



Turning the Page

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Friends,

With cherry blossoms only days away, we are so excited that spring has arrived in the DC region. As the seasons change, so too does the nature of our work as we close out of successful Winter Community Night series and begin to focus on Carpe Librum. Please take the time to visit our store (conveniently located at 2000 Pennsylvania Ave) and to spread the word to friends, family, and colleagues about our biggest fundraiser of the year. Thanks as always for supporting our programs and we look forward to seeing you at the book sale!

Funder Spotlight: Linus Foundation

Partnership starts on strong note



On Saturday, February 20th, the [Linus Foundation](#) “took” the Capitol by inviting guests to a fundraiser to benefit TTP programs, attracting about 170 guests and raising approximately \$1,200 from ticket sales and online donations. “We were pleasantly surprised that the word had spread,” says Jessica Natbony of Linus Foundation, who noted that “the evening was fantastic.” Held at the K Street Lounge, guests enjoyed drinks and dancing, knowing their attendance was supporting TTP’s programs in schools across DC. Since 2005, the Linus Foundation has supported innovative programming for children in St. Louis, New York, Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia. The organization hosts fundraisers in each city and has given away more than \$100,000 to organizations around the country. At each event, Linus collects “cover” charges to raise money for organizations supporting children, thereby serving as a “cover” or “security blanket” - a term introduced by Peanuts character Linus Van Pelt - for kids across the country. Knowing this successful history, TTP was thrilled when Stephanie Lapidus from Linus approached us in January and offered to host a fundraiser on our behalf!

The Linus Foundation, new to Washington, DC, is as excited to be working with us as we are with them. Says Jessica, as “we began to formulate the contours of the new branch, we knew that the first local charity we wanted to work with was one that sought to specifically target children within the urban education system.” The various programs offered by TTP were of interest to the people behind the Linus Foundation, and Jessica says that “we felt that TTP was a perfect fit with the mission we wanted to accomplish. More specifically, we felt that TTP really highlighted the unique characteristics of the city and the resources it had to offer, as well as offering programs in which volunteers could interact with and truly get to know school-age children - programs that we and our supporters could ultimately partake in. I guess in a nutshell, we were touched by TTP's mission and hope that the social structure we can provide through ongoing



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events involving a solid base of young support may help to contribute to the continuation of [TTP's] work.”

TTP is excited to begin a multi-faceted partnership with the Linus Foundation. Future social and fundraising events are in the works, with possible dates in June and October. Additionally, TTP is grateful to the Linus Foundation for helping to support our spring book sale efforts. Look for information about upcoming events and join us in saying a big thank you to the Linus Foundation!

Parent Leaders take Center Stage

Parents collaborate and discuss at Parent Leadership Conference

For several years, TTP's [Parent Leadership](#) program has offered a series of full-day training events for parents who want to take on new responsibilities in their schools and communities. The training on March 6th was something new, featuring parent presentations and panels at our first ever Parent Leadership Conference. The results were remarkable as parent-teacher organizations from each of our partner schools presented and fielded questions about



their recent successes and challenges, covering a broad range of topics of interest to their colleagues across the city. The themes of sharing and building upon one another's strengths were pervasive throughout the day. Annette Kenner, Payne PTA member, said it best: “Listening to everybody here, what your interests are, what you've achieved, all of that, I was wondering if it's possible...that we can have a collaboration for all of our schools to come together, so instead of always being separate schools, we can be one.”



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Especially inspiring were presentations by Ms. Tyree Wall and Mr. Michael Burriss. “Getting our PTA going has been a three-year battle,” said Ms. Wall, President of the Browne Education Campus PTA. She continued, “It is slow going, but I am taking notes from the young ladies I am listening to. We are doing it one parent at a time.” Ms. Wall attributed her success to building morale at her school and within the PTA. She listed nine “building blocks” that she considers essential to strengthening morale at any school, a very popular among conference participants. Speaking about Ms. Wall’s presentation, Aiton Elementary PTA member Mr. Burriss said, “Her speaking with so much confidence just gave me a very good idea.” Mr. Burriss said he would see to it that Ms. Wall’s “building blocks” were posted prominently in his school’s lobby so that all parents can see them upon entering the building. Later in the day, Mr. Burriss spoke eloquently about the mentoring program he started for boys at Aiton. “I come from the hood, I come from the ghetto, I come from violence,” he said. “If I can change my life from the worse to the better, I know these boys can start that now. So that’s why I started this program.” Following his presentation, many parents asked Mr. Burriss how they could start similar programs in their schools.

In addition to parent-led presentations, the conference featured two panel discussions. The first gave officers from the parent-teacher organizations the chance to share their experiences and challenges with elections, recruitment, and administration. “When I first arrived, we had a PTA, but there was no organization, no focus, no direction...Now, we have parents who are taking action. We are putting things on paper, and it’s not only ideas...We have a goal and we’re going after it,” said Carolette Sweatt, President of the Garfield Elementary PTA. The second panel brought teachers into the spotlight to address issues of parent-teacher communication and collaboration. Tyler Elementary teacher Patricia Sanker said, “All of the ideas have been great, and I’m taking all of them back to our teachers.” Claudette Carson, teacher at Garfield Elementary, spoke about unlocking the power of parent-teacher relationships: “We just need to pull down those barriers...because I really think that parents and teachers are the strength, and we’re the ones that are going to have to take hold of our DC public schools.”

