



2020

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Wednesday, September 9, 2020



# WHAT IS POSSIBLE?

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At Synthomer Foundation, we understand that the potential to improve outcomes relies upon a solid foundation of education, creativity and innovative problem solving.

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*Congrats to all the 2020 Employees of Distinction who have gone above and beyond!*



**Wednesday, September 9, 2020**

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Thank you for participating in the 19th Annual Employee of Distinction Awards program.

We are pleased to honor the shining stars nominated by local employers.

As a workforce leader, Goodwill recognizes all the honorees as outstanding role models for area employees, including the people we serve.

Goodwill's mission is straightforward – to help individuals prepare for, find and retain employment. Our mission not only helps people, but it improves and strengthens the region's overall workforce and economy.

Our ability to continue Goodwill's mission is made possible by the support of the community, sponsors and individuals. We are pleased you could join us today and thank you for the generous support!

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## **Agenda**

### **2020 Employee of Distinction Awards**

**Welcome** – Ray Horner, Radio Personality, WAKR

**Introduction** – Chip Clupper, Chair, Board of Directors, Goodwill Industries

**Introduction of Speaker** – Chris Canova, Executive Director, Jobs for Ohio's Graduates

**Keynote Speaker** – Teresa R. LeGrais, President & CEO, Akron Urban League

**Introduction of Honoree Portion of Program** – Chrissy Myers, Director & CEO, AUI

**Introduction of Honorees & Winners** – Ray Horner

**Closing Remarks** – Nan McClenaghan, President & CEO, Goodwill Industries

## ***Round of applause for all the Employee of Distinction nominees!***

Thank you for going above and beyond to make a difference in our community. A special congratulations to Alice, Paulette and Mendy for being honored.



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AUI

Jobs for Ohio's Graduates

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akronlife

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Thank you for  
making today the  
day that makes a  
world of  
difference.



We're proud to support Goodwill serving Summit, Portage, Medina, Ashland, and Richland Counties for driving the change that makes each day better than the one before.

Contact **Brigid Hillmuth**, Senior Vice President, Commercial Banking  
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★ ★

## **Teresa R. LeGrair**

### **President & CEO, Akron Urban League**

★



Teresa LeGrair serves as President & CEO of the Akron Urban League where the mission is to improve the quality of life of the citizens of Summit County, particularly African Americans, by advocating and facilitating programs that are economically and educationally transformational, impacting their lives and lives of future generations.

She previously served the Akron Community Foundation and also as President & CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Western Reserve. Teresa has served the Akron community in many capacities over the course of her career, and prior to joining the Akron Urban League and the Boys & Girls Clubs, she served as Vice President of Programs and Member Services for the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank. Teresa

also served in leadership roles as Vice President of Operations at the Akron Urban League and as Executive Director of Human Resources and Director of Guest Services for the National Inventors Hall of Fame. Prior to working for the past 25 years in the non-profit arena, she spent 16 years with Aetna Health Plans in various and progressive roles of responsibility. Teresa holds her Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from Malone University and is a graduate of Leadership Akron, Class XXIV. Her current board and committee involvement include, Greater Akron Chamber's Opportunity & Inclusion Committee, Commissioner on the Akron City Planning Commission, Akron Art Museum Board of Directors, ATHENA Akron Board Secretary, member of the Summa Cancer Institute Leadership Advisory Council and the Summa Healing Arts Leadership Advisory Council. Prior board and community involvement include, ConxusNEO, Heart to Heart Communications Board of Directors, Junior Leadership Akron Co-Chair, N.E.X.T. Program Day Chair for Leadership Akron, UW Dorothy O. Jackson Leadership Society, Character Counts Board, United Way Basic Needs Council and Public Policy Committee and the LeBron James King for Kids Bike-a-Thon. She was the prior award recipient of the Akron Black Women's Leadership Caucus Award, Akron Urban League's Woman of Power Award, Moving Beyond Hope Mover and Shaker Award and a finalist for the ATHENA International Leadership Award. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She has three adult sons and one granddaughter.

