at HA, was hired as a project manager by Crossroads. Joseph Orel, president of JJO Construction of Mentor, says he was pleased to have won the general contractor bid for a project that benefits the community.

HA coordinated the bidding process, provided construction and bidding documents and responded to contractor questions. Working closely with Crossroads' staff, HA's interior designer, Teri Ianni, addressed their need for flexibility while meeting present needs

and redesigned the space with a large multi-purpose area with offices ringing the perimeter, conference rooms, new lighting and finishes, updated HVAC equipment and a new parking lot and landscaping. HA also worked with the city to help remove any roadblocks during the planning and construction process.

HA used its expertise in designing public spaces with a playful use of color and lighting for the main areas. The result was a new facility with 14 offices and workspaces, two assessment and treatment rooms with one-way glass, spectrum natural lighting using solar light tubes, a three-hour security vault to protect sensitive information, a modern, environmentally friendly kitchen, conference room and a large multi-purpose room – decorated in bright reds, yellows and blues –which is versatile enough to serve 40 different functions for 15 different programs. Pendant task lights above workstations provide a glow instead of glare; a triple locking file system protects the privacy of sensitive information.

"Had it not been for Mike Crislip's leadership as president of the board and Herschman Architects, this never would have happened," Lindstrom says.

**Public, private & volunteer collaboration**

HA spearheaded much of the renovation and in addition to design and engineering services, assisted Crossroads in the selection of furniture and window treatments and later provided

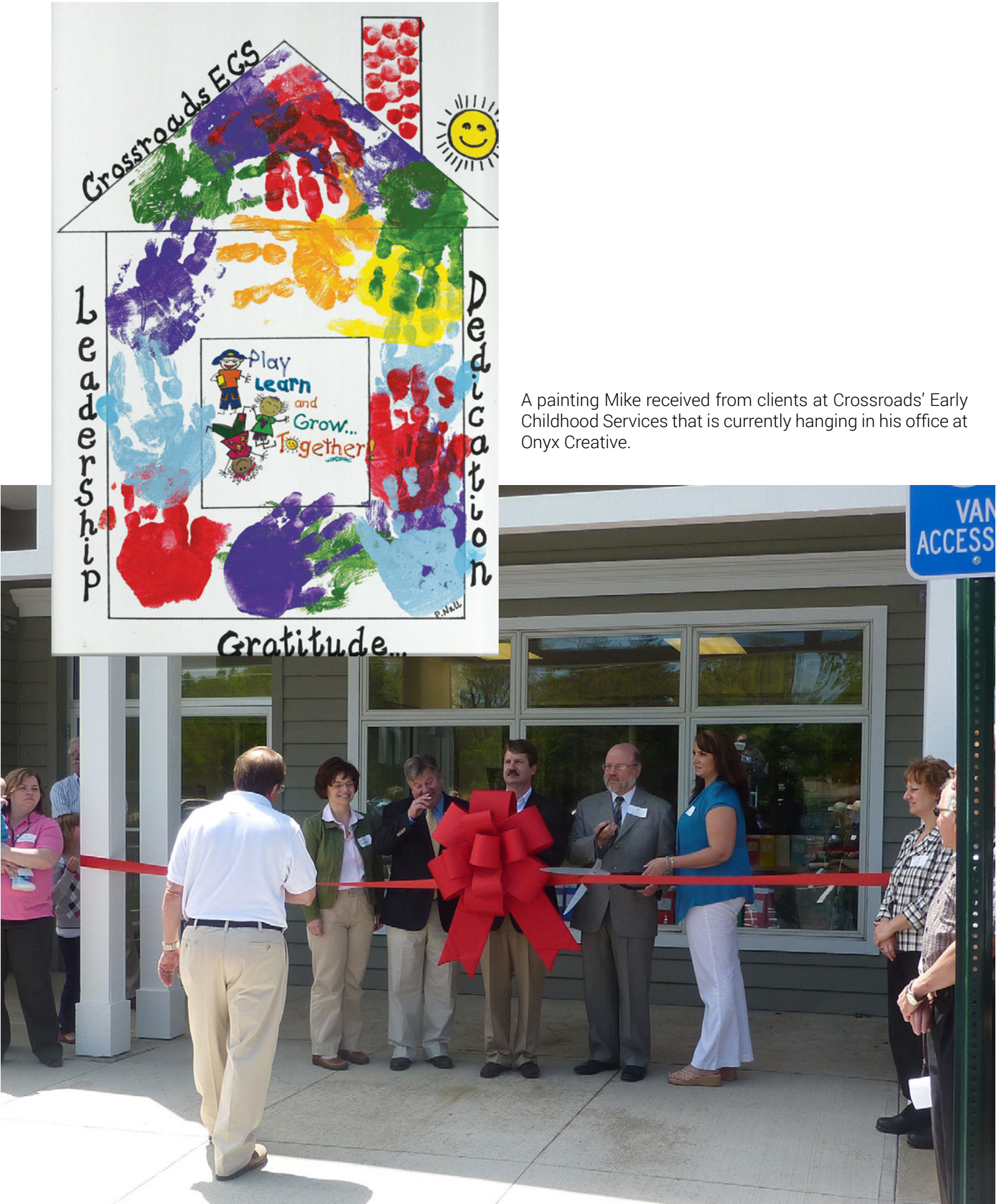
move management services. HA and DeAngelis worked closely with USDA, Crossroads and the city to handle the complex paperwork for the loans and the contractor selection process.

