



## The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

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# Weinberg Foundation Promotes Aaron Merki to Role of Chief Program Officer

He Most Recently Served as Managing Director, Programs and Grants

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Baltimore (September 27, 2021) – The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation today announced the promotion of Aaron Merki to the role of chief program officer.

Mr. Merki has led the program team in distributing approximately \$130 million in annual grants, all focused on improving the lives of people experiencing poverty in the United States and Israel. Under his leadership, the Foundation has prioritized strategic and collaborative approaches to grantmaking focused on achieving measurable impacts within the communities the Foundation serves. He has also overseen the streamlining of the Foundation’s grantmaking to four core focus areas—Housing, Health, Jobs, and Education—enabling the Foundation to focus greater resources on select funding priorities and initiatives.

“In addition to his impressive accomplishments, Aaron has been a dedicated colleague and partner, and the Foundation is delighted to acknowledge his commitment to excellence in this way,” said

Rachel Garbow Monroe, Weinberg Foundation President and CEO. “He has worked tirelessly to advance the grant work of the Foundation in meaningful ways, and I welcome and trust his good judgment and practical approaches to complex challenges. It is truly a pleasure to work with Aaron.”

Mr. Merki previously served as a program director at the Foundation and was responsible for grantmaking focused on aging and older adult services, which is now included under the Foundation’s Housing and Health portfolios. In that role, he helped lead the expansion of Housing Upgrades to Benefit Seniors (HUBS) in Baltimore City, a collaboration of nonprofits, city government, and philanthropy to enable low-income older adult homeowners to remain independent by providing home modifications and repairs, occupational therapy, and wraparound services. To date, the Foundation has invested \$9.3 million in this initiative, which has enabled more than 2,500 older adults to age in place.

Before coming to the Weinberg Foundation, Mr. Merki served as the executive director of FreeState Justice, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of Maryland’s LGBTQ citizens through legal

services and advocacy. From 2010-2013, he worked as a corporate litigator at Venable LLP where he represented a range of Fortune 500 companies, in addition to smaller businesses and individuals. From 2008-2009, he clerked for the Honorable Judge Susan K. Gauvey of the United States District Court for Maryland. Mr. Merki earned his J.D. from the University of Maryland School of Law and his B.A. in Political Science from the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), Phi Beta Kappa, where he was a Walter Sondheim Public Affairs Scholar. Other past and present leadership roles include service on the boards of Grantmakers in Aging, the Public Justice Center, The Journey Home, and FreeState Justice.

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**About The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation:** *The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private charitable foundations in the United States, is dedicated to meeting the basic needs of people experiencing poverty. The Foundation provides approximately \$130 million each year in total grant activity supporting nonprofits that provide direct services in the areas of Housing, Health, Jobs, Education, and Community Services. The Foundation's priority communities include Baltimore, Chicago, Hawai'i, Israel, New York City, Northeastern Pennsylvania, San Francisco, and Rural Communities (primarily rural areas within proximity to priority communities). The Foundation's trustees are Ambassador Fay Hartog-Levin (Ret.), Chair; Robert T. Kelly, Jr.; Paula B. Pretlow; Gordon Berlin; and Nimrod Goor. Rachel Garbow Monroe serves as President and CEO. For more information, please visit [www.hjweinbergfoundation.org](http://www.hjweinbergfoundation.org).*