



2016 SECOND ACT WINNER

Daughter of Holocaust survivors grew up with great expectations

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Nikki Kingery Projects Editor *Cincinnati Business Courier*



• [Darlene Kamine](#) is executive director of the Community Learning Center Institute.

What was your first job? Children's counselor at a summer resort

What do you wish you had known before you changed careers? How much I didn't know.

How do you think your co-workers would describe you? Short.

Best book you've read recently? "Hillbilly Elegy" by J.D. Vance.

What's the simplest thing you never learned to do? Ice skate.

If you could trade jobs with anyone for a day, who would it be ? I would love to be the president of the United States for a day. My parents were Holocaust survivors who came to this country shortly before I was born and they always said that they wanted to be sure that I was born here so I could be president of the United States. I heard it so often that I assumed this would be my job when I grew up.

What do you think is Cincinnati's best-kept secret? [Cincinnati Public Schools'](#) community learning centers. We are the national model for places like NYC and Philadelphia. Oylar Community Learning Center in Lower Price Hill was the subject of a yearlong program on Marketplace as well as an award-winning documentary film. Since the adoption of community learning centers as the paradigm for schools in Cincinnati, CPS has been the highest-performing large urban school district in the state, and we are one of the few urban public school systems in the country that is growing and bringing the middle class back.

What's the best advice you've ever received? My dad believed that life was worth living if you could be useful to at least one person. He loved his work and was happily working until the day he died.

Favorite vacation destination? South Haven, Mich.

What local organization, aside from your own, do you most admire? ProKids. Their extraordinary staff leads an army of hundreds of remarkable volunteers who work through the difficult issues of child abuse and foster care to ensure the safety, stability and well-being of our city's most vulnerable children. In 2016, 99 percent of the 757 children they represented were free from abuse and neglect.

If you had \$100,000 to give to charity, which would you choose and why? The Community Learning Center Institute. Our team is leveraging millions of dollars in partnerships with CPS schools to create the conditions necessary for children from birth to college to thrive and succeed. Anchored by our community learning centers, we are also leading the revitalization of neighborhoods with the redevelopment of housing, job creation and quality of life.

What scares you? That I will run out of time to finish what needs to be done. We have so much more to do to ensure that every child has the same opportunities and the same joy that we would want for our own child.

Is there something people might be surprised to learn about you? I lived in Alaska.