A Head Start grant provided funds for amenities such as supplies for the playground and sandbox, which were built by a welding class from Willoughby Tech. The students built the playground, assembled the equipment and manufactured railings and stairs for the warehouse. Patrick Perotti, an attorney with Dworken and Bernstein located \$453,000 from the settlement of undistributed class actions funds which paid down the mortgage on Crossroads' Mentor facility allowing them the flexibility to take on the new mortgage.

The overall cost of the project was about \$1.8 million, which includes renovation of the building, site work, sanitary sewer addition and land acquisition. The cost would have been more had not the original owners, Lester and Arnold Sukenik, contributed \$200,000 toward the project. The collaboration created a facility that meets a unique set of requirements tailored to the needs of Crossroads' clientele and is an example of what can be accomplished with the cooperation of public and private sectors and volunteers. **P**

*Reprinted with permission from Properties Magazine, July 2010. For more information, visit [www.propertiesmag.com](http://www.propertiesmag.com).*

Properties | July 2010



A painting Mike received from clients at Crossroads' Early Childhood Services that is currently hanging in his office at Onyx Creative.

Mike Crislip at the ribbon cutting for Crossroads' Early Childhood Services building in 2009.



Community Impact / Crossroads Health, Cont.



A photo of Mike's Jack Miller Award for volunteerism that he received in 2006. The award was presented by The Lake County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board (ADAMHS). This award "applauds the work of individuals whose generous contributions of time, energy and talent make an impact on clients and colleagues... [Mike] demonstrates a selfless commitment through the dedication of his expertise to advise on architecture and design for a new home for Crossroads and the clients it serves".



Mike Crislip celebrating his 2014 John Wolf Community Gratitude Award with Crossroads Health and Lake County ADAMHS board members. Here he is receiving Crossroads' client artwork from CEO Mike Matoney.



Mike Crislip at Crossroads Health's ribbon cutting for their Oasis Garden project in 2017.



Mike Crislip at Crossroads Health/New Directions' 2017 Night Fore Movies fundraising event.



Mike Crislip receiving the Board Citizen Award from Lake County ADAMHS and the Ohio Senate in 2014.



Community Impact / Saint John School



**St. John High School** is a private, Catholic K-12 school in Ashtabula, Ohio. Mike and the firm have provided volunteer services to help renovate an existing public grade school that was acquired and converted to a K-12 school. Services included design and construction documents for a cafeteria addition, interior improvements for two lab rooms, and the individual time painting and working on portions of the renovation. The firm later donated fees to design a new gym with classrooms (pictured right).

