

Volume 3, Issue 1 November 20

MILESTONES

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT



Gabriel Escontías, Jr. EdD

Dear Friends,

We at A Stepping Stone Foundation hope that this newsletter finds you and your loved ones in good health. Our country is going through unprecedented times, but let us remember that together we can rise above all challenges. Our children and their families continue to be blessed because of the kindness and empathy you have shown and afforded them through stepping stones such as our Literacy Elevates Arizona Families (LEAF) program so that they may actualize a life of liberty toward the pursuit of happiness. Together we support the lifelong success for both our students and their families in any capacity that we can assist them.

In my capacity as board president, I continue my commitment to remain a good financial steward [continued on p. 6](#)

WHAT YOU HELP US ACHIEVE

Even though COVID19 interrupted our typical LEAF (Literacy Elevates Arizona Families) services in March, we were still able to serve 46 families across our two sites last year. Of those families, 32 were in the program 6 months or longer. By mid-March, each preschooler had attended at least 465 hours of preschool with one of our highly qualified, certificated lead teachers and her highly qualified assistant. All preschoolers enrolled in our program six months or more were on track to meet their Teaching Strategies Gold benchmarks, but all classroom observation ceased on March 17th. Each parent had participated in their adult education (ESL or HSE), parenting classes and home visiting at an 80% attendance rate or better. LEAF and all our programs continue this fall through remote services such as Zoom, Google Classroom and WebEx.



A mom working in a LEAF preschool classroom.

OUR EXPANDING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

One of the unique features of ASSF's family literacy programs is the promise of a college scholarship for every child enrolled six months or more in one of our LEAF programs. In the fall of 2019, we began a new scholarship celebrating founder Rev. William O. Smith. The first two William O. Smith Scholarship (WOSS) [continued on p. 2](#)

MESSAGES

From the Stepping Stone Office



Cynthia Gattorna, MA

Your Gifts Transform our Future

From pandemic to human rights turmoil, recent history has assaulted us nonstop during this particularly divisive election year. May this issue of Milestones bring you peace and joy in the knowledge that your support of our children, families and scholars makes our community a better place for all to learn and grow.

We are blessed to have received two transformational bequests which have allowed us to invest in our internal capacity and our external look. Please visit our new website on page three of this issue and watch for an announce-

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We Need YOUR Support

ment regarding new staffing after the first of the year.

There are many details in the new website blog that give you a picture of how we are coping with teaching our children and families from a distance. While many school districts have returned to in-person classes, Alhambra and Isaac have not—and with good reason. Isaac district (zip code 85009) has the highest number of cases in the state.

Until we can be back in person safely, we continue to deliver our services remotely through internet solutions and I continue to work from home. If you have questions or just want to chat, I am just a phone call away!

Cindy - 602-670-0599

Expanding Scholarships

(continued from p. 1)

award winners were Dr. Efren Bernal and Miguel Uriostegui. This scholarship is competitive and awarded to one or two outstanding candidates from the pool of Billie Gannaway Memorial Scholarship (BGMS) submissions. WOSS applicants must fill out an additional application to the BGMS application.

For the 2020-2021 school year, the scholarship committee awarded 24 students scholarships from the BGMS fund for a total of \$35,000, which included two WOSS awards and five Ivey Stepping Higher Awards. See the details of each scholarship on our new website under Impact. For a full list of award winners please visit our website scholarship page.

A Stepping Stone Board

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WHAT'S NEW

At A Stepping Stone Foundation

Welcome New Board Member

Tomas Martinez is a Senior IT Asset Optimization Analyst at Arizona Public Service and has been at the company

since 2013 serving in a variety of positions in Supply Chain Management, Transmission & Distribution and Information Technology.

He brings extensive experience in Latino community engagement and was most recently the President of APS's Hispanic Organization for Leadership and Advancement (HOLA), overseeing employee engagement of 400+ members. Tomas holds a Bachelor's degree in Management from the College of Santa Fe and an MBA from New Mexico State University.

