

# James F. Mikulski Memorial Group



[www.jfmmemorial.org](http://www.jfmmemorial.org)

## Annual Report 2016

James F Mikulski Memorial Group Inc.  
February, 2017  
[info@jfmmemorial.org](mailto:info@jfmmemorial.org)

## Executive Summary

We are pleased that 2016 was a growth year for the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group. The charity was successful in hosting its first fundraiser as well as seizing new volunteer opportunities at various races within the Chicago area. We are also excited about the new partnership with Savers for a Donation Drive in 2017.

Our success has translated to continuing and enhancing our support for children in need. We plan to deepen and expand our funding of educational, artistic and athletic opportunities for less fortunate children.

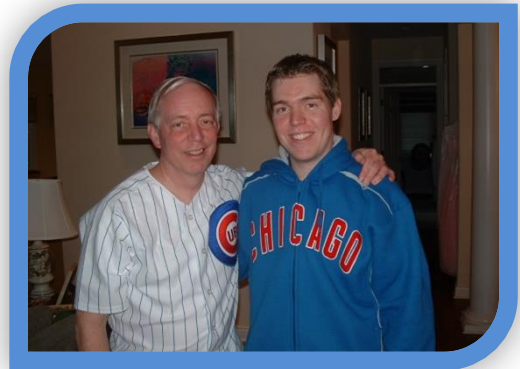
Our operating and management expense to revenue ratio remains very low at less than 5%.

All of this has enabled us to sustain our mission to establish a legacy of giving and sharing in memory of our son, James Mikulski, by helping less fortunate children in the Chicago area and doing it in a way that promotes wellness and service to others.

To our donors, volunteers, family and friends, thank you for helping make this possible. We look forward to furthering our mission in 2017.

Sincerely,

Maureen and John Mikulski



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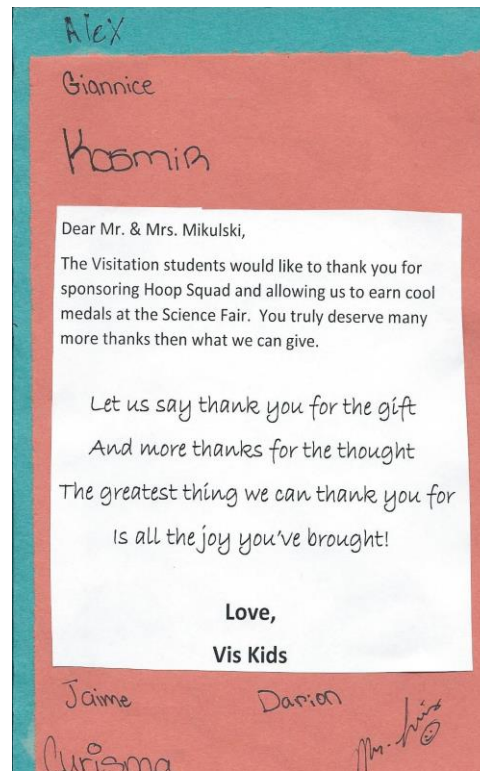
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## Mission

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group, Inc. was formed to establish a legacy of sharing, caring and helping others in memory of James F. Mikulski, a wonderful and loving husband, stepfather, son, brother, family member and friend who passed away suddenly on October 2, 2013.

This charity was created to honor Jim's life by giving back in a way that will directly benefit less fortunate children in the Chicago area. The organization accomplishes its mission by providing scholarships and support for school and after school activities. This is made possible through fundraising and volunteer activities that promote wellness, service and the opportunity to support the education of less fortunate school aged children. The organization is entirely run by volunteers. The beneficiaries of donations received through these activities are grade school educational and children support institutions in the Chicago area.

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group is funded through private donations, online contributions and donations in appreciation of organized volunteer services. Donations and volunteer services are accepted from anybody who would like to help make a positive difference in a child's life.



## About the Organization

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group is an IRS Tax Exempt 501(c)(3) Charitable Organization. It was incorporated in the State of Illinois as a charitable organization on January 13, 2014. It has a five member Board of Directors.