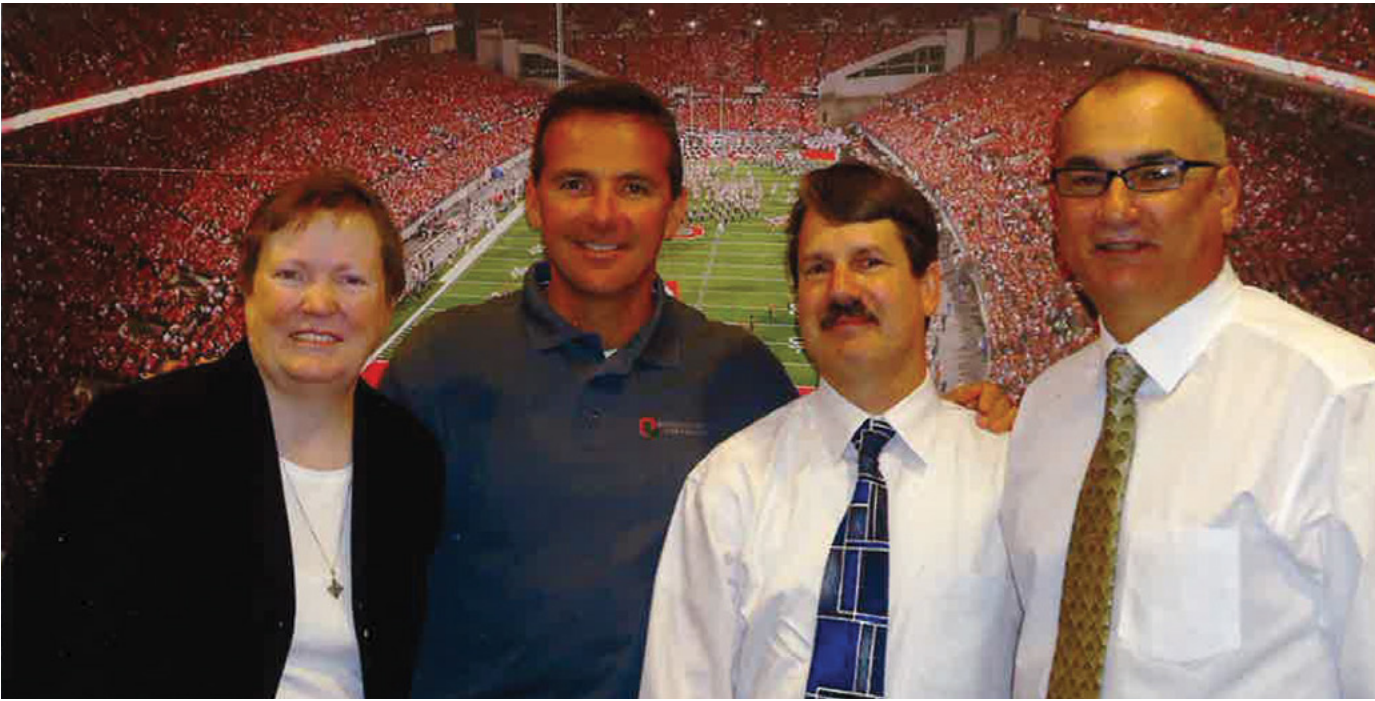


The newly renovated gymnasium at Saint John School.

Mike was inducted into the school's Hall of Fame in 2011. A scholarship named after Mike is awarded every year to a family in need.




“As architects, community activists, engineers, teachers, coaches, businessmen, and civic leaders, the Inductees of 2011 have insured that the mission of St. John High School and the Saints John & Paul School Community lives on well beyond the walls of the present buildings.”




Taken from the campaign magazine: “Sister Maureen Burke, Michael Crislip ‘76 and Larry Laurello ‘77 visit with Urban Meyer ‘82, head coach of The Ohio State University football team in his office. Larry and Michael have been instrumental in leading the process for the development of the Saybrook location of the school.”

