



# HEROES OF HOPE

## THE CHILDREN'S CENTER NEWSLETTER

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### LIGHT IT UP BLUE FOR AUTISM!

Every April, the international autism community comes together to recognize World Autism Month. Countless iconic buildings join homes and communities around the world to light their spaces blue and host events in support of people living with autism.



For the past four years, we've wrapped our outdoor lights in a blue film to make our buildings light up blue — and this year, we're doing it again.



Early this month, we also hosted a party for kids and families in our autism program. More than 20 families had fun popping bubbles in our Bubble Room, taking pictures in a photo booth, enjoying puzzle piece cookies and more.

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## REFLECTING ON FIVE YEARS OF THE HEAD START ACADEMY

Five years ago, The Children's Center embarked on a very special mission. Backed by a five-year grant, we began operating The Children's Center Head Start Academy in Detroit's 48219 and 48235 zip code areas which touched the lives and shaped the minds of thousands of 3-5 year old children.

While our grant is coming to an end, we're celebrating just a few of our Academy's many successes. In just five years, we:

- Prepared over 1,500 preschoolers for kindergarten success.
- Provided literacy-building activities, behavioral health supports, enrichment activities and social advocacy.
- Connected hundreds of volunteers from all walks of life to the community.
- Empowered, trained and supported hundreds of dads and male caregivers, encouraging them to be active in the lives of their children.
- Supported many parents in furthering their education and improving their job readiness.

While meaningful outcomes were achieved, it was at a significant financial loss to the agency. Our Board of Directors made the difficult decision not to apply for contract renewal. We'll be continuing classroom activities at Head Start Academy throughout the end of the school year, after which we will work with whomever is granted the next five-year contract. We look forward to focusing on our greatest strength; providing mental and behavior health services across all of Wayne County.

## GHOSTBUSTERS DETROIT PAY OUR KIDS A CALL!

Slime. Ghosts. Proton Packs. Just another day in the life of a Ghostbuster. Our kids got to experience it with a visit from Ghostbusters Detroit.



Suited up in their uniforms and Proton Packs, they showed our kids how to take on ghosts and make glitter slime. Before the afternoon was over, Stay Puft Marshmallow Man showed up and our kids put their new skills to the test, using the Ghostbuster packs to defeat him. Of course, it was all in good fun and Stay Puft stayed to enjoy treats and color pictures of his favorite ghost Slimer.



A nonprofit organization, Ghostbusters Detroit raises money by making appearances at conventions, parades, festivals to donate local Detroit charities. To learn more visit: [www.ghostbustersdetroit.com](http://www.ghostbustersdetroit.com).

# CELEBRATING GREAT HEART & SOUL

“Thank you” is a phrase we take seriously at The Children’s Center. The love, the support and the commitment our volunteers make to our children and families is nothing short of amazing — and we are so grateful for it.

That’s why, in 2009 we created the Lisa V. Ford Heart & Soul Award Luncheon to recognize and thank individuals, parents, employees and organizations who have made exceptional volunteerism contributions to our center throughout the year.

This year, we hosted the event in early April, honoring those who so generously volunteered throughout 2016. Below are the individuals and organizations we celebrated for their remarkable heart and soul. We can’t thank them enough!



## Staff Nominees

- James Appleton
- Roberta Davis
- Emily Young\*

## Head Start Academy Nominees

- William Champion\*
- Bonnie Wilson

## Lisa V. Ford Heart & Soul

### Individual Nominees

- Natalie Donohoe
- Deborah Gillespie\*
- Vonna McMickel

### Lifetime Achievement Award Honorees

- Charles Edmonson
- Tony & Julie Foust
- Robert & Hazel Karbel
- Jean Wersching
- Frank & Ruth Zinn



## Corporate Friend Nominees

- Barton Malow\*
- Cadillac Asphalt
- DTE Energy

## Community Service Nominees

- Circle K
- The Optimists
- MEDLIFE\*

\*Winner



## TAKE THE TOUR OF THE CHILDREN’S CENTER

What do a magic wishing well, a transformative wall of masks, and a bedazzled giraffe have in common? They’re all stops on our tour of The Children’s Center. Each play a role in how we help children and families cope and heal from traumatic experiences.

Take a tour of our center and hear stories of courage, resilience and triumph against odds. You’ll see our Center’s impact on families, hear testimonials and discover how you can help us heal our children, empower their future and rebuild our city.

On the tour, you’ll learn about our:

- Early childhood autism programs
- Therapy and support for those with mental health and behavioral disorders
- “Healing the Hurt” programs for those who have been abused, neglected or experienced loss
- Foster care, adoption, and independent living programs

For a sneak peek, watch our [tour video](#).

For more info, contact Melissa at 313-384-8575 or [mgorman@thechildrenscenter.com](mailto:mgorman@thechildrenscenter.com)

# IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Helping vulnerable children and families dream again takes time. Our Village of Giving (VOG) members understand that children can't turn their despair into determination without expert help. That's why VOG members make five-year pledges starting at \$1,000 a year. That's \$20 a week to meet the greatest needs of children.

We are grateful for nearly 200 members, along with the generosity of many others at every gift level for empowering children to overcome their past so they may heal, thrive and dream again.



Welcome our newest VOG member Liz Rogers! "I joined VOG because The Children's Center does great work. Twenty dollars a week is easily lost on movies and coffee. I'd rather know my money is helping children and families who won't have a brighter tomorrow without it."

Learn more about VOG by contacting Marletta Boyd II at 313-481-5116 or [mboydii@thechildrenscenter.com](mailto:mboydii@thechildrenscenter.com)

## JOIN US FOR TAU BETA'S ANNUAL SPRING MARKET



Get ready for some fabulous spring shopping to benefit a great cause — the children and families at The Children's Center.

From April 27-29, Tau Beta Association will generously host its annual Spring Market at The Grosse Pointe Club in Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan. The event presents a fabulous array of specialty boutique vendors featuring distinctive home accessories, clothing, jewelry and more.

Festivities begin with a preview party with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, followed by two fun-filled days of shopping. We couldn't be more grateful to Tau Beta Association members for all they do to empower vulnerable children and families!

Get your tickets and learn more by visiting their website at <http://www.taubeta.org/springmarket>.

# THE CHILDREN'S CENTER WISH LIST

It is difficult for our children and families to focus on their mental health therapy when they are struggling with basic needs. Your donations directly serve these families, so they can concentrate on healing, growing and thriving.

## Art & School Supplies

- Dry Erase Boards & Markers
- Graph Paper
- Glue Sticks
- Protractors
- Rulers

## Games

- Battleship
- Blocko
- Checkers
- Chess
- Connect 4
- Skip-Bo
- Uno

## Non-Perishable Food Items

- Beans
- Pasta
- Peanut butter
- Rice

## Clothing

- New Children socks
- New Children underwear

Call 313-324-8575 for more information on how to drop off your new or gently used items.



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