



Change a child's life by supporting the Millennium Fund

Three simple ways to give:

1. Return gift in enclosed envelope
2. Donate online at
www.akroncf.org/give/Millennium
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Grants from the Millennium Fund
have an immediate and lasting
effect on area children.

Akron Community Foundation and the Akron Beacon Journal created the Millennium Fund in 1999 to support the health, enrichment and education of area children. Grants are awarded to grassroots children's programs where even a small grant makes a big difference.

Fund balance as of Sept. 30, 2019:
\$1,083,460.56

Grants awarded since 1999:
\$799,872

For more information about the Millennium Fund for Children and stories of its donors and grantees, visit www.MillenniumFund.org.

**Millennium Fund for Children
of Akron Community Foundation**

345 West Cedar Street
Akron, OH 44307
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Issue 19

2019

Millennium Fund celebrates 20 years of giving to children

In 1999, the Millennium Fund for Children was just a glimmer in the eye of former Akron Beacon Journal editor Jan Leach.

The paper had just published a series of articles on the needs of local children, most notably those affected by shaken baby syndrome.

The topic lay heavy on her heart.

"I always felt newspapers should pay close attention to the children and the underserved in the community who don't have a voice of their own," she said. "We were very interested in the well-being of children in the area."

Around that same time, former Beacon Journal publisher John Dotson and then-Akron Community Foundation President Jody Bacon attended a conference designed to encourage the exchange of ideas about local philanthropy.

In the midst of all the discussions, one simple idea stood out: Ask people to donate their last hour's pay of the 20th century to benefit children in the 21st century and beyond.

Then and there, the Millennium Fund for Children was born.



Jan Leach

Since that day, the fund has grown to nearly \$1.1 million and distributed almost \$800,000 to grassroots children's programs throughout the Beacon Journal/Beaconjournal.com's coverage area.

Read more about the fund's history at www.akroncf.org/MillenniumHistory.

Millennium Fund will spread Sparkles of Joy to Akron area

By Betty Lin-Fisher
Beacon Journal/Beaconjournal.com

When Tessa Puma was in the hospital in 2017 recovering after losing her leg to a rare infection, special meals were sent to her hospital room.

Easter dinner. A Longhorn steak dinner that Tessa craved once she got her appetite back.

"We were in the hospital for 2½ months. It was so overwhelming," said Tina Puma, Tessa's mom.

A mutual friend connected the Pumas to Brecksville-based A Special Wish Foundation Inc., a nonprofit organization that grants the wishes of children and young adults under age 21 who have been diagnosed with a



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Record amount of grants awarded in 2019

In 2019, the Millennium Fund awarded a record \$49,000 in grants to 26 nonprofits that provide grass-roots children's programs in the Akron Beacon Journal coverage area of Summit, Portage, Medina, Stark, Wayne and Cuyahoga counties.

Now in its 20th year, this brings the fund's grantmaking total to nearly \$800,000.

The following grants were awarded this year:

ACCESS, to provide meals, clothing, health assessments and academic support for children living at the shelter, \$2,000

A Special Wish Foundation, to support the Sparkles of Joy program in Summit and Medina counties, which grants wishes to immune compromised children, \$1,000

Akron Children's Museum, to provide free tickets to the museum for disadvantaged children in Greater Akron, \$2,000

Akron Interfaith Immigration Advocates, to support programs and activities for Akron's immigrant youth, regardless of their immigration status, \$2,000

Art Sparks, for Dynamite Duos, an inclusive dance and music curriculum in Akron Public Schools that celebrates students with developmental disabilities while fostering acceptance by their non-disabled peers, \$2,000

Autism Society of Greater Akron, to support the iCan Bike camp, which teaches individuals with developmental disabilities to ride a two-wheel bicycle, \$2,000

Battered Women's Shelter, to support enrichment activities for children living at the shelter, \$2,000

Caring for Kids, to provide children in foster care personal recognition and special attention, like a present on their birthday, that they otherwise may not receive, \$2,000

CASA Board Volunteer Association, to provide warm winter pajamas for abused and neglected children in foster care, \$2,000



A grant to the Ronald McDonald House Akron will provide a home away from home for families with children receiving care at Akron Children's Hospital.

Christ Child Society of Akron, to provide essential newborn items and child safety literature to mothers of at-risk babies, \$1,000

City of Akron Police Department, to support expansion of Safety Town Year-Round to all kindergarten students in Akron Public Schools, \$2,000

Fallen Fathers Foundation, for the after school program, which provides a safe environment for youth from Kindergarten to 12th grade, \$2,000

Family Promise of Summit County Inc., to purchase linens, toiletries and diapers for homeless babies and children, \$2,000

First Congregational Church of Akron, for the Peanut Butter & Jelly Program at Mason Community Learning Center, which provides students in need with healthy food for the weekend, \$2,000

Girls on the Run of Greater Summit, to provide running apparel and supplies for girls in need so they can train for the program's signature 5k event, \$2,000

Good Samaritan Hunger Center, to provide bi-monthly bags of food for each student at Findley Community Learning Center, \$2,000

Limitless Ambition, to support girls in the Summit County Juvenile Court due to abuse or neglect, \$2,000

OPEN M, to provide gifts, school supplies and food to children during the holiday season, \$2,000

Rape Crisis Center, for trauma therapy for youth impacted by sexual violence, \$2,000

Ronald McDonald House Akron, to provide a home away from home for families with children receiving care at Akron Children's Hospital, \$2,000

Shelter Care Inc., to provide psycho-educational group activities for youth in short term residential care due to crisis or trauma, \$2,000

