

# THANKS TO YOU

# WE ARE



MAKING  
IT  
BETTER

## 2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT

### A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS,

As always, this past year has been filled with many successes, great joy, and a few challenges. Thanks to you - our generous donors, dedicated board and volunteers, and amazing staff - we were able to increase the number of children and families served, as well as book distributions across all programs. We are coming to the end of our year-long celebration of a Decade of Dedication and want to thank YOU for celebrating with us! Our ongoing challenge is to provide the best reading intervention and literacy enrichment programming while addressing the social/emotional needs of our children. However, this challenge is also what keeps us excited and motivates us every single day.

We are excited to announce our partnership with the Harris County Public Library and Houston Housing Authority that will take our Ready, Set, Read! program on the road (slated for early spring) to communities lacking access to free high quality early childhood programs. Early intervention and engaging families as partners to develop their child's literacy skills is a key component of all we do. Our program brings services to families' doorsteps and engages parents in their preschoolers' literacy development. Sadly, poverty and the reading achievement gap go hand-in-hand, but our Ready, Set, Read! and Reading Intervention programs are making progress in closing that gap.

Each year as we analyze our program curriculum and delivery of services, we reflect on lessons learned and plan to implement improvements in the coming year. During that process, we realized

our mission statement and tag line did not accurately capture the work we do. After much brainstorming, I am thrilled to share them with you . . .

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *Transforming communities by empowering children and families through literacy, leadership, and life skills.*

**TAG LINE:** *Transforming lives through literacy*

Just before we went to print for this Annual Report, the Houston area suffered the horrific devastation of Hurricane Harvey. Harvey showed the world something we as Houstonians already knew - We Are Houston Strong! In a time of crisis, we came together and will continue to work together to rebuild, move forward, and make a difference in the lives of those who need us the most.

God bless each of you and THANK YOU for coming alongside us each day. We could not do it without you!

*Jacque*

Jacque Daughtry,  
Executive Director



So many problems that exist are tied to the early education of children. And it's such an overwhelming problem that too many people say, "Well, let's just sit back and try and come up with a comprehensive solution." Making It Better went in and said, "No, we're not going to do that. We're going to take it a bite at a time." And by doing that, that's the way we solve problems. And there are hundreds, if not thousands, of children that are going to grow up to be much better adults, simply because of Making It Better.

HONORABLE ED EMMETT  
HARRIS COUNTY JUDGE



### HERE WE GROW

In January, Making It Better embarked on an aggressive Expansion Campaign to celebrate our 10-year anniversary and position the organization to serve more children and families in the coming years. **To date we have raised \$14,610 and we are deeply appreciative of the support you have given.** Making It Better would like to recognize the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation for their leadership and commitment to helping combat illiteracy in Houston by providing a \$10,000 dollar-for-dollar match to the Expansion Campaign.

### DONATE

**BY MAIL**  
14781 Memorial Dr. #25, Houston, TX 77079  
**ONLINE**  
[www.mibt.org/donate](http://www.mibt.org/donate)

### VOLUNTEER

**WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES OCTOBER - APRIL**  
Reading Intervention Assistant  
Lunch Bunch Mentor

**ONE-TIME OPPORTUNITIES**  
Steps 2 Success  
Family Literacy Nights  
Administrative Projects  
Themed Literacy Enrichment Group Activities  
Special Events Assistance

\*For more information, please contact our Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at [volunteer@mibt.org](mailto:volunteer@mibt.org)

### CONNECT

[MIBTX.ORG](http://MIBTX.ORG)



Non Profit Org  
US Postage  
PAID  
Katy, TX  
Permit No 221

### HOW YOUR DONATIONS HELP OUR KIDS

Provides healthy snacks for 1 week at a Steps 2 Success after school program site

\$25

Covers rental of two 15 passenger vans, giving children the gift of expanding their worlds through field trips

\$250

Provides books and activity supplies for 1 Family Literacy event

\$1K

Covers the cost of 1 interventionist at 1 Reading Intervention program site

\$5K

Sponsors 13 students in our Reading Intervention program

\$10K

Provides 35 books to be distributed to children attending Family Literacy Nights

\$100

Provides all materials and supplies needed for 1 Reading Intervention program site

\$500

Provides materials and supplies for 10 Parent Workshops

\$2.5K

Provides funds to launch a Ready, Set, Read! program

\$7.5K

Covers the annual materials and supplies for our Parent Partnership programs, fostering parent involvement

\$15K





# MAKING A DIFFERENCE



## IGNITING THE FLAME

Maryam was a kindergarten student in our Reading Intervention program at Piney Point Elementary. With neither of her parents able to speak English, she had no one at home to help her with her school work. Just a couple of weeks into the program, Maryam began excitedly telling our staff over and over again that she was reading the books we sent home each week. Throughout the program, she continued to tell our staff about reading at home and that she was now reading to family members. "I read my books ten times, no one hundred times, every night to my mom and am helping her to learn English!" She also reads to her little sister each night! Many of the students in our programs don't have access to books at home, much less multiple books from which to choose. Our program provides high interest, age-appropriate books for them to read which ignites the flame that reading can be fun. The wonderful book donations we receive are such a blessing so kids like Maryam can go home excited to read and spread the joy of reading with their families. Whether it's just looking at the pictures and telling a story, or actually reading the words, getting books into kids' hands is critical to encourage a life-long love of reading!

