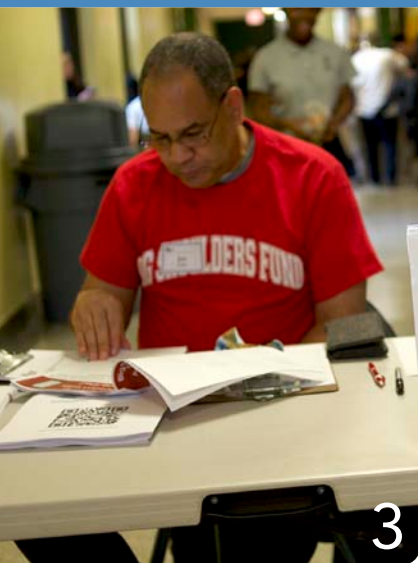


Shoulder **to** Shoulder

SPRING 2018

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Covered Schools Initiative Keeps Schools Rooted in Communities

Our Lady of Tepeyac Elementary School Principal Patricia Krielaart spends time with students.

Big Shoulders Fund impacts Chicago's education landscape via several entry points, including scholarships that help families provide their children with a high-quality education and professional development support to teachers and administrators to enhance their ability to better serve those children.

At times, a school might require more all-encompassing support to ensure its continued operation. In response, Big Shoulders established the Covered Schools Initiative.

In its first year (2014–15), the Initiative kept the doors open for more than 1,140 students at seven inner-city Catholic schools. An intensive, broad-based approach, the Initiative focuses on each school's financial, operational, and academic health by providing additional focus and resources. Big Shoulders has assembled a talented, multifaceted team

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Our Lady of Tepeyac students.

Nearly 2,000 students this year alone continue to receive a quality education at the schools of their choice.

Covered Schools Initiative

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who work with schools' leadership and communities. Now in its fourth year, the Initiative includes 11 schools and has generated more than \$1 million in operating savings. More important, nearly 2,000 students this year alone continue to receive a quality education at the schools of their choice.

Our Lady of Tepeyac Elementary School (OLT) was one school that risked closing. However, leadership from Big Shoulders, the Archdiocese of Chicago, and the school saw potential for growth, and Big Shoulders brought OLT into the Initiative. Furthermore, OLT serves an important role in the Little Village community, providing educational opportunity for nearly 170 students, 100 percent of whom live in low-income households.

"At the beginning of each year, we set targets and measure progress, when we also brainstorm new ideas for the school," explained Lea Jesse, director of Big Shoulders Fund's Patrons Program. "For example, we review a forecast and discuss whether or not the school is on track relative to its budget. We set tuition and create a school budget. We collaborate on a strategic marketing plan that helps retain current families and seeks new families. Our academic team looks at the overall curriculum and student needs, creates goals, and recommends new programs and teacher development supports."

Priorities for OLT that the Initiative tracks include enrollment retention, tuition collection, external funding growth, academics, financial management, facilities updates and repairs, and deficit reduction. In addition, the school participates in Big Shoulders Fund's Data Driven Instruction Initiative, with support from Lead Instructional Coach Liz Bartley.

The team's collective effort has led to impressive results during the past three years: OLT had a 96 percent family retention rate at the beginning of the 2017–18 school year; completed last year with a 99 percent tuition collection rate; and reduced its anticipated operating deficit by more than half, due largely to increased fundraising. In fact, the school exceeded its fundraising goal by nearly 50 percent. "With a focus on improving the school culture and climate, OLT's significant improvement on the University of Chicago's 5Essentials Survey, which correlates highly to academic achievement, positions the school well to even better serve students," said Bartley.

Among the most important changes at OLT was a new principal, Patricia Krielaart. "She has been great to work with and open to new ideas," said Jesse. "The parents love her. She stands outside every day and greets every family during pickup and drop-off. That makes a difference." In addition, Patrons Liz and Kent Dauten now provide support that is critical to the school's long-term success.