Approval of tax-exempt status for The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group was received from the Internal Revenue Service on July 30, 2014 with an effective date of Exemption of January 13, 2014.

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group is registered with the Office of the Attorney General of the State of Illinois, under both the Charitable Trust and the Solicitation for Charity Acts, effective November 28, 2014.

The charity has an Assumed Name of Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future.

## Accomplishments for 2016

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group was successful in meeting its goals for 2016

- Help children in need in the Chicago Area
- Enhance fundraising
- Coordinate volunteer groups as a source of revenue
- Get the word out about our organization
- Keep operating expenses low through strong financial management

### Help Children in Need in the Chicago Area

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group was able to sustain and, in some cases, enhance its support for the children at Visitation School, St. Gall School and the Erie Neighborhood House. For Visitation our charity increased its scholarship and school program funding as well as acted as the primary sponsor for a new reading program, which is being enjoyed by children in 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. We funded the transportation of twenty Visitation students, plus chaperones, to a week long summer camp in Wisconsin.

At the Erie Neighborhood House we sponsored a new program – Back to School Backpacks – for the children entering kindergarten. Each child was able select the backpack of his or her choice, which was stocked with school supplies!

Between Visitation and St Gall School, we provide scholarship funding for six students. We continued to volunteer for the Visitation Science Fair, the Visitation Christmas Bazaar, Catholic Charities Sponsor a Family and the Erie Neighborhood House Holiday with Heart events.

### Enhance Fundraising

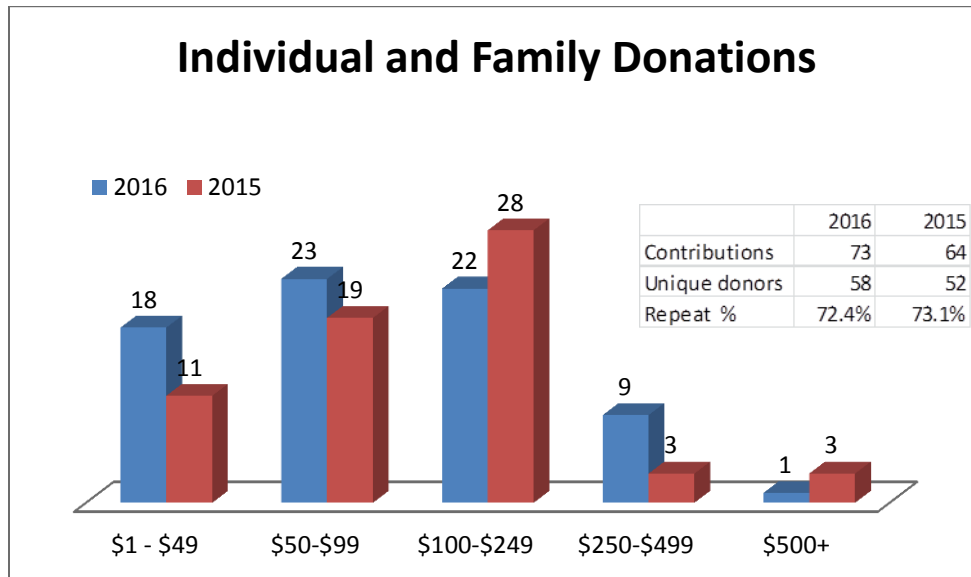
In 2016 the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group embarked on a new fundraising venture – The 2016 Spring Get Together and Fundraiser – held on May 15, 2016 at Zachary's Grill in Palos Heights, IL. The purchase of a ticket to this afternoon fundraiser included appetizers and soft drinks as well as the opportunity to participate in a Silent Auction and Raffles. We were delighted that twenty seven individuals and businesses donated items for the silent auction and raffle.

Ninety people joined us that day to relax, meet with friends and bid on one or more of the 17 silent auction and 13 raffle items. The response to the Spring Fundraiser went well beyond our expectations and will greatly help us in continuing our mission.