★ ★



# CAN'T FIT THE CAR IN THE GARAGE?



## REMEMBER GOODWILL

W3 Financial Group salutes Goodwill Industries and the Employees of Distinction Honorees for building a brighter future for many in the Greater Akron Community. Bring Good Home.



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## 2020 Employee of Distinction Honorees



### Monique Allen

Career Specialist  
**Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOG)**

Nominated by: *Pamela Crombie,*  
*Program Manager*

"Monique has made a difference at JOG, and has positively impacted her students. Her skills, knowledge, willingness to help others and being a team player deserves the Employee of Distinction Award."

### AUI Customer Service Team

**Paulette Lewis**  
**Mendy Snyder**

Customer Support Specialists  
**AUI**

Nominated by: *Chrissy Myers, CEO*

"This team goes above and beyond every day answering questions and solving problems that may seem overwhelming to our clients on their own."

### Brandon Berens

AVP Financial Center Manager  
**Fifth Third Bank**

Nominated by: *Nick Jennings,*  
*VP Regional Manager*

"Brandon never shies away from tackling tough challenges, whether its training new bankers to the region or rolling up his sleeves and providing financial relief for our small business clients throughout the market by helping them apply for SBA loans."

### Tammy Bigler

Employment Quality Assurance Manager  
**VANTAGE Aging**

Nominated by: *Kate Harkin,*  
*Director of SCSEP*

"It is impossible to overstate the contributions Tammy has provided to the SCSEP program and its staff. Her knowledge and skills are critical to the program!"

### Mario Bob

Warehouse Supervisor  
**Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank**

Nominated by: *Dan Flowers, CEO*

"Mario is an extraordinary leader, popular among his people and all of our staff. His leadership had been courageous, rock solid, critical and exemplary during our COVID-19 response."

### Brandon Boling

Docket Clerk  
**Brennan Manna Diamond (BMD)**

Nominated by: *Jennifer Shankleton,*  
*Director of Marketing*

"Having joined the BMD family almost 2 years ago, Brandon's growth has been ever so apparent. With a drive to learn new things and always bringing what could only be described as a can-do attitude, Brandon has established a positive presence within the firm. Brandon's development at BMD has been noticed by all levels of the firm and he truly is a rising star. Given any opportunity he consistently shines and will brighten everyone's day with his upbeat attitude."

### Jen Brenner

Business and Community Outreach  
**Jobs for Ohio's Graduates**

Nominated by: *Pamela Crombie,*  
*Program Manager*

"Jen is an innovative, determined professional. While Jen succeeds in any role, it is her heart and dedication to better the lives of the youth we work with that truly set her apart."

### Eileen Chambers

Accounting Manager  
**Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority**

Nominated by: *Cathy Watson,*  
*Finance Director*

"Eileen is an outstanding team player who has implemented processes that have significantly improved and enhanced the productivity, accuracy and efficiency of the finance team."

### Lauren Connors

Legal Assistant  
**Kastner Westman & Wilkins, LLC**

Nominated by: *Arthur Miller,*  
*Director of Administration*

"Lauren is highly productive and accountable, all with the goal of providing outstanding support to the attorneys she supports and clients we serve."

### Julie Dustman

Supervisor, Social Services  
**Summit County Children Services**

Nominated by: *Jennifer Snyder,*  
*Department Director, Social Service Programs*

"Julie passionately built a new visitation unit to promote reduced levels of supervision, and change our culture to one of Visit Coaching for the parents."

### Andrea Gordon

VP Financial Center Manager  
**Fifth Third Bank**

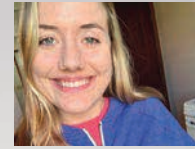
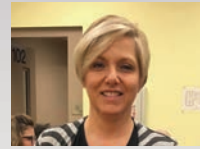
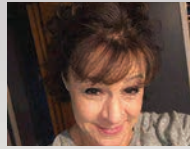
Nominated by: *Nick Jennings,*  
*VP Regional Manager*

"Angie is not only a stalwart out in the community she is an irreplaceable co-worker and highly respected among her peers. Angie will never pass on an opportunity or an initiative to better her community, her branch, and her peers."