"Our relationship with Big Shoulders is wonderful," said Krielaart. "We determine reachable goals that are best for the school and its student body. We reach our goals, whether through grants, professional development for our teachers, or hands-on help from the Big Shoulders team. The result has been more eighth graders graduating and enrolling at good Catholic high schools and overall greater student achievement." ■

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Shoulder to Shoulder

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Big Shoulders Fund Chairmen's
Advisory Council member
Joe Tyler helps register families
at a Tax Credit Scholarship
application site.



Tax Credit Scholarships Expand Big Shoulders Fund's Reach

As the largest private K–12 scholarship program in Illinois, Big Shoulders Fund is committed to providing quality educational opportunities for Chicago-area children. The enactment of the Tax Credit Scholarship Program, made possible by the Illinois Invest in Kids Act, increases Big Shoulders Fund's ability to open doors for students.

The program offers an income tax credit to individuals and businesses contributing to qualified Scholarship Granting Organizations (SGOs)—including Big Shoulders Fund. The SGOs then provide scholarships for students whose families meet the income requirements to attend qualified, non-public schools in Illinois.

“Big Shoulders Fund chose to participate as an SGO to serve more children and families,” said President and CEO Josh Hale. “With more than 30 years of providing private scholarships—nearly 5,000 each year in more than 60 distinct scholarship programs—we are uniquely positioned to participate.”

Big Shoulders opened its Tax Credit Scholarship on January 22, 2018 and received more than 12,000 applications in less than two days. That first day, Big Shoulders Fund volunteers operated five application assistance sites and a temporary call center to help families with the online application.

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Tax Credit Scholarships

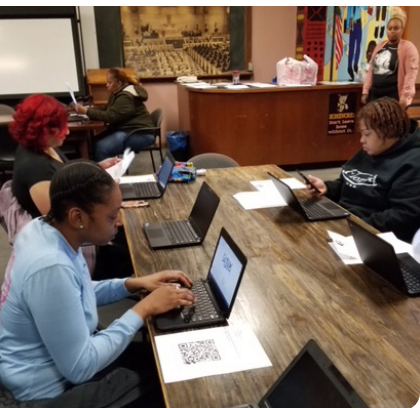
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“Thanks to Big Shoulders Fund for your support and guidance and for the ease with which my families navigated through the entire process,” shared Queen of the Universe School Principal Mary Porod.

To date, Big Shoulders has awarded 1,132 scholarships to students across 143 ZIP codes, but with demand outweighing available funding, Big Shoulders started a waitlist and anticipates additional contributions will enable more scholarships.

The Tax Credit Scholarship makes an impact by breaking down financial barriers and enabling families to attend a private school. The average family income for awardees is \$35,168.

“Without this scholarship, we would not have been able to afford to bring Eduardo back to St. Gall for the opportunity to have a quality education.” — *St. Gall parent Arely Vidal*



Parents apply for the Tax Credit Scholarship.

the possibility of continuing the education and legacy that his parents and older sister started.”

Malik Jones is a second grader at St. Ethelreda School. His aunt, Tamika Honeycutt, was so thrilled to have the opportunity the scholarship offered, she helped other families applying. “My nephew has been blessed to attend a wonderful school where he can learn, grow, and be challenged. Helping other parents is a small gesture to say thank you for all that St. Ethelreda and Big Shoulders Fund have been able to do.”

Tax credits are still available to reserve, and Big Shoulders continues its outreach to donors. “We are eager to serve as many children as possible and would happily reopen our application process if more funding becomes available,” said Director, Corporate Partnerships and Outreach Amy Drozda. “Our current waitlist is considerable, but we hope to grant awards to as many children as possible.”

For more than 30 years, Big Shoulders has provided scholarships to families across the city of Chicago. The Tax Credit Scholarship Program provides another vehicle to partner with donors, parents, and students to secure educational opportunities for children. Each application represents a family's hopes and dreams for a brighter future.

For more information, contact Amy Drozda. ■



Jennifer and Gerald Beeson with scholars.