Spring 2016 Fundraiser Results						
Revenue			Expense			
Donations	\$1,442	16%		Auction Site	\$120	5%
Raffles	\$2,170	24%		Printing/Supplies	\$372	15%
Silent Auction	\$3,660	40%		Restaurant	\$1,859	75%
Tickets	\$1,790	20%		Web Fees	\$112	5%
Total	\$9,062			Total	\$2,463	
<b>Profit</b>			<b>\$6,599</b>			

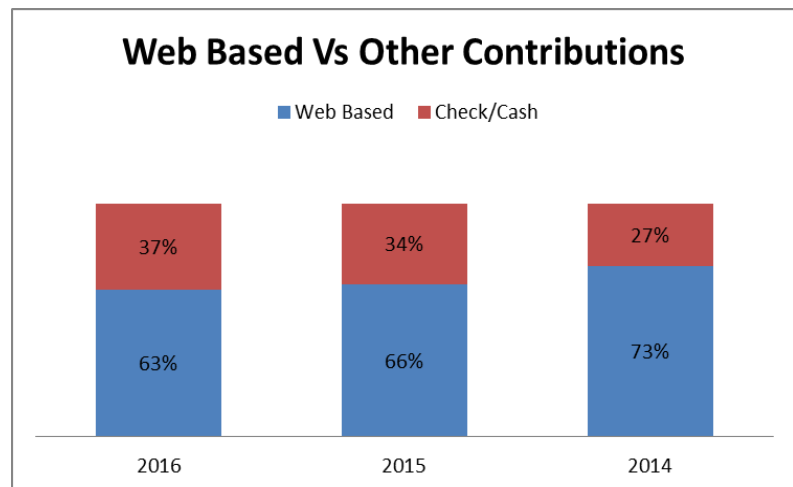
The Annual Summer Party and the two editions of our newsletter were also successful in generating donations, although somewhat down from 2015 levels. However, the overall revenue from the Spring Fundraiser enabled us to greatly exceed our income from prior years.

In reviewing our list of individual donors, we identified that 72% are repeat donors, while 28% are new donors. This is consistent with the number of new and repeat donors in 2015. We are grateful that we have been able to retain our supporters and attract new donors for our cause.



While most donations are web based, we see an increase in the number in cash or check. This minimizes the fees we incur for web based donations.

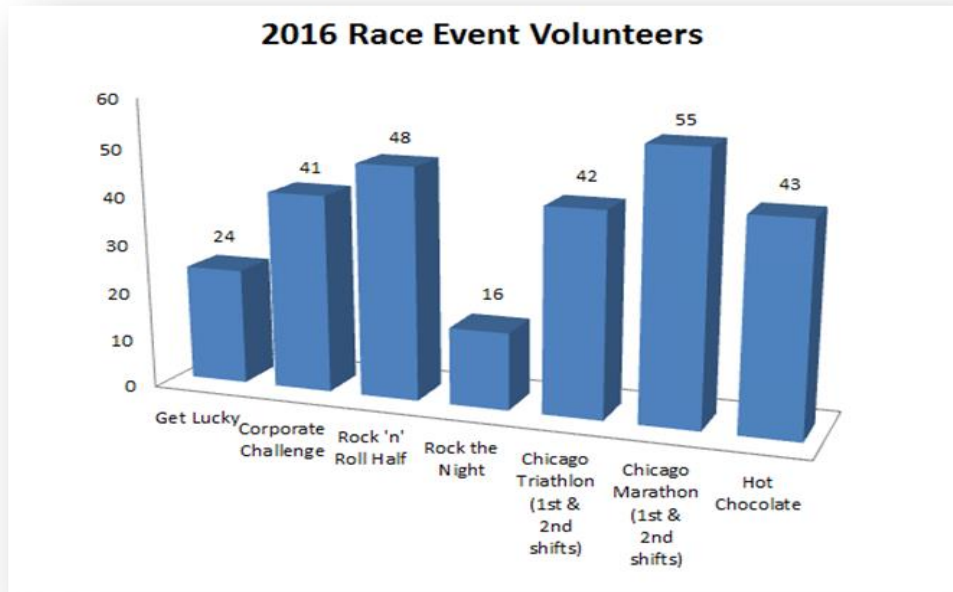
In April 2016 we moved from GoFundMe to Paypal for web donations. Our average fees from Paypal are 2.7% versus 7.7% from GoFundMe, which has positively affected our operational expense for web fees.



