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2022 Walter Kaitz Foundation Dinner Celebrates Moving Forward + Together

WASHINGTON, DC – October 13, 2022 - The media and entertainment industry gathered at the New York Marriott Marquis in Times Square Wednesday evening to celebrate progress and to collectively look towards a future of inclusion and belonging. The event, which serves as the capstone of *Diversity Week*, took place in-person for the first time since 2019, under the theme *forward + together*. The theme focused on a renewed energy and movement around inclusion and equity with a keen focus on social justice, gender and racial equity, and requisite change.

This year's Kaitz Dinner raised over **\$1.1 Million** that will fund programs that support leadership and professional development for women, diverse professionals, and students in media and entertainment. The funds enable the nonprofit organization to support grantee organizations that include the Emma L. Bowen Foundation, the National Association for Multi-ethnicity in Communications (NAMIC), the T. Howard Foundation, and The WICT Network (WICT).

The Dinner was attended by nearly 500 guests representing 70 companies and organizations. The event was hosted by Emmy-Award Winning journalist, **Shaun Robinson**, and featured entertainment provided by spoken-word artist Najee Omar, and Filipino-American brother-sister duo **Elisha** and **Marco Soronio**.

During the dinner, the Walter Kaitz Foundation presented its inaugural **ChangeMaker Awards**, marking the end of the Foundation's legacy Diversity Advocate and Diversity Champion Awards and ushering in a new focus on the significant contributions of individuals, groups, organizations, or content creators that have, over the course of the past year, generated significant impact and resonance around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Human-I-T was recognized in the category of Social Impact. The non-profit and social enterprise, co-founded by former computer repair technicians **Gabe Middleton** and **James Jack**, works to create equitable access to opportunity by providing connected devices, internet access, digital skills training, and tech support for communities left on the wrong side of the digital divide. Human-I-T empowers businesses and organizations to do good by diverting their unwanted technology equipment, including personal computers, laptops, tablets, and WiFi hotspots, from landfills into the hands of low-income families and individuals, students, veterans, senior citizens, recently arrived immigrants, and other targeted communities.

Daisy Auger-Domínguez was presented the ChangeMaker Award for Individual Leadership. Daisy is an accomplished executive and dynamic leader widely recognized for her ability to drive organizational transformations on the leading edge of culture. As Chief People Officer at Vice Media Group, Daisy leads a global team responsible for people operations and culture, diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, corporate facilities, and environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG). She recently authored *Inclusion Revolution*, a practical, inspiring roadmap for building and growing equitable workplaces.

The Foundation's Executive Director, **Michelle Ray**, welcomed guests and offered "We are reliant on each other. We can and will make progress only if we move forward but we **MUST** do it together."

The 2022 Dinner Committee was comprised of **Phil Spencer**, *Chief Executive Officer*, Vyve Broadband, **Phil McKinney**, *Chief Executive Officer*, CableLabs®, **Mark Greatrex**, *President & Chief Executive Officer*, Cox Communications, Inc., **Kathleen Finch**, *Chief Content Officer*, US Networks Warner Bros. Discovery, and **John Evans**, *Chief Executive Officer*, Evans Communications Company.

Michael Powell, *President and CEO* of NCTA – The Internet and Television Association, delivered moving remarks that focused on the importance of inclusion in programming. Reflecting on the impact of representation in content and citing Disney’s upcoming release of the *Little Mermaid* movie starring Halle Bailey, Powell stated, “It does make all the difference in the world.” Powell also thanked Michelle Ray for her years of impactful leadership as she plans to step down from the role of Executive Director this December.

The 2023 Kaitz Dinner will take place in New York City at the Marriott Marquis on September 20, 2023.

Though the Dinner is behind us, you still can show your support for the Foundation and its critical work. You may use this [link](#) to make your individual contribution to this year's annual fundraising drive, which will continue through December 31, 2022.

About The Walter Kaitz Foundation

The Walter Kaitz Foundation advances diversity, equity and inclusion in the media and entertainment. The Foundation provides targeted grants to organizations, supports vital industry research that promotes diversity and inclusion in the workforce and collaborates with key stakeholders on the curation and presentation of diverse content. The Foundation also develops unique programs and initiatives designed to educate and facilitate collaboration between partners and benefactors that align with its mission. Learn more at <https://www.walterkaitz.org>

About Human-I-T

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About Daisy Auger-Domínguez

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