

# Shoulder **to** Shoulder

FALL 2018

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## THE GIFT OF TIME: Volunteering Through Big Shoulders Fund

(Above R) Big Shoulders Fund volunteers work on math skills with a St. Sylvester student during the Saturday morning tutoring program.

(Above L) Big Shoulders Fund Director and ComEd President and Chief Operating Officer Terry Donnelley (L) and a ComEd team member help paint the halls at Maternity BVM School.

Volunteers are often the lifeblood of a school, providing skills, dedication, and time that otherwise would not be available. In turn, volunteers join in strengthening school communities across Chicago, broadening their own experience with the city.

Big Shoulders Fund offers a range of volunteer opportunities, with individuals serving as mentors, tutors, sports coaches, guest instructors, school board members, and more.

The “Next Generation” of leaders who will guide Big Shoulders into the future includes two groups: the **Auxiliary Board** and the **Chairmen’s Advisory Council**.

The Auxiliary Board is now in its 12th year, with 200 (and growing) members who volunteer, fundraise, and publicize the Big Shoulders mission. This fall, the board is sharing its expertise through tutoring,

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GATX employees, led by CEO Brian Kenney, installed new furniture at a school during a recent service day. GATX employees also mentor and tutor at their two Patron schools, Academy of St. Benedict the African and St. Margaret of Scotland.

## The Gift of Time

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test prep, essay review, and mock interviews across the Big Shoulders Fund network.

“St. Sylvester has benefitted from the generosity of numerous Big Shoulders Fund volunteers,” commented Principal Allyn Doyle. “From tutoring students in math and assisting teachers to landscaping, painting, and reorganizing classrooms, Big Shoulders volunteers have made a big difference in the quality of the education we offer to our students.”

Jeff Apel joined the Auxiliary Board in 2007 after seeking a charity focused on early education. “Big Shoulders stood out with its amazing leadership, impressive supporters, and great families,” he said. Apel joined the Epiphany Catholic School board in 2008 and is now its chair. “My favorite thing about volunteering on the school board is being part of a team—the principal, teachers, parents, and other volunteers from the business community. Epiphany is in the top 10 schools for enrollment growth. One of the biggest drivers of that success is annual support from Big Shoulders.”

**Corporate Service Days** offer companies a dedicated opportunity for a positive collective volunteering experience. Terry Donnelley, president and COO of ComEd and Big Shoulders Fund board member, recently brought 30 employees to Maternity BVM School for a day of service. Donnelley embraced the spirit of his surroundings by assuming the role of “principal” for the day, with the promise of a gold star or the threat of a detention based on effort.

The Chairmen’s Advisory Council (CAC) has grown to 160 members and aims to increase support for Big Shoulders and involvement of prospective board members. The CAC also supports the Chairmen’s Emergency Scholarship, which provides tuition assistance for families in crisis. In a new endeavor this summer, CAC hosted a Night at Wrigley. For each of the 225 tickets sold, the Chicago Cubs donated \$5 to support the scholarship.

A fun program that benefits schools with financial support and the volunteers with some outdoor exercise is the Big Shoulders Fund Racing Team, which last year raised more than \$100,000 at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon and the Chicago Half Marathon. This fall, 69 individuals were part of the Racing Team, up from 31 members in 2013.

Auxiliary Board member and engineer Chris Goebbert shares his love of the markets with St. Agnes School through the Big Shoulders Fund **Stock Market Program**, which brings business professionals into eighth grade classrooms to teach basic concepts related to the financial markets, personal savings and investing concepts, and careers in the financial industry. “I took an economics class in high school that taught me the basics of investing, and it forever changed my life financially,” noted Goebbert. “I owe that teacher a lot and wish he knew the difference he made on my future. I hope some of the lessons in this program resonate with the kids. If I can make an impact on even one kid’s future the way my teacher did with me, my mission will be fulfilled.” Goebbert also served as 2018 Big Shoulders Fund Ball Co-Chair.

For information about volunteer opportunities, contact Kevin Pitts, Assistant Director, Volunteerism and Engagement. ■



# Summer Fellows GIVE BACK to Schools

Big Shoulders Fund Fellows gave back to the school community by helping with student recruitment.

Enrollment growth is essential to the future of any school, but it can be a formidable and time-consuming task. To supplement and enhance efforts by principals to increase enrollment, Big Shoulders Fund offers a number of tools and resources, including marketing support, scholarship offerings to attract new families, professional development opportunities for marketing and development directors, social media and website services, and the Big Shoulders Fund Fellows Program, which enlists help from college students during the summer.