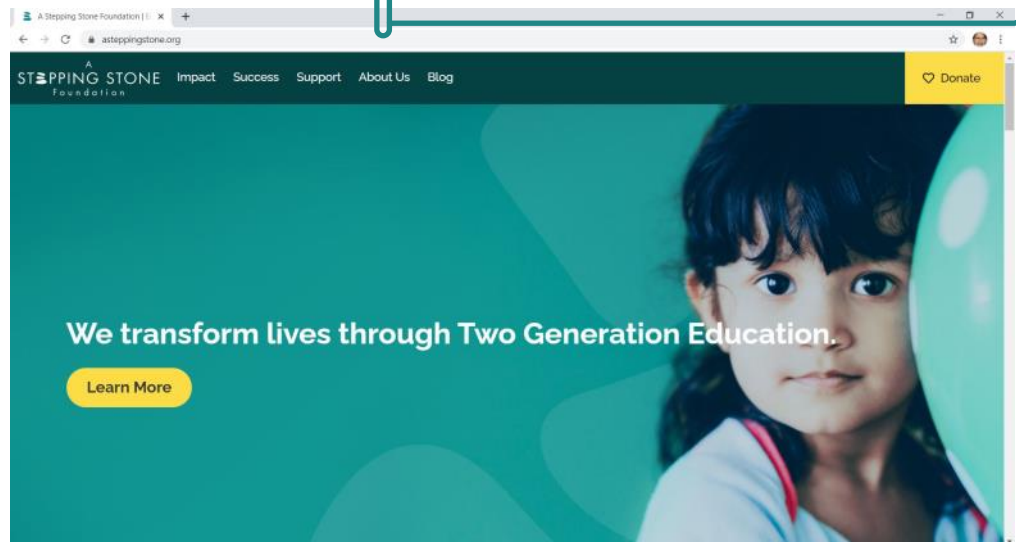
Passionate about serving the Arizona Community, Tomas is active in volunteering activities serving Latino causes, child wellbeing, the LGBTQ Community, and art. In his spare time he enjoys writing, spending time with friends, and is a self-proclaimed Star Trek nut job.



Please Visit our New Website

Thanks to a special donor who underwrote the cost, we have been working diligently for the past 11 months to craft a site that is user friendly and reflects the culture of A Stepping Stone Foundation.

Please visit our new website at www.astepplingstone.org and let us know what you think about it!



TwoGenEd News

"...meetings allow wonderful opportunities for networking and collaborating. One conversation during a meeting led to a collaborative effort between policy makers and early childhood advocates to develop a bipartisan Children's Caucus that allows legislators the opportunity to learn about and discuss issues and policy proposals that impact children across Arizona."

Kelley Murphy, Early Childhood Policy Director at Children's Action Alliance

Understanding the need for strong community partners to maximize our impact, A Stepping Stone Foundation convened a group of stakeholders in the fall of 2017 to network about multi-generational learning. Since then, our Two Generation Education Affinity Group (TwoGenEd) has been meeting quarterly. At each meeting we hear about current efforts regarding two-generation efforts and explore any opportunities to work together. Practitioners, funders, policy makers and elected officials are welcome.

A STEPPING STONE FOUNDATION MISSION

To provide stepping stones of success through education to families of limited opportunities.



RESEARCH SUPPORTING OUR THEORY OF PRACTICE

They Talk About It and We Do It!

Ways to Support A Stepping Stone Foundation

The single most powerful way for you to support our efforts is to make a cash contribution and then tell the world about why you did it. Your passion is contagious in the best of ways!

Below are just some of the ways you can donate.

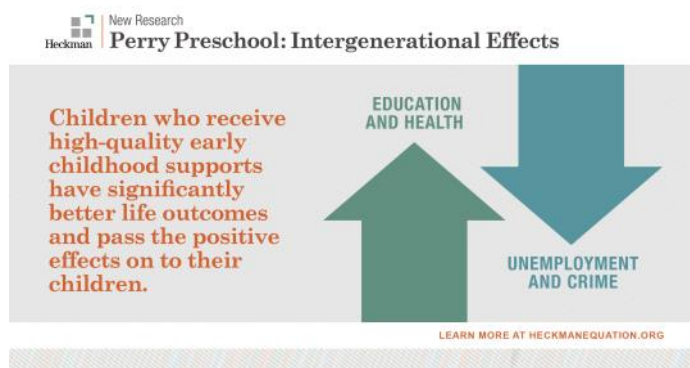
Please seek the expertise of a tax professional when considering tax matters.

- A Stepping Stone Foundation (ASSF) is an Arizona **Qualifying Charitable Organization**. Make a donation of \$400 (\$800 for couples) directly to ASSF before April 15, and **you may take a tax credit**; pay less taxes and direct your tax money to your favorite charity!
- **Birdies for Charity**: includes a 10% match by Thunderbirds Charities, pledge online before 2/1/21 at www.birdiesforcharityaz.com.
- **Amazon Smile**: Shop on Amazon? By enrolling and naming us as your beneficiary, you donate every time you buy on Amazon.com.
- **Fry's Community Rewards**: link your rewards card to A Stepping Stone Foundation.
- Are you 70 1/2 or older? You may avoid paying taxes on your **required retirement distributions** by donating it directly to ASSF.
- Include A Stepping Stone Foundation in **your will**.
- **Donate through your employer**. A Stepping Stone participates in United Way (Donor Choice # 0962), SECC (State of AZ Employees Combined Campaign).
- **Find out if your employer will match your donation**.

