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## Danae Davis retiring from Milwaukee Succeeds

### *Ignites next-gen leaders around collective action in educational equity*

**Milwaukee, Wis., July 28, 2022** – Danae Davis, Milwaukee Succeeds executive director, has announced she will retire in late fall 2022 after leading the communitywide initiative since 2015. Part of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Milwaukee Succeeds supports a vision of cradle-to-career success that's centered on racial equity, community voice and changing systems.

Greater Milwaukee Foundation CEO and president Ellen Gilligan lauded Davis's vision and leadership. During her tenure, Milwaukee Succeeds was able to align philanthropic support through a Funder's Collaborative supporting equitable educational outcomes in our community, as well as establish a collaborative leadership structure resulting in positive impact for children and families.

"Milwaukee Succeeds has added tremendous value to the Milwaukee community and will continue to do so as an embedded initiative of the Foundation focused heavily on early childhood education and centering young Black and Brown leaders in developing solutions for systems change in education," Gilligan said. "I am grateful that Danae's leadership has put Milwaukee Succeeds and the importance of education on the map locally and nationally with Strive Together, our national network partner."

Davis helped ensure that principles of anti-racism and community empowerment are central in Milwaukee Succeeds' current strategic focus on early childhood education and high school success.

"The Milwaukee Succeeds' collective impact model is an anchor and example to the community for how to bring people together within a sector to build effective systems, in this case from cradle-to-career," said Jackie Herd-Barber, former co-chair of Milwaukee Succeeds. "I am grateful for Danae's passion to bring education equity to all children in Milwaukee."

During the pandemic, Davis oversaw the development of the MKE Early Childhood Education Coalition that continues to be a force for building more equitable systems within the sector. This collaborative approach helped Milwaukee providers stay open, keep staff employed and safely serve children. Nearly half of Milwaukee providers reported they would have closed without support for which the coalition successfully advocated. This included:

- Securing \$7 million from city of Milwaukee American Rescue Plan Act funds supporting the early childhood education workforce
- Informing \$46 million in state investment to keep providers safely open and serving families
- Advocating for \$29 million in the state budget to increase Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy rates statewide

Gilligan congratulates Davis for her commitment to building a shared leadership model that has brought many results to community. She says the Foundation is developing a transition plan to

continue Milwaukee Succeeds' impact, and that she will appoint a special committee to conduct a local search for Davis's successor.

"I am proud of the positive influence Milwaukee Succeeds has advanced as an asset and embedded initiative within the Greater Milwaukee Foundation along with strategic partners in educational equity," Davis said, "The future is bright. Milwaukee Succeeds continues to evolve as a partnership model for systems transformation, capable of changing outcomes for Black and Brown children, youth and families. It's time to hand over the baton to the next generation in this civic, collective action work by further supporting those with lived experiences as they assume their rightful places as leaders in this community."

Learn more about Milwaukee Succeeds at [milwaukeesucceeds.org](https://milwaukeesucceeds.org).

#### **About the Greater Milwaukee Foundation**

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation is Wisconsin's largest community foundation and was among the first established in the world. For more than a century, the Foundation has been at the heart of the civic community, helping donors achieve the greatest philanthropic impact, elevating the work of changemakers across neighborhoods, and bringing people and organizations together to help our region thrive. Racial equity is the Foundation's North Star, guiding its investments and strategies for social and economic change. Leveraging generations of community knowledge, cross-sector partnerships and more than \$1 billion in financial assets, the Foundation is committed to reimagining philanthropy, recentering communities and remaking systems to transform our region into a Milwaukee for all.

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