



## **Barbara Papitto**

Barbara Papitto is the founder and a trustee of the Papitto Opportunity Connection, (POC) a non-profit private foundation dedicated to listening and working together with Rhode Island's Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities to empower and create individual success stories by investing in education, job skills training and entrepreneurial ventures.

Barbara founded POC in December 2020 as a continuation of the long-time commitment she and her late-husband Ralph have made to creating educational opportunities and supporting children impacted by systemic racial injustice in Rhode Island.

In 2008, Ralph and Barbara, founded a program to help inner-city children improve their reading skills and earn scholarship funds. The Read to Succeed program's mission is to improve literacy for Providence underserved students by encouraging them to address their learning loss over the summer with the powerful incentive of a \$1,000 college scholarship awarded to them each year for six years. Since it began, Read to Succeed has funded more than \$2.2 million in scholarships.

Barbara received her BS in Accounting and her MBA from Bryant University. Over the last 40-years Barbara has given her time to organizations and causes where she believes she can make a difference. She is currently on the Board of ReFocus, Inc., a non-profit human service agency which serves adults with differing physical and developmental needs and is a supporter of St. Mary Academy-Bay View. Barbara has also been active with St. Gabriel's Call, an organization operated by the Diocese of Providence, that supports single mothers and their newborn children. Barbara's prior involvements include serving on the Board of Trustees of Bryant University and was president of the former Nickerson Community Center in Providence.