Inspired by the success of the conference, TTP is looking forward to future events that allow parents to share in such collaborative ways. Parents, teachers, and school communities eagerly await continuing and new projects strengthened or developed at the conference.



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George Washington Day a Huge Hit! Child mentors bring families to campus

Inspired to share her college campus and experiences with TTP families, Jen Perry - a senior at [George Washington University](#) (GW) and a veteran TTP Federal Work-Study student – recently coordinated “GW Day” for parents and their students. Jen says she was inspired to show TTP families the campus because “even if the children don’t remember the specifics of the day when they are older, we hoped that the day as a whole would evoke a lasting impression.”



Holding meetings on weekends and even after Community Nights, Jen and the other Child Mentors worked tirelessly to plan and execute a memorable day. The hard work paid off on Saturday, February 27th when 33 parents and children joined Child Mentors and TTP staff to enjoy a busy and fun-filled day at GW. The day began with a campus tour which included stops at the Marvin Center and the Lerner Health and Wellness Center. Next, Child Mentors collaborated with the university’s Associate Director of the Office of Student Financial Assistance, Ruth Hoch, to offer parents tips on college financial aid options. Later, a question and answer session with a panel of child mentors provided families an opportunity to learn more about the college students who work with their children at Community Nights. As Wanda Carter shared, “the Child Mentors gave from the depths of their hearts.” The finale of the day, a [GW men’s basketball](#) game, made possible through complementary tickets provided by the GW Athletic Department’s Cokes for Kids program, was a resounding success, especially as the Colonials defeated Charlotte 75-70. After the game, families were able to meet several of the players and get their autographs. Ms. Wanda Polite shared, “It was heartfelt when the players stayed after to talk to the children.” As tired families headed to their cars and the metro, Jen says “It was so satisfying seeing [families] at the end of the day energized and excited from the past few hours.”

The families were grateful to the mentors for planning and hosting the enjoyable day. Ms. Tamika McLeod was excited for her little brother Terryll, to meet the players. Ms. Jacqueline Foster remarked that, “it was an eye-opening experience to me, learning about the campus, culture, financial aspects, and diversity of our student hosts. I was amazed by the students who really had a handle on everything from beginning to end. Their level of maturity and overall performance to ensure the event went well was impressive.” As Turning the Page completes our Community Nights series, we know that parents and children will remember this special day.

Jen Perry and the GW Child Mentoring team would like to thank the GW Men’s Basketball Team and GW’s Athletic Department. In addition, TTP gratefully acknowledges the participating GW Mentors: Jen Perry, Amber Hunnicutt, Angel Cordova, Courtney McGuire,



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Hannah Libby, Jacqueline Jaskot, Lauren LaMonte, Lucie Bercow, Mary Brooks, Rebekah Curtis-Heald, Stefanie Yacubovich and Tracey Shipman.

School Spotlight: Browne Gibbs Young Educational Campus

Student performances and parent leaders bring new energy to Browne E.C.



Browne Gibbs Young Educational Campus, one of TTP's newest partner schools, is our only partner that serves elementary- and middle school-aged students. Browne is situated in Northeast Washington DC, near the Anacostia Park. At the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year, the school was at the center of a unique merger between Browne Jr. High, Charles Young Elementary and Gibbs Elementary. After a four year partnership with Gibbs, it was only natural to transition our partnership to the Browne E.C.

community when Gibbs shut its doors after the 2007-2008 school year. With over 500 elementary and middle school students, the school has proven to be a unique and exciting environment. Teachers, parents, and students participate in TTP's programs, including [Literacy Through Photography](#), [Community Visions](#), teacher [Leadership Group](#) Meetings, [Community Nights](#), and [Parent Leadership](#) trainings. At our March Parent Leadership Conference, Ms. Tyree Wall, a dedicated Browne PTA member, eloquently spoke about the role parents play in school communities. "Morale is a key building block among many that are needed to have a successful school environment," said Ms. Wall as she spoke to over 40 parent leaders from all of our partner schools.

The newly energized Browne E.C. Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is the first at the merged school to become officially recognized by the National PTA and to have all of the executive board positions filled. With anticipation and excitement brewing amongst the new energized members. The PTA is very focused on channeling this new energy into a successful game night kickoff event at the end of the school year.

Community Nights are, of course, an important part of our partnership with the school. "Our boots, our boots, our boots are on fire," sang 30 students at a recent Browne E.C. Community Night. The second through fifth grade students shared this performance to kick off the TTP Community Night series at the school this winter. The evening was a partnership between TTP



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and [City Year](#) (an AmeriCorps program), and included student performances, raffles, family dinner, child mentoring activities and of course, our parent workshops aimed to engage parents in their children's education. The highlight of the evening was the City Year Boot Camp, a performance where children led parents in a stretching, chanting and stomping routine that finished with a special rendition of, "My Boots are on Fire." It was the perfect start to our workshop series, "Raising a Healthy Child," which included time for families to make healthy snacks together. From student performances to passionate parents, and lively Community Night discussions to student photo exhibits, TTP is excited to continue our partnership with the Browne E.C. school community.

