

MUTUAL OF AMERICA

A top-down view of several children sitting around a table, drawing on a large sheet of light brown paper. The drawings include a sun, a heart, a water drop, a recycling symbol, a globe, a whale, a car, a lightbulb, a potted plant, a tree, and various leaves. The children are using colored pencils and markers. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor setting like a classroom or community center.

2018 Community Partnership Award

**Twenty-Three Years
of People Working
Together to Build Better
Communities**

About the Mutual of America Community Partnership Award

The Mutual of America Community Partnership Award annually honors the outstanding contributions that nonprofit organizations, in partnership with public, private and other social sector organizations, make to society.

Each year, the Mutual of America Foundation sponsors a national competition in which hundreds of organizations demonstrate the value of their partnership to the communities they serve, their ability to be replicated by others and their capacity to stimulate new

approaches to addressing significant social issues.

From this group of applicants, an independent committee selects 10 organizations for a Community Partnership Award and produces a documentary video of the national award-winning program.

The video serves as a valuable tool in the partnership's efforts to expand public awareness of their crucial work and helps them attract additional partners and new sponsors.

Since its inception in 1996, the Community Partnership Award has recognized 230 partnerships from cities and towns all across America.

Like so many of our clients working in the nonprofit community, Mutual of America is dedicated to having a direct, positive impact on our society. It is with enormous pride that Mutual of America presents the Community Partnership Award winners for 2018.

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and individuals carefully selected, quality products and services at a competitive price and the personal attention they need to help build and preserve assets for a financially secure future. For more information, visit mutualofamerica.com.

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This publication is dedicated to honor the memories of William J. Flynn and Thomas J. Moran, Chairmen Emeriti of Mutual of America.

Both Mr. Flynn and Mr. Moran championed the Community Partnership Award as a way to recognize the extraordinary leadership of non-profit organizations and highlight the numerous contributions they make to improve the lives of countless individuals.

Introduction

There is a generosity of spirit that is fundamental to who we are as Americans. It is deeply rooted in our values as a nation and in the shared belief that we're stronger when we work together. While this spirit may be difficult to fully describe in words, it is evident in the stories of ordinary people who reach out in extraordinary ways to help those less fortunate among us live healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Such is the case with our 2018 Community Partnership Award winners. Each of these innovative organizations understands that the most pressing societal issues, like equal access to education, housing, health care and economic opportunity, are rarely resolved in a vacuum. By generously engaging their community in unprecedented ways, they demonstrate that creative solutions are possible when you think boldly and place your efforts in a wider ecosystem of change.

That spirit of compassion and determination defines our 2018 Community Partnership Award winners. Inside, you'll see how each program is moving the needle on a wide range of complex and seemingly intractable problems. They're achieving these goals by collaborating with local partners to address the needs of society's most vulnerable members, including children and families impacted by violence, homelessness, profound medical challenges and incarceration.

For example, this year's recipient of the Governor Hugh L. Carey Award, the Baltimore City Deconstruction Project, is employing a new model of multi-disciplinary problem-solving to transform once-blighted blocks of dilapidated, vacant houses in Baltimore's inner city into thriving green space. They're doing this, not by clogging landfills with demolition debris, but by hiring

and training local residents, many who were formerly incarcerated, to take apart these buildings, piece-by-piece, and then salvaging bricks and boards for resale.

They, and each of the 2018 honorees you'll meet on the following pages, demonstrate the power of generous thinking and action to deliver lasting change. Their stories point to a crucial lesson: namely, that when organizations align creatively in support of the underserved members of their communities, they strengthen the connecting thread of our democracy and help pave the way for a better America for all of us.

At Mutual of America, we are proud to recognize, support and help extend the reach of these organizations through this year's Community Partnership Awards.



2018 Selection Committee Members

William F. Baker, Ph.D.
Claudio Aquaviva Distinguished
Professor of Education
Fordham University

George E. Barker
Former Executive Vice President
for International Development
American Cancer Society

Dudley H. Hafner
Former CEO
American Heart Association

Carla Harris
Vice Chair, Wealth Management
Senior Client Advisor,
Managing Director
Morgan Stanley | Company
Management

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President and CEO
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Leadership Forum

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Theodore L. Herman
Vice Chairman
Mutual of America Foundation

The Governor Hugh L. Carey Award

The Governor Hugh L. Carey Award is presented annually to the Community Partnership Award national award-winning program. This award recognizes the important contributions that nonprofit organizations, in partnership with public, private and other social sector organizations, make to society.



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Visit the official [YouTube](#) channel for the Mutual of America Foundation Community Partnership Award to watch videos of each of our 23 national award-winning programs.

