The Coleman Foundation to Match $500,000 for 3rd Home

With two of six new children’s homes now open, Little City is focusing on taking the rest of the plan from drawing board to reality.

In a pledge of support for Little City’s efforts to enhance its impact with a supportive home environment, The Coleman Foundation has generously provided a $500,000 matching grant for construction of a third home in the Duffey Family Children’s Village.

“We are very pleased to have received the $500,000 grant from The Coleman Foundation,” said Executive Director Shawn Jeffers. “It is an honor that will certainly inspire others to provide additional financial support for the completion of our third home as well as the entire Children’s Village.”

The Coleman Foundation grant comes at an opportune time, with growing uncertainty over government funding. Little City is diversifying its revenue stream while adhering to its goal of continual improvement.

Times have changed since Little City began in 1959, and so has its population. The campus was originally constructed with a focus on serving children with Down syndrome. Today, 93 percent of participants have some form of autism, and Autism Spectrum Disorder rates nationwide are on the rise. Outdated living quarters and facilities have constrained Little City’s ability to meet its participants’ needs.

Each of the six homes in the new Duffey Family Children’s Village will include individual bedrooms for children, providing for the development of respect, dignity and privacy. The cost of construction for the third home is estimated at $1.7 million. A Sensory Room in each home will allow clinicians to work with participants on strategies to regulate their emotions and activities, while also helping them develop skills for independent living.

Audrey and Dan Tepperman, the parents of a child living in a new Children’s Village home, reflected on how the surroundings affect their son Scott’s quality of life. “Scott’s new home is very welcoming and offers a sense of privacy and comfort for the entire family when we visit. For us, one of the main benefits is that Scott has his own room. The other children in the home do, as well. Having his own space is extremely helpful in allowing him to work on his goals. In addition, the home has dedicated areas where he can meet his therapy and sensory needs. Our gratitude is overwhelming that Scott’s home life is now much more meaningful.”

Adjacent to the new homes are the Discover/KaBOOM! Therapeutic Playground and the new Ethel B. & Joel H. Sharenow Fitness and Recreation Center. The ChildBridge Center for Education therapeutic day school is also expanding educational programming for participants.

Little City thanks the Parent, Family, Guardian Group for its generous $20,000 donation, which will become $40,000 with the matching grant.
Executive Director’s Corner

“Even though the future seems far away, it is actually beginning right now.” — Mattie Stepanek

Dear Friends,

As Executive Director, I often have the pleasure of showing off Little City’s campus and telling people about our very special community. I prefer the former partly because you can vividly see where Little City has been and where we are going. But the community aspect of Little City also shines on a campus tour. It becomes obvious Little City is an endeavor of so many people who have stepped foot on campus before us and of so many participants, staffers, volunteers and contributors yet to come.

The Duffey Family Children’s Village provides a glimpse into Little City’s future. Thanks to the generosity of The Coleman Foundation’s $500,000 matching grant and to George and Dimitra Zervas and all who have given to help realize the goal either at the phenomenal 56th Annual Gala or on your own, we are well on our way to planning construction of additional homes in the village.

Already, we have seen how far the children in the first two homes have come in a short amount of time. Maladaptive behavior has dropped, and the children are making excellent progress toward their individual goals.

At the same time, the ChildBridge Center for Education therapeutic day school is ready to receive more students. The school doubled its square footage in an expansion completed in the spring. The facilities are cutting edge, and we encourage you to see for yourself what a difference the new classrooms and equipment are making in the education of our students. Applications are still being accepted for this school year. Please contact Tim Gavin for more information at 847-221-7859 or tgavin@littlecity.org.

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who has contributed to our community.

Nobody builds a house alone, and nobody builds a city by themselves. Through your continued support, Little City will become all that it can be.

Yours in service,

Shawn E. Jeffers
Executive Director

Little City Spotlight

Chief Financial & Administrative Officer

Kim Tyler

Kim Tyler joined Little City recently, as governmental funding for social service agencies was perhaps at its most challenging point in history. With experience in finance at both for-profit corporations and with a nonprofit special education cooperative, Tyler brings an understanding of Little City’s mission and what will be required as the organization expands and seeks new revenue sources.

