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Immediate Release

Hundreds of Child Advocates Gather **Thursday** for Michele Corey Child Advocacy Summit *Michigan's Children Hosts First-Time Event to Boost Grassroots Advocacy in State*

LANSING – Nearly 300 child and family advocates – the unsung she-roes and heroes of communities across Michigan – are coming to Lansing **Thursday, April 27, 2023**, for the first [Michele Corey Child Advocacy Summit](#), an event designed to celebrate, inspire, and provide advocacy training for positive policy changes for the state's children.

Sponsored by [Michigan's Children](#), the day-long networking and training event begins at 10 a.m. at Lansing's Radisson Hotel with a keynote address from President & CEO **Angelique Power of The Skillman Foundation**. It continues with multiple panel conversations on topics including: how child and family advocates can run for office, navigating the legislative process, talking to lawmakers, working with the media, building effective messages and talking points, and empowering youth to influence advocacy groups with their experiences.

The program features 36 panelists and speakers from top Michigan advocacy groups and foundations, Lansing-based lobbying firms, the media and communications experts. The expert voices presented include young adults who experienced foster care, homelessness, and the juvenile justice system and are now leading efforts to improve those systems in Michigan.

The event is named in recognition of Michigan's Children's long-serving vice president Michele Corey, who passed away in 2021. Corey was a nationally sought-after and celebrated policy expert and advocate for improvements to the state's early childhood system, foster care and child welfare, juvenile justice, adult education, kinship care and family economic stability. A roundtable discussion titled *Friendspeak: The Legacy of Child Advocacy Michele Corey* will discuss her dedication to organizational development, program system building, and inspiring new advocates. Four significant and accomplished Michigan advocates will round out the panel, led by former **Michigan's Children President & CEO Sharon Claytor Peters**, and share stories detailing how today's grassroots advocates can learn from her experiences as an effective advocate and activist for change.

"Michele was a passionate and successful champion for the children in our state, known for her policy acumen, and for her ability to empower grassroots advocates to lift up their voices before lawmakers and policymakers," Michigan's Children President & CEO Matt Gillard said. "She was a keen observer of the human experience, and fierce defender of the most vulnerable children of Michigan."

During the summit, Michigan's Children will honor four young advocates from southeast Michigan and northern Michigan **Emerging Star Award** and **Rising Star Award** recipients. They have been selected for their exceptional advocacy work on behalf of children, youth and families in Michigan.

"We often say, kids don't have high-priced lobbyists or super PACs but they do have us. In Michele's memory, we've created a tangible tribute to community activists and advocates who are working hard to make Michigan a better and more equitable place for children, youth, and families to realize their dreams," Michigan's Children's Director of Programs Teri Banas said. "Strengthening Michigan's network of grassroots advocates to improve the odds for all children is why this summit was created."

Michigan's Children is most grateful to contributors: [the Annie E. Casey Foundation](#), [Blue Cross Blue Shield](#), [The Kalamazoo Community Foundation](#), [the Early On Michigan Foundation](#), [the Ethel and James Flinn Foundation](#), [Peckham Inc.](#), [Children Trust Michigan](#), and [the Michigan Adult, Community and Alternative Education Association](#).



Michigan's Children is an independent voice working to reduce disparities in child outcomes from cradle through career through policy change. It has served to improve the odds for all children and families in Michigan for more than 25 years.