Connect with us on social media: [!\[\]\(bd1a142de767a21e5362c595f844a4ff_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(d4257ae6a3e163e6d467b3eb87960fa1_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(37da042f270bb1ebdb248503fcdcdd43_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(22b1bf7712f21472f961e36af9cc7acb_img.jpg\)](#)

ORGANIZATION

Humanim, Inc.

PROGRAM

Baltimore City Deconstruction Project

PARTNERS

Baltimore City Housing and the Office of Sustainability

U.S. Forest Service

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

Room & Board

Baltimore City Deconstruction Project

In Baltimore, empty, dilapidated buildings stretch for blocks in every direction. The economic and human cost of this increasingly common urban decay is enormous. As the city works to stem the tide of the vacant housing crisis, Humanim, Inc., and its partners are providing an innovative solution that offers hope for Baltimore's future.

For nearly 50 years, Baltimore-based Humanim has empowered individuals facing social and economic challenges through innovative workforce development services. In 2014, it launched the Baltimore City Deconstruction Project – a pioneering collaboration with Baltimore City Housing and the Office of Sustainability that created the first municipal contract to dismantle by hand, rather than wrecking ball, abandoned buildings as part of a blight elimination, economic development and workforce strategy.

Humanim is deconstructing vacant houses in Baltimore's hardest-hit neighborhoods, hiring and training residents to do the work. Many of these workers were formerly incarcerated people trying to change their lives; today, all earn a living wage and are eligible for raises and benefits as they gain experience. As they take apart buildings, piece-by-piece, much of the materials saved are being sold through a thriving sales and

distribution channel for reclaimed brick and board that Humanim developed. Rather than ending up in landfills, 1.2 million bricks and more than 425,000 board feet of lumber have been salvaged and sold in 20 states and six countries to-date. Once the buildings are cleared, Humanim makes way for the City of Baltimore and the U.S. Forest Service to turn the empty lots into green spaces.

"The Baltimore City Deconstruction Project is a win for the city, for residents who might not otherwise find work and for the environment. Over 185 individuals have been employed to-date, and in the past two and a half years, not a single previously incarcerated worker has reoffended," said Henry Posko, President and Chief Executive Officer. "Based on this success, the State of Maryland has agreed to expand our program to develop employment opportunities for other returning citizens."

2018 National
Award-Winning
Program



Governor
Hugh L. Carey
Award Recipient



Photo credit: Humanim, Inc.

ORGANIZATION

Community Rebuilders

PROGRAM

Ending Veteran Homelessness

PARTNERS

The Salvation Army Housing Assessment Program

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Health Care for Homeless Vets

Ending Veteran Homelessness

In a country as prosperous as the United States, no one should be without a place to call home. Yet, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimates that every night, more than 40,000 veterans experience homelessness, and another 1.4 million are considered at risk due to poverty and other reasons.

For nearly 25 years, Community Rebuilders has worked to end homelessness in Kent County, Michigan, through housing opportunities and support services for families in transition. In 2016, after receiving the Supportive Services for Veteran Families grant from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Community Rebuilders began the Ending Veteran Homelessness program with a pledge to end veteran homelessness in Kent County. Within two years, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness certified Kent as the first county in Michigan and the 54th county in the nation to effectively achieve that goal.

In achieving this success, Community Rebuilders demonstrated how transformative change is made possible when space is opened for new ideas, citizens are trusted to know what's best for themselves and collaboration around public problem-solving is improved. Through the Ending Veteran Homelessness program, Community Rebuilders identified specific services and support needed to end veteran homelessness

and then asked community partners to formally identify, pledge and commit to the resources they could deliver in a dedicated manner. At the same time, they organized a multi-agency outreach team to find and name every homeless veteran in Kent County. Based on what they learned from veterans about their needs and wants, Community Rebuilders developed an assessment tool to prioritize and connect current veterans to appropriate services, including transitional housing, rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing.

"We've been able to bring hope to veterans who are struggling by providing strengths-based, consumer-driven housing options," said Vera Beech, Executive Director. "Since 2016, more than 600 homeless veterans have gained access to safe and decent housing of their choosing. As we look into the future, Community Rebuilders remains dedicated to ensuring that homelessness in Kent County will be rare, brief and nonrecurring for the men and women who valiantly served our country."

2018
Honorable Mention
Award Recipient
★



ORGANIZATION

Hour Children, Inc.

PROGRAM

Family Services Programs at Bedford Hills
Correctional Facility

PARTNER

New York State Department of
Corrections and Community Supervision

Family Services Programs at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility

An estimated 1.3 million children across America have a mother in the criminal justice system. When the prison door slams shut on one of those moms, it creates an echo that reverberates through their kids' lives as well. In fact, research shows that children of mothers who are incarcerated face a range of negative effects, including an increased risk of anxiety and stress, troubled attachments and developmental regressions.