“We have to be open to new ways of doing business,” Tyler said. “For years, we’ve been reliant on government funding. Our long-term sustainability is dependent on creating new revenue streams to offset the decreasing funding from government entities.”

Tyler has an undergraduate degree in accounting, a master’s degree in business administration in finance and marketing from Northwestern University and is a Certified Public Accountant. She lives in Frankfort with her husband, Dominic, and two daughters, Sydney, 14, and Sanai, 10. Tyler also serves as the development chair on the board of the Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health and is on the finance committee for the Village of Frankfort. In her spare time, she teaches accounting at Prairie State University and also is a foodie who enjoys travel and reading.

Among the highlights of the live auction was an $11,000 pledge for Little City’s Special Olympics program. More than 70 athletes of all ages compete in the sports program at regional and state levels.


Little City Executive Director Shawn Jeffers, LCI Co-Chair Marcus Montayne, Honoree David Althoff, and LCI Co-Chair Ken Kolmin, shown from left to right, take part in the event, which raised $325,000.

PFG Group Golf Outing Tallies Over $23,000

About 77 golfers hit the greens June 26 at the Parent, Family, Guardian (PFG) Golf Outing at Highland Woods Golf Course in Hoffman Estates. The event raised over $23,000, including $2,000 from a raffle for Little City’s participation in the Special Olympics. The PFG Group, headed by Gil Fergus, also planted flowers at the Little City Port Center in October as part of the group’s annual volunteer day.

Mike Spiropulos, John McCauley, Gil Fergus and George Vokl (shown from left to right) enjoyed the PFG Golf Outing June 26, which was supported by sponsors including Multimodal International Ltd.
A gainst an historical backdrop with a view toward the future, Little City’s 56th Annual Dinner Gala, Night at the Museum, brought together more than 350 community leaders, philanthropists and supporters Sept. 26 at the Field Museum.

Jennifer Gavelek and William Chepulis served as co-chairs of the event, which raised more than $735,000 to support the children and adults with autism and other intellectual and developmental disabilities Little City serves. Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White was the event’s distinguished guest. The announced Fund-A-Need is the expansion of the Duffey Family Children’s Village, and Little City has received a $500,000 matching grant from The Coleman Foundation in support of the third home in the village.

Dorothy W. and J.D. Stetson Coleman, who were owners of the Fannie May Candies company, started the foundation in 1951 to create opportunities that improve quality of life primarily in the Chicago area. The foundation supports agencies and programs for people with developmental disabilities as well as entrepreneurship education and cancer care. It aims to foster change through support of practical, financially sustainable and results-oriented programs.

During the evening, Executive Director Shawn Jeffers announced a $250,000 contribution from George and Dimitra Zervas. Excitement over the generous gift and the matching grant encouraged additional contributions of over $60,000 for the Fund-A-Need during the event.

Little City thanks the generous sponsors who made the event possible: **Gold Sponsors:** Nancy and Tim Desmond and the Albert B. & Audrey G. Ratner Foundation; **Silver Sponsors:** Breakthrough Technologies LLC, Paramount Staffing, and Zurich NA; **Bronze Sponsors:** Eleni & Jimmy Bousis, Vernon Carson/Burt Ury, the Gianaras Foundation, Karen & Larry Heisler, Mesirow Financial Corporation, Motorola Solutions Foundation, The Hockfield/Rose Families; **Photography Sponsors:** The John J. George Family and Celia B. Green; **Program Sponsor:** Harper College; **Showcase Sponsor:** David J. Pfau; and **Official Media Sponsor:** Splash.

George and Dimitra Zervas’s generous $250,000 contribution was announced at the Gala.

Elaine Hodes, the daughter of one of the founding families of Little City, died in late July of complications from surgery within days of her 68th birthday.

Hodes’ shining smile brightened the lives of those around her, and her brother Bob Hodes recalled her appreciation for Steve Martin comedy and just about anything chocolate.