### HALL OF FAME




*Frank Roskovics '67, President of the Saints John & Paul Alumni Association, served as the Master of Ceremonies for the 2011 Hall of Fame Dinner.*



*At the Hall of Fame Dinner, the Saints John & Paul Community recognized and thanked Wally Dunne for his years of service to Catholic Education. Wally retired on April 30 from his position as Associate Superintendent for the Diocese of Youngstown. Wally has served in Catholic Educator as teacher, principal and in various positions for the Diocese for over 40 years. Most importantly Wally served at Saint John principal from 1989 – 1992. We wish Wally well as he looks forward to more leisurely days.*

**O**n April 9 two hundred people gathered to recognize the accomplishments of the 2011 inductees to the Saints John & Paul Hall of Fame. This year's inductees are pictured on the cover of this issue: Denny Allan '67; Mike Crislip '76; Joe and Mary Kay Welch DelPriore, '60; and Todd Teter '79. These alumni were joined by friends of the school who were inducted: Dan McGinnis, Paul Kopko and Gene Pushic, teachers and coaches for the Heralds spanning the years 1957-1983.

The theme of the night was acknowledging that these men and women have accomplished a great deal in their personal and professional lives. However, their professional accomplishments are magnified because they reflect the dignity and manner in which the inductees live their lives. As architects, community activists, engineers, teachers, coaches, businessmen, and civic leaders, the Inductees of 2011 have insured that the mission of Saint John High School and the Saints John & Paul School Community lives on well beyond the walls of the present buildings.



*This year Career Day was scheduled to coincide with the Hall of Fame Weekend. Keynote presenter Nobby Lewandowski spoke about how he views his stuttering as a challenge not a disability. He shared that nearly everyone who stutters is able to sing with fluency. "We may sing off-key, but we do so without stuttering." Thus, he cajoled the Hall of Fame Honorees who were present, Denny Allan, Mike Crislip, Joe and Mary Kay DelPriore, Gene Pushic and Todd Teter to join him in singing YMCA.*



Community Impact / Kent State University



Onyx Creative and Mike have worked with **Kent State University** for more than 15 years attending career fairs, supporting the student professional organization AIAS, participating in Firm Profile Nights, engaging in student design reviews, lectures, and intern employment, giving students a window into the professional world of architecture and design.

We've hosted students every year from the *Leadership, Ethics and Office Management* class for Mike Crislip and our CFO Carole Sanderson to discuss employment, benefits, operations, and management.

Mike also participates every year in KSU's Alumni Day of Service, where he has done carpentry, window replacements and general repair at the Lake County Historical Society for the past five years.

In 2021, Mike collaborated with Jed Downs, from Cuhaci & Peterson, on The Jed and Mike Collaboration Scholarship. This \$25,000 scholarship will be awarded to an architecture student enrolled full-time in the bachelor of science degree at KSU, in the spirit of Jed and Mike's friendship to the individual who demonstrates his/her understanding of architectural collaboration. Applicants must write a creative essay featuring a story when they built a relationship that has enchanged them/their work, and how the end result was more successful because of it.



Mike and fellow Onyx Creative employees at a KSU Career Fair in February 2019.

"We can measure the success of an architecture firm by their built work and how it stands the test of time, and to that end, Onyx Creative has many excellent examples. However, with Onyx Creative, we can measure their impact on the profession in generations as the next generation of young professionals enter the field ambitious, optimistic and prepared for their career. Not because of a teacher, telling them about it, but because they experienced it through the interactions, leadership, and mentoring of the team at Onyx Creative."

- Peter Marks, AIA, Former educator at KSU

Community Impact / Boy Scouts of America



**Boy Scouts of America** prepares young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling values of trustworthiness, loyalty, helpfulness, courageousness, and kindness. Mike has sponsored an Eagle Scout who is interested in architecture or engineering for a career every year for the past ten years.





Community Impact / Canstruction Cleveland-Akron



**Canstruction® Cleveland-Akron** is an event that Onyx Creative plans for and has hosted since 2005. Canstruction® is a design/build competition showcasing the Cleveland community's creativity, while helping to stock the shelves of the Cleveland and Akron-Canton food banks. Local prominent architectural, engineering, planning, designs firms, and students mentored by these professionals, create phenomenal structures built entirely of food. At the close of the exhibition, all of the canned food used in these structures is donated to the food banks. Through donations and fundraising from 2005-

2019, we have provided the Greater Cleveland Food Bank with donations totaling \$35,000 in addition to 341,684 cans of food to help feed an estimate of more than 425,000 hungry people throughout Northeast Ohio!