More Scholarship News

Big Shoulders Fund is thrilled to announce the **Tengelsen Family Scholarship Program**, a renewable scholarship following students from middle school to high school, thanks to a generous gift of \$1 million. The Tengelsen family has been involved with Big Shoulders for a long time, having supported a variety of STEM initiatives, including the Big Shoulders Fund Math Initiative at St. Mary of the Angels, Staddle Camp at Brush Creek Ranch, Extended Day Programming, and more. This new scholarship program extends their support and links their family to a group of scholars. “Having this opportunity to deepen our relationship with the Big Shoulders Fund family is indeed an honor and a privilege for us,” said Jennifer Tengelsen. “Their excellence in reaching out to Chicago's neediest communities is above reproach, and we can think of no better way to help with their mission of ‘Para Los Niños!’”

Jennifer and Gerald Beeson have expanded their support to a new cohort of 18 students receiving the **Beeson Scholarship**. The scholarship starts with students in fifth grade and is renewable through high school for those who maintain a B average and attend a high school in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The earlier cohort of students were enrolled at one of six Big Shoulders Fund schools where the Beesons had personal connections, including St. Gall (where the Beesons are also Patrons), St. Bede the Venerable, St. Mary Star of the Sea, St. Nicholas of Tolentine, St. Symphorosa, and St. Walter. The new cohort comprises students at St. Mary Star of the Sea and St. Nicholas of Tolentine. The scholars come together around a service project each year to teach them the importance of contributing to the community. The program also includes annual cultural enrichment events, such as a trip to Chinatown. “We are so excited to continue this program with Big Shoulders Fund and give students the ability to further their dreams,” said Jennifer Beeson.

Big Shoulders Fund's long-standing, privately funded programs remain a key source of support for the students and schools. This academic year alone, nearly 4,200 scholars will receive more than \$7.4 million in assistance across more than 60 scholarship programs. Thanks to all who support these important programs. ■

Catholic High School Chicago

Find Matches Apply Schools Scholarships Español

To begin, enter your ZIP code
60607 GO

Select all criteria below that is important to you. You may leave sections blank.

School size:

- ☐ Over 500 students
- ☐ Between 250 and 500 students
- ☐ Less than 250 students

Student population:

- ☐ Co-ed
- ☐ All girls
- ☐ All boys

Transportation options:

- ☐ Public Transit (CTA, PACE, or Metra)
- ☐ School bus

Support programming:

- ☐ English as a Second Language (ESL)
- ☐ Post-High School Counseling
- ☐ Support for Learning Differences
- ☐ Tutoring
- ☐ Mental Health Counseling
- ☐ Restorative Justice Programs
- ☐ Corporate Work Study Program

Academic programming:

- ☐ IB Program

28 schools match your criteria

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New Mazza Foundation Program Helps Families Transition to High School



Above: More than 300 people attended a Big Shoulders Fund high school fair last fall.

Top: This website is being developed to aid students in their high school search.

With a growing number of school options available, Chicago families often find the process of selecting a high school for their children overwhelming. Big Shoulders Fund measures its success with elementary school students in part through the matriculation rate to quality high schools. The Mazza Foundation, which has supported Big Shoulders Fund for nearly 30 years, including through the Mazza Foundation Scholarship Program, recognized the need to alleviate the challenges of this decision and are funding a new initiative: the Mazza Foundation High School Support Program.

“The number of high school options available to Chicago students is staggering,” commented Dan Bennett, Big Shoulders Fund director, leadership and scholarship support. “Each category of schools has its own set of requirements, application processes, and admissions policies. When factoring in tuition, financial aid, and/or scholarship considerations, the transition from eighth grade to high school can be quite complex. We want to help our students navigate through that crowded, complicated landscape by providing not only awareness, access, and greater capacity to manage the selection process but also tools for students to have a successful transition to high school.”

Information gathering and sharing has been crucial during this first year of the program. Bennett has conducted focus groups with elementary school teachers and principals, high school administrators and admission directors, eighth and ninth grade students, and families to review the process of searching, selecting, and transitioning into high school.

Bennett also has made presentations to students and families at eight Big Shoulders Fund schools and provided packets with overviews of different high schools, contact information, timelines, and more. Big Shoulders sponsored a high school fair in the fall, which welcomed more than 300 people, and is planning another this spring. This summer, Big Shoulders will launch an early bridge program as a way of proactively introducing seventh grade scholars to the high school application process and the transition into their selected school. As part of the weeklong experience, students will learn from current high school students, teachers, and administrators about what it takes to be successful and participate in workshops (note taking, organizing, social outreach) that will equip them better to succeed.