Established in 1986 and incorporated six years later, Hour Children is a leading provider of prison- and community-based services for women who are currently or formerly incarcerated and their children. In 2013, they entered into a groundbreaking partnership with the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (NYSDOCCS) to enhance and administer its long-standing prison-based programs at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, the largest women's prison in New York.

Hour Children oversees the prison's Nursery program – the only one of its kind in New York that allows mothers who are incarcerated to live with their babies for up to 18 months. It also has instituted three groundbreaking programs: The Teen program enables up to 42 adolescents to visit monthly with their mothers at Bedford Hills, while the Overnight and Summer programs provide extended opportunities for children to spend time with their

mothers during the day, while staying with a host family in the evenings. In addition, Hour Children now provides transportation to bring families together, advocacy, parenting education, case management and mentoring.

"We named Hour Children to acknowledge the most important hours that shape the life of a child with an incarcerated mother: the hour of their mother's arrest, the hour of their visit, and the hour of her release," said Sister Tesa Fitzgerald, Executive Director. "Last year, Hour Children hosted more than 2,000 visits between mothers who are incarcerated and their children. We also facilitated more than 2,000 advocacy sessions, parenting classes, and case-management support sessions for moms in prison. Together, we're working to end the cycle of intergenerational incarceration by helping these women and their children to strengthen their bonds and build healthy, independent and secure lives."

2018
Honorable Mention
Award Recipient
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ORGANIZATION

College Success Foundation

PROGRAM

Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth

PARTNERS

Casey Family Foundation

Numerous colleges and universities

The Mockingbird Society

Treehouse

YMCA

Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth

Nationwide, half a million children live in foster care. Most have the same dreams, ambitions and potential to succeed as other children, including the hope of continuing their education after high school. While 70% of foster youth plan to go to college, just 2.5% end up finishing their program – the lowest success rate of any student population, according to a recent study.

College Success Foundation (CSF) was created in 2000 to encourage and inspire youth who are disadvantaged to graduate high school and earn their college degree. The organization serves students in Washington State; Washington, D.C.; and colleges in every state in the nation. Working directly in the schools, CSF staff delivers academic advising, college planning and readiness support, and financial aid and scholarship assistance that begins early in middle school and continues through college. Recognizing that students from foster care often face unique challenges to funding college, in 2001 CSF created the Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth program.

CSF administers the program, which it created with then Washington Governor Gary Locke, to provide scholarships and support for college-bound students from foster care. CSF staff provides continuous support to Governors' Scholars throughout college. Working with

colleges and universities across the state, CSF also hosts an annual three-day immersive event so that high-school-age youth from foster care can directly experience college life. Finally, CSF partners with colleges and community organizations to deliver wrap-around support that provides students from foster care with housing assistance, transportation, clothing and other basic needs, along with academic support and case management to help ensure success.

"As of 2017, close to 500 students have been awarded a Governors' Scholarship and approximately half have earned their college degrees – 15 times the national rate," said James Dorsey, President and Chief Executive Officer. "As proud as we are of that achievement, we know more is needed. Through the advocacy efforts of CSF and our partners, we're working to bring more attention to the need for greater funding to help youth in foster care to achieve their dream of a brighter future."

2018
Merit Finalist Award
Recipient
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ORGANIZATION

Families Together

PROGRAM

More Than a Roof

PARTNERS

Catholic Charities

Learning Together

Project CATCH

Triangle Literacy Council

More Than a Roof

For many Americans, home is a two-story house in the suburbs, a city duplex or an apartment in a quiet neighborhood. However, for a growing population of working families, home is a cramped room without a kitchen in an often run-down motel. The reasons are many and varied, including that either they earn too little to afford the up-front costs of an apartment, or because of a poor credit record, past evictions or a criminal history precludes them from renting.

Founded in 1980, Families Together is the largest nonprofit dedicated to housing families with children experiencing homelessness in Wake County, North Carolina. In 2015, the More Than a Roof collaborative was launched through funding from the United Way of the Greater Triangle with the aim of addressing the needs of the growing number of families living in motels.

More Than a Roof uses a multi-disciplinary approach to moving this often invisible population toward economic self-sufficiency and stabilization. Specifically, Families Together provides access to emergency short-term family housing, rapid housing placement and post-housing stabilization services, as well as financial literacy, transportation assistance, credit repair, and education regarding landlord-tenant rights. Project CATCH provides early intervention and developmental screenings for children ages 0–8, case management to address the various

family needs, and emergency and short-term childcare assistance. The Triangle Literacy Council provides literacy evaluation and tutoring. Catholic Charities provides housing placement and case-management services, and Learning Together conducts behavioral assessments and counseling services for children.