Big Shoulders recruits from more than 150 universities for potential Fellows with skill sets in videography, graphic design, Web design, marketing communications, and community organizing. Under the supervision of Big Shoulders staff, Fellows assist with designing and producing marketing materials, updating schools' social media, following up with prospective parents by phone, and canvassing school neighborhoods with parents and/or teachers. And sometimes the work continues: since 2015, eight former Fellows have joined the Big Shoulders staff or continued working with Big Shoulders Fund schools as marketing directors or consultants.

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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

## Summer Fellows Give Back

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The 2018 Fellows were a diverse group of achievers—50 percent minorities—attending 11 universities, and a third had attended a Big Shoulders Fund school or were Big Shoulders Fund scholars. Their results demonstrate their dedication and effort:

- Schools working with Fellows had **FIVE PERCENT HIGHER ENROLLMENT** (as a percentage of last year's enrollment) at the end of the summer program compared to all Big Shoulders Fund elementary schools.
- The 22 schools they worked with gained **243 ADDITIONAL PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES** during the summer.
- Fellows reported **351 NEW ENROLLMENTS (AND COUNTING)** at the schools they supported.

Milton Olivares, a senior at DePaul University majoring in sociology, attended St. Agnes of Bohemia School and graduated from St. Laurence High School. He was a Big Shoulders Fund Gallagher Scholar beginning in fifth grade at St. Agnes and is a Canning Scholar at DePaul. "Becoming a Fellow this summer was motivated by what Big Shoulders has done for me and my family," he commented.

**"Big Shoulders helps students who are just like me. I want to continue to be a part of the bigger difference. Service is hard work, but it's a job that needs people for the greater common good."** —*Fellow Jessica Douglas*

"I've known about Big Shoulders Fund since I was eight years old," said Fellow Jessica Douglas, a Big Shoulders Fund Ruscitti Scholar who attended St. Angela School and was in the first graduating class of Christ the King Jesuit Preparatory School. Having learned the value of service to her community, she recently completed two years as a Jesuit Volunteer at Christ the King.

"Within those two years of working in development/communication, my passion for social justice and service grew," Douglas described. "I want to continue helping to bridge the education gap that many students face, especially in Chicago. The greatest lesson I've learned is to stay in my community, which has given me opportunities to succeed. Big Shoulders helps students who are just like me. I want to continue to be a part of the bigger difference. Service is hard work, but it's a job that needs people for the greater common good."

"I was very impressed with Milton's and Jessica's professionalism and their ability to hit the ground running," said Lea Jesse, director of Big Shoulders Fund's Patrons Program. "Jessica helped St. Malachy School canvass their neighborhood for prospective families. She also created new banners for the front of the school. Milton helped Leo High School update their website and ran an email campaign that helped Pope John Paul II School engage more than 60 prospective families. All our Fellows should be very proud of their work this summer, which continues to make an impact." ■



Big Shoulders Fund STEM Scholar Natalie Nieves attends a Saturday workshop in 2013. Today, she is a freshman at Wellesley College, where she plans to combine her STEM education with policy-making through a political science major.

## First STEM Scholars Class Heads Off to College!

Eight years ago, longtime Big Shoulders Fund supporters Wendy and Dave Dury grasped the necessity of improving children's skills in science, technology, engineering, and math and funded a new scholarship, the Big Shoulders Fund STEM Scholars Program. Students receive scholarship support from fifth through eighth grades and participate in enrichment activities, including Saturday morning classes, science experiments, and museum visits.

This fall, the first class of STEM Scholars is heading to college. Many have realized the program's original concept and are continuing to pursue an education in one or more STEM areas. Examples include Natalie Bucio, who is on a pre-med track at Loyola University Chicago, and Holy Trinity High School graduate Monika Romo, who is studying engineering at Saint Mary's College. Big Shoulders continues to support Romo's college education through a \$3,000 grant, renewable for up to four years, from the Greer Foundation.

Jesus Zavala, who is studying engineering at the University of Illinois, served as an intern in the STEM Scholars program for multiple years and as a junior counselor in Big Shoulders Fund's Brush Creek Ranch Science Enrichment Program. He attributes his intended college major and career path to his exposure to STEM in Saturday classes.

