

## A Message From A Stepping Stone Foundation President Beverly Carroll

A Stepping Stone Foundation is looking for some new Board members.

Over the past few years, A Stepping Stone has encountered challenges common to all non-profit organizations and so we have embraced new approaches to address these matters. We are committed to fostering innovative ideas within the organization and seeking fresh voices on the Board.

This is an exciting time to become involved and an opportunity to grow with our dynamic organization promoting preschool education with family literacy. We are eager to share our vision and strategic plan with you and to discuss the many ways through which Stepping Stone can gain from *your* insights.

*You* will gain rewarding experiences while serving on our working board, and together we can work to realize the vision of A Stepping Stone.

We have identified a number of skills that we would like to incorporate into our Board as we grow:

- Business/Financial Management
- Information Technology
- Fundraising and grant writing
- Marketing
- Non-Profit Administration
- Outreach and Volunteer recruitment
- Education

However, our highest commitment continues to be creative enthusiasm and a deep belief in education for children and their families who are at greatest risk for school failure.

Our working board requires both governance skills and hands-on service. Board members participate in fundraising activities, serve on governing committees as needed, attend monthly board meetings and contribute at least a couple hours a week to (cont on p.3)

## So What's New With A Stepping Stone?

### What's New:

Cindy hired two former Stepping Stone preschool students to work in our Administrative Office donated by Climatec



Geraldine and Bianca

Inc. Geraldine Medina and Bianca Ortega both were preschoolers from 1997-1998 with Mrs. Carmen at Isaac Preschool. Geraldine attends Glendale Community College and Bianca attends Grand Canyon University. Both young women were awarded scholarships from our Billie Gannaway Fund last April.

Next month our **Christmas Angel Program** will be in full swing again. As in past years, our tree will be hosted by Shadow Rock Church south of Thunderbird on 8th Avenue. Please call President **Bev Carroll** if you'd like more information on Christmas Angels at: **623-694-9191**. Angel tags will be ready by November 17th and gifts are due back to Shadow Rock by December 8th.

### The Tried and True:

Much of what A Stepping Stone is up to these days will be familiar to our long-time supporters. We continue to serve 35 families in central Phoenix with excellent preschool, parenting classes, adult education (ESL and GED prep) and home visiting in cooperation with Alhambra Elementary School District.

We also continue to operate the Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship for former preschoolers who need help attending college. Last spring we awarded 23 scholarships totaling \$19,000 at our annual Bill and Billie's Kids Go to College event.

## A "Foot" Note from the Director

Happy New Year! Happy new school year that is. As Paulette notes in her article below, our program is filled to capacity and we have a waiting list for our services. We are off to the start of another quality-filled year of education for two generations learning together.

As most of you know in the past two years we have down-sized our capacity due to lower funding. It is important to remember that A Stepping Stone Foundation is funded entirely by charitable donations, foundation and trust grants and fundraising activities. It is YOUR support that keeps A Stepping Stone doors open so that we can serve local children and their families.

We continue on with our anchor program of child-centered family literacy. We also continue to keep in touch with these preschoolers and their families over time and continue to provide Billie Gannaway college scholarships for former preschoolers to help them access post-secondary institutions.

This year, for the first time, we have employed two former preschoolers

in the office that attend college on this scholarship to give them their first work experience (see p. 1).

Our dream has always been to give needy children the same access to quality education and therefore employment that their affluent peers sometimes take for granted. Again, you help us do this.

President Bev Carroll and I will be calling and visiting with funders over the next several months to update you and listen to why you share a passion for and support our important mission. Blessings to you all and we cannot say it enough--thank you to you all!

Cindy Gattorna 602-670-0599



To the left:  
Kimmy Sapon  
presents a SUNDT  
grant check to  
A Stepping Stone  
this spring.

### Paulette's Corner

Our 23rd school year is off to a great start! All our classes are full and we have a waiting list. Last year our children developed new skills, a sense of community and a love of learning--the same broad goals we have for our new and returning families this year. Their parents worked hard in their GED and ESL classes as well as gaining parenting tools in the *Raising a Reader* and *Kith and Kin* parent workshops--both of which will be repeated this year.

We begin this new year with a sense of purpose and excitement.

What is especially exciting is that all 20 families were slated to return to the program, at the writing of this article.

Fourteen were from last year's three-year-old class and the remaining six are families returning from previous years.

Families this year come from Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico and of course from the United States. We look forward to working with them all.

Thank you for supporting A Stepping Stone Foundation!