“Since 2016, More Than a Roof has helped 30 families move out of motels and into stable homes, with 75% retaining their housing for at least a year and 70% taking advantage of our comprehensive case-management services,” said Lisa Rowe, Executive Director. “By leveraging the respective strengths and resources of each of our partners, More Than a Roof is able to do more for the children and families of Wake County living in motels than any agency could do alone. We remain committed to strengthening and growing our networks to boost the ability of our families to succeed.”

2018
Merit Finalist Award
Recipient
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ORGANIZATION

New Alternatives for Children (NAC)

PROGRAM

NAC Kids Can Education Partnership

PARTNERS

Legal Aid Society

Advocates for Children

Reach Out and Read

NAC Kids Can Education Partnership

Educational success is widely regarded as one pathway out of poverty. However, children with medical complexity – those with significant health problems, disabilities or developmental disorders – who are involved in the child welfare system, often experience significant barriers that prevent them from accessing the resources and tools needed to build a strong foundation for the future.

New Alternatives for Children (NAC) is an award-winning child welfare agency that provides comprehensive, interdisciplinary health and social services for children who are living in poverty, have experienced or are at risk for abuse/neglect, and have complex medical and mental-health challenges. Founded in 1982, NAC is one of the only child welfare agencies in New York City with an extensive on-site education department. Through their NAC Kids Can Education Partnership, NAC's nine full-time, master's-level education specialists provide services to children in special medical and foster-care programs who have historically fallen through the cracks.

The program's individualized educational support begins with babies and early childhood education and extends through high school and beyond. To ensure that no young person served is educationally disadvantaged, NAC and its civic and volunteer partners provide advocacy in numerous forms, including school placement, special

education support and transportation assistance, as well as home-based and after-school programs, one-on-one tutoring and test preparation assistance. Additionally, they offer literacy programs for parents and young children, and a College Bound program that supports adolescents beginning their college journey. NAC also advocates with the NYC Department of Education to provide services to support children with highly specialized needs and to minimize the impact of child welfare involvement on the child's academic success.

"The NAC Kids Can Education Partnership serves more than 600 children and their families each year. Many of these children are among New York City's most vulnerable and medically complex residents," said NAC founder and Executive Director Arlene Goldsmith, LCSW, Ph.D. "Despite the extraordinary challenges they face, these young people deserve the same opportunities we want for our own children, including access to the best schools for their academic needs and a chance at a brighter future."

2018
Merit Finalist Award
Recipient
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ORGANIZATION

Heartland Alliance

PROGRAM

READI Chicago

PARTNERS

University of Chicago Crime and Poverty Labs

Various outreach partners

READI Chicago

Mass shootings in places like Parkland, Florida, and Las Vegas, Nevada, capture national attention, but gun violence is an everyday occurrence in many communities across the country. In Chicago, more than 2,000 people have been shot this year – more than eight individuals each day – according to data from the *Chicago Tribune*.

Heartland Alliance, a Chicago-based organization dedicated to advancing the human rights of marginalized populations around the world, formed a partnership in 2016 with the University of Chicago Crime and Poverty Labs and six other service organizations to address the root causes of gun violence in four of the city's hardest-hit neighborhoods. Their Rapid Employment and Development Initiative (READI Chicago) recognizes that many individuals at a high risk to commit or to be victimized by gun violence lack access to mental-health counseling, life-skills support, and job training and placement.

Launched in the fall of 2017 with a goal of decreasing shootings and homicides among men who are most at risk of violence involvement, READI Chicago relentlessly engages these individuals through a ground-breaking program that pairs paid employment up to 29 hours per week with regular participation in individual and group-based cognitive behavioral therapy, coaching and

other support services. At the end of 18 months, participants can access an additional six months of case management and coaching to help them successfully transition to unsubsidized employment.

The early results have been promising. "As of mid-September 2018, 672 individuals are actively participating in the program," said Evelyn Diaz, President of Heartland Alliance. "Of those, 267 have started transitional employment and 70% consistently show up for work. This is notable because many are coping with significant trauma and other issues that can create barriers to long-term success."

The University of Chicago Crime and Poverty Labs are conducting an evaluation of READI Chicago to determine its impact. "We believe the results could significantly influence approaches to violence reduction and public safety spending in Chicago and other cities across the country," said Diaz.

2018
Merit Finalist Award
Recipient
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ORGANIZATION

Teen Action and Support Center

PROGRAM

The Station Community Hub

PARTNERS

Jones Trust

Stitches of Springdale

Tech Hogs Robotics

Washington County Juvenile Courts

The Station Community Hub

The teen years are a period of intense growth – physically, emotionally and intellectually. It can also be a time when poor decisions and risky behaviors may land vulnerable teens in the juvenile court system and derail their education and their dreams.

