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Towards Employment Announces Promotion of Adaora Nzelibe Schmiedl to Interim Executive Vice President and Crain's Recognition as a Notable Leader in Communication

CLEVELAND, OH — October 26, 2026 — Towards Employment (TE) is pleased to announce the promotion of Adaora Nzelibe Schmiedl to Interim Executive Vice President, coinciding with her selection as one of *Crain's Cleveland Business's 2026 Notable Leaders in Communications*.

Schmiedl, previously TE's Chief Advancement and Community Engagement Officer, has been instrumental in expanding the organization's visibility, philanthropic support, and community partnerships. Her accomplishments include helping lead the successful completion of TE's Chance to Advance Capacity Campaign, securing a $2 million gift from MacKenzie Scott's Yield Giving, and elevating the organization's voice and impact across Northeast Ohio.

In her expanded role, Schmiedl will provide executive leadership across advancement and philanthropy, marketing and communications, government relations, community engagement, organizational partnerships, and strategic initiatives. She will also help guide TE through its leadership transition and upcoming strategic planning process.

"Adaora brings a powerful combination of strategic vision, creativity, and deep community relationships," said Tania Menesse, CEO of Towards Employment. "Her ability to build partnerships, attract transformative investments, and tell the stories of our mission has helped position TE for continued success. Her promotion and recognition by Crain's are both well deserved, and I am excited to have her leadership as we shape the organization's next chapter."

The announcements come during TE's 50th anniversary year, which included its most successful fundraising event in organizational history. Schmiedl helped lead the celebration, raising more than $430,000 to support TE's mission.

"I am honored by this recognition and the opportunity to take on an expanded leadership role," said Schmiedl. "I believe in the power of relationships, storytelling, and community partnerships to create meaningful change. I look forward to working alongside Tania and our talented team to build on 50 years of impact and expand opportunities for the people and communities we serve."

Schmiedl's recognition will appear in the October 26 edition of *Crain's Cleveland Business*.

About Towards Employment

Founded in 1976, Towards Employment champions the potential of every person to succeed in a rewarding career while strengthening policies that create pathways to opportunity for all workers. TE serves more than 2,000 individuals annually through career training, coaching, supportive services, employer partnerships, and advocacy.
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