



## **Brain Gain – White Paper**

### **Introduction**

Over the past 20 years, Cuyahoga County has lost approximately 140,000 residents—nearly 10 percent of its population. Many people blame this loss on so-called “brain drain.” However, in today’s fast-paced, technology-driven world, people are mobile. Recognizing this allows us to change our focus and ask a different question: How can Cuyahoga County become a destination for the world’s increasingly mobile citizens? By opening our county’s arms to immigrants, increasing access to post-secondary educational options, and creating a coherent marketing message, we can create “brain gain” and forget talk of “brain drain.”

### **Immigration/Migration**

Cuyahoga County’s population grew through the 1960s, driven largely by migrants. Today, Cuyahoga County’s foreign-born population comprises approximately 7 percent of the total population, compared to 13 percent nationally. Cuyahoga County was once a place where people seeking the American dream came to realize that dream—either from abroad or here in the United States. As a councilperson, Phil will advocate for the types of policies that will once again make Cuyahoga County an attractive place for anyone seeking opportunity.

Phil will promote creating the partnerships necessary to make the much-discussed immigrant welcome center a success. This will require building the relationships among the county’s various governmental, business, non-profit, educational, and faith organizations. Together, we can create a one-stop center that acts as a beacon orienting new Ohioans to Cuyahoga County. This center would serve as a clearinghouse to connect new Northeast Ohioans to social and immigrant services, as well as provide various community information and guidance.

### **Cuyahoga Hope**

Access to a college education has become increasingly restricted over the past decade, with tuition fees increasing at an average of 3-5 percent annually. These increases continue to make college the dream of all, but the reality of the few. As we seek to make this region more economically competitive and attractive for businesses, we must act to bridge this access gap. We must make higher education a reality for all who seek it.

As a county councilman, Phil will advocate for the creation of a county-wide scholarship program for Cuyahoga County high school graduates to attend public universities in the state of Ohio. This program would be modeled after Michigan’s “Kalamazoo Promise” program, which provides scholarships in varying

amounts for students who attend and graduate from the Kalamazoo public school system and pursue post-secondary educational options. This type of scholarship program has the potential to be a brain gain catalyst in our county. In collaboration with local foundations, businesses, and residents, we can achieve this goal.

### **Cleveland Marketing Plan**

Though Cleveland is not included within District 11, it is the hub of our county and we all share its fortunes. Thus, we must work collectively to promote the physical and economical health of Cleveland. One way we can do this is to create a unified marketing plan for Cleveland that will increase interest in our region, step up tourism, and ultimately draw residents to settle here.

Cleveland is a city of world-class attractions, whether it's the unique perspective of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the top-notch performances at Severance Hall, or the beloved Cleveland Browns of the National Football League. Now is the time to let the world know about all of the wonderful social, cultural, recreational, and educational attractions that are available in Cleveland. As a councilperson, Phil will work with the new administration, the City of Cleveland, and organizations such as Positively Cleveland, to create a marketing plan for the city of Cleveland that promotes these features to the world and makes Cleveland not only a tourist destination, but a potential home high on the list of any prospective new Ohioan.

By attracting and keeping talent in our region through welcoming new arrivals, providing for higher education, and promoting our region to the world, we'll once again grow our region and create a vibrant, thriving community for years to come.

Friends for Phil Robinson



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