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# Crain's honors three exceptional Wayne State fundraising leaders



Three Wayne State University philanthropy leaders have been named 2023 Notable Leaders in Fundraising by Crain's Detroit Business.

Receiving the honor are Heidi Coates, senior associate vice president for the Office of Business Engagement and Strategic Partnerships; Denise Lewis, director on the Wayne State University Foundation Board; and Danielle Manley, senior director of strategic partnerships for the Office of Economic Development and TechTown Detroit. The

They were selected for their contributions to elevating philanthropy at the university and in Detroit, and for their ability to help Wayne State's campus better reflect the community it serves.

## Heidi Coates

For the last 36 years, Heidi Coates has served as an executive leader in the nonprofit sector. Throughout that time, she collaborated with numerous volunteers and community organizations and engaged staff to raise more than \$260 million for environmental, arts and higher education causes.



Heidi Coates

In her current role, Coates is responsible for collaborating with the president, key leaders and staff to establish and implement strategies that foster relationships and gain philanthropic support from local and global businesses, corporations, foundations, agencies and other organizations to further the university's urban-serving teaching and research missions.

Coates also gives back to the community through volunteerism and mentorship. She advocates emphatically for diversity, equity and inclusion at Wayne State, and she served on the university's Social Justice Action Committee.

"Heidi Coates brings talent and passion to whatever she does," said David Ripple, vice president of development and alumni affairs at Wayne State and president of the Wayne State University Foundation. "Since joining Wayne State's development team in 2012, she has transformed corporate and foundation relations and is poised to have an even greater impact in her new role. Her work has made the university and the city of Detroit stronger."

## Denise Lewis

and vice chair of the McGregor Fund. Lauded for her civic and philanthropic leadership, Lewis led these organizations during periods of successful transition and critical change in strategic direction.

Lewis is a long-time advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion in leadership positions, believing there is significant untapped potential within traditionally marginalized communities. She is also an integral part of the Wayne State University Foundation Board, chairing the Committee on Directors and serving on the Investment Committee. Through her focus on membership diversity, innovation and social mobility, she has increased the university's engagement with the board, driving its growth and increasing the university's endowment.



Denise Lewis

“Wayne State is proud of its relationship with Ms. Lewis,” said Ripple. “Her role on our Foundation Board is marked by asking tough questions, challenging ideas and driving impactful decisions. She consistently wants to do more, and her decades of work in the city has resulted in an astounding impact on Detroit.”

## Danielle Manley

Danielle Manley focuses on inspiring the city's philanthropic community to financially support a more equitable economy. In Manley's time with the Office of Economic Development and TechTown, she has launched and grown an annual fund of individual donors who believe — as she does — that everyone can play a role in building a community where entrepreneurs have economic opportunities to provide great lives for themselves, their families and their communities. She led nearly a 400% increase in the university's fundraising production by adding new donors and diversifying funding, and in just the past two years, she has secured more than \$16 million in federal awards.



Danielle Manley

currently leading the board composition component of TechTown’s five-year equity goals and is on pace to achieve representation of 51% women, 51% Detroit residents, and 75% Black, Indigenous and people of color within the board and the executive committee.

“I’m a Detroiter by choice, which, for me, means I make a daily commitment to actively and boldly participate in the growth and prosperity of the city and its residents,” Manley said. “As a first-generation college graduate, I’m living proof that the opportunity to earn a college degree has a positive, lifelong impact on social and economic mobility. It’s my great honor

to support others as they pursue a path to their own version of greatness.”

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