The Teen Action and Support Center (TASC) is a grass-roots organization founded in 2005 to empower young people to become agents of change in their own lives and communities. In 2016, TASC created The Station Community Hub (The Station) in collaboration with community partners in response to the high rate of youth violence and disproportionate involvement of teens in the Juvenile Probation System in Northwest Arkansas.

The Station, which is located in the heart of downtown Springdale, where the majority of teen referrals to probation and detention originate in Washington County, is part of a community effort to empower juveniles ages 13–19 who are at medium to high risk of reoffending to take corrective steps in their own lives. The program provides a continuum of services and support, including evening supervision and transportation by the Washington County Juvenile Courts, individual and group counseling, tutoring and homework assistance, computer lab

access, life and job skills training, and community service projects.

“Through our collaboration with Jones Trust, Stitches of Springdale and other partners, we’re providing services that our teens need in our own community. So far, the results have been encouraging,” said Madi Hutson, Executive Director. “Only 4% of the girls who are involved in The Station and also the Juvenile Probation Department have reoffended, compared to an average of 25% countywide. Nearly 90% of the boys who were referred to The Station to divert from incarceration have successfully completed their court-mandated community service. And nearly all (98%) of the teens who participated in The Station’s teen parenting program have since graduated high school, compared to a state average of 38%. We believe our model for avoiding teen incarceration is well equipped to help communities combat youth violence and allow more teens to reach their full potential.”

ORGANIZATION

Compass Family Services

PROGRAM

Twitter NeighborNest

PARTNER

Twitter

Twitter NeighborNest

The internet has become such a central part of daily life that it's easy to assume everyone has access or instinctively knows how to navigate online resources. In reality, the opportunities of our increasingly digital world hold little promise for homeless individuals and families who are cut off from the web.

For more than a century, Compass Family Services (CFS) has been providing comprehensive support services to San Franciscans in need. Their focus on family homelessness began in the 1990s, when they recognized a growing need to help families secure permanent housing and attain economic self-sufficiency. In 2016, they extended that commitment through a unique collaboration with Twitter to bridge a growing barrier to financial and housing stability – the digital divide. The Twitter NeighborNest (the Nest) is a family-friendly technology center where parents and children can access computers and learn basic technology skills in a nonjudgmental and supportive environment.

The Nest provides tools and resources – including free drop-in childcare – to help underserved families search for and obtain housing and employment opportunities, stay current with school assignments and updates, and maintain personal and professional relationships. Family members can take computer classes and workshops geared toward

different skill levels, participate in English-language tutorials, and enjoy non-tech activities designed to foster parent-child bonding. Through the partnership, CFS offers childcare providers and a case manager who oversees workshops, classes and drop-in lab hours, while Twitter provides grant funding, staff members who jointly operate and oversee the Nest, and employee volunteers.

“Our partnership with Twitter has enabled us to create a space where the less fortunate in our community can explore the internet and access the information and tools they need to assist them out of homelessness,” said Erica Kisch, Executive Director. “By all measures, the Nest is making a difference. In just three years, we have hosted more than 4,500 visits by parents and children, and provided more than 400 hours of childcare and nearly 200 group sessions and educational workshops. We’re confident that this program can be replicated in communities across the country.”

2018
Merit Finalist Award
Recipient
★



Photo credit: Ray Mina

ORGANIZATION

Hospice Savannah

PROGRAM

We the Living

PARTNERS

Chatham County Victim Witness Assistance Program

Savannah-Chatham County Public School System

Savannah Metropolitan Police

We the Living

Supporting a child when a loved one passes is one of the most difficult things for parents and caretakers to deal with. When the death is a result of violence, it adds even more trauma to an already devastating situation. Without intervention, these children are often the “living victims” after a homicide occurs, left to struggle with unexpressed anger, post-traumatic stress, hypervigilance, fear and more.

For nearly four decades, Hospice Savannah has provided home-based and in-patient hospice care and bereavement services to families in Greater Savannah, Georgia. In 2016, when Savannah’s homicide rate spiked due to gang-related violence, they took the lead in creating We the Living, a children’s grief and violence support network that addresses the unique needs of children who have lost a loved one to violence.

We the Living support groups are led by master’s-level counselors, all of whom are trained in childhood trauma. Their work is uniquely supported by a music therapist, who teaches children how music can be an effective tool for channeling emotions. Each child is given an iPod Shuffle and iTunes gift card to keep and is encouraged to create a personal playlist and to share songs that have special meaning.