“Elaine loved Steve Martin movies, especially ‘Father of the Bride.’ She’d watch his silly antics and just laugh and laugh. Whenever he appeared on screen, she would shout out with complete delight, ‘It’s Steve Martin!’” Bob recalled.

Elaine Hodes was one of Little City’s long-time residents, and we miss her.
The Donor’s Corner

“I personally believe in the mission of Little City. I would consider it an honor to listen to your wishes and work closely with you to help you make your gift and leave your legacy.”

India Alexis Ehioba, MNA, CFRE, Senior Philanthropy Officer and Director of Planned Giving, is an experienced, highly credentialed gift advisor. The Donor’s Corner is a regular column providing helpful information on various gift options to Little City. You can contact India directly at 847-221-7809 or iehioba@littlecity.org with your questions and to discuss your personal interest in supporting Little City.

An Elite Group Anyone Can Join

“While the reasons people contribute varies, the theme is the same: They want to leave the world a better place and have an impact on others far beyond their lifetimes.

Those who have included Little City in their estate plans are special people who have expressed the highest form of philanthropy that exists today. We call them philanthropists. We call them friends. We call them members of our Heritage Society.

The Heritage Society was established to honor you and others like you who:

• Make a bequest to Little City through a will or living trust;
• Establish an immediate or deferred gift annuity with Little City;
• Name Little City as a beneficiary of an Individual Retirement Account or other qualified retirement account;
• Name Little City as a beneficiary of an insurance policy or the recipient of an outright gift of a paid up insurance policy;
• Designate Little City as a beneficiary of a charitable remainder trust or charitable lead trust.

Financial contributions will help to underwrite the programs so vitally important to Little City’s future and the growth and development of the individuals we serve.

Your decision can serve as an inspiration for others to follow. To learn more or to request a copy of our Wills Planning Guide, please contact me at 847-221-7809 or iehioba@littlecity.org. Information on giving also is available on Little City’s website at www.littlecity.org/plannedgiving.

Little City Heritage Society Members:

Jan Abramowitz  Alexander Gianaras  Linda LaPorte
Alex G. Alexandrou  Ronald and Marci Holtzer  Sandra Loebe-Stoken
Howard E. Bell*  James R. Howell  Carol Meyer
Julie Bell  Ryan & Carmen Isherwood  Matthew and Tina Schubert
Vernon and Merle* Carson  Shawn and Barbara Jeffers  Harold H. Schmalbeck*
Tim and Nancy Desmond  Bill Johnson  Henry and Isabel* Smogolski
Robson & India Alexis Ehioba  C. Conrad Johnson*  Ulfur and Carol Thors
Charles (Gil) and Betty Fergus  Ellen Kolegar
Lillian Gorak  Sheldon I. and R.A. Landman

Little City also would like to thank members who choose to make anonymous donations.

“I am grateful for what Little City has done for me and know by making plans for the future, I will help improve the programs and services for many years to come.”
—Verne Carson, Little City parent and Heritage Society member

Community Partners

Thank you to the following funders for their generous grants that support the work and mission of Little City:

• The Arc of Illinois
• The Coleman Foundation
• Cook County Bureau of Economic Development
• Hanover Township Mental Health Board
• Lake County Consortium
• Omron Foundation, Inc.
• 100 Women Who Care – Chicago
• RJN Foundation
• Village of Schaumburg

The above referenced grants were awarded on or after July 2015.
News From Around the City

Covering Echols’ Art for Art’s Sake

At Little City is all about the process, and online journal Savant Garde captured this brilliantly in an Aug. 27 article on outsider artist Tarik Echols’ work with Little City’s Center for the Arts. The report, “Field of Vision: The Dynamic Works of Tarik Echols,” by Carrie McGath, described Echols’ process, often involving repetition of words on a page, as “calming while also chaotic. The dichotomy shows the depth of Echols’ mind and its associations, and it shows the world he sees, a place full of stimuli that laces itself into his consciousness and into the work.”

