

The Community Family Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building a centralized and permanent home for five early childhood education and family support agencies in Highland Park.

Three Year Olds Inspired by the Pilgrim Chamber Players

In late January, the Highland Park Pilgrim Chamber Players musical ensemble performed for the children at Highland Park Community Nursery School and Day Care Center (*one of the five agencies that will be housed in the Community Family Center*). Two weeks later Mrs. Darin, a teacher in the Orange Room, preschool classroom for three year olds, discovered a group of children had built their own “band” in the big blocks, complete with piano, drums and a double bass! Thus began a full-fledged exploration, or project, focused around the topic of instruments and music. Lynn Darin, along with co-teachers Laura Weinberg and Pam Carlson, facilitated the children’s exploration by listening and responding to their interests as demonstrated in their play, conversations, and art work. Mrs. Weinberg explains, “When young children play out their experiences, they apply and extend their understanding. When done in a social setting, children have the opportunity to collaborate and problem solve. In essence, they create knowledge together.” This idea of the co-creation of knowledge is key to the philosophy of this Reggio-inspired classroom, an approach to learning which emphasizes collaboration, problem-solving, and multiple avenues of expression/understanding. As the project continues, not only do the children continue to play “band” in the big blocks, they have also begun to create their own stringed instruments and drums out of hollow blocks and materials from the classroom art studio. Many thanks to the Pilgrim Players for their wonderful inspiration!

-Pam Carlson, Highland Park Community Nursery School and Day Care Center



Young pianists at play.

About Reggio Emilia - The city of Reggio Emilia in Italy is recognized worldwide for its innovative approach to early childhood education. Six staff members from Highland Park Community Nursery School and Day Care Center were fortunate to be able to visit Reggio Emilia in June 2008 to learn first-hand about this signature educational philosophy.

The Community Family Center is pleased to announce that Carol Honigberg, renown pianist and Artistic Director of the Pilgrim Chamber Players, and her husband Joel have generously pledged to name the Learning Resource Center in our new building. Thank you to the Honigbergs for investing in the future of our community.

Herb Wander Honored by City of Highland Park



Herb Wander

Herb Wander, Community Family Center Board President and long-time Highland Park resident, has been named a recipient of the 2010 Robert Barnard Character Counts Pillar Award. The honor was bestowed by the Character Counts Committee of the City of Highland Park. The award recognizes nominees whose beliefs, attitudes and actions consistently exemplify the six pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Herb has been a strong advocate for the Community Family Center, serving as Board President for almost eight years. Although the project has faced many obstacles, Herb has never considered anything other than “sticking with it” and seeing it through to completion. His commitment is driven by a passion for the community where he lives and raised his family. Congratulations, Herb, for representing the highest values of our community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS**Officers**

Herb Wander, President*
 Susan Ruder, Vice President*
 Philip Kurschner, Vice President
 Sari Montgomery, Secretary
 Eric Ephraim, Treasurer

Board Members

Robert S. Baizer*
 P. Bryn Benson
 Tony Blumberg
 Jane Boutet
 Gail Feiger Brown*
 Katie Cohen*
 Janet Freed
 Maureen Hager
 William Kaufman*
 Edith Kaye*
 Emily Matz
 Claribel Puello
 Victoria Ratnaswamy
 Jane Rich
 Donald Schindel
 Jane Shapira
 Marilyn Straus
 Karen Wander*
 Roberta Wexler*

Agency Directors

Jean Wallace-Baker, HP Community
 Nursery School & Day Care Center
 Pam Feinberg, Tri-Con Child Care Center
 Jordan Friedman, Family Network
 Jane Talesnick, HP/HW Home
 Child Care Association
 Robert Wolf, Family Service: Prevention,
 Education & Counseling

Ex. Officio Members

Anne Flanigan Bassi, Lake County Board
 David Behlow, Superintendent NSSD 112
 Susan Garrett, State Senator
 Ellen Gussin, Moraine Township
 Greg Kurr, NSSD 112
 Karen May, State Representative
 Liza McElroy, Park District of HP
 Nancy Rotering, HP City Council

Honorary Directors

Barbara T. Bowman
 Jane B. Colman
 Dolores Kohl Kaplan
 Bernice Weissbourd

Campaign Steering Committee

Robert S. Baizer, Chairman
 David S. Ruder

* indicates members

Administration

Andrea Kressmann, Executive Director
 Barbara Haley, Associate Director

Welcome New Board Members

The Community Family Center welcomes the following individuals who have joined the Board since our last newsletter.



Bob Baizer



David Behlow



Barbara T. Bowman



Katie Cohen



Bernice Weissbourd



Bobbi Wexler

Robert S. Baizer practices personal injury trial law with Baizer Kolar & Lewis, P.C. in Highland Park. A lifelong resident of Highland Park, Bob was active in the fundraising for the North Shore Health Clinic. Bob is a member of the Board of Directors and is Chairman of the Campaign Steering Committee.

David L. Behlow Ph.D is Superintendent of North Shore School District 112. Dr. Behlow is an Ex-Officio Board Member.

