

Reflections from Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future



James F. Mikulski Memorial Group

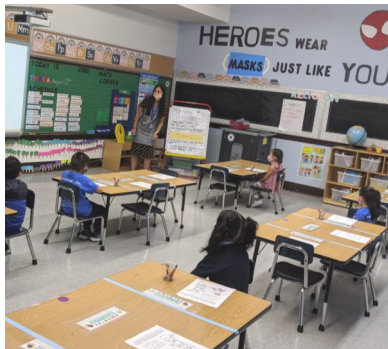
Volume 6 Issue 2

Discovering Creative Ways to Help

COVID-19 continues to make 2020 a very different year for all of us. Like many charities, Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future could not follow its normal routines for volunteering, visiting with the organizations we support and planning other activities.

And like many, we pivoted to find other ways to contribute. This newsletter highlights those activities.

While our volunteers could not help out at races, one of them led an effort to produce much needed face masks.



While many school programs that we fund were suspended, Jim's Bridge instead sponsored face masks, hand sanitizer and shoe coverings to prepare for the gradual return to onsite learning.

While we could not visit with our scholarship recipients, we ensured funding would be there for them when school resumed.

We hope that by the time of our Spring 2021 Newsletter, things will be getting closer to our pre-COVID activities. Whatever the future may hold, we will do the best we can, with the help of our donors and volunteers, to continue to make a difference for children.

Generating Funds with a Successful Clothing Drive

When we saw that Savers Thrift Stores had reopened, we geared up for our next Clothing Drive. It was a huge success – perhaps due to the time people had at home to clear out their closets?!

On September 5th, we brought 370 bags to Savers, weighing 4,210 pounds. That crushed our goal of 2,300 pounds and set a record for Jim's Bridge!

Readied with face masks, gloves and hand sanitizer, our volunteers helped deliver the clothing donations to Savers, even pitching in with their own vehicles.

Our thanks to all who contributed to this successful clothing drive. Jim's Bridge will receive a nice donation from Savers for all we collected on their behalf.





Volunteering at Race Events

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all 2020 races where Jim's Bridge planned to volunteer were cancelled or became 'virtual'. We will resume volunteering at races once we are confident of a healthy and safe setting for our volunteers.

Notification will be posted on Facebook, on our website and sent via email when volunteering resumes.

Making a Difference in a New Way

We were proud that a colleague runner and volunteer for Jim's Bridge found a creative way to make a difference.

When the COVID-19 PPE shortage became apparent early on, Kathy Somerfield wanted to help.

She knew how to sew and began making face masks for friends, co-workers and a local nursing home.

She reached out to the South Suburban COVID Mask

Facebook page and things took off from there.

That organization, as well as friends, family, Jim's Bridge, and fellow runners provided the supplies she needed.

To date, Kathy has produced over 2,500 masks which have been distributed to multiple police departments, fire departments, hospitals, nursing homes and local doctors.

Kudo's to Kathy and all who helped this great effort!



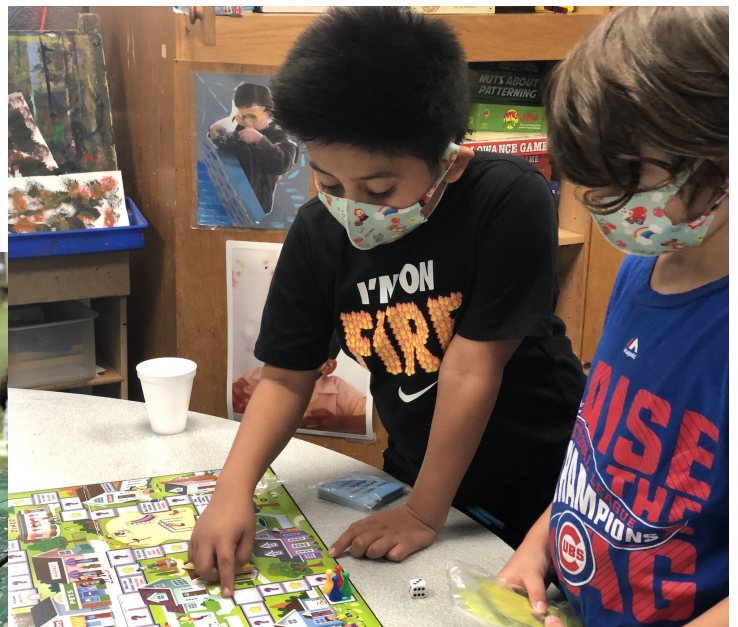
Supporting the Erie Neighborhood House

The Erie Neighborhood House had to close its doors in March for onsite programs and move to phone based or virtual services.

