

Shoulder **to** Shoulder

SPRING 2017

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BIG IMPACT FROM BIG SHOULDERS: Principal Shares Her Experience with Valued Programs

Co-Chairmen John Canning (L) and James O'Connor join Principal Candice Usauskas and students of St. Mary Star of the Sea School at Lend a Shoulder Day 2016.

Big Shoulders Fund programs impact schools in a variety of ways. In 2015, St. Mary Star of the Sea (SMSS) School joined the Covered Schools Initiative, which provides a team of Big Shoulders staff and consultants to collaborate with the school on enrollment marketing, financial planning, scholarships, academics, and more. Enrollment has increased 49 percent since 2014–15, the deficit has decreased 42 percent, and 96 percent of 2016 graduates chose a Catholic or quality public high school.

Born and raised in the SMSS community, alumna, former teacher, and current Principal Candice Usauskas shares the ways Big Shoulders programs affect her day-to-day activities. “Having Big Shoulders Fund behind us is kind of like that breath of fresh air now. The overall culture of the school has changed, and people are coming back home.”

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Principal Usauskas (fourth from L) meets with Big Shoulders Fund Fellows. St. Mary Star of the Sea School has participated in the summer marketing enrollment program for three years.

Principal Shares Her Experience

...continued from cover

A participant in the Big Shoulders Fund Leadership Development Program, Usauskas receives financial support for pursuing her principal licensure and access to a network of mission-driven principals and mentors.

When dealing with financial, ethical, or legal issues, my confidence is strong due to the course work I have participated in through the Leadership Development Program. The network of fellow principals has been accessible in times of need. If I have a concern about discipline or a school policy, it is reassuring to have a support group. Keeping up to date on trends and research will help make our school strong. The entire Big Shoulders educational team is looking out for us as principals to ensure we are at the top of our game.

SMSS participates in the Big Shoulders Fund Math Initiative to bring rigorous curriculum and teaching practices to its students.

Last summer we purchased new textbooks for grades six through eight. As part of the Math Initiative and its collaboration with University of Illinois at Chicago, we receive the support of a math coach for the middle school teacher. The program allows us to work in a network of schools that have the same goal: improving math programs and test scores. The teacher receives professional development and collaboration and incorporates ideas she acquires into daily lessons. I am impressed to see the changes in her teaching style. She is more child-centered. The children own their lessons. The level of their math discussions has expanded.

The Big Shoulders Fund Data Analysis Initiative provides SMSS with coaching on how data can best inform instruction, including a value-added model and surveys that gauge school progress from year to year.

We have shifted to using the ACT ASPIRE to assess student learning. Thanks to the Data Analysis Initiative, we can use our professional development time to learn about the components of the test. We have begun to use data from the interim assessments to further drive student instruction and prioritized writing as an area for improvement.

Through a partnership created by Big Shoulders, we gained access to the University of Chicago's 5Essentials survey, which measures school culture and climate in effective leadership, collaborative teachers, ambitious instruction, supportive environment, and involved families. Last year SMSS was rated strong or very strong in all five areas. We surveyed teachers and students, and this year I hope to include parents. It is critical to have a strong school community with opportunities for interaction and feedback. I usually start my day by 6:30 a.m. to be available to speak to parents. I also walk through the school each morning for a quick assessment of the day, touching base with children struggling with assignments or specific subjects.

With the Big Shoulders Fund Summer Fellowship and Marketing Support, SMSS has access to a variety of resources to help with enrollment building, fundraising, and community awareness.

Monday evenings I often have planning meetings at school, and the marketing strategies I have acquired from Big Shoulders leadership have helped me more effectively get our name out to the public. Planning for fundraising is a large task, which takes time to build. I know that help is only a phone call away. Soon we will plan how best to use our Big Shoulders Fund Summer Fellow to help build enrollment and attract more community interest in our school. ■



One Mission, Many Hands... Big Shoulders Fund Committees Get the Job Done

Photographer Tom Balla (C) of Pictureboy Creative directs a photo shoot at St. Malachy School for Big Shoulders Fund's 2015 annual report.

Supporting Catholic schools in the neediest areas of inner-city Chicago is a multifaceted undertaking. It truly “takes a village” to implement the range of programs and services Big Shoulders Fund provides. Fortunately, there are committees of dedicated people to ensure Big Shoulders addresses the challenges facing families, schools, and communities. In addition to those serving on the Chairmen’s Advisory Council and Auxiliary Board, nearly 85 committee members donate their time and talent to help Big Shoulders grow and earn recognition among its peers.

THE PATRONS COMMITTEE, under the leadership of Chair Thomas Lanctot, recruits new Patrons to develop relationships with Big Shoulders Fund schools and oversees program outcomes. The Patrons Program has initiated several programs, including marketing and development programs, technology investments, fiscal management strategies, and alumni advancement programs, which have raised more than \$500,000 in new funds.