### Coordinate Volunteer Groups as a Source of Revenue

We supported seven race events in 2016, up one from 2015. We added new events, such as the Get Lucky 7K, 14K, Half Marathon and the Transamerica Triathlon, and skipped other races with

low donation levels.



Overall our number of volunteers is stable, at a very impressive 269! The amount of donations received from races is declining. This is due to race organizers reducing their per person donation amounts and limiting the number of volunteers to a lesser number than prior years. However, we received enhanced donations from three races due to the quality of our volunteers or level of participation.

Year to Year Comparison for Races	2016	2015	2014
Number of Race Events	7	6	5
Total Number of Volunteers	269	268	206
Donations Received from Races	\$4,475.00	\$4,631.50	\$3,217.50

It's important to recognize that volunteering at races remains a great way to promote our charity and get people involved. We keep our name and our good works in front of people on a regular basis, and it offers the opportunity to directly help. In 2016, we had a number of people who have wanted to volunteer for a long time finally able to join us.

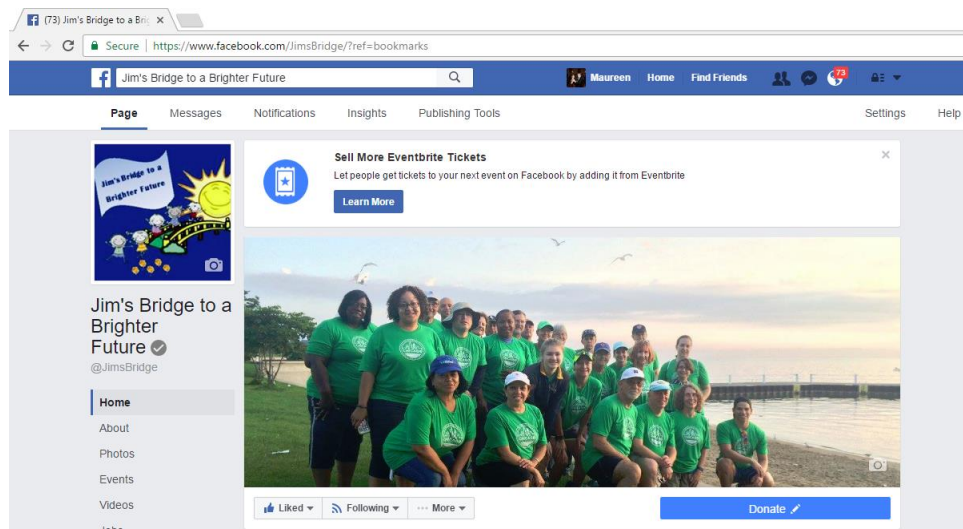
We plan to continue to volunteer at seven or more events in 2017. However, we will closely watch the level of donations we receive and number of volunteers we can sustain.

### Get the Word Out About our Organization

The Jim's Bridge Facebook page and the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group website, along with our semi-annual newsletter, are the primary ways that we communicate about the work our charity has done as well as upcoming volunteer opportunities.

Our Facebook “Likes” are up to 77. We would be very happy to surpass 100 in 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/JimsBridge/>



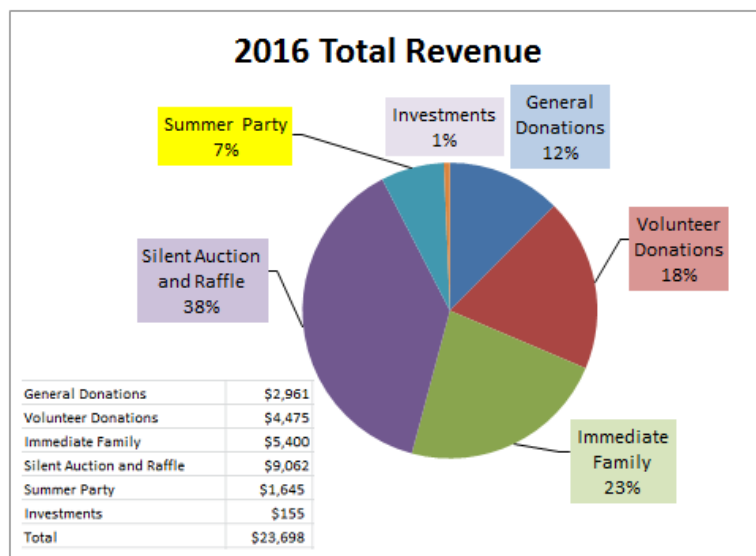
Publicizing our Spring Fundraiser also raised awareness of the charity. In fact we had a booth at the Palos Heights Health and Fitness Expo on April 30, 2016 where we displayed info about the charity, recruited new volunteers, sold Fundraiser tickets and raffled off a prize.

