

Reflections from Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future



James F. Mikulski Memorial Group

Volume 9 Issue 1

A Special Honor for Jim's Bridge

Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future was thrilled to receive the 2023 Community Investment Award from the Erie Neighborhood House.

It was presented at the Erie Neighborhood House Annual Awards Dinner on March 2, 2023. Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker provided the opening remarks for the event to the over 400 guests in attendance.

Last year's award winner, Sally Pryor, delivered a thoughtful and eloquent introduction for Jim's Bridge. We were delighted to be joined by longtime friends and supporters of our non-profit.



We are very proud of our partnership with the Erie Neighborhood House.

Since 2015, we have sponsored programs and events at the Erie House, such as providing supplies for the children to create a vibrant playlot mural, funding backpacks filled with school supplies, sponsoring summer camp, supporting the Holiday with Heart celebrations, and during COVID times, donating personal protection equipment.

The award is a beautiful and colorful original work of art, made by a local artist. It is actually created with rice and beans!

Thank you Cristina De La Rosa, Exec Director, and all at the Erie House!

Answering the Call to Declutter!

Jim's Bridge Winter Clothing Drive was a huge success, delivering over 4,000 pounds of goods to Savers Thrift Stores, which resulted in a nice donation to Jim's Bridge. Thank you to all who contributed and helped us load up for delivery to Savers.

We are always amazed and grateful for the response to our clothing drives. Many people thank us

for being the impetus to clean out closets, whether it's to down-size, rotate out clothes or just to get rid of stuff. Jim's Bridge is delighted to help you with these efforts!

The next clothing drive will be during the summer from July 1st through August 12th. We will send out reminder emails and post on Facebook/Instagram.





Volunteering at Race Events

Volunteering at races is a fun and rewarding way to help raise funds for Jim's Bridge. The race organizers make a donation to Jim's Bridge based on the number of volunteers we recruit for the event. Here are recent races and our planned 2023 event calendar.



Hot Chocolate 15K/5K - Nov 5, 2022



Shamrock Shuffle Packet Pickup - Mar 25, 2023

**2023
Volunteer
Events for
Jim's Bridge**

Event	Date
Chase Corporate Challenge	Thu., May 18, 2023
CARA Spring Trail Chase	Sun., May 21, 2023
BTN Big 10K (*NEW)	Sat., July 15, 2023
Chicago Triathlon (Shift 1 & Shift 2)	Sun., August 27, 2023
CARA Ready to Run 20 Miler	Sun., September 17, 2023
Bank of America Chicago Marathon	Sun., October 8, 2023
Allstate Hot Chocolate 5K/15K	Sun., November 5, 2023

Jim's Bridge in Action

Jim's Bridge to a
Brighter Future



Promoting the Holiday Spirit

For the 2022 holiday season, we tried something different. In place of the toy drive, we presented each of the three schools with a "Christmas Gift" that they could use for something special for the children. Read below about how each school found a very creative way to enjoy the gift!

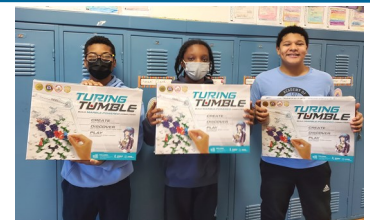
Visitation School

Visitation School sponsored cookie decorating and hot chocolate with Santa and Mrs. Claus.



Academy of St. Benedict the African

ASBA purchased toys and games for their extended day program, including 3-story Chess sets for their Chess team and Turing Tumble 'build a computer' logic games.



St. Gall School

St. Gall's used the gift to provide each student with a voucher for the school book fair. That way, each student was able to get one or more books of their choice!



Erie Neighborhood House

For the Erie Neighborhood House, we continued our tradition of sponsoring gifts for the children for the Holiday with Heart event, as well as snacks when the gifts were distributed. We were delighted to volunteer to help wrap the gifts.



Wrapping up the First Half of the School Year

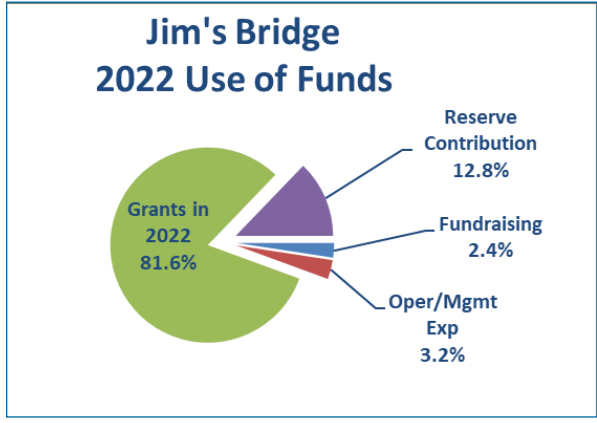
Since Jim's Bridge had a successful 2022, we were able to provide additional grants to the schools at the end of the year. Visitation used its grant to provide supplies for after-school clubs, including Dance, Volleyball, Basketball and "Craft it Up". For the Chess Club, we funded new chess boards, timers, and team t-shirts to help them get ready for competing with other schools! St. Gall School and ASBA each used the grant to award scholarships to additional students, whose families were experiencing financial hardship. As a result, Jim's Bridge has funded a total of 16 scholarships for 2022-2023 school year.



A Strong Year for Jim's Bridge

We are very happy that the year 2022 sustained the strong recovery for Jim's Bridge from the pandemic impacted years of 2020 and 2021.

- Funding and grants to help school children increased to our highest levels
- We visited our scholarship students and sponsored numerous in-school and after school programs
- Our summer fundraiser was the most successful to date



- Donations from volunteering at athletic events is back to Pre-COVID levels
- Our clothing drives collected over 11,000 pounds of goods, setting a new record
- The number of individual donations to Jim's Bridge reached its highest level, with 25% new donors
- Our Revenue to Expense ratio remains well below 10%

Accomplishments Since 2014

\$202,251	Total Funds Granted to help Children
51,912	Pounds of goods collected for Savers
2,139	Volunteers provided to Run/Walk events
690	Donations Received
83	Scholarships Awarded

We are very grateful to all who support Jim's Bridge mission to make a difference in children's lives as a tribute to the life of our son, Jim.

SAVE THE DATE!

Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future

2023 Fundraiser

Sunday July 30, 2023

1:00 PM — 4:00 PM
Zachary's Grill
 13415 Ridgeland Ave
 Palos Heights, IL 60463

Featuring Games, Raffles & Silent Auction

An Update on AmazonSmile



In February 2023, Amazon decided to discontinue their charitable donation program, AmazonSmile. Our sincere thanks to all who have donated to the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group for the past several years by purchasing items through AmazonSmile. See Amazon.Com for further details.



Our Mission

October 2, 2022, marked nine 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, a tax exempt 501(c)(3) charity EIN 46-4519616, 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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 405 Shadow Creek Court
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James F. Mikulski Memorial Group



www.jfmmemorial.org

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