THE INVESTMENT COMMITTEE, chaired by Kent Dauten, comprises experienced investment professionals who set portfolio allocations and investment goals, select and review investments, meet with investment managers, and work with a consultant to ensure investments meet risk tolerance and return standards. The investment portfolio’s performance directly impacts Big Shoulders programs, and this committee works to maximize the funds available to support the mission.

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Thomas Zbierski

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Shoulder to Shoulder

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MANAGING EDITOR

Michaela Metzger

EDITOR/WRITER

Jill Chukerman, JAC Communications

DESIGNER

Sarah Stec, Archetype Graphic Design

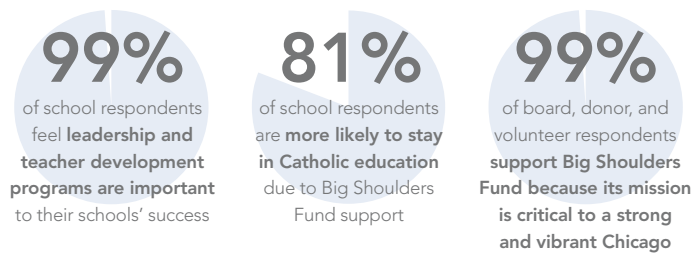
Committees Get the Job Done

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THE AUDIT COMMITTEE, chaired by Daniel Doherty, provides oversight of management's systems of internal control and risk management, the integrity of financial statements, compliance with legal and regulatory requirements and ethical standards, and the engagement and performance of independent auditors. The committee meets periodically with auditors and management to review policies regarding accounting, internal control, risk assessment and management, and internal codes of conduct and explore significant or unique accounting issues affecting the organization. Their years of experience and diverse backgrounds provide critical support to the accounting staff.

THE DATA, OUTCOMES, AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE aims to understand Big Shoulders Fund's impact through external and internal evaluation, identify areas of investment, and leverage results to help Big Shoulders raise additional funds, using third-party research, data systems, and donor engagement. "The Big Shoulders team is laser-focused on student outcomes," said Chair Steve King. "Our committee uses data and research to track those outcomes and inform programmatic investments."

STAKEHOLDER SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS



THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE manages the Big Shoulders Fund brand and messaging through various marketing initiatives. "Each year, the committee develops different forms of communication, each targeted to a particular audience," shared Chair Bill Lynch. "The gem is the Annual Report. First, we determine the overall theme and identify key stories to carry the message. The team generates ideas to make the stories and visuals work together. The writing needs to be engaging, short, and crisp. Visuals need to be powerful and arresting. Layouts need to pop. The process is simply amazing, as are the experienced professionals donating their time, including writer Jim Dyer, art director Mark Masseur, and photographers Tom Balla, Craig Andrews, and Michael Flack."

THE GOLF COMMITTEE, chaired by Giancarlo Turano and Bill Lagoni, plans the annual Golf Classic event that raises funds for the Friends of Big Shoulders Scholarship. Since its inception 16 years ago, the event has netted \$7 million and, in 2016, grossed more than \$600,000 for the 10th consecutive year.

All these committees help contribute to Big Shoulders Fund's strong organizational management, which is perhaps best illustrated by its four-star rating on Charity Navigator—for financial accountability, transparency, and efficiency—for 10 years and counting.

Big Shoulders thanks all those serving on these committees for sharing their expertise and dedication toward the organization's success. ■



Generous Donors KPMG and PwC Provide Valuable Support

The Data, Outcomes, and Research Committee recently undertook a major initiative, with support from Big Shoulders Fund Director and Audit Committee Chair Daniel Doherty, partner and advisory market development leader at KPMG. The firm donated in-kind a team of analysts to evaluate results of a stakeholder survey as part of a strategic planning process. Big Shoulders sent the anonymous survey to principals, teachers, board members, donors, and volunteers. Having independent, third-party analysis and interpretation of the results proved extremely beneficial and demonstrated a strong correlation between Big Shoulders priorities and the challenges facing inner-city schools, among them attracting and retaining strong school leaders and building enrollment. The report showed school leaders recognize the valuable contribution of Big Shoulders Fund programs to their success.

KPMG also donated 11,000 books earlier this year to pre-kindergarten through third grade classrooms at all 64 Big Shoulders Fund elementary schools. Each student went home with a book, and teachers received books for their classrooms. KPMG has partnered with Big Shoulders on this program since 2009.

