At Youth Guidance, we see a bright and successful future for every child. Yet for so many of our youth, the way forward is fraught with struggle. From poverty to under-resourced schools to unhealthy and unstable neighborhoods, those we serve often face an uneven playing field before they ever get their hands on the ball.

Yet where some may only see challenges, Youth Guidance sees hope. For more than 90 years, our mission to create and implement school-based programs that enable at-risk children to overcome obstacles, focus on their education and, ultimately, succeed in school and in life has continued unabated. We are committed to providing youth with the social and emotional support they need to thrive.

Moving the needle on youth crises such as gun violence, low educational attainment and disproportionate rates of incarceration can be seemingly impossible. Yet, our evidence-based programs consistently dispel these notions. The Becoming a Man® (B.A.M.) program for example—with nationally-recognized, positive outcomes in these areas—has expanded to 48 public schools, serving roughly 2,500 young men—a 25% increase over last year. Across all programs, including Working on Womanhood (W.O.W.), Project Prepare® and Community and Afterschool, we are touching more than 8,000 youth with more trauma-informed counselors than ever before. The demand for these offerings is reflective of their positive impact and leaves us hopeful about the road ahead.

We have learned that we can not only move the needle, but also move mountains by cultivating a formidable army of support: generous donors, highly skilled staff, committed school administrators, and alliances with those who share our fixed gaze on social justice and dedication to opening up doors of opportunity. Together, we are shining light on the plight of so many of our youth, and dramatically improving their odds of success. We are changing societal narratives through innovative, school-based models that create safe and enriching places of learning and emotionally healthy kids who are receptive to education and poised to do the work necessary for successful lives as adults.

Chicago’s youth are resilient. Despite all odds, they never give up—and neither will we. The work is too important. The life-saving reward, priceless.

We thank you for your support which lends strength to our voice and impact in the schools and communities that need us most.

We look forward to continuing our work to create a Chicago where opportunity and hope for our youth carry the day.

LETTER FROM CEO & CHAIRMAN

Michelle Adler Morrison  –  Krista Crowdy
Youth Guidance’s Becoming a Man® (B.A.M.) program offers in-school group counseling that guides young men to learn, internalize and practice social cognitive skills, make responsible decisions for their future and become positive members of their school and community.

The B.A.M. program operates in many of Chicago’s most disadvantaged areas—including Little Village, Englewood, Roseland, and Austin—where the challenges of community violence, unemployment, and academic failure for youth are paramount. B.A.M.’s manualized curriculum uses a blend of group therapy, positive youth development and men’s rites of passage work delivered by highly trained counselors to help students. The curriculum is designed to develop competencies in six core values: integrity, accountability, positive anger expression, respect for womanhood, self-determination, and visionary goal-setting. These core values help young men increase their emotional resilience, succeed in school and develop achievable post-secondary plans.

B.A.M. has achieved new levels of local and national attention in the last two years as a result of research performed by the University of Chicago Crime Lab that illustrates the program’s effectiveness. In January 2013, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel pointed to B.A.M. as part of a larger strategy to reduce youth violence. “To build off the program’s proven track record of success,” Emanuel said in a 2013 release referencing the Crime Lab report, “our goal is to expand access to the Match and B.A.M. programs to reach 1,000 students by next school year.” B.A.M. has since exceeded expectations with more than 2,000 young men in 42 Chicago schools.

In February 2014, President Barack Obama announced a new White House initiative, My Brother’s Keeper, which was in part inspired by his visits with B.A.M. students at Hyde Park Academy a year earlier.

In June 2015, B.A.M.’s demonstrated success in reaching young minority males was highlighted in the national Discovery Communications film Rise: The Promise of My Brother’s Keeper, which explored the need for and challenges of programs that work to improve life outcomes for young men of color in the United States.

A University of Chicago Crime Lab study conducted during the 2013-15 academic years showed that participation in B.A.M. reduces violent crime arrests by 50% and total arrests by 35%. These findings show a return of as much as $30 for each dollar invested in B.A.M. from the reduction in crime alone. Also, in a long-term follow-up to the first B.A.M. study (2009-10), researchers found that B.A.M. increased on-time high school graduation rates by 19%.

Cecil* participated in B.A.M. as a senior at Hyde Park High School during the 2014-2015 school year. Cecil lived with his great-grandmother; his parents lost their parental rights when he was very young and his grandparents are deceased. Due to guidance and support challenges in his life, Cecil experienced a great deal of anger and lagged behind his peers in terms of emotional maturity. Participation in B.A.M. led to life-changing outcomes for Cecil. “With a lot of individual work Cecil has grown into a bigger and better person,” said B.A.M. Counselor Peter Agostino. “He is one of the students that we have seen work really hard to be part of the B.A.M. program. He fought for his future. His journey from angry rudderless student to confident young man has been amazing to be part of.”