From HeckmanEquation.org

The Economics of Human Potential

Professor Heckman's newest research looks at the life outcomes of Perry Preschool participants at midlife, as well as outcomes of their children. After putting the data through a series of rigorous tests, Heckman finds that those children who participated in the Perry Preschool program had significant gains in personal and family life outcomes that provided their children with positive multi-generation effects on education, health, employment and civic life. Early childhood education resulted in stronger families and significantly contributed to upward mobility in the next generation—an indication that early childhood education can be an effective way to break the cycle of poverty.



James Joseph Heckman is a Nobel Prize winning American economist who is currently at the University of Chicago, where he is The Henry Schultz Distinguished Service Professor in Economics...among many other duties and honors!

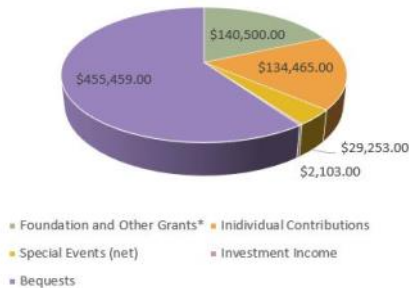
"Hello?", I answer a call from longstanding supporter Betsy Davis. "Oh, hello, Cindy. I just wanted you to know that my daughter just called to tell me how much donating to A Stepping Stone saved me on my Arizona State taxes. I thought you and your supporters should know!" This real phone call underscores the importance of your giving and how it makes you a great supporter, community partner, and saves you Arizona tax dollars, too. For more details feel free to call me at the office.

Cindy 602-670-0599

A STEPPING STONE FOUNDATION FINANCES

These charts are based on preliminary end of the year reports. The annual audit will be available by January 2021.

Revenue 2019-2020 *\$761,780



Expenses 2019-2020 \$409,007



* This year's total revenue includes two extraordinary windfall bequests.

President's Message continued from p. 1 and to work with my fellow governing board members and staff to ensure that your investment always translates to a stronger community. Together we can continue filling our society with doctors, teachers, and many other successful LEAF graduates who contribute to our community through their talents. We know and understand that your trust and investment can be made in many other areas, so we and our families thank you for your countless years of giving. If you are about to give for the first time through your time, talent, goods or monetary contributions, welcome to our family. Your investment is transformational not only in the lives of our children and families, but to the state of Arizona.

Wishing you and your loved ones a safe, healthy and loving holiday season.

Gabriel Escontrías, Jr.

Gabriel Escontrías, Jr., EdD



THANK YOU!

We are so grateful to all our donors. The following list of supporters includes those who have given cash donations from July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020. Some donors have asked to remain anonymous and a list of memorials and celebrations can be found on the last page of our newsletters.

Names in bold represent a contributions of \$1,000 or more.

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THANK YOU FROM A STEPPING STONE FOUNDATION!

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Christensen, Steve and Beth
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Coffelt, Lynda and Richard
Conway, Margaret J
Cramer, Charles and Erika
Cullison, Paula and Tim
Curry, Elizabeth (Liz)

Curry, Gregg and Carla

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Dispo, Mitchell
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Eicher, Victor
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Hansen, Bradley

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Reay, Sharon and Dewey

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Repella, Ted and Rae

Restrepo, Laida
Reuter, Kurt and Barbara
Ritter, Anita
Roberts, Dave and Linda

Robins, Christopher & Susan Sawyer

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Rutila, Gabriela

Sanchez, Jessica S.

Sanchez, Jessica M.

Sass, Nadine
Sassaman, Randy and Claudia
Schleifer, Thomas
Schwiebert, Judy

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Shapiro, Jeff and Sandra
Sherk, Kenneth
Short, Martha and Dale
Sircar, Melanie C.
Slotta, Louise

Smith, Ann
Smith, Constance J

Smith, Jackie

Smith, Nancy

Smith, Richard and Candace

Spurlock, Robert
Staley, Cindy and Mike
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Thunderbirds Charities

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Wiig, Janet
Williams, Janet S.

Winkleblack, Art

Winkler, Sallie

Wong, Keith

Yale, Charles and Suzanne

Zannis, Victor and Doreen
Zinn, Heidi and Kenneth

A
STEPPING STONE
Foundation

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Celebrating
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Visit our new website!

www.asteppingstone.org

CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday!

Ann M. Eicher

Linda Pape

Donations made in honor of:

Michael Gattorna

John and Meaghan Stertzer

Rosalie and Ed Favilla

IN LOVING MEMORY

Sean Gattorna

Diana Kruglick

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Diane Nowlin

John Pape

Lorraine (Rayne) Ragan

Frank Reuter

Rev. William O. Smith

John O. Whiteman



VALLEY TOYOTA DEALERS

For Sponsorship Opportunities & Award Nomination Info
Call 602-670-0599 or Visit www.asteppingstone.org/serenata

13th Annual Serenata

SATURDAY BRUNCH,

April 18, 2021 at the lovely

Old Main at Arizona State University



MAJOR IN-KIND DONORS

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