Barbara T. Bowman co-founded the Erikson Institute, a premiere graduate school in child development, located in Chicago. She is Chief Early Childhood Education Officer for the Chicago Public Schools and a Consultant to the U.S. Secretary of Education. Barbara is a member of the Honorary Board.

Katie Foreman Cohen holds a master's degree in Social Work from Loyola University. She was raised in Highland Park and has remained in the community with her husband and their three school-age children. Katie is a member of the Board of Directors and the Campaign Steering Committee.

Jane B. Colman grew up in Highland Park. She and her husband, John, raised their children in Highland Park. Jane is a longtime friend of Family Network. Jane is a member of the Honorary Board.

Claribel Puello is a paralegal with Baizer Kolar & Lewis in Highland Park. She and her husband live in Highland Park with their three sons. Claribel is a member of the Board of Directors.

Bernice Weissbourd founded Family Focus, an agency that provides comprehensive programs for children and their families from birth in diverse communities in the Chicago area. Bernice is a member of the Honorary Board.

Roberta Wexler M.Ed. was the Director of Ravinia Nursery School in Highland Park for 12 years. She currently administers the JUF Right Start project. Bobbi is a member of the Board of Directors and the Campaign Steering Committee.

It's All About the Programs

The Community Family Center (CFC) will provide increased space for five agencies in a single modern building in order to meet the growing need for high-quality, non-sectarian, affordable and accessible early childhood education, day care and counseling. The City of Highland Park authorized a nominal rent lease and consent to adapt for re-use the Karger Recreation Center. The remodeled facility will be 38,375 square feet, located in the heart of downtown Highland Park and close to public transportation. The building conveniently borders the city's main park and forms a campus with the Lake County Health Clinic. The architectural firm of Holabird and Root, which has a strong history of designing early child care and family service facilities, has developed plans for the integrated facilities that support multi-sensory learning. The Community Family Center plans are to achieve Silver LEED Design. The cost of the project was recently re-evaluated and reduced to reflect current economic conditions. As a result, construction costs are projected to be \$10.5 million. The Community Family Center is also seeking a \$4 million operating and maintenance fund. The Community Family Center expects that 75% of the total capital fundraising goal will be raised through donations from individuals and family foundations. To date over \$1.7 million has been raised and/or pledged from public and private sources. **The Community Family Center agencies and programs include:**



Architectural rendering of proposed site March 2009.



Mission: To promote the wellbeing of children from birth by supporting their families in and with their communities. Bilingual/cultural services include parent support, social and educational programs, and child development activities for parents and their children birth through four years old and after school child care for children in grades K-5.
Why CFC is important: "To expand programmatic space to serve more families."



Mission: To assist individuals adapting to the ever changing landscape of today's society. Programs include family and individual counseling, mental health and case management services for seniors, Latino family resources services, employee assistance programs and community education.
Why CFC is important: "To reduce operating expenses and to share support staff."



Highland Park Community
Nursery School & Day Care Center

Mission: To provide a culturally diverse, caring, carefully planned and enriched environment designed to enhance the emotional, social, cognitive and physical development of young children.
Why CFC is important: "The building is aging and in need of major repair."



Mission: To promote quality care for infants and toddlers in licensed child care homes in our community.
Why CFC is important: "The opportunity to integrate and collaborate with agencies serving working families, and to have space for an office and toy lending library."



Mission: To provide an affordable high quality bilingual environment for young children of working families that enhances language, social and emotional development in preparation for a successful kindergarten experience.
Why CFC is important: "To get the kids out of the basement, avoid flooding/repairs and to have space to expand the program to serve more families."



580 Roger Williams Avenue, #23
Highland Park, IL 60035

Phone: 847-433-5846

E-mail: comfamilycenter@sbcglobal.net

VISIT US ON THE WEB!

WWW.COMMUNITYFAMILYCENTER.ORG



*Family Network Drop-In Center
(One of the five Community Family Center Agencies)*

The Community Family Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building a centralized and permanent home for five early childhood education and family support agencies.

Building Momentum for 2010



*Andrea Kressmann
Executive Director*

An investment in education and the community. Let's remember that the vision of Community Family Center is supported by the ideas of Nobel Prize-winning Economics Professor James Heckman of the University of Chicago. Professor Heckman has called early childhood education "the most powerful investment America can make." It's also a powerful investment in the future of Highland Park and Highwood.

How you can help. You can strengthen this investment by contributing via our web site, making a pledge, by volunteering, and by staying informed about our progress and spreading the word among your friends, associates and neighbors. This year, we want to raise community awareness, develop new fundraising sources, and increase the number of people and corporations throughout the area who support the CFC. Please participate in our vision!

Key Investments to Ensure the Future Well-Being of Our Community

- 1) Early Childhood Care and Education
- 2) Health Care Services
- 3) Child Care Assistance for Working Families
- 4) Mental Health Services
- 5) Child Welfare and Prevention Programs

We're Going Green!



In an effort to reduce costs, it is our goal to use email as much as possible to communicate. **Please send us your email address.** We promise to use your email address only for Community Family Center business and will not share your address with anyone else. **Send your email address to Andrea at comfamilycenter@sbcglobal.net**

Thank you for helping us reduce costs and preserve our environment!