At the front lines of We the Living are the Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools, the Chatham County

Victim Witness Assistance Program and the Savannah Metropolitan Police, who provide essential help in identifying youth impacted by violence, advocate on behalf of grief counseling, and encourage parents and caretakers to take steps toward healing for their children.

“Together, our partnership is helping to ensure our community is equipped to address trauma-related grief,” said Jamey Espina, Vice President, Development and Community Services. “To-date, we have trained nearly 100 staff members, school counselors, social workers and volunteers to provide support. Our program outcomes are significant, measurable and meaningful, with participants demonstrating improvement in key areas such as feeling supported, decreased fear and a reduction in loneliness. While we may not be able to prevent violence, together, we can help create a brighter future for those whose lives are affected by it.”

2018
Merit Finalist Award
Recipient
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ORGANIZATION

Fresh Start Surgical Gifts

PROGRAM

Surgery Weekend Program

PARTNERS

Plastic Surgery Foundation

Rady Children's Hospital

University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital

2014 National Award-Winning Program Update:

Surgery Weekend Program

Whether caused by a birth defect, accident, abuse or illness, a disfigurement can have a profound psychological, emotional and social impact on the affected individual. When that person is a child or teen, dealing with curious stares, hurtful remarks and even bullying can lead to feelings of low self-esteem, anxiety, embarrassment and isolation.

Fresh Start Surgical Gifts – winner of the 2014 Community Partnership Award – is transforming the lives of underserved children with cosmetic and physical deformities through the extraordinary gift of reconstructive surgery, dental and other health-related services, here in the U.S.

Their groundbreaking Surgery Weekend Program was launched in 2009 in a first-of-its-kind partnership with Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego. In exchange for the use of Rady's surgical suites on the weekend, Fresh Start gives Rady access to its clinics during the week, thus maximizing the number of patients each can serve. During Surgery Weekends, an all-volunteer team of world-class reconstructive surgeons, dentists and other medical professionals provides services to patients free-of-cost, while Fresh Start covers the cost of transportation, food and lodging for patients.

In 2014, Fresh Start duplicated their winning formula at the Comer Children's Hospital at the University of Chicago Medical Center. Today, they are laying the groundwork for a third clinic that is projected to open in San Antonio within the next two years. Fresh Start's expansion and overhead is covered by the Fresh Start Surgical Gifts Foundation, which allows 100% of every donation to directly fund the medical program.

"Since Fresh Start's inception in 1991, more than 7,500 children have received life-changing, no-cost medical care valued at more than \$38 million," said Shari Brasher, Chief Executive Officer. "The Community Partnership Award and the video Mutual of America produced on our behalf have helped shine a light on underserved children from the U.S. and around the world who would not otherwise be able to afford care. Mutual of America's recognition has enabled us to leverage our impact, giving more children with visible differences the second chance at a life they thought they'd never have."



Past National Award-Winning Programs

2017

Evans Community Partnership School

Children's Home Society of Florida
Orlando, FL

The Evans Community Partnership School uses a transformative "no-wrong-door" delivery model to provide a range of social services, including on-site medical and dental services, mental-health and counseling programs, after-school enrichment and mentoring, and transportation and meals, aimed at raising the academic ground floor and empowering students to succeed. Today, the school has 15 agencies working collaboratively to strengthen the community by creating opportunities for students and their families to reach their full potential.

2016

East Harlem Center for Living and Learning

DREAM
New York, NY

DREAM's (formerly known as Harlem RBI) East Harlem Center for Living and Learning originated from DREAM's need for school facilities and the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA's) interest in increasing low-income housing in the neighborhood. The center includes a 450-seat public charter school, where 50% of kindergarten seats are reserved for students living in NYCHA residences; after-school and summer program space that serves more than 1,800 kids each year; 89 units of affordable housing; a revitalized public park and community space; and ongoing job opportunities for local residents.

2015

Waikiki Health's PATH Clinic

Waikiki Health
Honolulu, HI

Waikiki Health's PATH Clinic is Hawaii's only comprehensive obstetrics/gynecology clinic that specifically addresses the often complex needs of pregnant and parenting women with current or past addiction challenges. It provides primary medical care, smoking cessation programs, childcare and social services, all in an environment that is nonjudgmental and compassionate.

2014

Surgery Weekend Program

Fresh Start Surgical Gifts
Carlsbad, CA

At Fresh Start Surgical Gifts, an all-volunteer team of world-class surgeons, dentists and other medical providers is transforming the lives of disadvantaged children with physical deformities through the extraordinary gift of reconstructive surgery, dental and health-related services. These ongoing services are provided through Fresh Start's Surgery Weekend program, a first-of-its-kind partnership with Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego.