In his “Chicago 240” painting described in the article, Echols used white crayon to write Chicago again and again. Then he covered every inch of a 22” x 28” piece of paper with watercolor and china marker.

Echols’ work has attracted outsider art collectors to Little City, and it also has been exhibited extensively. Work from Echols and Little City artists Andy Bell, Harold Jeffries, Angelo LaPietra, Wayne Mazurek, Don Nelson and Luke Tauber will be on display Oct. 15 to Nov. 1 at the “When I Paint My Masterpiece” exhibition in the Project Onward studio at the Bridgeport Art Center, 1200 W. 35th St. in Chicago. A panel discussion on the ethics of representing and selling work by artists with disabilities will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17, and hands-on activities and a showing of the documentary “Share My Kingdom,” featuring three Little City artists, will take place at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18, at the Bridgeport Art Center.

The exhibitions Little City participates in, along with the coverage received, provide welcome recognition for the artists, said Frank Tumino, Center for the Arts administrator. “That is really a help. It’s never a bad advertisement when people see what we’re doing, when people are achieving things and becoming recognized for their work,” he said.

Backyard Art Involves Teamwork

What happens when you trade an ordinary paintbrush for a rake, broom, egg or toy to create art? At the Raleigh home, the eight adult residents discovered the answer over the summer in the form of a colorful canvas painting now displayed on the wall for all to enjoy.

“The whole thing was bringing everyone together...and having a therapeutic aspect to it,” said Rizik Mohammad, manager of the home in Arlington Heights. Anita Miller, mother of Daniel Miller, brought many of the objects the participants used and volunteered with the outdoor activity.

“Instead of painting sitting down at a table, they were using their whole bodies, standing up,” Mohammad said. “It was more fluid.”

Miguel Santos paints with a mop on the canvas with encouragement from Shawn Jeffers II, a direct service provider at the Raleigh home.
Little City aims to provide the highest possible quality of life for the people it serves, including offering a variety of educational and recreational opportunities, wellness initiatives, options to explore creativity and more. Recent updates from around our “City” include:

**Back to an Expanded School**

Anthony Leggaro is among the 25 students from 19 area school districts attending Little City’s ChildBridge Center for Education. The school’s capacity has increased to 50 students with the completion of the East Wing this past spring, which doubled the school’s square footage to 10,000 square feet. About 92 percent of students make progress on their Individualized Education Programs each year.

**Rep. Roskam Tours Campus**

Congressman Peter Roskam, who represents the 6th District in Illinois, took a tour of Little City’s campus Aug. 27. Roskam supported passage of the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act, providing for tax advantaged savings accounts to allow individuals and their families to save for disability-related expenses, such as education and transportation, without jeopardizing federal benefits. The act was signed into law Dec. 19, 2014.

**Pulling Together for Special Olympics**

Board President Matthew Schubert and Executive Director Shawn Jeffers, along with Little City power-lifters Tony LaPorte, Kevin Mastin and Jimmy Stelmach helped to pull a 190,000-pound United Airlines 737 jet 12 feet in 7.19 seconds at the annual Plane Pull fundraiser for the Special Olympics on Sept. 19 at O’Hare International Airport.

**Time Out for a September Cookout**

Petula Tompkins, pictured on the left, and Simone Kilberts enjoyed a summer cookout for participants of Little City’s Center for Employment & Business Opportunities, Center for the Arts and Dorothy Rose Horticulture Center. The event, which drew about 120 participants, featured hot dogs, music, bean bag toss and other games.
Support Little City while enjoying hot chocolate and chocolate fondue at the Hot Chocolate Walk for Little City.

This 3K walk is a family event, with many fun post-race activities for children of all ages. Children under the age of 12 are encouraged to register as a junior walker. All participants will receive a goodie bag.

Register today at littlecity.org/walk

#GIVINGTUESDAY

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Watch for information online about this global day of giving online powered by social media.

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POKER & CASINO TOURNAMENT
NIGHT 2016

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Enjoy a wonderful evening of casino games and Texas Hold ’Em where the grand prize is a $10,000 entry into the World Series of Poker!