We will continue to identify new ways to promote our charity to let people know about our mission and ways to contribute.

## Keep Operating Costs Low – Financial Analysis

### Revenue

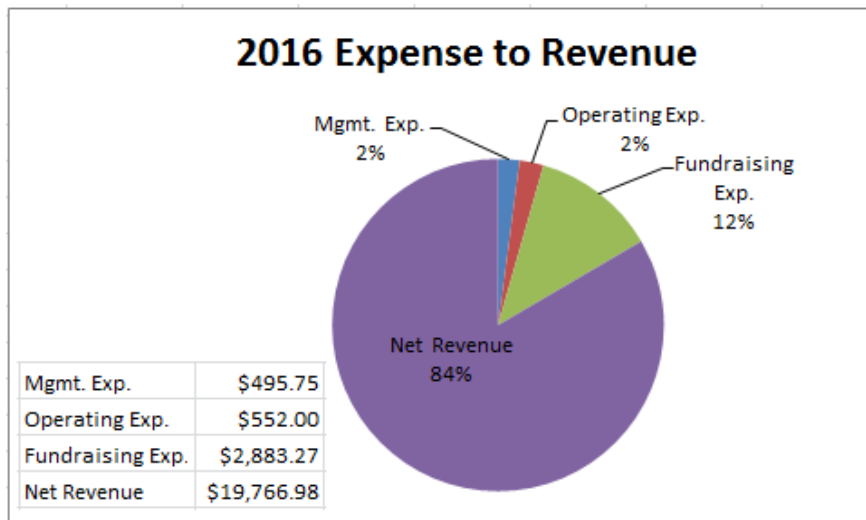
In reviewing the 2016 revenue results for the charity, it is clear that the Spring Fundraiser had a large positive impact on our income. While other donation categories were down slightly from 2015, the Fundraiser more than made up the gap.



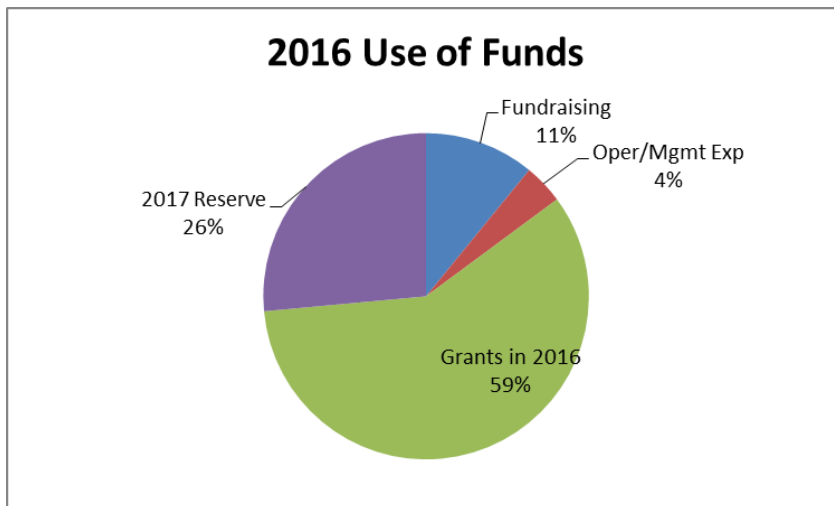


## Expenses

While overall expenses were higher in 2016 than prior years, the increase is entirely due to the cost to put on the Spring Fundraiser, which was a great success. In the categories of Operating and Management Expense we saw a decrease from 2015. Our Operating/Management Expense to Revenue ratio remains a very healthy 4.5%, which is an improvement from 6% in 2015. This is due to decreased expenses for web based donation fees by moving to PayPal from GoFundMe and implementing a more sophisticated newsletter template which allowed us to maintain professional looking printed copies on a less costly paper stock



As always, our charity manages all of its own fundraising. No outside or professional fundraising organizations are used.