Mike and our CFO Carole Sanderson donate time for employees to plan for the event every year during working hours, while also donating the fees required to buy the cans for our own firm's team structure. This upcoming event will be held at South Park Mall in Strongsville, Ohio in September 2021.



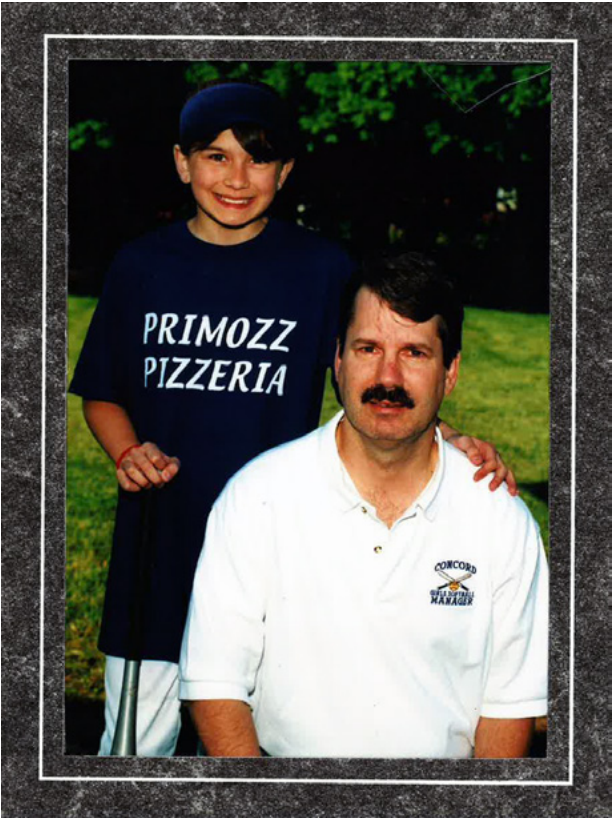
The Onyx Creative team can structure for the Heroes and Villains theme in 2019.

Community Impact / Softball Coach



CONCORD GIRLS  
SOFTBALL LEAGUE

Mike was also a softball coach in the **Concord and Mentor Girls Softball Leagues**, where he provided leadership and motivation to his daughter Michaila and her teammates, for ten years.





Letter of Support | AIA Cleveland



AIA Ohio 2021 Honor Awards Committee  
17 South High Street, Suite 200, Columbus, Ohio 43215

10 June 2021

**AIA Ohio Public Service Award  
Michael Crislip, AIA Nomination**

Dear Committee Members,

As the AIA Cleveland Board President this year, it is my great privilege to write this letter in support of Michael (Mike) Crislip for the 2021 AIA Ohio Public Service Award.

It is the charge of all licensed Architects to care for the Health, Safety, and Welfare of the public, but few actually walk it out in such a tangible way as Mike. He has centered his life around caring for the public, both in the profession as an Architect volunteering his services and in his private life as the Board President of Crossroads Health, a non-profit organization providing a continuum of recovery and mental health programs and services for all people, at any age or stage of life.

I believe this application will demonstrate how Mike would be an excellent candidate for this award purely on the work his firm Onyx Creative, formerly Herschman Architects, has been doing for the last four decades. In the office, Mike and his team at Onyx have been helping non-profit organizations such as Crossroads, Rescue Village and the APL of Cleveland through the donation of professional services and endless volunteer hours. Outside the office, Onyx has proven how design can help address world hunger through the organization of the annual Northeast Ohio CANstruction event involving AEC firms from across the area raising funds and donating goods to the Cleveland Food Bank, which raises awareness of hunger as well as the role architecture can play in serving our communities.

However, Mike's greatest impact to the community has gone well beyond his work through the firm or his active roles in professional affiliations such as AIA or his support of the Kent State University College of Architecture and Environmental Design program. The greatest impact Mike has made is through his 20 years of leadership with Crossroads Health to support families in Northeast Ohio. I believe Mike's ongoing service to Crossroads Health embodies the spirit of Architecture through *firmness*, which is to say soundness of structure, or in this case, the soundness of mind for our society through the programs and services that this amazing organization provides. I cannot imagine a more worthy candidate for consideration of the AIA Ohio 2021 Public Service Award. On behalf of AIA Cleveland, I do fully support the nomination for Mike Crislip.