Cecil graduated from Hyde Park High School in June 2015 with an acceptance to Philander Smith College, a Historically Black College in Little Rock, Arkansas.

*Name changed for confidentiality.
The Working on Womanhood (W.O.W.) program has become one of Chicago’s leading counseling programs for young women growing up with daily exposure to poverty, violence and trauma. As W.O.W. has evolved, participants have continued to show positive academic and socio-emotional outcomes and evidence of positive personal growth.

Focused on grades 7-12, W.O.W. utilizes a school-based, counseling model to support young girls. Students attend one-hour, weekly small group sessions held during the school day over the course of the school year. Trauma-informed W.O.W. counselors empower young women through the program’s therapy-based curriculum which emphasizes five core themes: self-awareness, emotional intelligence, healthy relationships, visionary goal-setting, and leadership.

New assessments and evaluation tools introduced during the 2014-2015 school year have helped Youth Guidance more effectively evaluate W.O.W. students’ exposure to trauma and mental health needs at intake. Initial findings have shown that the vast majority of W.O.W. participants exhibit acute symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), with 84% of participants reporting five or more lifetime exposures to trauma and 72% reporting some degree of depression.

W.O.W.’s counseling-focused settings help young women develop the skills necessary to address life stressors that could lead to depression, aggression and high-risk behaviors. Studies reveal that 67% of those W.O.W. participants noted as most severely depressed at intake showed dramatic improvement by the end of the 2015 school year.

To build on the program’s success, Youth Guidance has launched a collaboration with academic experts at Northwestern University and Lurie Children’s Hospital to refine W.O.W.’s curriculum and training process. Supported by an Evergreen Invitational Women’s Health grant, the project allowed W.O.W. to build a team of girls, parents, school and community partners, and academic experts to strengthen best practices and links between program goals and theory. The aim is to increase W.O.W.’s ability to effectively serve even more young women in the years ahead.

Candice* is a bright 7th grader with a great deal of potential. Unfortunately, her home life is extremely challenging. Her mother works hard to provide for the family, so Candice is often left alone to care for her four younger siblings. Her father is seldom present and when he is, his interactions with Candice are verbally and emotionally abusive. Under the weight of stress at home, Candice began to lash out at school and have frequent fights with other girls. Her disruptive behavior and lack of academic focus posed a serious threat to her future.

The W.O.W. program has provided Candice with a tremendous amount of support. Her W.O.W. Counselor and fellow group participants provide an outlet for voicing frustrations and addressing self-esteem issues. Candice is now much more open about her thoughts, emotions and struggles. She has improved her focus on her studies and has learned to control her anger so that she can build better relationships. Once at risk for falling into despair and negative habits, she is now on the path to school success and a brighter future.

*Name changed for confidentiality.

**PROGRAM PROFILE**

**BY THE NUMBERS 2014-2015**

- **1,121** young women served in 35 schools.
- **2,095** group sessions held in 118 W.O.W. school sites.
- **96%** of W.O.W. participants were promoted to the next grade.
- The dropout rate for high school W.O.W. students was **71%** lower than their schools’ overall dropout rate.
- **67%** of W.O.W. participants who were experiencing depression when school began had a decrease in depression by the end of the school year.
- **93%** of participants reported that their counselors have helped them make better decisions.
Children whose parents are actively engaged in their education are much more likely to succeed both academically and socially. Working within schools, Youth Guidance’s Parent and Family Engagement program equips parents with the skills to support their children’s educational experience from a very early age. Parents gain strategies for modeling healthy, constructive choices in the family and community, as well as practical techniques for providing the emotional support youth need for positive academic outcomes.

Parent and Family Engagement staff also guide parents through the complexities of challenging school and community environments. Family Engagement Coordinators partner with community leaders, local businesses, law enforcement, religious institutions, and elected officials to provide families with connections to critical resources such as medical services, behavioral health supports and emergency crisis services.

A highlight of parent-focused programming is the Annual Parent Leadership Conference which provides professional education and resources for both parents and school partners during a two-day gathering. The conference has been running more 22 years.

In February 2015, more than 200 parents and parent leaders attended the leadership conference to hear from encouraging guest speakers and participate in peer coaching, motivational workshops and interactive presentations. The conference aims to help parents and school staff develop more meaningful and effective relationships that give children well-rounded support for school success.

A recent evaluation of the Parent Leadership Conference showed that:

- 93% of participants said they gained skills that will enable them to help parents take a more active role in school.
- 98% of participants found the individual workshop sessions to be very useful.
- 89% learned strategies on how to improve communications between parents and teachers.