PwC, with the support of Big Shoulders Director and PwC Greater Chicago Market Managing Partner Jim Kolar, provided in-kind support to enhance the effectiveness of technology and capture much-needed data on scholars. The support enabled Big Shoulders Fund's scholarship team to digitize its scholarship process, including a new cloud-based database and program tracking system. The PwC team, composed of Mireya Manigault, Stephen Ladner, and Ryan Lanigan, provided insightful analysis and recommendations and dreamed big on its deliverables, even when it meant more work on their end. The scholarship team successfully launched its first online scholarship application this past fall. With PwC's help, they also digitized all aspects of the scholarship program, including report cards, parental consents, and enrollment verification. Because of PwC's tremendous support, Big Shoulders has improved systems to report on scholarship recipients, who are the heart of Big Shoulders, and will be able to expand these capabilities in the near future. ■

(Above) St. Symphorosa School students are thrilled with their new books from KPMG's Family for Literacy program.

ICTC Legacy Fuels Big Shoulders Fund School Leadership

Passion is a great starting place for anyone who wants to teach. Amplifying that passion with education, training, and coaching can develop a dynamic, successful teacher. Big Shoulders Fund has focused on building its pipeline of future teachers and principals and creating an environment that encourages them to stay and thrive. Working to develop, support, and retain excellent teachers and principals carries forward the legacy of the Inner-City Teaching Corps (ICTC).

The Ryan family, whose longstanding support is funding more than 10,000 scholarships for Big Shoulders Fund students, has also facilitated teacher training and development. Pat Ryan, Jr. founded ICTC, which, during a 20-year period, recruited, trained, and placed more than 500 outstanding college graduates as teachers in high-poverty Chicago schools, primarily Big Shoulders Fund schools. Today, this legacy continues at the Accelerate Institute, which emphasizes leadership development and training at the center of a national movement dedicated to urban school reform. To date, more than half a dozen promising new leaders at Big Shoulders Fund schools have completed the Accelerate Institute's Accelerator, focused on increasing student outcomes through leveraged leadership.

"ICTC was built on the conviction that all children deserve access to an equal education," said Ryan. "The program recruited ambitious college graduates into schools that needed their energy and drive. ICTC's legacy continues in its alumni, who have gone on to impact Big Shoulders Fund schools in a variety of leadership roles and in the thousands of students taught by ICTC teachers."

ICTC graduate Jaclyn McNamee Damico, assistant principal at St. Thomas the Apostle School, attributes her early success to ICTC. "I gained confidence as an educator and saw myself as a leader. I developed my philosophy of education and my vision of a great school and helped implement changes to help St. Thomas on its path to greatness." St. Thomas's enrollment has grown 37 percent in the last three years.

Patrick Dwyer, who teaches at DePaul College Prep High School, credits ICTC for giving him "the tools, the mindset, and the training to fulfill my vocation in a way that mutually benefitted me and my students and



St. Margaret of Scotland School fourth grade teacher Mrs. Kimpela participates in the Teacher Development Program.

connected me to a community of committed, like-minded people. This ICTC community shaped me into the person, teacher, and education professional I am today."

Nearly 30 ICTC and Accelerate Institute graduates continue to grow as educators at Big Shoulders Fund schools. These teachers saw meaning and mission at those schools and want to continue to evolve professionally there, establishing a pipeline of instructional talent for years to come.

"ICTC was built on the conviction that all children deserve access to an equal education."

—Pat Ryan, Jr. founder, ICTC

Big Shoulders established its Teacher Development Program (TDP) to continue to attract and retain talent. With funding from the Opus Foundation and partnerships with area universities, the TDP identifies individuals committed to community, excellence, and leadership; provides tuition assistance, tutoring, clinical placement opportunities, and job selection guidance; and offers coaching and professional development.

TDP new teacher coach and ICTC graduate Antoinette Greengard commented, "The most rewarding thing I have experienced is when a teacher reaches the goals we set, then sets new ones or asks questions that show eagerness to tackle the next challenge."

Katie Thompson, a TDP coach and mentor, was a lead instructional coach with ICTC. "If you hire well and take care of your staff, they excel at their jobs and students thrive. Our teachers have the important task of educating our children, our future. We must support and equip our teachers with guided experience, content knowledge, and mentoring to ensure their success." ■

(L-R) TDP participant Katie Bond, first-year teacher at St. Gall School, meets with TDP Coach Antoinette Greengard and TDP Mentor Lily Olson.





In the Community





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- 1: Big Shoulders Fund's Auxiliary Board celebrated the start of the new school year at the 10th Annual Big Shoulders Fund Ball on September 29, 2016 at Revel Fulton Market. More than 700 guests, including (L-R) Jaime Poremba, Jennifer Manfredo, and Molly Kean, gathered to raise more than \$120,000 for the Auxiliary Board Scholarship.
- 2: (L-R) Co-Chairman Monsignor Velo, Big Shoulders Fund Director and Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer, Principal Patricia Murphy, Senator Dick Durbin, and teachers' aides gather with the first grade class of the Academy of St. Benedict The African in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood during Lend a Shoulder Day on November 3, 2016. Big Shoulders Fund hosted nearly 300 supporters at 15 schools to see firsthand how their support makes a difference in the lives of these amazing teachers and students.