Sincerely,

DAVID W CRAUN, AIA  
AIA Cleveland President

AIA Cleveland  
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Letter of Support | AIA Ohio



AIA Ohio Awards Committee  
17 S. High Street Suite 200  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: AIA Ohio Public Service Award  
Letter of Nomination  
Michael Crislip, AIA  
June 4, 2021

Dear Jury Members;

I have known Michael Crislip, AIA for over three decades and have witnessed his commitment to serving the community, promoting a practice reflecting a concern for the value of service, and giving back to the community through both personal and professional endeavors. His commitment to public service is exemplary and is appropriately recognized with the AIA Ohio Public Service Award.

By example of Mike's commitment as an individual and firm leader in community service, I would point out his role in a few of his activities. He has been a member and past president of the board of Crossroads, a community organization focused on providing services for at-risk youth. He has promoted the firm's commitment to be the regional leader for the Canstruction food drive. He has given back through the providing of *pro bono* services in producing projects for community not for profit organizations such as: the Geauga Humane Society, the Adoption Network and Crossroads facilities.

As a past recipient of this award, past president of AIA Ohio, and a former member of the honors and awards jury, I recognize the significance and standards for this award. Therefore, as a professional association, I believe AIA Ohio ought to applaud and distinguish Michael Crislip, AIA as a practitioner personifying the role of architects as community leader and a promoter of the values we support in exemplifying servant leader. For these reasons, I ask your consideration in conferring the AIA Ohio Public Service Award on Michael Crislip, AIA. He is well deserving of this honor.

Thank You for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Judson A. Kline, FAIA, NCARB, LEED AP  
President, CIVITAD Services, LLC  
AIA Ohio Ex Officio

3959 Orangetown Drive Orange Village, Ohio 44122 (216) 469-5370

Building Communities by Leading Design and Strategic Services



Letter of Support | Crossroads Health/New Directions



AIA Ohio Honor Awards  
c/o Kate Brunswick, Executive Director  
400 W. Wilson Bridge Rd., Ste. 120  
Worthington, OH 43085

June 8, 2021

It is a great honor and privilege to provide my highest recommendation and nomination of Mike Crislip for the AIA Ohio Public Service Award. In my role as CEO of Crossroads Health and its partner organization, New Directions, I have often provided heartfelt recommendations for awards and honors for colleagues, board members, staff, and community leaders. This recommendation of Mike Crislip stands alone—above all others—for his unwavering commitment to the values of community service, particularly within our local Northeast Ohio communities in these unprecedented times.

Professionally, I feel every non-profit should have an architect on its Board of Directors. We have that and more with Mike Crislip! Mike is a transformational servant-leader known and admired for his humility, kindness, generosity, availability and willingness to listen responsively, and selflessly mentor others through his inestimable business acumen.

Mike has led two different complex organizational mergers as Board Chair for Crossroads Health and New Directions combining both his business knowledge and his heart for helping others in 2011 and most recently in 2019. These mergers extended our mission to clients and families within and beyond our community. Without Mike's energy, commitment, and passion for the shared mission of Crossroads Health and New Directions, the consolidation would not have gone as smoothly and efficiently as it did. Both organizations will be forever grateful and changed because of his dedication and service.

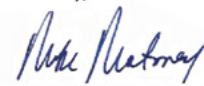
Mike's 20+ years of board leadership service has resulted in unanimous elections to Board Chair on four different occasions! He has donated countless architectural services to Crossroads Health, New Directions, and numerous other non-profits in Cuyahoga and Lake County.

For instance, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Mike generously offered his firm to struggling non-profits. He provided relief to myriad organizational COVID-related budget crises by assisting them in keeping their years of investment in planning building projects and related strategic plans from devastating derailment of COVID-19 on our local non-profit sector.

