

theBOOKMARK

A newsletter for friends of the East Side Learning Center

FALL 2017

Enclosed with your newsletter is your copy of the 2016-17 Annual Summary.

A message from the Executive Director, Chris Flippo

As we approach the end of 2017 and the beginning of a new year, I find myself reflecting on what it means to help children change their future in today's complex world. Recently, at one of our sites, students chose to come to tutoring instead of a school assembly. Why would they choose learning over a fun group activity?

As I overheard them, I began to realize that the children chose ESLC because they genuinely love coming to tutoring.

The children need and want one-on-one attention with a caring adult. They want to spend time with tutors to show them what they can do. In class, they are required to learn at the pace of their peers often causing them to fall behind.

I realized that ESLC is a place where children know they will get to



have fun while they practice reading and writing in English. And while the children have good days and bad days just like the rest of us, they know the expectation is to learn. Tutors and staff believe

each child can learn to read. I can hear them providing encouragement and kind words. I can see the

children begin to believe in themselves and rise to the challenge.

Then, it clicked. The very realization that was unfolding in my mind is the legacy of our tutors, donors and partners. Your support will not make you famous. Your investment won't make you rich. There is nothing reciprocal about our relationship, but it will make the east side of Saint Paul better as our children grow up to become leaders, teachers,

Continued on page 3, ED

Give the Gift of Reading

People come to St. Paul's east side in poverty. Families with children have nothing in their pockets. They are down, but not out. The key to their success is to provide opportunities that disrupt the cycle of poverty. ESLC disrupts poverty by building a foundation through reading. Our theme this year is superheroes, because superheroes build a better future in their communities. Our children need your help so

they can choose a better future. Your gift unlocks the potential of super readers! Ka Davenport's sons participated in ESLC tutoring in kindergarten and first grade. When they started, they too, were not able to read at grade level. Ka told us:

"The results from ESLC turned out to be unbelievable. Today, both of my sons are doing so well. Now they're tutoring my eight year old daughter.



She is able to read and spell. She is now confident enough to pick a book out and read it on her own. All thanks to ESLC's hard work"

Be a superhero for a super reader at ESLC and help our children build a better future. Give the gift of reading this holiday season. |

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EAST SIDE LEARNING CENTER

"Unlocking each child's potential through the foundation of reading" since 2001

An educational partnership with the School Sisters of Notre Dame

740 York Avenue | Saint Paul, MN 55106 | (651) 793-7331 | Fax: (651) 793-7310

Meet East Side Learning Center's new staff members

Ellen Bergstrom



Ellen Bergstrom, Operations Manager

Ellen joins ESLC with experience leading the AmeriCorps VISTA program at the Minnesota Literacy Council. She has a bachelors in elementary education and Spanish.

Contributions: support, teamwork and positive attitude

Super Power: creative problem solving

Why work at ESLC?

"Helping young children build their reading skills can make a huge positive impact on the rest of their lives. It really is a foundational skill that opens many doors. The children we serve have great potential, and it's an incredible opportunity to help them."

Kathy Cosmano, Site Assistant, St. Paul Music Academy

Kathy previously worked as a preschool literacy teacher at St. Catherine's

Shoua Khang leads students to recess after their tutoring sessions.



Early Childhood Center. She received a bachelors in elementary education.

Contributions: knowledge, best practices & effective instruction

Super Power: learning new things

Kathy Cosmano



Why work at ESLC? "Early literacy has always been my passion. Literacy skills impact a child's ability to grow in all academic domains. Serving children

Kymerly Miller



helps them succeed in reading, of course, but also math, science, music—anything they want to pursue!"

Kymerly Miller, Site Coordinator, Bruce F. Vento Elementary

Kymerly has a history of teaching junior high students in special education and language arts. Her bachelor's degree is in Secondary Education

Together we can...

"What we do is less important than how we do it."

- Bl. Theresa Gerhardinger

with English Language Arts and Reading endorsements.

Contributions: motivation, positivity, and fresh outlook

Super Power: compassion

Why work at ESLC?

"Teaching someone how to read is the greatest gift you can give. Teaching a child to read opens a door for children that leads anywhere in life—to achieve their dreams, conquer their fears, and become whoever they want to be. It excites me to know that I have the ability to help a child meet their full potential."

Shoua Khang, Site Assistant, John A. Johnson Elementary

Shoua has worked for many years with Hmong children on the East Side and joins us from the YMCA. She earned a B.A. from American Inter-Continental University, Atlanta, GA.

Strengths: confidence, cultural sensitivity and encouragement

Super Power: patience

Why work at ESLC? "I see success stories developing every day at ESLC. Previous staff have told me about alum that have gone on to college and beyond. I want to help our children grow up to be leaders in our community." |

Be a super hero

"We all have the capacity to be a super hero. In order to become one, you just have to find your unique power or ability and exploit it for the greater good. The cape and mask are optional accessories, but a kind heart is essential."

- Robert Clancy

"I believe firmly in our faithful supporters. I trust in their desire to support the future of our children and community."

ED, continued from p. 1 and business owners. **This is your legacy.**

I believe firmly in our faithful supporters. I trust in their desire to support the future of our children and community. For this reason, I must tell you that ESLC is facing a significant financial gap. As many of you know, we reduced services this year by 40 students because of the United Way cuts. If we do not raise \$100,000 from individuals this holiday season, we will need to reduce our services by another 40 students for the 2018-19 school year.

Together, we can help more children. **Please consider helping ESLC close the financial gap by becoming a monthly supporter of ESLC.** As always, we promise to invest more than 80% in the tutoring program. Monthly gifts help us plan for the future and sustainably support our children. To set up a monthly donation, please visit www.eastsidelearningcenter.org/

Children wear capes to show their friends they reached a reading milestone.



Super Readers Return to ESLC!

Last year we brought you an incredible story of courage, strength and victory! More than seventy children at John A Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary transformed themselves into superheroes by meeting reading goals to receive a superhero cape. This year, we're challenging each child in tutoring to reach his or her reading goals. Children who achieve their goal earn their very own super reader cape.

But wait! ESLC won't have any superhero capes to give our super readers without your help! **About 280 children need you to sew their "super reader" capes, which**

will be distributed in May. ESLC will provide a sewing pattern and directions. Each cape takes less than 30 minutes to make with a sewing machine. We even have a sewing machine you can use. It's easy! Thanks to our friendly east side neighbor, Lee Custom Upholstery, we have some donated fabric or you can purchase your own materials as a tax deductible donation. For more information and instructions, visit our website at www.eastsidelearningcenter.org/volunteer/group-volunteer-opportunities or call 651-793-7364. |

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EAST SIDE LEARNING CENTER

ESLC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that relies on the generous donations of individuals and foundations. For the sake of children who could benefit from one-on-one tutoring with a caring adult, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution.

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Close the Volunteer Gap

During the months of December and January, East Side Learning Center loses about 40% of its tutors due to the "snowbird" effect and college students returning to school for second semester. That means a whopping 112 children a day will go without one-on-one literacy tutors unless people like you sign-up to help them learn to read! All it takes is...

 **ONE** BOOK.
HOUR.
CHILD at a time.
Will you be the one to make the difference?

For more info, visit www.eastsidelearningcenter.org/volunteer or contact Lauren Johnsen at lauren.johnsen@spps.org or 651-793-7364.