Leadership

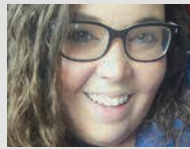
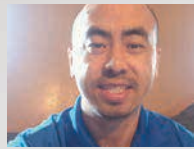
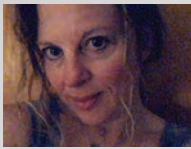


Confidant



Teacher

Mentor



Guidance

Cheer Team

Educator



Dedicated

Coach

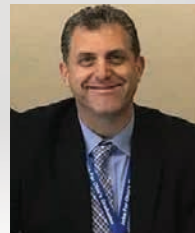
Supportive

Friend

Trusted

Advisor

Specialist



Connector

Success

Motivator

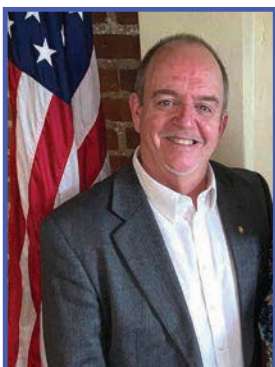
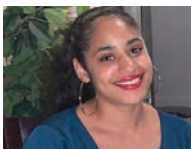
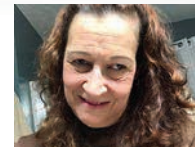
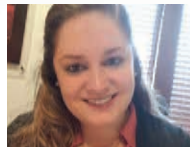
Employability

Relationship

Skills

Developer

Confidence



# Thank You

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AND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO MR. RON  
WHITMER FOR HIS 21 YEARS OF SERVICE!  
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR  
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## 2020 Employee of Distinction Honorees



### Kathy Haubert

Payroll Coordinator  
**VANTAGE Aging**

Nominated by: *Tamara Lukes, Controller*

“Kathy consistently has a positive attitude, and has been able to weather the necessary changes/challenges in getting all our staff paid while working remotely!”

### Bob Irwin

Youth & Discipleship Director  
**South Street Ministries**

Nominated by: *Joseph Tucker, Executive Director*

“Bob is Mr. Reliable. He is always available to help. He doesn’t like change, but has risen to the occasion during the pandemic!”

### Jennifer Kollar

Lead Property Manager  
**Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority**

Nominated by: *Debbie Barry, Deputy Director*

“Jennifer’s willingness to jump in and assist anyone with anything contributes to the overall quality of life for staff and residents at Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority.”

### Emily Markey

Kitchen Assistant  
**VANTAGE Aging**

Nominated by: *Jennie Strubel, Food Service Supervisor*

“Emily is a joy to work with and truly dedicated to feeding our clients!”

### Natalie McGee

Site Supervisor  
**IST**

Nominated by: *Deric Anderson, manager*

“Efforts, leadership, and support by Natalie and IST have truly assisted in meeting the needs of the Roetzel team during this unprecedented time.”



### Kellie Morehouse

Jobs Plus Program Manager  
**Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority (AMHA)**

Nominated by: *Christina Hodgkinson, Resident Services Director*

“Kellie provides exemplary service to AMHA residents, colleagues and community partners while also making sure grant requirements are met or exceeded.”

### Nichole Newell

Career Specialist  
**Jobs for Ohio’s Graduates**

Nominated by: *Pamela Crombie, Program Manager*

“Nichole is a team player who is dedicated to improving the lives of young adults.”



### Karen Noftsinger

Developmental Therapy Supervisor  
**The Blick Center**

Nominated by: *Karin Lopper-Orr, Executive Director*

“Karen is an example of “the best” that comes out of a crisis. She does what needs to be done - cleaning, delivering food, grant writing.”