2013

Inside to Outside Initiative – Prison Puppy Raising Program

Leader Dogs for the Blind
Rochester Hills, MI

The Prison Puppy Raising Program pairs future Leader Dogs with model prisoners who have demonstrated they can be trusted to provide 24/7 care to a seven-week-old puppy through its first year of life. These Leader Dogs not only provide greater independence, safety and self-worth to their blind or visually impaired clients, but also give the inmates who cared for them a sense of pride and gratitude for the chance to give back to the community.

2012

Operation Rebound

Challenged Athletes Foundation
San Diego, CA

Operation Rebound uses the healing power of sports as a path to recovery for active-duty service members, veterans and first responders who have suffered life-changing injuries as a result of their service. Operation Rebound has helped injured service members to reactivate their competitive spirit and pursue goals as big as competing in the Paralympics and as important as being able to chase their children around the block.

2011

College Possible Access and Success Partnership

College Possible
Saint Paul, MN

College Possible helps break down the barriers that often keep economically disadvantaged youth from getting into college and earning a degree. Using AmeriCorps members as coaches, College Possible provides intensive ACT/SAT preparation, college admission and financial aid consulting, college transition guidance at the high school level and a program to help college seniors as they prepare to graduate and join the workforce.

2010

Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO)

Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO)
New York, NY

Through its partnership with the City of New York Department of Correction and the New York City Board of Education, Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO) helps incarcerated men between the ages of 18 and 24 earn their GED and focus on life skills and possible career paths to better their chances of success once released. Fewer than 15 percent of the released inmates GOSO has worked with have recidivated.

2009

Barbara McInnis House: Medical Respite Care Program

Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program
Boston, MA

Most of us rely on the support of family or a visiting nurse when recovering from surgery, illness or injury. Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program's Barbara McInnis House: Medical Respite Care Program is a 104-bed facility that provides 24-hour medical care for homeless patients who are too sick for a shelter or the street but not in need of an extensive hospital stay.

2008

Family Eviction Prevention Collaborative

Catholic Charities CYO
San Francisco, CA

Since its inception in 2007, the Family Eviction Prevention Collaborative – comprising Catholic Charities CYO, Homeless Prenatal Program, Hamilton Family Center and Compass Community Services – has helped thousands of San Francisco families avoid homelessness by providing rental assistance to stave off eviction and help those in shelters or substandard housing find permanent homes.

2007

Project Success

100 Black Men of Atlanta, Inc.
Atlanta, GA

Project Success is a partnership between 100 Black Men of Atlanta, Inc., and Atlanta Public Schools. This wide-ranging enrichment and mentoring program for students has grown to include programs in 19 Atlanta public schools. Project Success has energized Atlanta, helping thousands of children realize their potential for leadership and success.

2006

New Jersey SEEDS Scholars Program

New Jersey SEEDS
Newark, NJ

Every year, New Jersey SEEDS Scholars Program selects over 100 inner-city students to attend rigorous Saturday and summer classes in academic subjects as well as leadership training. Students who make it through the program receive full financial aid at one of over 100 independent secondary schools across the country that are partners in the program.

2005

The Hope for Veterans® Transitional Housing Program

Community Hope, Inc.
Lyons, NJ

The Hope for Veterans Transitional Housing Program offers transitional housing in Lyons, New Jersey, for up to 75 honorably discharged, homeless veterans. The partnership provides up to two years of group and individual therapy, case management services, access to psychiatric services and a professional program of substance abuse counseling and vocational services.

2004

StreetWorks Collaborative

Freeport West, Inc.
Minneapolis, MN

StreetWorks is a collaborative of 13 organizations in Minneapolis and St. Paul that have pooled their resources and developed a coordinated response to help homeless youth get the help they need. StreetWorks' outreach workers offer homeless youth everyday necessities for life on the street and distribute referral cards to agencies in the collaborative for those who want further help.

2003

An Achievable Dream

An Achievable Dream, Inc.
Newport News, VA

An Achievable Dream is a year-round program in academic, social and moral education for impoverished children in grades K-12. The program has succeeded by approaching the achievement gap from many different angles: extending the school day and year, providing food and health care, and stressing character development and social skills. Partners include the local sheriff's office, business community and a U.S. Army facility.

2002

Clubs Go to College

Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford, Inc.
Hartford, CT

In Clubs Go to College, two Hartford institutions have realized their common goal: to provide children and young adults with opportunities to develop physically, morally and intellectually. The Boys & Girls Clubs offer sports, art and computer facilities, and the children have access to Trinity College events and facilities as well as student volunteers, who serve as positive role models and friends.