“The program is enhancing the way elementary schools expose families and students to school and scholarship options and helps them walk through the required steps for each option,” said Bennett. “It is enabling all parties to start this process earlier and thus be better informed when the time comes for applications, decisions, and transitions.”

Feedback has also helped guide the development of a website that students will be able to use when searching for high schools, aiding them in determining the options that might be the best match. Big Shoulders is developing a second website as a resource for teachers and school administrators. ■



In the Community





1: (L-R) Sacred Heart School Principal Dr. Lisa Griffiths, St. Nicholas Cathedral School Principal Anna Cirilli, and Holy Angels Catholic School Principal Sean Stalling, all Big Shoulders Sullivan Fellows, enjoyed courtside seats at a Chicago Bulls game. The Big Shoulders Fund Sullivan Fellowship, founded by Tim and Sue Sullivan, acknowledges principals conducting exemplary work and leading transformative initiatives to improve their schools. Fifteen Big Shoulders Fund principals participate in the program.

2: Meggan Flom visited her student mentees at Maternity BVM School as part of the Big Shoulders Fund scholarship program. Big Shoulders thanks Meggan, husband David, and their Chicago Cut Steakhouse for all they do.

3: The 2018 Big Shoulders Fund College Symposium for High School Scholars took place March 13 at DePaul University, with more than 18 schools and 550 students in attendance. Seniors from St. Rita of Cascia High School were excited to receive their Big Shoulders college-bound care packages.

4: A new Latino Outreach Program kicked off this year to improve engagement with Latino families and communities and help grow enrollment. Latino Outreach Coordinator Vicente Del Real shared with Telemundo how families can apply for a Tax Credit Scholarship, and he led Spanish Q&A workshops across the city.

5: Big Shoulders Fund's Academic and Enrichment Team, in conjunction with Leo High School, designed and led the first annual Black History Academic Bowl to raise the school's profile of academic achievement. Eight schools and 35 students demonstrated their knowledge on many subjects, such as African-American history, math, and engineering. Tolton Academy took home the trophy.

6: St. Margaret of Scotland School seventh graders used a green screen and video recording package to produce their broadcast news show. With support from the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, Big Shoulders provides resources, such as the boom mic and iPad for recording, through a lending library of multimedia tools for teachers and students.

7: (L-R) Big Shoulders Fund Director, Vice President of Global Public Affairs at Aon and Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer; Big Shoulders Fund President and CEO Josh Hale; and Speaker Series Committee Co-Chair Elizabeth Suffredin-Boyle attended the year's first Chairmen's Advisory Council Networking Breakfast on March 16. Gainer shared her insights on the importance of civic engagement, Chicago's inner-city schools, and the work of Big Shoulders Fund.

8: The 11th Annual Bowl for Big Shoulders took place March 27, raising more than \$22,000 for the Auxiliary Board Scholarship Fund. Dinner sponsor GATX and its team participated in this fun night and regularly provides mentors, tutors, and service day volunteers. Thank you to Michael Spencer and 10pin bowling lounge for hosting the event in-kind.

9: Rachel Wilhelm (L), Big Shoulders Fund Ball co-chair and Auxiliary Board fundraising committee member, and Lilliane Webb, Bowl for Big Shoulders co-chair and Auxiliary Board schools' committee member, participated in a day of service at the Give Back Day at St. Stanislaus Kostka School on February 24.

10: The Allstate Foundation Greater Good Leaders Program selected Director, Corporate Partnerships and Outreach Amy Drozda (third from far R) to be part of its class of 2018. The seven-month program provides group-based academic instruction, executive coaching, and development opportunities.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Some of our favorite
pictures from
Lend A Shoulder Day
of years past...



save the date!

BIG SHOULDERS FUND GOLF CLASSIC
Monday, August 13, 2018
Olympia Fields Country Club

BIG SHOULDERS FUND BALL
Friday, September 28, 2018
SpiN Chicago

BIG SHOULDERS FUND
LEND A SHOULDER DAY
Thursday, November 15, 2018