### Maggie Oliver

Teacher  
**Akron Public Schools**

Nominated by: *Jill Sweitzer on behalf of Teaching and Learning Department*

“She has a quiet passion to be an advocate for others, uses her talents with a purpose, and connects with students and colleagues.”

### Kori Peetz

Children’s House Assistant  
**Hudson Montessori School**

Nominated by: *Michelle Lazor, Director of Advancement*

“From the beginning, she was a Montessori “natural.” It’s a gift to be a good teacher’s assistant and she nails it! Both teachers and children adore her.”

### Aarthi Rao

Associate Director, Product Ownership  
**SaaS Factory**

Nominated by: *Penny Schirra, Executive Assistant*

“Aarthi does an outstanding job knitting together complex technical requirements and client expectations into easy to understand elements that help our technical projects move forward.”

### Alice Rhodes

Senior Account Executive  
**AUI**

Nominated by: *Chrissy Myers, CEO*

“Alice continually goes above and beyond in building relationships with clients and being a trusted resource they can turn to when they need help.”

### Mary Rhodes

Career Specialist  
**Jobs for Ohio’s Graduates**

Nominated by: *Pamela Crombie, Program Manager*

“Mary is a committed professional who constantly looks to improve not only the youth, but to assist the professionals around her.”





# Building a Stronger Community

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## Roetzel & Andress LPA is proud to support Goodwill Industries of Akron

Congratulations to our Roetzel  
Pandemic Essential Team for being  
Employee of Distinction nominees,  
and to all other 2020 nominees!



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Fifth Third Bank proudly  
supports Goodwill and  
our own:

**Brandon Berens**  
**Andrea Gordon**

**2020 Goodwill Employee  
of Distinction Nominees.**



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## 2020 Employee of Distinction Honorees

### Roetzel Pandemic Essential Team

#### Paula J. Barholt

Case Clerk

#### Michelle Cagle

Payroll Coordinator

#### Addy Crocker

Case Clerk

#### Judith A. Cunningham

HR Assistant

#### Susan I. Flowers

Receptionist

#### Sheila J. Graf

Case Clerk

#### Denise Mauser

Legal Assistant

#### Melanie L. Olson

Records Coordinator

#### Julie A. Pfouts

Legal Assistant

#### Deanna Pillsbury

Billing & Collections Specialist

#### Rebecca A. Ross

Case Clerk

#### Stacy Speegle

Accounts Payable Specialist

#### Naomi Tingler

Support Specialist

#### Roetzel & Andress

Nominated by: *Kelly Nizzer Bates, Firm Administrator*

“This team has been providing essential support and services to all remote workers. Everything this team has done has been above and beyond. They were thrown into tasks they had never completed before. They have been critical in keeping our operations running smoothly.”

#### Susan Russo

Receptionist/Administrative Assistant

#### Bober Markey Fedorovich

Nominated by: *Stefanie Marusiak, Administrative Director, & Eileen Connor, HR Director*

“Susan is the consummate team player who consistently and graciously serves our clients, guests, and associates while also going above and beyond. She has been a standout contributor to the success of the organization.”

#### Penny Schirra

Executive Assistant

#### SaaS Factory

Nominated by: *Melanie Bozzelli, Digital Marketing Manager*

“Penny is masterful at keeping staff organized and accountable. She manages many complicated schedules, emails, events and an entrepreneurial office with grace and stellar results.”

#### Kalie Stranger

Facility Supervisor

#### Hattie Larlham

Nominated by: *Chad Kelly, Business Relations Manager*

“Kalie has a compassionate heart for the people she serves. She has the ability to help drive people to their potential while showing a great deal of empathy for individualization.”

#### Leah Thompson

Tax Administrative Assistant

#### Sikich LLP

Nominated by: *Tracy Burkhardt, CPA; Partner, Tax Services Practice Leader, Akron*

“Leah is dedicated to going above and beyond for our staff and clients alike. She is an invaluable contributor to our Northeast Ohio team and the entire Sikich firm. Leah is not only a team player, she is a leader that we can always count on when needed.”

