

Gerald Driggs

Gerald Driggs is the founder and managing partner of Ground Floor Solutions (GFS), a Pittsburgh-based firm specializing in creating, implementing, and sustaining social enterprise ventures. He brings this skill set to GFS customers as a senior partner assisting each organization in converting innovative ideas into financially sustainable initiatives with maximum social impact.

He is an experienced social entrepreneur with over forty years of success implementing innovative and sustainable ventures and social enterprises with local, statewide, regional, and national impact. He has worked with more than 100 nonprofit organizations with ventures ranging from high-tech application development companies to community development corporations, social innovation accelerators, dozens of social service agencies, and various public/private partnerships. In addition, he has extensive management experience building collaborative efforts serving the public and private sectors.

Over four decades, he and his business partners have pioneered a diverse portfolio of ventures and initiatives. They broke ground with a company called *The NetWorks*. It was an online information service bureau (pre-Internet and pre-PCs) that created a variety of services, including (1) an international petroleum spot pricing service and weekly magazine for the petroleum industry (*PetroSpot News*); (2) a rate tracking service and mortgage matching service for home buyers and Realtors (*Mortgage Match*); (3) the first online legislative and regulatory tracking service in Pennsylvania (*PA DataQuick*); and (4) a computer service bureau for state and national associations.

Next, he led the team that created the first automated claims processing service that enabled the PA Department of Education to generate Medicaid reimbursements (*PDE ACCESS*) for medically necessary services provided by local school districts (LEAs) to special education students. Since its inception, it was replicated nationally and has generated over \$1.5 billion in reimbursements for school districts serving more than 3 million children with special needs.

His groundbreaking company, the Corporation for Standards & Outcomes, partnered with the Pressley Ridge Foundation, a Pittsburgh nonprofit organization, to produce the country's first online outcome management system for social service agencies. The model was a social enterprise success. So much so that it was purchased by a considerable managed care behavioral health organization generating a significant financial return (\$3 return for \$1 invested) for the Pressley Ridge Foundation and setting national outcome management precedents.

His next venture was a partnership with Droz & Associates, which created the *Institute for Marketing Accountability*. They worked with Symbol Technologies to introduce Symbol's hand-held scanning technology into a viable in-store tool for grocery store customers to shop and purchase items based on their loyalty program preferences. This innovation led to the current systems used in Giant Eagle and other major grocery chains. Additional clients included *Family Communications* with Fred Rogers, prominent Pittsburgh law firms, and Fiserve Financial Services.

Gerald also directed the Pittsburgh-based Social Innovation Accelerator, a social impact firm with a portfolio of 40 nonprofit social enterprise ventures. Each venture was managed to maximize social impact, create and implement growth strategies, and leverage existing assets. **Ground Floor Solutions** was later formed to provide more in-depth support for a wide range of start-up ventures that included (1) eco-fashion manufacturing; (2) combustion technology to turn waste plastic into clean fuel; (3) aquaponics and solar-powered lights for developing countries; (4) a community-based music venue called The Bridge Music Hall; and (5) an online expert knowledge system, *V2V Matrix*, to turn NPO's intangible intellectual assets into tangible revenue-producing services generating maximum social impact.

Currently, Gerald has three priorities. They include (1) the redevelopment and repurposing of blighted properties in river towns in Allegheny County with an emphasis on the Upper Allegheny Valley; (2) the use of wireless and fiber broadband to serve under-resourced communities in southwestern PA; and (3) several redevelopment projects in Pittsburgh's Hill District, the Larimer Community, and rural Westmoreland County through the Food21 nonprofit organization. He's lived in Pittsburgh for 30 years, where he and his wife Deborah raised their two children and are now proud and happy grandparents.