- 3: Fifty sixth grade Gallagher Scholars from 10 Big Shoulders Fund schools enjoyed a day at the Chicago History Museum, thanks to members of the Gallagher family, including Big Shoulders Fund Directors Anne Gallagher O'Malley and Bob Gallagher.
- 4: Students from Holy Trinity High School came out early on October 9, 2016 to cheer on the Big Shoulders Fund Racing Team at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon. That day 43 runners carried the dreams of children across the finish line. The Big Shoulders Fund Racing Team is in its fifth year and has raised \$300,000.
- 5: The Academy of St. Benedict the African celebrated its second Annual Prayer and Walk for Peace. Parents and families from the Englewood neighborhood joined the students, as did the District 7 police, city aldermen, and the religious community.
- 6: Second grade students from Our Lady of Grace School learned about saving, spending, donating, and investing from The PrivateBank Money Savvy Generation Program on October 28, 2016. The program, with its signature piggy bank, rolled out in 20 schools with more than 3,000 students and nearly 400 volunteers.
- 7: On December 14, 2016, student choirs from 12 Big Shoulders Fund schools shared their wishes for a peaceful holiday with commuters at Ogilvie Transportation Center and Millennium Station. For seven years, students have taken an active role in bringing cheer to Chicago by caroling during the morning and afternoon commutes.
- 8: St. Thomas the Apostle Principal Tim Gallo (L) and students celebrated #FrameTheFuture, a campaign spotlighting the work of teachers, principals, volunteers, and all who come together to frame the future of success for students across Chicago. The campaign took place from September to December 2016 with a dedicated website chronicling the stories of featured subjects and a billboard on the Kennedy expressway. Thanks to everyone who participated and everything you do to frame the future of Big Shoulders Fund schools!

- 9: Volunteers from United joined children at St. Therese Chinese Catholic School and Children of Peace School for an unforgettable Halloween treat. More than 500 children enjoyed surprise Halloween treats and a costume parade by volunteers.
- 10: (L-R) President and CEO Josh Hale, Co-Chairman Monsignor Velo, U.S. Representative for Illinois's 2nd congressional district Robin Kelly, and AT&T's Paul La Schiazza attended the award presentation for Big Shoulders Fund's High School Success Summer Bridge Program. With AT&T's generous support, the Bridge Program prepares rising freshmen enrolling at St. Francis DeSales High School, Leo High School, and Our Lady of Tepeyac High School for a successful transition.

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212 West Van Buren St. • Suite 900 • Chicago, IL 60607

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Patrons Program Thrives

In 2001, Big Shoulders Fund initiated the Patrons Program to invest the necessary talent and resources to sustain and grow inner-city Catholic education. By June 2006, Big Shoulders had enlisted the help of 45 Patrons, including those profiled in this 2006 *Shoulder to Shoulder* article. Currently, there are 131 Patron relationships at 63 Big Shoulders Fund schools. Seventy percent of Patrons have renewed their relationships beyond the initial three-year commitment. A Patron can be an individual, foundation, company, or group of people eager to step up to the challenge and assist a Catholic school in positively impacting the lives of its students. The Patrons Program continues to be one of the most effective ways to partner our supporters with a school in need.

If you are interested in becoming a Patron, contact Patrons Program Senior Director John Moran at 312.751.3897 or jmoran@bigshouldersfund.org.

(R) Excerpt from 2006 *Shoulder to Shoulder*

Patrons Program

Total Number of Patron Schools	
June 2005	29
March 2006	38
June 2006	45*
	*projected

David Lies, Patron, St. Thomas of Canterbury (4827 N. Kenmore Avenue)
"I believe that the best way to break the cycle of poverty of families is through quality education and the instilling of proper values. I do not know of a more efficient way to accomplish these goals in Chicago than through a Catholic school education. St. Thomas of Canterbury School's success is the result of a strong principal, an excellent pastor and a committed staff and faculty."

Elizabeth Cole, Patron Advisor, St. Benedict the African (6020 S. Laflin Street)
"Participating in the Patrons Program has allowed me to witness firsthand the tremendous sense of mission and dedication of the principals and teachers in the inner-city Catholic schools."

Phil Corboy, Patron, Our Lady of Tepeyac (2235 S. Albany Avenue)
"I believe very strongly in the role that Our Lady of Tepeyac plays in the life of this community. My wife, Mary Dempsey, and I are proud to support this school's mission to serve the people who live and work in the neighborhood."

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