#### Stacy Timm

Program Director, Adult Day Services

#### Hattie Larlham

Nominated by: *Kim Bartell, Vice President of Community Services*

“Stacy is an exemplary employee. She goes above and beyond every day. Her commitment to those we serve can only be described as extraordinary.”

#### Lacy Vartenuk

Desktop Support Specialist

#### VANTAGE Aging

Nominated by: *Sarfaraz Mohammad, Director of Information Technology, & Kate Harkin, Director of SCSEP*

“During COVID-19, Lacy stayed at the office, preparing employees to work from home, and offering technical assistance. She also assisted other departments with their needs. Lacy’s knowledge, expertise and responsiveness make her a valued member of the agency.”

#### Wendy Voelker

Development Officer

#### Hattie Larlham Foundation

Nominated by: *Heather Lorenzon, Chief Development Officer*

“I am nominating Wendy for her tireless devotion to her position, Hattie Larlham and the more than 1,700 individuals with disabilities we serve. I have had the privilege of working with Wendy over the past year and have witnessed her strong work ethic and dedication to our mission. Wendy is truly an exceptional fundraising professional and Hattie Larlham employee who takes her position to heart, and always has the best interest in mind of the people we serve.”

#### Kathy Wilson

Customer Care Specialist

#### VANTAGE Aging

Nominated by: *Jennifer Kanney-Beebe, Director of Home Wellness Solutions and Customer Care*

“Kathy is a compassionate, dedicated employee, giving her all every day for each client she talks to. She makes them feel they are the priority! Kathy is always the first to offer to help another teammate, is incredibly patient, and a true role model on how to treat others.”

## Judging Guidelines

Choosing a few individuals to receive an Employee of Distinction Award is a challenging responsibility. The panel of judges starts with a group of stellar employees, and then endeavors to find individuals nominated who have distinguished themselves among a truly outstanding group.

To make this difficult choice, Goodwill enlisted the help of area leaders in human resources. Each judge received the submissions for the honorees, with their names and companies omitted. Judges were then asked to select their top choices based on:

- Quality of work
- Dedication to the business
- Extraordinary efforts



Individuals with the highest average rankings receive the Employee of Distinction Awards.

Goodwill congratulates all the honorees and wish each continued success!



**Congratulations to**

*Karen Noftinger*

An employee of distinction  
for over 27 years!



Congratulations  
Employee of  
Distinction  
Honorees



**SEPTEMBER IS  
HUNGER ACTION MONTH**

Visit [akroncantonfoodbank.org/ham](https://akroncantonfoodbank.org/ham) for ways  
you can get involved in Hunger Action Month.

# Thank you

## 2020 Event Chairs & Judges

### Event Chairs

Chris Canova  
Pamela Crombie  
Chrissy Myers

### Judges

Bob Chess  
Jim Gill  
Jocelyn Mellinger  
Angela Oney  
Julie Wheeler



### Employee of Distinction Award Program

Last year, 69 outstanding employees from 27 area organizations were recognized at the Employee of Distinction Awards Top Employee of Distinction Award Winners: *front row left to right:* Beatrice Flett, Jennifer Case, Sally Dean and Mike Smeltz. *Back row left to right:* Victoria Broeker, Maggie Wooten, Neil Burt, Laura Walker and Chad Kelly.