Natalie Nieves, a Holy Trinity graduate who plans to combine her STEM education with policy-making through a political science major at Wellesley College, recalled the program's impact at a graduation ceremony for STEM Scholars: "Fifth grade seems like such a long time ago. When I applied for the STEM program, I had no idea I was preparing to do something that would affect the rest of my life. ...The Big Shoulders Fund STEM Scholars Program saw the budding geniuses in all of us and helped us evolve into well-grounded scholars who were better prepared for high school than most eighth graders. They want you to succeed!"

The Durys' vision has inspired other programs, including the Exelon STEM Scholars and a \$1 million endowment gift from the Grover Hermann Foundation to fund a significant portion of future programming. ■

# Data Drives School Improvement at Covered Schools

From ensuring students have the educational opportunities they need to reach their potential to planning strategically for the future of 100-year-old community institutions, it takes a lot to run a school. Big Shoulders Fund's Covered Schools Initiative steps in to support schools' efforts in enrollment marketing, financial planning, scholarships, academics, and more to help them thrive for years to come. Now in its fifth year, the Initiative includes nine schools and has generated more than \$1 million in operating savings. More importantly, this year alone, nearly 2,000 students continue to receive a quality education at the schools of their choice. Each of these schools is one more node in a bright network.

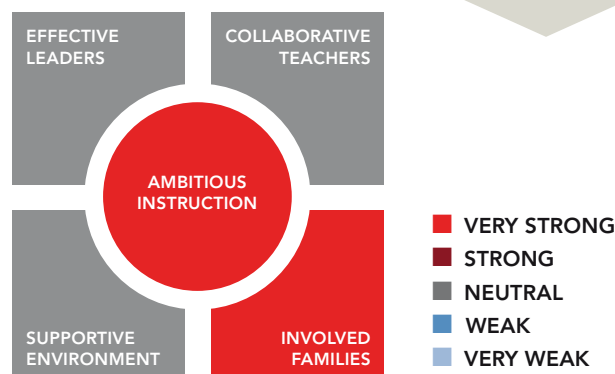
Each Covered School also participates in the 5Essentials Survey, a tool developed by the University of Chicago's Consortium on Chicago School Research (UChicago CCSR) that aims to drive improvement in schools. With three decades of strong research behind it, the survey assesses five key effectiveness factors that reflect the culture and climate of schools, which then correlate with overall school success. Schools that rate strongly in at least three of these five factors are 10 times more likely to improve student learning.

"Using this research-based third-party tool, Big Shoulders is able to deepen its vantage point when looking at schools and tailor the nature of our support accordingly," said Rebecca Lindsay-Ryan, senior director of academic programs and external affairs. "During the past several years, our team has used survey reports to identify a focus on increasing the use of collaborative practices among teachers. In the last four years, we have seen performance on this measure nearly triple. This data has provided an opportunity to make actionable plans and monitor progress over time to ultimately benefit students."

One of the Covered Schools, Holy Angels Catholic School, serves the Bronzeville community under the leadership of veteran educator and Holy Angels alumnus Sean Stalling. In that time, the school has used data from the 5Essentials to determine areas of focus with the goal of improving the school's culture and climate. These whole-school efforts have led to significant increases in "academic press," which is a measure of how challenged students feel in class, and in the level of trust between students and their teachers.

"The 5Essentials is a well-thought-out way to approach school improvement," said Stalling. "It touches on the areas that matter most, involves the stakeholders that matter most, and measures the strongest levers to help transform a school. The key is to use the 5Essentials as a tool for change. One should embrace the data it provides and grow from it. The change that results from using this information will make you a better leader and your school a better place for children."

Since 2015, through Big Shoulders Fund's Data Analysis Initiative with support from the Data, Outcomes, and Research Committee, Big Shoulders has developed use of the 5Essentials survey into a core offering, with the number of participating schools steadily increasing to 20 and plans to expand to 24 schools this year. ■

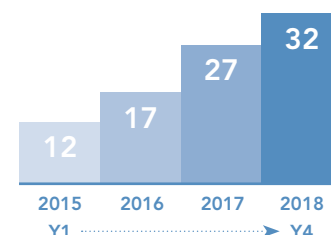


## MEASURES FOR COLLABORATIVE TEACHERS

- Teacher-Teacher Trust
- Quality Professional Development
- School Commitment
- Collective Responsibility
- Collaborative Practice

## Big Shoulders Fund Interventions to Support COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

- Professional learning communities
- Substitute pool enabling teachers to attend professional development and observe other teachers
- Scheduling support for planning shared teacher prep time
- Data Driven Instruction Initiative



10 POINTS IS CONSIDERED STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT

**EFFECTIVE LEADERS:** The principal works with teachers to implement a clear and strategic vision for school success.

**COLLABORATIVE TEACHERS:** The staff is committed to the school, receives strong professional development, and works together to improve the school.