Mike Crislip is a longtime friend and supporter of the Lake County ADAMHS Board's mission. His engaged activity consistently demonstrates a desire to raise our community to a higher level—one that is more caring and empathetic to those in the greatest of need. Mike received the 2014 Advocate of the Year Award for helping facilitate the Crossroads Health Early Childhood Center and for his leadership and services donated to the Extended Housing and Bridges facilities. When Extended Housing and Bridges moved into the same building, Mike's architectural and strong leadership background helped make this vision a successful reality.

Personally and professionally, Mike has been a mentor to me in the 10+ years and for that I will always be grateful. I am a better person and professional due to Mike's sharing of his time and counsel with me. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at 216-360-4444 or by email at [mmatoney@crossroadshealth.org](mailto:mmatoney@crossroadshealth.org).

Sincerely,

  
**Mike Matoney, MBA, LICDC-CS**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Crossroads Health**  
8445 Munson Rd.  
Mentor, OH 44060



**New Directions**  
30800 Chagrin Blvd.  
Cleveland, OH 44124



Letter of Support | Saint John School



June 5, 2021

To the Members of the AIA's Ohio Public Service Award Committee:

I have had the opportunity to work with Mike Crislip on a number of projects over the past nine years. Mike is a graduate of Saint John School and when we had an opportunity to buy a public school building and merge our two campuses on one location; there was little time for planning and even less time for allocating funds. Mike stepped in and helped with advice, design consulting and project planning. A year later he was instrumental in the addition of a new cafeteria and eventually a new gym and 14 classroom addition. He and his firm Onyx Creative are partnering with us on two future projects.

Mike's work has always been creative, functional and professional. He takes pride in his work and has a passion for fitting his designs into the overall vision of the project. He is a great listener, concerned more about the outcome of the project than receiving credit or acknowledgement of his part in it.

I was also involved with Mike and a project that would benefit the Ashtabula area. Although, the project did not come to fruition, did not lessen Mike's willingness to offer a solution to a problem that many had identified as a need in the community.

Mike no longer lives in the Ashtabula area, but he remains committed to bettering the city and county that is his hometown. He has been involved in a number of projects in the area, some on a contracted basis and some on a pro bono basis. Mike believes in giving back to the community that he grew up in. Ashtabula is also an area that has lost its manufacturing base and is reinventing itself. Mike wants to be part of that process.

In getting to know Mike personally, I know him to be a creative person of integrity. Under Mike's leadership Onyx has grown and expanded. Despite the many demands of business, Mike is a family man – devoted son, loving husband and proud father. I never hesitate in giving Mike a call. He is always willing to offer ideas and advice in a manner that is constructive and informative. One would never know that he is a president and co-owner of national leader in architecture. I know that Mike also serves on local boards in his current hometown area and has especially been involved with helping those dealing with mental health issues.

There is a story of a tourist approaching three men who were working on chiseling stones. The tourist asked each man what his job was. The first one responded, "I am responsible for smashing the large stones into pieces". The second's response was "I just do what the foreman says". The third man, looked up and with a gleam in his eye, responded, "I am building a cathedral".

That describes Mike. The plan may call for a closet. Mike treats it as a cathedral. He treats each person as if the project is a \$10 million international project. He is a man of service, he is a person of integrity, and he is a servant leader.

No better person could receive the Public Service Award.



Sincerely,

Sister Maureen Burke, SND, EdD  
President  
Saint John School  
7911 Depot Road  
Ashtabula, OH 44004  
440-997-5531  
[mburke@sjheralds.org](mailto:mburke@sjheralds.org)



Letter of Support | Extended Housing



270 E. Main Street, Suite 300 • Painesville, OH 44077  
Phone: 440.352.8424 • Cleveland: 440.942.9441 • Fax: 440.352.8421  
www.extendedhousing.org

June 10, 2021

AIA Ohio Awards Committee  
17 S. High Street, Suite 200  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: AIA Ohio Public Service Award Letter of Nomination Michael Crislip, AIA

Dear Jury Members:

It is an honor and privilege to recommend Michael Crislip for the AIA Ohio Public Service Award! I have worked with Mike Crislip for seven years and am grateful for his work with our non-profit group, Extended Housing, Inc.