South Street Ministries, to support an after-school enrichment program for elementary school students in the Summit Lake neighborhood, \$2,000

Stewart's Caring Place, to provide social events and programming for children who are currently in treatment for cancer or have a loved one who has experienced cancer, \$2,000

Summit Choral Society, to provide free concert tickets to underserved youth, \$2,000

Victory Gallop, to purchase recognition items for children that complete a 12-week therapeutic riding program, \$1,000

Weathervane Community Playhouse, to help children from low-income families attend theater classes, \$2,000



Interfaith volunteers serve as lifeline for immigrants new to Akron

By Jennifer Pignolet
Beacon Journal/Beaconjournal.com

On a gray November morning in Akron's North Hill neighborhood, John Beaty leaned over the front door frame at the home of a young Guatemalan couple and their two children.

The door closed just fine, but a gap at the bottom was letting in too much cold air. The mother, Marisol, was afraid to turn up the heat for what it would cost, so Beaty was determined to insulate the house as much as possible.

It's one of several times he has made himself useful to the family, although it pales in comparison to when he looked after 3-year-old Nimsy while his wife stayed with Marisol as she gave birth to now-6-month-old Juan. Marisol's husband is now out on bond and working, but was being held in a federal detention facility at the time of his son's birth.

The family asked to be identified only by their first names because of

their pending immigration case.

As the family waits on their asylum request to make its way through the system, they have come to rely on Beaty and his wife, Linda, not just as their sponsors in the U.S. but as their friends.

"I am very grateful to them and thank God for them because they are good people," Marisol said in Spanish.

Beaty, a retired pastor, now spends much of his time helping immigrant families with whatever they need day to day.

He is one of the founders of Akron Interfaith Immigration Advocates, a nonprofit that helps immigrant families when they first arrive in Akron. The group can help a family find legal aid or health care, drive them to and from court hearings or other appointments, and assist them in enrolling children in school.

The group was one of 26 recipients of this year's Millennium Fund for Children grants, which total \$49,000.

Now in its 20th year, the program



Photo: Karen Schiely/Beacon Journal

started by the Akron Beacon Journal and Akron Community Foundation has distributed nearly \$800,000 to community organizations that benefit children.



Read the full story at www.akroncf.org/ABJ/Interfaith.

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life-threatening disorder.

The organization grants a "big wish" to its children but also offers what it calls "Sparkles of Joy," which are other things like meals, private events for wish kids and VIP events, Executive Director Eileen Lane said.

A Special Wish is one of 26 recipients of this year's Millennium Fund for Children grants, which total \$49,000. Now in its 20th year, the program started by the Akron Beacon Journal and Akron Community Foundation has distributed nearly \$800,000 to community organizations that benefit children.

A Special Wish will use its \$1,000 grant to expand its Summit and Medina county programs, first specifically with Akron Children's Hospital. The grant will be used to fund five VIP-like experiences for Children's patients, Lane said.

"We can't wait to spark these awesome programs into the Akron area," she said. "This really gives that boost to be able to do that and bring smiles to our wish families' faces."

The meals provided to the Pumas and other wish children mostly in Cuyahoga County are part of the group's Sparkles of Joy program. The meals are often donated by area restaurants, with assistance from donations from the organization and delivered by volunteers, said Lane.

More than 130 community partners work with the group to provide food drops at hospitals four or five nights a week. The organization works with three children's hospitals: Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital and, since January, Akron Children's Hospital.



While the organization has mostly been working in Cuyahoga County, Tessa was the group's first Akron-area recipient.



Read the full story at www.akroncf.org/ABJ/Sparkles.

AKRON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

345 West Cedar Street
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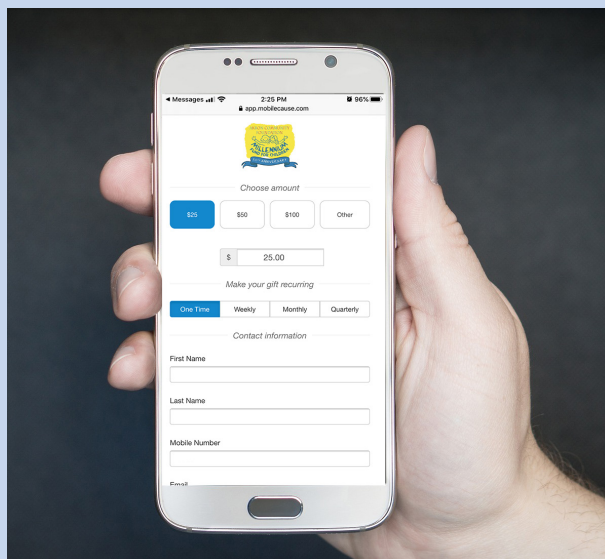
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WAYS YOU CAN GIVE

Thanks to your generosity, the Millennium Fund has nearly \$1.1 million in assets. Gifts of any size make a real and lasting difference in the lives of local children. Here are a few ways you can give before year-end:



Gifts of Cash/Check: Postmark your gift by Dec. 31 or donate online before midnight by visiting www.akroncf.org/give/Millennium.

This year, you can use your phone to donate, too. Just **text Millennium to 41444** for a quick and simple way to give.

Gifts of Retirement Assets: If you are age 70 ½ or older, you can donate up to \$100,000 from your IRA without paying taxes on the distribution. Learn more at www.akroncf.org/IRA.

Read about more ways to give to the fund now or in the future at www.akroncf.org/MillenniumWaystoGive. 