

Shoulder **to** Shoulder

SPRING 2016

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**Big
Shoulders
Fund.®**



Big Shoulders Fund Scholarships Are Key to Student Success

Gallagher Scholar Sydney holds the scholarship code of conduct. The Gallagher Scholarship follows students from fifth through 12th grade.

As the largest scholarship provider in Chicago, Big Shoulders Fund remains committed to developing and partnering with dedicated individuals, families, foundations, and corporations to ensure that deserving children have access to a safe and effective education. Big Shoulders has been providing scholarships to deserving inner-city students since its inception. Today there are more than 60 types of scholarships that vary in duration and award amount, depending on the need and available resources. In the current academic year, Big Shoulders has awarded more than \$8.1 million in scholarships to almost 5,000 scholars. The scholarship programs are always oversubscribed: this year alone, 2,539 applied and 994 did not receive support.

Seven out of 10 students graduating from high school with a Big Shoulders Fund renewable scholarship enter a four-year college—a stark

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Big Shoulders Fund Scholarships Are Key to Student Success



Velo and Reynolds Scholars at Epiphany Catholic School in the city's South Lawndale neighborhood.

contrast to the outcome at Chicago Public Schools, from which about four of 10 graduates enter a four-year college. Big Shoulders schools educate underserved students living in poverty who, despite these challenges, continue to succeed at astonishing levels in the most crucial areas: high school graduation and college entrance rates.

A significant issue for schools serving high-poverty urban communities is the level of financial instability among families. Big Shoulders data shows that students who receive renewable scholarships stay in Big Shoulders schools at higher rates than their peers, due in part to parents/guardians being able to rely on consistent financial support. Data also shows that the longer a child stays at a Big Shoulders school, the greater the likelihood he/she will achieve above grade level, graduate from high school, and enroll in college, with scholarships playing a critical role.

The scholarship team at Big Shoulders is led by Tom Zbierski, Big Shoulders Fund's senior director, scholarship programs and school relations, and includes Scholarship System Coordinator Kate LaMantia and Assistant Director of Scholarship Programs Khyla Jackson. Although present with the program, the scholarship team has set goals to improve service to families and schools, increase efficiencies at Big Shoulders, and digitize the scholarship process. While Big Shoulders will attain some goals through process changes, PwC is collaborating to enhance the effectiveness of technology and capture much-needed data on scholars in a meaningful way. "PwC believes in the power of data and investing in youth education," said Mireya Manigault, PwC's director, regulatory.

Zbierski believes these data metrics will help ensure all Big Shoulders scholars succeed. "The scholarship data will also help us tell a compelling story to our donors, as there is always more need than available funding at our schools."

"PwC believes in the power of data and investing in youth education," said Mireya Manigault, PwC's director, regulatory.

Zbierski captured the challenges of the scholarship program: "The most powerful stories do not come from our successes through the years, but rather from those thousands of students and their families whom we've been unable to help due to limited finances. Knowing we could have more impact by helping more students inspired me to set a goal of 10,000 Big Shoulders Fund scholars.

"As President and CEO Joshua Hale always says, 'It's all para los niños—for the children.'" ■

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Shoulder to Shoulder

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE SCHOOLS: Carol and David Hinman Beth and Bruce White

Carol Hinman tutors at
St. Malachy School.

Schools benefit from outside support in various ways, from financial contributions to volunteer time. Carol and David Hinman and Beth and Bruce White understand that combination can make a difference, and offering time and expertise at a school can serve a crucial role in student success.

Since last fall, Carol Hinman, a former elementary school teacher and tutor, has been volunteering at St. Malachy School, working with first and third graders. She said, “The classroom teacher knows he has another adult who can do some one-on-one work, allowing him to continue with the others.”

She appreciates the school’s attitude about encouraging children to dream big. “St. Malachy is striving to have its students see themselves as scholars and believe they will go to college. What a great message to give little kids, since an education is the most important thing one can receive. St. Malachy does this with some love sprinkled in, too! I would encourage anyone who has some volunteer time available to try a school setting.”

