

Give kids a chance



Bright Promises Foundation 2014 Annual Report

Message from the Executive Director and the President

Dear Friends,

It is our great pleasure to share with you the highlights of 2014 for Bright Promises Foundation (BPF).

As this report will show, it was a watershed year for us!



Iris Krieg



Shari Runner

BPF's mission is to create opportunities for Illinois children to reach their full promise and potential. We made strides toward that mission this past year by awarding Focus Grants to several organizations with the expertise to train teachers, coaches, child care providers, etc. to recognize when children have been victims of trauma. Trauma can result in all sorts of challenges for children throughout their lives, a fact which has not been sufficiently understood until recently. The BPF Board of Directors decided to make a long-term commitment to the issue hoping to bring it to the forefront.

The BPF Board's decision to devote our Focus grant funding to alleviating the effects of childhood trauma was made following the recommendation of experts whose research and experience told them that trauma-informed, child-serving adults could help children survive and thrive in spite of their experiences. BPF is unique in our approach to grant making. We look for areas that need addressing and where our grants can make permanent improvements to the landscape for Illinois children and families.

It was a banner year as well for our EQUIP (Early Childhood Quality Improvement Program). The Pritzker Early Childhood Foundation made a grant of \$1.3 million to EQUIP to support grants funding improvements in early childhood education. We are so grateful for their strong endorsement of this program.

We would also like to acknowledge the record-setting success of our annual spring fundraiser – The Salon Soiree. Last year's Co-Chairs, Elizabeth Foster and Arlene Szykowny were fabulous! They helped us raise the bar yet again!

On behalf of the BPF Board of Directors and our grantees, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to the donors listed in these pages for their generous support. We are doing our very best to ensure that your dollars are put to work for all children – especially children whose life circumstances place at higher risk.

In partnership,

Shari Runner
President, Board of Directors

Iris Krieg
Executive Director

Year in Review

In 2014, the Bright Promises Foundation made significant progress in strengthening our service to disadvantaged children and youth in the Chicago area and the State of Illinois.

In our Focus Grants, we completed our third year of grants to organizations that provide training and ongoing support for front line, child-serving agencies enabling them to better recognize and support children and youth who have experienced trauma. Our funding makes it possible for teachers, coaches, child care workers and others to learn how they can help children and youth who have been experienced traumatic events such as abuse, neglect, violence in their community, etc.

2014 Focus Grant Recipients were:

Illinois Collaboration on Youth - \$35,000
Urban Youth Trauma Center, University of Illinois at Chicago - \$15,000
Voices for Illinois Children/Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition - \$50,000
Children's Research Triangle - \$50,000
SGA Youth and Families Services - \$33,500
Ulrich Children's Advantage Network - \$50,000

An exciting development in the Focus Grants program was a \$25,000 matching grant received from the Tracy Family Foundation of Mt. Sterling, Illinois. Due to their generosity, children and youth in West Central Illinois will benefit from a Focus Grant to address childhood trauma in 2015. This partnership is a significant step in the direction of achieving a Bright Promises goal which is to work collaboratively with other foundations to improve the lives of Illinois children.

EQUIP Grants

In our collaborative program, EQUIP (Early Childhood Quality Improvement Program), we awarded grants to 14 non-profits that identified areas in their respective programs that could be strengthened such as early literacy, parental involvement and arts education. EQUIP was given a significant boost in 2014 with a \$1.3 million grant from the Pritzker Early Childhood Foundation. This grant ensures the longevity or sustainability of the program for the next ten years.

FIRST YEAR GRANTEES

Casa Central - \$10,000
Children's Home + Aid - \$7,260
Korean American Community Service Illinois - \$10,000
Lutheran Social Services Illinois - \$10,000
Metropolitan Family Services - \$10,000
Northwestern University Settlement - \$7,175
SGA Youth and Family Services - \$10,000
Thresholds - \$9,700

SECOND YEAR GRANTEES

Chicago Commons - \$6,500
Christopher House - \$6,500
Gads Hill Center - \$6,500
Project HOPE, Inc. - \$6,500
Through a Child's Eyes - \$6,500

Year in Review: 2014 Awards Recipients and Special Initiatives

BPF annually recognizes individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership in serving the needs of children in Illinois.

Last year's honorees were:

Bryan Samuels

Bryan Samuels received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his many years of work on behalf of vulnerable children. Mr. Samuels is the Executive Director of Chapin Hall, one of the nation's leading research and policy centers focused on improving the well-being of children and youth, families, and their communities. Chapin Hall's research agenda looks within systems, such as child welfare and education, to learn how various policies, programs, and practices are succeeding or struggling.



Bryan Samuels, Scheherezade Tillet, Rodger Owen,

Scheherezade Tillet

Scheherezade Tillet received the *Ed Marciniak Bright Star Award* for beginning or mid-career individuals who have shown motivation and leadership on behalf of vulnerable children. Ms. Tillet works tirelessly to end violence against girls and women. She is Co-Founder and Executive Director of A Long Walk Home. The Marciniak Award comes with a \$5,000 honorarium.

Rodger Owen

Rodger Owen, BPF Director, received the President's Award for his outstanding dedication to Bright Promises and its mission. Rodger Owen has been an integral part of Bright Promises Foundation for more than thirty years. His vision and leadership have been crucial to the organization as it transitioned from the Illinois Humane Society into Bright Promises and adopted new strategic funding initiatives.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Prep to Succeed

Prep to Succeed is a pilot project that creates equal educational opportunities for inner-city students. It matches high-school students preparing for college entrance exams with tutors to ensure that each student is prepared and ready to take the exam. Last year Prep to Succeed completed its inaugural semester of ACT tutoring. The test scores were significantly improved. Prep to Succeed has plans to expand its services to more students in 2015, and hopes to work with more schools and organizations that serve Chicago high school students in the future.

30-20-10

30-20-10 is also a pilot project that is being tested in Chicago Public Schools. The program extends physical education, recess, and movement to elementary students with a goal to increase the current average of once-per-week physical education to 30 minutes each day of physical education, plus 20 minutes of recess and 10 minutes of in-class movement. BPF funded an assessment of the test phase and the results will be used to increase the effectiveness of the program as it expands into additional schools.

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