As a result of our successful Spring Fundraiser and lower operating/management expense, we were able to provide over 40% more in grants to schools and community organizations in 2016 as compared to prior years.

Year over Year Comparison	2016	2015	2014
Revenues	\$23,542.96	\$16,152.43	\$17,850.00
Expenses	\$3,931.22	\$1,364.23	\$2,420.88
Grants for Children	\$15,501.61	\$10,936.23	\$8,497.08

## Our Board of Directors

We are fortunate to have a Board of Directors comprised of family and friends skilled in business and wellness professions. The Board positions were unanimously re-elected on March 23, 2016 and will be held for two years. There is frequent communication among the Board of Directors throughout the year, with two formal meetings per year.



**Maureen Mikulski, President**, has more than 35 years of experience in Information Technology and Business in the Chicago Area, with an advanced degree in Computer Science and Certification in Project Management.



**Kathleen Mikulski, Vice President**, has more than 10 years of experience working for non-profit organizations and the wellness field, with an advanced degree in Psychology.



**John Mikulski, Treasurer**, has more than 35 years of experience in Information Technology and Business in the Chicago area, with an advanced degree in Computer Science.



**Kathleen Grady, Secretary**, is a Registered Nurse with an advanced degree in Nursing and more than 30 years of experience as a volunteer or volunteer coordinator.



**Hugh M. O'Neill, M.D., Sergeant at Arms**, is a Family Practice Physician who has practiced medicine and managed his medical business for more than 30 years. Dr. O'Neill also serves on the board of a physician group practice.

## Plans for 2017

### *Supporting the Children*

In addition to sustaining the work and good relationships that we have established at Visitation, St. Gall and the Erie Neighborhood House, we plan to either deepen our support of existing schools or include one additional school or organization that supports children in need.

### *Fundraising*

We are very pleased with the results of the 2016 Spring Fundraiser and plan to hold a similar event in 2017. We will continue to look for other ways to raise funds while at the same time having fun and supporting others. In late 2016, we forged a partnership with Savers to hold a donation drive where our charity will receive a donation from Savers based on the amount of items that we are able to collect for the drive. Initial response has been wonderful.

### *Coordinating volunteers as a source of revenue*

We will continue race volunteering, especially with the race organizers who know us and respect the efforts of our volunteers. We will seek races that provide fun and rewarding experiences for our volunteers as well as a donation to Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future. We will recruit new volunteers and extend our gratitude to all of them, especially those who volunteer with us at every possible opportunity. In 2016, as part of our Volunteer Appreciation Raffle, we gave a gift card to each of the seven people who volunteered with us five or more times.

### *Getting the word out about our organization*

We will continue to publish our semi-annual newsletter and promote the charity through Facebook. The Fundraiser and Donation Drive also expanded our reach to those who may not have known about the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group/Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future. We will actively seek other opportunities to let people know about our work.

### *Keeping our Operating Expenses low through strong financial management*

Close management of our expenses and monitoring our revenue stream will always be a priority. We will actively identify ways to keep our expenses as low as possible so that our donors know that their dollars will be spent to benefit the children that we support.

## Ways You Can Help Support Our Mission

Please consider helping our cause with a donation on our website at the James F Mikulski Memorial Group website <http://www.jfmmemorial.org/donatePP.html> or by mail at

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group  
405 Shadow Creek Court  
Palos Heights, IL 60463

If you would like to volunteer with us or if you would like to be included on our distribution list, please send an email to [info@jfmmemorial.org](mailto:info@jfmmemorial.org)



From the Erie House Peace Mural  
1347 W. Erie, Chicago, IL  
Sponsored by James F. Mikulski Memorial Group  
Dedicated August 2015