School leaders, parents and community stakeholders across Chicago team with Youth Guidance to create and implement programs that address challenges such as poverty, lack of access to health and wellness services, under-resourced schools, and youth violence. Full-Service Community School programming is tailored to the unique needs of each individual school and community to:

- Redefine the school as the home base for extended learning experiences for students, families and communities.
- Provide school-based academic and social interventions that extend beyond traditional school hours.
- Offer students the academic and social-emotional support needed for college and career success.
- Provide academic enrichment opportunities in low-performing, high poverty schools, with the goal of improving performance in state academic achievement standards.

Youth Guidance Full-Service Community School resources offer all student participants a range of social-emotional and behavioral health supports, including participation in B.A.M. and W.O.W. for middle and high school students. High school students have the opportunity to participate in college and workforce readiness programs including standardized test preparation, college and financial aid counseling and internship opportunities.

Youth Guidance operates 16 Full-Service Community High Schools and Elementary Schools, serving more than 1,500 youth in disadvantaged Chicago communities.

Youth Guidance’s Community & Afterschool programs created safe and positive school environments for more than 3,000 students in 23 public schools during the 2014-15 school year. To fully engage parents, teachers and the community in school improvement, Youth Guidance uses a holistic approach to achieve four targeted outcomes:

- Building social and emotional resiliency
- Influencing gains in academic achievement and engagement
- Positively impacting school culture and climate
- Providing increased opportunities for parent and family engagement

“We Our Youth Guidance Resource Coordinator has always worked closely with school and community stakeholders to ensure that program activities build on the school’s core instructional program and provide a wide range of enrichment activities that address the social-emotional, cognitive-intellectual, physical, psychological, and ethical developmental pathways. As our lead partner, Youth Guidance has demonstrated a holistic and collaborative approach to student engagement and has been instrumental in rallying other social service supports, prevention programs and parent resources. The partnership has been so successful in fact, that John Hancock College Prep was a National Community Schools winner for 2015!”

Karen Boran, Principal Hancock College Prep
PROGRAM PROFILE

PROJECT PREPARE

In many Chicago communities, youth unemployment rates are nearly 50%, often leading to generational poverty and negative impacts on communities. Youth Guidance’s Project Prepare® program works to break this cycle by providing at-risk high school students with opportunities, life skills and resources to help guide their transition into meaningful employment and/or post-secondary education.

During the 2014-2015 school year, Project Prepare served more than 200 students in four Chicago public high schools: Harper High School; Kelvyn Park High School; Roberto Clemente Community Academy; and Wells Community Academy. Participants received individualized services such as college/career counseling, job readiness training and job placement assistance.

In the past year, Project Prepare has opened new pathways to college and career resources during the summer months and after high school graduation—critical times when high-risk youth can quickly become disconnected from institutional supports.

In 2015, a new internship program and Leadership Academy provided students with an eight-week, paid summer work experience paired with weekly career development activities. The summer initiative was implemented across nine work sites in partnership with the Episcopal Diocese’s CROSSwalk to Work program and corporate supporters.

Youth Guidance also launched an AmeriCorps program to help graduating seniors from various agency programs gain valuable work experience through direct service in Youth Guidance-affiliated schools. A total of 24 AmeriCorps placements were awarded through Serve Illinois and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

In June 2015, Project Prepare was awarded a grant from the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership to support the program’s growth in the coming year. With help from the expanded Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Youth Guidance will be able to specifically target disconnected youth between the ages of 18 and 25, offering career readiness training, financial literacy, one-on-one counseling, internships, and job shadowing opportunities. The program will also help participants realize their capacity for perseverance and build developmental skills central to post-secondary success.

BY THE NUMBERS 2014-2015

240 students served in 4 Chicago public high schools.

100% of Project Prepare seniors graduated from high school on time.

92% of Project Prepare high school students were promoted to the next grade.

74 students placed in job opportunities.

89% of core participants engaged in counseling and case management services.

PROGRAM PROFILE

STRIVE

Young people aging out of the foster care system face significant challenges and decreasing state resources. Without the proper support, the transition can lead to chronic unemployment, homelessness and incarceration.

Youth Guidance’s STRIVE program (Strategies to Rejuvenate Interest and Value in Education) is a partnership with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services that provides in-school support and resources for youth who need to prepare for this critical transition.

STRIVE helps juvenile wards of the state achieve stability by reducing truancy, suspensions and expulsions, academic failure, and behavioral problems. Program staff focus on increasing parent/family engagement and case worker involvement, and create meaningful change through one-on-one counseling, college tours, social and educational outings, parent and family workshops, and other activities. Children living in subsidized guardianship and adoption situations are also welcome to participate in program offerings.