2001

Zone-Based Advocacy

Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA

Zone-Based Advocacy brings together the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh (WC&S), the City of Pittsburgh Police Department and the Allegheny County District Attorney's Office in a coordinated response to the needs of domestic violence victims. WC&S advocates work to prevent future violence, helping victims understand their options, including counseling and shelter.

2000

Prisoner and Family Ministry Building Homes: Rebuilding Lives

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
Des Plaines, IL

Building Homes: Rebuilding Lives is a partnership of the Prisoner and Family Ministry of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, the Illinois Department of Corrections and Habitat for Humanity International. This program trains prisoners to construct homes for Habitat for Humanity families. It has served hundreds of inmates and families, offering valuable lessons in both home building and community building.

1999

Al Sigl Center Partnership

Al Sigl Center for Rehabilitation Agencies, Inc.
Rochester, NY

This partnership of individual agencies works together to help people with disabilities live fuller, more independent lives. Al Sigl Center is the resource agency, managing real estate for programs, coordinating shared services, raising charitable contributions and expanding public awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, thus freeing the partner agencies to focus on serving clients.

1998

Kinship Support Network

Edgewood Center for Children and Families
San Francisco, CA

The Kinship Support Network supports grandparents and other relatives of children who've lost a parent through death, abandonment, abuse or neglect. The Network provides guardians with support groups, mentors and educational workshops as well as access to a range of services including health care, case management, community resources and housing opportunities.

1997

"A Level Playing Field," A Program for At-Risk Children

Alachua County Organization for Rural Needs, Inc. (A.C.O.R.N. Clinic)
Brooker, FL

"A Level Playing Field" assigns students of medicine, nursing and dentistry from the University of Florida to elementary schools, community centers and the A.C.O.R.N. Clinic to provide basic dental care, immunizations and a range of other health services to children in low-income rural communities in Florida.

1996

Community Internship Program

Henry Street Settlement
New York, NY

In this partnership, United Parcel Service (UPS) sends its managers to the Henry Street Settlement to learn about inner-city life. Managers visit homebound seniors, teach job skills and deliver food to the homeless, while learning about the diversity of their workers and the people they serve. The Henry Street Settlement learns how the corporate world solves its problems.

Visit the official [YouTube](#) channel for the Mutual of America Foundation Community Partnership Award to watch videos of each of our 23 national award-winning programs.

2018 Award-Winning Programs

Baltimore City Deconstruction Project

Humanim, Inc.
1701 N. Gay Street
Baltimore, MD 21213
410-381-7171
hposko@humanim.org
Henry Posko, President and
Chief Executive Officer

Ending Veteran Homelessness

Community Rebuilders
1120 Monroe Avenue NW, Suite 220
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616-458-5102
vbeech@communityrebuilders.org
Vera Beech, Executive Director

Family Services Programs at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility

Hour Children, Inc.
36-11 12th Street, Lower Level
Long Island City, NY 11106
718-433-4724
tfitzgerald@hourchildren.org
Sister Tesa Fitzgerald, Executive Director

Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth

College Success Foundation
15500 SE 30th Place
Bellevue, WA 98007
425-416-2000
jdorsey@collegesuccessfoundation.org
James Dorsey, President and
Chief Executive Officer

More Than a Roof

Families Together
908 Plainview Drive
Raleigh, NC 27610
919-212-1123
lisa@familiestogethernc.org
Lisa Rowe, Executive Director

NAC Kids Can Education Partnership

New Alternatives for Children, Inc.
37 West 26th Street
New York, NY 10010
212-696-1550
agoldsmith@nackidscan.org
Arlene Goldsmith, LCSW, Ph.D.,
Executive Director

READI Chicago

Heartland Alliance for Human Needs &
Human Rights
208 S. LaSalle, Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60604
312-660-1300
bhoffman@heartlandalliance.org
Barbara Hoffman, Chief External Affairs Officer

The Station Community Hub

Teen Action and Support Center
2525 W. New Hope Road
Rogers, AR 72758
479-636-8272
madi@tascnwa.org
Madi Hutson, Executive Director

Twitter NeighborNest

Compass Family Services
37 Grove Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
415-644-0504
ekisch@compass-SF.org
Erica Kisch, Executive Director

We the Living

Hospice Savannah, Inc.
Box 13190
Savannah, GA 31416
912-355-2289
jespina@hospicesavannah.org
Jamey Espina, Vice President, Development and
Community Services

Community Partnership Award Impact

Surgery Weekend Program

Fresh Start Surgical Gifts
2011 Palomar Airport Road, Suite 206
Carlsbad, CA 92011
760-944-7774
shari@freshstart.org
Shari Brasher, Chief Executive Officer and
Executive Director



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Life Insurance Company.

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