Fifth Third Bank Senior Commercial Banker/Senior Vice President David Hinman has orchestrated his company’s involvement in volunteering for Our Lady of Tepeyac School. In August 2014, Fifth Third launched a partnership with the school to implement the David Ramsey Financial Literacy curriculum, which outlines the foundations of personal finance.

Our Lady of Tepeyac High School Principal Becca Noonan said, “Fifth Third has been a great asset to our school. All our math classes use parts

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE SCHOOLS:

Carol and David Hinman Beth and Bruce White

of their financial literacy program, and our students are much more financially savvy. Fifth Third representatives also routinely meet with our families regarding college financial aid and their own financial literacy.”

Cynthia Gutierrez, who mentors students at Our Lady of Tepeyac, lived in the Little Village neighborhood and was the first member of her family to graduate from a university (DePaul). During her 14 years with Fifth Third Bank, she has moved up from part-time teller to manager of its Berwyn Financial Center.

“Being a mentor/coach is powerful when you can place yourself in someone’s shoes, but even more when the students are fully aware I *was* in their shoes,” she described. “I know the challenges and barriers they may face in an underprivileged community with limited financial resources.”

She continued, “In my community, college was simply not top of mind because of family financial concerns. I have shared my story with the students, and I am there as an example that we cannot allow ourselves to be paralyzed by our fears; if we want to accomplish something, we must strive for that goal every day.”

Beth and Bruce White sponsor the White Family Scholarship Program, supporting 120 middle school students with renewable scholarships from third through 12th grade. They recruited friends to serve as mentors, meeting monthly with scholars at the schools during the past three years. The Whites sponsor an enrichment activity for the scholars to attend a play in Chicago each year and serve as mentors at Visitation Catholic School.

EDUCATING TOMORROW’S STUDENTS TODAY:

Big Shoulders Fund Launches Foundations for the Future Campaign

The work of educating Chicago’s inner-city children is not a task that ends. It is a mission Big Shoulders Fund has had for 30 years and will have for years to come. Big Shoulders is grateful for its committed donors, who make more than onetime donations; they invest in the organization’s mission with their time and financial support.

This commitment has transformed the lives of hundreds of thousands of students, and Big Shoulders wants to make sure it continues. “Big Shoulders wants to help children not only today, but also in the future, while offering a way for donors to leave an indelible mark on the schools, mission, and city they love,” said Big Shoulders President and CEO Josh Hale. This spring, Big Shoulders is launching the Foundations for the Future campaign, providing an opportunity for donors to leave a lasting legacy in schools and on the city. This three-year campaign focuses on growing Big Shoulders Fund’s long-term vitality by ensuring the resources are in place to perpetuate its mission well into the future.

The campaign will safeguard inner-city children’s access to educational choice, preparing them to compete in a global economy as eventual



Bruce and Beth White with Immaculate Conception School's White Family Scholars.

They explain, “We are trying to provide opportunity to young people who might not otherwise have it. Our philosophy is that if you impact a child, you can impact a family and ultimately a community. Education is the foundation for opportunity, and Big Shoulders schools provide the perfect infrastructure to do so. Big Shoulders is the most efficient and effective way to contribute and make a lasting impact. Without exception, the mentors believe they get more out of the program than the kids do. We have become more connected with our ‘Vis kids’ watching them mature these last three years and look forward to sustaining this meaningful relationship.”

Gutierrez urges others to get involved. “If you had the ability to add your share to make this world a little better than you found it, would you do it? If so, your volunteering efforts should start today! Our children need to learn life skills from you.” ■



A student at St. Catherine–St. Lucy School holds open the door for future generations.

members of the workforce and contribute to stronger communities. Participation in the Foundations for the Future campaign will allow donors to join Big Shoulders Fund’s Joseph Society, which honors those who leave their legacy through special commitments to Big Shoulders and its schools and students. Some current Joseph Society members include Chairmen James J. O’Connor and John A. Canning; board members John Buck, Christine Kelly, and Arthur Velasquez; and many other supporters.