Jim's Bridge contributed to the Erie House Community Fund to assist the families and children hit hardest by the crisis.

When Erie House resumed in-person programming in August, Jim's Bridge provided funding for face masks, hand sanitizer

and shoe coverings. These items will be utilized by the students enrolled in their Early Childhood Education and Expanded Learning Program.



The Schools We Sponsor



Face Mask Donation for the Schools

The three schools that we support have reopened for in-person and remote learning. Our Board Director, Zach Kubiak, of Zachary's Grill, partnered with Spyglass Construction to fund 3,000 disposable face masks for the children. Each school received 1,000 face masks. Our thanks to both businesses for their donation!



Visitation School

Earlier in the year at Vis, Jim's Bridge sponsored the "Girls in the Game" program, new books and various supplies. Once the COVID-19 restrictions arrived, our funding was used to obtain PPE for the students.

We were happy to learn that our annual scholarships were awarded to the same four

students as last year. We met with them once last year and look forward to chat with them again.

We stopped by Vis in early August to deliver the face masks, scholarships and program funding. The school looked great and ready for the school year.



St. Gall School

We visited St Gall's in August to deliver our scholarship funding and disposable face masks.

In addition, Jim's Bridge donated fifteen electric pencil sharpeners to provide touch-free pencil sharpening in the classrooms and main office.

As with Visitation, St. Gall was spotless and ready for the coming school year.

We are pleased that our scholarship funding will be awarded to three students, two returning from last year.



Academy of St. Benedict the African

Before the arrival of the COVID-19 restrictions, Jim's Bridge donated funds to ASBA that were planned for new play equipment for the Early Childhood program. In August, it finally arrived and the children really enjoy it!

This is the first year for Jim's Bridge awarding scholarships at ASBA. We were very happy

to learn that those funds will be used to assist six children in the school.

We met with the Assistant Principal in August to provide our scholarship funding, the face masks and a box of Art & Crafts supplies.





Special 2020 Appeal

Usually this is where we share the success of our Annual Fundraiser and Get Together.

Due to COVID-19 health and safety concerns, our Board of Directors agreed to defer this year's annual fundraiser.

We will greatly miss the opportunity to connect with our donors, our volunteers and our supporters, where we can share the work our charity has performed and highlight the

children who have benefited from Jim's Bridge. Plus the delicious food, live music and a chance to win fabulous prizes will be missed too!

Although not the same, instead, this year we are issuing a Special 2020

Fundraising Appeal to help fill the void left by the fundraiser and the loss of coordinating volunteers for races.

Your contribution will allow us to continue our mission into future years.

You can donate in the following ways:

Online:
www.jfmmemorial.org/donate

Facebook
Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future

By sending a check to
James F. Mikulski Memorial Group
405 Shadow Creek Court
Palos Heights, IL 60463

Your contribution is tax deductible to extent allowed (EIN 46-4519616).

Thank you for your consideration

Stay healthy!

 **Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future**
Accomplishments since 2014

- \$127,910 Total Funds Granted to help Children**
- 34,575 Pounds of good collected for Savers**
- 1,738 Volunteers for Run/Walk/Tri events**
- 425 Donations Received**
- 201 "Likes" on Facebook**
- 44 Run/Walk/Tri events supported**
- 54 Scholarships Awarded**

Attention eBay Sellers!



When you sell items on eBay, you can donate a percentage of your sales to our charity and your seller fees will be reduced by that same percentage.

During the sale setup, look for: Donate a portion to a Charity

Select the percentage you would like to donate

Select "James F. Mikulski Memorial Group"

Attention Amazon Shoppers!



Amazon donates 0.5% of purchases made through Amazon Smile for the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group at no cost to you!

Go to www.smile.amazon.com

Select James F. Mikulski Memorial Group Inc

Then Go Shopping!!!



Our Mission

October 2, 2020 marked seven years since we lost our dear son, brother, husband, step-dad and friend to suicide, and we will probably never understand why. Not a day goes by without remembering Jim, still loving him and wishing he was with us.

We knew from that day in 2013 that we wanted to do something positive as a tribute to him. We set up the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group as a tax exempt 501(c)(3) charity to honor his life by benefiting children while emphasizing wellness and helping others. We are proud that our charity, with your help, has been able to accomplish this. Without our generous donors and wonderful volunteers it would not be possible. We continue to keep operating expenses well below 10% of revenue.

Please consider a donation at www.jfmmemorial.org or to


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www.jfmmemorial.org



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