Each STRIVE student is assessed through six key areas: number of schools attended, number of foster home placements, length of time in foster care, housing status, special education status, and juvenile court involvement. The results of this assessment, as well as other factors such as home placement stability, are used by staff to determine the individualized level of support needed. STRIVE staff then work closely with school faculty and administrators to ensure that students stay engaged and receive the resources they need for school and life success.

BY THE NUMBERS 2014-2015

200 youth between ages 14 and 21 served.

12 Chicago area high schools participating.

76% of STRIVE students were promoted to the next grade level.

89% of STRIVE students assessed as ‘at-risk’ or ‘high risk’ on key social-emotional measures at intake showed improvement by the end of the academic year.
Invited guest Mayor Rahm Emanuel spoke about the measurable, positive impact of Youth Guidance programs. Other highlights included student and parent testimonial videos and an exciting live auction. The night culminated with live music and dancing courtesy of Grammy Award-nominated DJ Steve “Silk” Hurley.

Youth Guidance CEO Michelle Adler Morrison noted: “Words cannot express our gratitude to our supporters for their generosity. We look forward to increasing the reach of our programs to serve even more Chicago youth in the year ahead.”

To help support Youth Guidance’s next Bright Futures Gala, please contact Chief Development Officer Rebecca Clarkin at rclarkin@youth-guidance.org.

The 2015 Bright Futures Gala, held at the Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park Hotel, raised more than $770,000 in support of at-risk youth and set an unprecedented fundraising record for Youth Guidance.

Co-chaired by Diane and Paul C. Reilly, the Gala honored Bank of America as Organization of the Year, and Richard Logan of the Reva & David Logan Foundation as recipient of the Kurt L. Schultz Service Award in recognition of his commitment to the B.A.M. and W.O.W. programs. Board member and Stewardship Committee Co-Chair John R. Raitt is the BAM School Sponsor of both Foreman High School and Julian High School. His dedication, philanthropic support positively impacts the reach, resources, and overall efforts of the BAM program in both schools throughout the academic year.

“Sponsoring a BAM or WOW school is important because it lets the kids in the program know that Chicago’s leaders care about them, and are invested in their success.”

– Gregory G. Simoncini, Youth Guidance Board of Directors & Stewardship Co-Chair

In Memoriam: Mary Raitt, beloved friend of Youth Guidance, died peacefully on December 11, 2015 with her family by her side. Mary is survived by her husband of 31 years, John R. Raitt, and her daughters Carolyn and Katherine Raitt.

Long-time supporters of Youth Guidance’s mission, the Raitt family also supports Working on Womanhood (W.O.W.) programming at Amundsen and Fenger high schools in honor of Mary.

“Mary had such an incredible warmth and spirit. I’ll never forget the evening she and John generously hosted a Youth Guidance cultivation event at their home. Given the care and attention that went into every event detail, I expected quite a formal affair. I remember walking into their beautiful home and hearing Mary laughing in the kitchen with her daughter. Imagine my surprise when I realized that Mary wasn’t with her own daughters, but rather our W.O.W. girls, giggling and eating together like family. Mary had a way of making everyone feel like family. She circled Youth Guidance up in her loving arms and nurtured us. She cared deeply about the importance of our mission and each life we were able to touch. Mary is dearly missed, and we are honored and humbled to have the success of our young women in W.O.W. at Amundsen and Fenger high schools be a part of her legacy.”

– Michelle Adler Morrison, CEO of Youth Guidance.

2015 ANNUAL GALA BREAKS PREVIOUS FUNDRAISING RECORDS

SCHOOL SPONSORS

Mark D. & Julie Gerstein

BAM School Sponsors, Hyde Park Academy

Mark Gerstein, longtime member of Youth Guidance’s Board of Directors, has a historic family connection to Hyde Park Career Academy. His parents, Helene and Bob, attended high school at Hyde Park many decades ago. Helene recently marshalled support for Youth Guidance when she led her class’ reunion gift. “Mark and Julie’s philanthropic leadership as school sponsors enables Youth Guidance to continue to grow our programs,” says Michael Crowley, Chair of the Youth Guidance Board of Directors.

“Julie and I are pleased to support the BAM program at Hyde Park Career Academy. To know that our contributions help youth transcend obstacles that often derail their future aspirations means a great deal. It is a step towards meaningful change—a chance to empower young men, who may only see challenges when they begin their BAM journey, to leave inspired, hopeful and prepared for success in adulthood.”

– Mark Gerstein, Youth Guidance Board of Directors
## 2014-2015 Statement of Activities
### Year Ended June 30, 2015

### Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2015</th>
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### Liabilities

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### Net Assets

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### Total Liabilities and Net Assets

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<thead>
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## 2014-2015 Statement of Financial Position
### Year Ended June 30, 2015

### Assets

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<td>$5,343,854</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Scott D. Myers - Retired Executive Director, World Sport Chicago
Jennifer A. Naber - Secretary
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