**INVOLVED FAMILIES:** The entire school staff builds strong relationships with families and communities to support learning.

**SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT:** The school is safe and orderly. Teachers have high expectations for students. Students are supported by their teachers and peers.

**AMBITIOUS INSTRUCTION:** Classes are academically demanding and engage students by emphasizing the application of knowledge.



# In the Community





1: Early High School Bridge Program participants use a new website ([catholichighschoolchicago.org](http://catholichighschoolchicago.org)) that allows them to research and craft a list of their top schools and scholarship opportunities. The program is a part of the larger Mazza Foundation High School Support Program at Big Shoulders Fund, which includes school visits, parent meetings, teacher training, and the creation of this new website.

2: The Innovation 2018 Conference hosted by Big Shoulders Fund and its Innovation Leader Kristin Ziemke took place September 20. The first of its kind, this conference brought educators together to discover best practices to implement next-generation learning in the classroom. The evening included speakers from various Big Shoulders Fund schools, including Stacy Kabat (far R), second grade teacher from Academy of St. Benedict, who demonstrated how to create a flexible lab, along with innovative curriculum created by Ziemke and Big Shoulders. This initiative is helping students bridge the opportunity gap and also led to a Chicago Innovation Award nomination for Big Shoulders Fund.

3: Big Shoulders Fund Development and Events Coordinator Sam Rodriguez (R) welcomed alumni and friends to the April Give Back Day on April 14 at his alma mater, St. Nicholas of Tolentine.

4: On May 20, Teen Board members fundraised for and packed school supplies for Big Shoulders Fund schools.

5: St. Laurence Gallagher mentees Jose (L) and Juan (R) pose with Linhard Steph, their mentor of seven years, at their high school graduation in May. Both students started college this fall, Jose with a full-ride Chick Evans Scholarship at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Juan at IBEW NECA Technical Institute.

6: The 18th Annual Big Shoulders Fund Golf Classic took place on August 13 at Olympia Fields. The event raised more than \$560,000, making it one of the most successful Golf Classics to date. Among the supporters were (L-R) Michael J. Thompson, Event Co-Chair Giancarlo Turano II, Steve Gaspari, and Dan Giraudo.

7: Event Co-Chair Chris Goebbert (fourth from L) and guests enjoyed a night of fun and ping pong at the 12th Annual Big Shoulders Fund Ball hosted by the Auxiliary Board on September 28 at SPiN. The event grossed more than \$100,000 for the Auxiliary Board Scholarship, which directly benefits Big Shoulders Fund students. Thank you, Chris, and Co-Chair Rachel Wilhelm!

8: On June 1, St. Ethelreda School received the Croghan Teacher's Award for exhibiting remarkable growth in student learning evidenced by standardized test scores. Created by Rosemary and John Croghan, this financial award for the school faculty applauds the efforts of teachers, students, and school leadership in raising the schools' educational outcomes.

9: On May 16, WGN Morning News staff went back to school by participating in a Service Day at St. Stanislaus Kostka School. Participants learned more about the school community while painting, cleaning, organizing, and landscaping.



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## Big Shoulders Fund.®

This past spring, Big Shoulders Fund brought real-world experiences to schools to help enrich the lens through which students view the world.



A Cristo Rey Jesuit High School student panel discussed how the news they consume through social media platforms influences their understanding of the world at the **2nd Annual Big Shoulders Fund News, Media, and YOU(th) Conference**, made possible with generous support from the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.



Students from Big Shoulders Fund schools, with the help of EY employee mentors, designed innovative products and services to improve the Chicago community for the **second annual EY Entrepreneurship Challenge**. St. Malachy students won first place with their Junior Teacher Associates tutoring service.

Students and teacher mentors gathered at the Goodman Theatre on May 15 to celebrate another successful year of the **Stock Market Program**. The winning team from Immaculate Conception School received the Stock Market Cup. Sixty-six classrooms participated in the program last year.