For more about how to leave your legacy, be part of the Foundations for the Future campaign, join the Joseph Society, and ensure Big Shoulders Fund’s important work continues for generations to come, contact Amelia Drozda at 312.751.3850 or adrozda@bigshouldersfund.org. ■

Big Shoulders Fund's Data Analysis Initiative Drives Educational Effectiveness

Big Shoulders Fund's goal is to ensure its schools continue to provide the best possible academic option for students in underserved communities. During the next two years, the Big Shoulders Fund Data Analysis Initiative has the potential to make a significant difference for students in Chicago and beyond.

Teachers love what they do, and they constantly strive to do their job better: they seek the best methods, set high expectations for themselves and their students, and reflect on their practice with the goal of continual improvement. Teaching is a never-ending feedback loop between teachers, students, administrators, and families, providing critical information on how schools are engaging with their students and creating opportunities for progress.

Every classroom conversation, each piece of student work, any interaction within a school's walls offers a wealth of information, which can help fuel more efficient delivery of services. The analysis of well-rounded and robust portfolios of data helps teachers understand their students on a deeper level, create more effective lesson plans, and employ better teaching strategies by fine-tuning their instructional methods to cultivate greater student achievement.

"Big Shoulders teachers and principals have definite interest and motivation to use the data they have in meaningful ways," said Rebecca Lindsay-Ryan, senior director of academic programs and external affairs. "But they struggle with time, resources, and knowledge. We want to ensure schools understand the information available—from standardized test results to attendance rates to classroom performance—and learn how to effectively organize, analyze, and incorporate their findings into decisions at the school and classroom levels."

This year, Big Shoulders launched the Big Shoulders Fund Data Analysis Initiative to equip schools, specifically teachers and principals, with the knowledge and resources they need to organize, interpret, and connect information with teaching strategies. The new program, funded by a multi-year grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, offers schools new ways of examining data, including student test scores, to improve instruction and increase teacher and student performance. In the long run, this will help students and their parents.

"The ability to compare data on academic progress across different tests is an extremely valuable tool for parents to identify the best educational



During math class at St. Ailbe School, fourth grade students eagerly raise their hands, ready to answer the teacher's questions.

options for their children, especially in low-income and ethnically diverse communities," shared Sister Rosemarie Nassif, SSND, Ph.D. of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

To affect lasting and systemic change, the initiative takes a deep, three-tiered approach. First, Big Shoulders will analyze a school's standardized testing data so teachers can compare their school to others with similar backgrounds, as well as determine their school's year-to-year growth. Next, Big Shoulders will drill down deeper into standardized testing data at up to 20 schools to separate math, reading, and science results at the student level, rather than the school level. Finally, up to 10 schools will receive ongoing direct support from a Big Shoulders Fund Data Coach, who will help identify data teams, organize existing pools of information, and implement regular data analysis cycles.

"The ability to compare data on academic progress across different tests is an extremely valuable tool for parents to identify the best educational options for their children, especially in low-income and ethnically diverse communities," shared Sister Rosemarie Nassif, SSND, Ph.D. of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

By analyzing the impact and sustainability of school and classroom-based improvements at each tier, Big Shoulders will expand these supports across the network, as well as share this model with other foundations and dioceses across the U.S. While the work is still in the earliest phases of implementation, teacher and principal interest has been high. ■



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In the Community



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1: Deloitte and Big Shoulders Fund Director Byron Spruell invited Big Shoulders Fund principals, including (L-R) Benny Morten from St. Ann, Denise Spells from St. Ethelreda, and Scott Ernst from Epiphany, to participate in the Courageous Principals program last summer. Courageous Principals complements the Big Shoulders Fund Leadership Development Program, connecting principals with top leaders in business, the public sector, and nonprofit organizations for a series of learning experiences that produce breakthrough thinking and action supporting systemic change.