Paulette Harshberger

### A Stepping Stone

#### Executive Board

##### **President**

Beverly Carroll

##### **Vice President**

Jennifer Sanchez

##### **Secretary**

Patricia Davis

##### **Treasure**

Judy Brengi

#### Board At Large

Carmen Arias-McKinn

Jeanne Baker

Con Englehorn

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Passed President

Adolfo Maldonado

#### Advisory Board

Jack Bobo

Jack Kucera

Tio Tachias

Gary Tooker

Ed Van Brunt

Bill Smith, Founder

#### Staff:

##### **Executive Director**

Cynthia Gattorna  
cindy@asteppingstone.org

O: 602-843-8281

##### **Program**

##### **Coordinator**

Paulette Harshberger  
Paulette@asteppingstone.org

##### **Office**

##### **Administration**

Geraldine Medina  
Bianca Ortega

## CLASSROOM NOTES

### **Three-Year-Olds**

*Janet Castaneda & Maria Flores*

Last spring we prepared our four year olds for their next adventure. We had many discussions about where they would be going and how ready they were for Kindergarten. The children shared what they learned in school this year and how much fun we had together. How we ended the year was an important process for our children. Though we knew we had given them the tools to be successful in school, we also want to recognize how important they were to us. I let them know no matter where they go, they always had a special place in my heart.

In our classrooms, we had the unique opportunity to work with outstanding parents throughout the year and also built a strong classroom community with them.

Our last day was filled with tears as we said our good-byes but I knew this would not be the last time I'd see them. Many families continue to come by our classrooms to say hello this fall and we get the opportunity to catch up with how they are all doing.

At the end of April we had our annual "Parent Recognition Night" to award parents certificates for their participation in the program this past year. This is a special night to recognize hard they have worked and acknowledge all their accomplishments.

That celebration was even more special to the parents with so many Foundation and district supports in attendance. The parents shared how honored they felt that so many important people from A Stepping Stone Foundation and the Alhambra School District came to celebrate this day with them. They were especially touched to see Bill Smith in attendance and many families asked to take pictures with him after the ceremony.

I cannot tell you enough how much this program impacts our community. We are making a difference because of your continued support. There truly are no words to fully describe how grateful the families are for what is provided in the program.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

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### **Four-Year-Olds**

*Fran Smith & Veronica Dozal*

At the beginning of the year, our main focus is building our classroom community. By October, students are able to follow classroom routines, share with classmates, and become very good singers and dancers! Over the learning year, we read MANY books. At first we read about friends, and the importance of working together and helping each other. We will continue this theme through the holiday season of sharing. Then we shift to the many thematic units which are led by the children's interest.

As you know, parents play a big role in our program and we kept our parents busy. For example, in October, one parent from each family will join us on a field trip to the Desert Botanical Gardens' Pumpkin Festival. Students and their parents participated in games, face painting, and we all rode on a hayride to the pumpkin patch. This was a fun day for all and very rewarding for parents.

The rest of the year follows suit. We are proud of the growth both children AND parents have experienced.

We're thankful to all who support us and give us the opportunities to make memories everyday!

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(cont. from p. 1) A Stepping Stone Foundation work. If you are interested in joining our board, or if you would consider volunteering in any of the areas mentioned on page one, we strongly encourage you to send a letter of interest to, or call, Cindy Gattorna (contact on opposite page). We look forward to learning more about how YOU CAN impact this organization.

A huge thank you to our three newest members: **Jeanne Baker, Carmen Arias-McKinn and Adolfo Maldonado**. Thank you for joining our team!!

Prez Bev

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## Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Many thanks to the following supporters for their cash and in-kind donations to A Stepping Stone Foundation for the past Fiscal Year (July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012).

**Names in bold represent a one time monetary gift of \$1,000 or more.**

Kelly and Jim Aanenson  
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**\*Indicates In-kind Giving (cash giving may be included). Some donors may have elected to forgo recognition.**

## *Celebrations and Honors*

### **In Honor of:**

Richard and Alaine Steuk  
 Linda and John Pape  
 The Work of Bill Smith

### **In Celebration of:**

John Pape's 73rd Birthday  
 Judy Brengi's 65th Birthday  
 Frances Carroll's 90th Birthday





Check out our Blog at:  
[asteppingstone.org/blog](http://asteppingstone.org/blog)

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*~ Memorials ~*

**In Loving Memory of:**

Stepping Stone Foundation Board Member, Hector Riojas  
 Toni Abramson Elizabeth Bob  
 Rulon Rassmussen Jean Larson  
 Jack Peterson

**Cena y Serenata 2012**

**February 9, 2012 5:30 PM**



Left:  
 A Fond  
 Farewell  
 to Board  
 Member  
 Linda  
 Pape.  
 We thank  
 her for  
 her ten  
 years of  
 service.



Above:  
 The preschoolers entertain parents and  
 guests at the 2012 Family Celebrations at  
 the Westwood Campus. See Janet's article  
 inside.



Above:  
 One of the hallmarks of  
 our child-centered pro-  
 gram is two generations  
 working together for stu-  
 dent success.