### 2019 Winners

**Jennifer Case**  
Hudson Montessori School

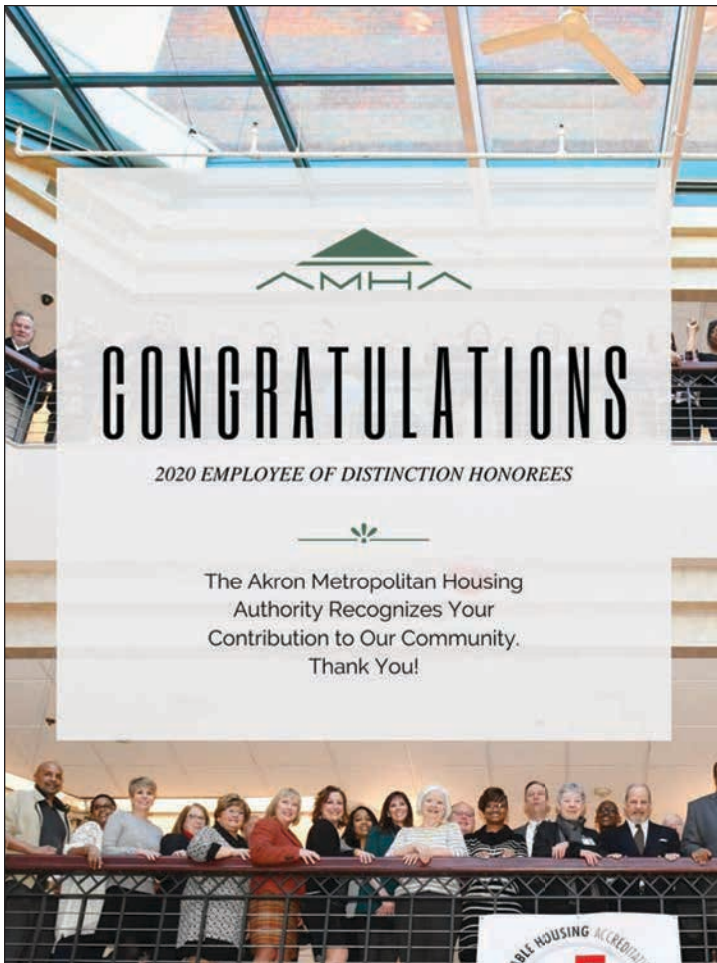
**Sally Dean**  
Child Guidance & Family Solutions

**Beatrice Flett**  
Summit County Children Services

Hattie Larlham Employment Services Team

<b>Elizabeth Apazeller</b>	<b>Jennifer Gray</b>
<b>James “Andy” Beckett</b>	<b>Chad Kelly</b>
<b>Victoria Broeker</b>	<b>Angela Norvell</b>
<b>Neil Burt</b>	<b>Craig Pittman</b>
<b>Grace Ebner</b>	<b>Laura Walker</b>
<b>Emily Gardner</b>	<b>Maggie Wooten</b>

**Mike Smeltz**  
Blick Center



Summit County  
**CHILDREN SERVICES**  
*Building Families . . . Building Futures*

## Congratulations!



Summit County Children Services wishes to recognize

**Julie Dustman**

*Supervisor, Community Visit Unit*

A Nominee for this year's Goodwill Employee of Distinction Award.



Summitkids.org

## WHERE WINNING PERFORMANCE MEETS WELL-EARNED RECOGNITION

Our Partners and Staff proudly congratulate

*Susan Russo*

2020 Goodwill Employee of Distinction Nominee

### THANK YOU

for your endless contributions to the firm and the  
tremendous amount of hard-work you give each day.

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# Brennan, Manna & Diamond

## Proudly Sponsors Goodwill Industries

Celebrating 20 years, BMD continues to support the Goodwill mission of helping individuals prepare for, find and retain employment. These values echo BMD's pledge to clients and business family: to Listen, Solve and Empower.



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[contact@comunale.com](mailto:contact@comunale.com)



# CONGRATULATIONS

to all 2020 Employee of Distinction Honorees

*Eric & Nan McClenaghan*



On behalf of The 330, *Akron Life* magazine says

THANK YOU &  
CONGRATULATIONS

to all of this year's  
Employee of Distinction Award Winners

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Radio Stations. Proud to  
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**107.3 fm  
jeny**  
the pulse of the north coast



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