2: Roxanne Martino, CEO of Aurora Investment Management LLC, was the featured speaker at the October 21, 2015 Chairmen's Advisory Council (CAC) Networking Breakfast generously hosted by Chicago Cut Steakhouse. Martino shared her inspiring story of growing up on Chicago's West Side and graduating from St. Lucy School, committing to philanthropy, and using one's skills to help deserving causes. (L-R) Big Shoulders Fund Co-Chairman Monsignor Velo, CAC member Kristina Kelleher, CAC Co-Chair and Director Fred O'Connor, Roxanne Martino, Co-Chairman Jim O'Connor, CAC Co-Chair and Director Lori Dawson, Big Shoulders Fund President and CEO Josh Hale, and CAC member and Director Alan Myers were among those in attendance.

3: Querrey/Simpson Scholar Kaylee Zillinger (third from R), from Epiphany Catholic School, ran a toy drive for children spending Christmas in the hospital. Zillinger's family home burned down this fall, leaving them with nothing. Help from others during that difficult time inspired her to give to children at Lurie Children's Hospital. Commending her for her efforts are (L-R) Kimberly Zillinger, Daniel Adamski, Kimberly Querrey, President and CEO Josh Hale, and Lurie Children's Hospital Development Director Sarah Beal.

4: Last fall, the dream of a science lab became a reality for the more than 250 students at Maternity BVM School. Through the support of generous donors, Maternity BVM is increasing access to a high-quality education. Celebrating this accomplishment are (standing, L-R) Big Shoulders Fund Patrons Program Director Lea Jesse, Resident Teacher and Learning Innovation Specialist Kristin Ziemke, Christy King, Glenn Kelly, Sabrina Guthrie, Chairmen's Advisory Council member Adam Marshall, teacher Eileen Alps, President and CEO Josh Hale, Director Clarisol Duque, Principal Christine Molina, teacher Kimberly Rose, and Director Christine Kelly.

5: The Big Shoulders Fund High School Fair, hosted by DePaul College Prep, invited all Chicago Catholic high schools to share information with Big Shoulders Fund scholars and students. The fair is the only event of its kind that brings all the Catholic high schools to one place, making it a well-attended event welcoming more than 200 students and parents. Here is one happy student from Our Lady of Tepeyac High School.



6: The Give Back Day at St. Agnes of Bohemia School on November 14, 2015 was the Big Shoulders Fund Auxiliary Board's biggest service day event to date! Nearly 200 people were there to roll up their sleeves and give the school a much-needed deep clean, complete with painting, mopping, and organizing classroom libraries. Thank you to everyone who attended!

7: Second grade students from St. Richard School visited with The PrivateBank's Larry Richman and the Money Savvy Pig. The PrivateBank rolled out the Money Savvy Generation program at 19 Big Shoulders Fund schools. Nearly 400 volunteers taught more than 3,000 students about saving, spending, donating, and investing.

8: Principal Kevin Powers (L), math teacher Jenna Ryan (C), and Big Shoulders Fund Mentor Bill Powell (R) engage in math games with students at St. Margaret of Scotland School during Lend a Shoulder Day on November 5, 2015. Big Shoulders hosted nearly 250 supporters at 15 Big Shoulders Fund schools all across Chicago to see firsthand how their support makes a difference in the lives of these amazing teachers and students.

9: Big Shoulders Fund elementary schools participated in the Chicago Community Trust's ADA 25 Chicago event, creating artwork that summarized what the Americans with Disabilities Act meant to them. The cards were displayed around the Pritzker Pavilion Stage at the final event on January 6. Guests enjoyed seeing the artwork and learning about the students' deep understanding of the ADA.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Clip from *Crain's Chicago Business*,
August 22, 2009.

Big Shoulders Fund will honor the work of President and CEO Josh Hale at the Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Humanitarian Award Dinner on May 26, 2016. Hale has been a tremendous force in the leadership of Big Shoulders since he joined the organization in 2005. Members of the Dinner Steering Committee include Ellen and Jim O'Connor, Rita and John Canning, Sue and Tim Sullivan, and Monsignor Ken Velo, while Elizabeth Cole is chairing the Arrangements Committee.

For more details or sponsorship information, contact Amelia Drozda at 312.751.3850 or adrozda@bigshouldersfund.org

save the date!