The mission of Extended Housing, Inc. is to prevent and end homelessness for individuals in Lake County with serious mental illness. As such, we provide homeless outreach, rental subsidies, and own/develop rental properties. In 2013, we moved into a four-story office building that we purchased. It needed many capital improvements. Mike was instrumental in providing pro-bono architectural services for the complete remodel of the entire first floor. In addition, he worked with me to hire the contractor and work with our soon to be new tenant. Mike's friendly, warm, and stabilizing nature was truly a Godsend for me during this time. Since then, Mike has continued to work with us, including donating his services on projects such as our office building addition, new elevator, repurposing of the old elevator, and most recently installing automatic front doors on the building.

Mike has a way of making his philanthropic service seem effortless, such as his outstanding tenure as Board Member and Board President of Crossroads Health where he has and continues to positively lead them through various growth and change. You know he believes in others and it really shows. I believe Mike Crislip is one of the main reasons for Crossroads' success as a thriving nonprofit agency.

Please know that your choice for Mike for this highly prestigious award would be an authentic decision!

Sincerely,

Karen B. McLeod  
Executive Director



A home. A hand. A fresh start.

Letter of Support | Forbes House

P.O. Box 702 • Painesville, OH 44077



Tel: 440-357-7321 • Fax: 440-392-0012

June 10, 2021

AIA Ohio  
400 W. Wilson Bridge Road, Ste. 120  
Worthington, Ohio 43085

Re: Letter of Support for Mike Crislip

Dear Nominating Committee:

I am happy to have the opportunity to share with you the tremendous impact one individual can have on an entire community. I don't believe in coincidences and meeting Mike Crislip is one of the many blessings of my life. He is one of the most generous people I know. Philanthropy is part of his nature as Mike not only is generous with monetary contributions but also generous in giving his time and talents. He is willing to coach and offers levity during tough times. This is a man who makes a difference just by being present. He is quietly confident, reliable, analytical, aspiring and inspiring to all. Mike never says a cross word about anyone. He has extreme patience, acts with grace and is simply someone I admire. We should all move through the world like Mike, leaving it better than how he found it. Mike enhances and improves any project or partnership he is part of which almost always means his community is better off because of it. I am writing in support of the nomination of Mike Crislip for the AIA Ohio's Public Service Award. I have known Mike for many years through my work at Crossroads Health and his work on that Board of Directors.

In 2019, I became the Executive Director of Lake County's only domestic abuse shelter, Forbes House. My new agency was in the midst of a relocation and renovation project that was initially halted due to the leadership transition but then was stalled due to issues with project management, strategy, and most importantly, funding. Mike Crislip was the first person who came to mind to help!

In need of someone to facilitate moving the project forward and who would provide me with sound advice, I reached out to Mike and explained the circumstances. In my very first phone conversation with Mike, not only did he reassure me that I was moving in the right direction, but offered his services to visit the property of the relocation and assist me in designing a structure that would optimize every square foot for shelter living. This was no small feat, and took many hours of Mike's time to make sure Forbes House used the space to the best of its needs. From Mike's initial designs and recommendations, Forbes House has continued to move forward with completing its dream of relocating to a newly renovated building and providing a safe haven for survivors of domestic violence. The volume of work, the troublesome nature of what was inherited wasn't enough for a man who is as driven and caring as Mike! He is what this award was created for! His spirit, his effort, his desire to make a difference and he has over and over!

Mike has remained a committed friend of Forbes House and supports us wholeheartedly with his participation in every fundraiser and event Forbes House hosts. As a non-profit who depends solely on our donors, Mike is priceless. He has a great passion for his community and civic work and works tirelessly to make his community the best it can be. The success that Forbes House has and will continue to have will be because of Mike Crislip's commitment to serve those in need as he always has an outstretched hand to help and I can honestly say we would have never been able to do it without him! It's an honor and pleasure to recommend Mike Crislip for the AIA Ohio's Public Service Award.

Sincerely,

Kathy D. Strancar  
Executive Director  
kstrancar@forbeshouse.org



This agency is an equal provider of services and an equal opportunity employer  
serving the community for over 30 years.