**YOU helped serve 349 students K-2nd grade in nine schools throughout HISD. Of those students, 83% scored at least 90% on a Foundational Skills Assessment, 71% showed an increase of at least 1 Reading Grade Level, and 86% showed an increase of 1 or more Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) levels, with 39% improving 3+ DRA levels.**

## TRANSFORMING LIVES, CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN

After being introduced to the organization through our community partner Freudenberg Oil & Gas Technologies, Michael Pulvino joined our Lunch Bunch program as a mentor with a group of four 4th grade boys at Ross Elementary. "I'm looking forward to meeting up with the kids again next year," he said. "Working with them this past school year was a true joy and blessing." Like Michael, twenty-two other dedicated volunteers helped empower 4th and 5th grade students to make positive decisions and create healthy relationships.



**Thanks to YOU and our dedicated volunteer mentors, we served eighty-one 4th and 5th grade students in our Lunch Bunch program on four HISD campuses this past year. We are excited to announce that due to the overwhelming success of this program, we will be expanding Lunch Bunch to two new schools and including 3rd graders at the 5th Ward schools we serve. A special thank you to the Houston Touchdown grant and the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation for making this expansion possible.**

Of the 81 students served, 100% reported the program taught them skills to improve their relationships with their family, friends and peers and 87% reported they enjoyed reading books for fun more than they did before they joined the program.

Thanks to you, Making It Better served  
**1,475 STUDENTS  
& 249 ADULTS  
THIS YEAR.**  
A BIG thanks to our donors,  
volunteers, board and staff!



52%  
MALE



48%  
FEMALE



47%  
SINGLE PARENT  
HOUSEHOLD



91%  
FREE & REDUCED  
LUNCH



# OF BOOKS  
DISTRIBUTED

Studies reveal there is only 1 book for every 300 children living in low-income areas. Thanks to YOUR generous support, we distributed over 3,200 books to begin or add to home libraries!

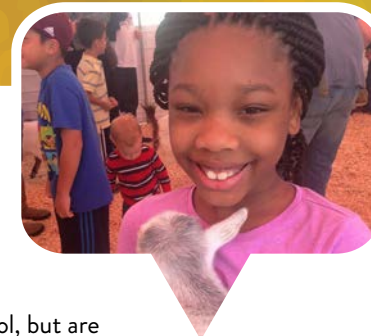
## DEMOGRAPHICS

Our students are from diverse backgrounds.



## BUILDING THE STEPS TO SUCCESS

Kanada just finished 2nd grade and has been in our Steps 2 Success (S2S) program for two years. Her teacher, Vicki Townsend, has watched her grow and mature as Kanada puts some of the important life skills our program teaches into practice. During group discussions, she is usually one of the students who will share how the topic applies to her life. "She is growing into a leader by her willingness to try (and even be the first to try) all of the various projects and activities we do in S2S Jr., even when one may not be her strong suit," stated Vicki. Our Steps 2 Success program is so important for kids like Kanada because they learn important life skills that are not taught in school, but are necessary for future academic and life successes.



**YOU helped serve 30 students 1st-5th grade at Belmont Place Apartments. Of those students, 73% reported they enjoyed reading books for fun more than they did before joining the program and 95% reported acquiring skills that helped improve relationships with friends, peers and family.**

## SUPPORTING FAMILIES THROUGH PARENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS



Through our Family Literacy Nights, we served 374 children and adults, which was a 56% increase from 2015-16. We are truly grateful to the following groups who volunteered regularly at these events: Freudenberg Oil & Gas Technologies, Houston Junior Forum, and The Kinkaid School.

Parent Workshop attendance increased more than 60% from 2015-16, serving over 140 parents. Parents of our Reading Intervention students were offered these workshops twice a year at each school, giving them the opportunity to connect with their child's Reading Interventionist and acquire new activity ideas and materials to enhance their child's learning at home.

In the spring of 2018, we are slated to launch our Ready, Set, Read! mobile unit that will travel to Houston Housing Authority and other low-income apartment communities. Staff and trained volunteers will lead classes that are open to parents and/or caregivers and their toddlers. Classes are highly interactive and designed to build vocabulary and promote school readiness through the use of songs, movement, storytelling, reading, and art. Ready Set Read! will ultimately provide parents with the tools necessary to help their children develop the foundational skills crucial to becoming reading ready before entering kindergarten.

## VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We had 224 amazing volunteers in our programs and behind the scenes who served 1586 hours, having an estimated economic value of \$39,888.00. We also gained four new corporate/ community partners: Freudenberg Oil & Gas Technologies, Frost Bank, the Houston Junior Forum and Lockwood Andrews & Newnam.

*Our employees love the programs and interacting not only with the kids but with the dedicated and committed staff at Making It Better. As a result, many of our employees have contributed not only their time but their money in supporting Making It Better and the great work they do in our local communities.*  
- Richard Schmidt, President & CEO, Freudenberg Oil & Gas Technologies

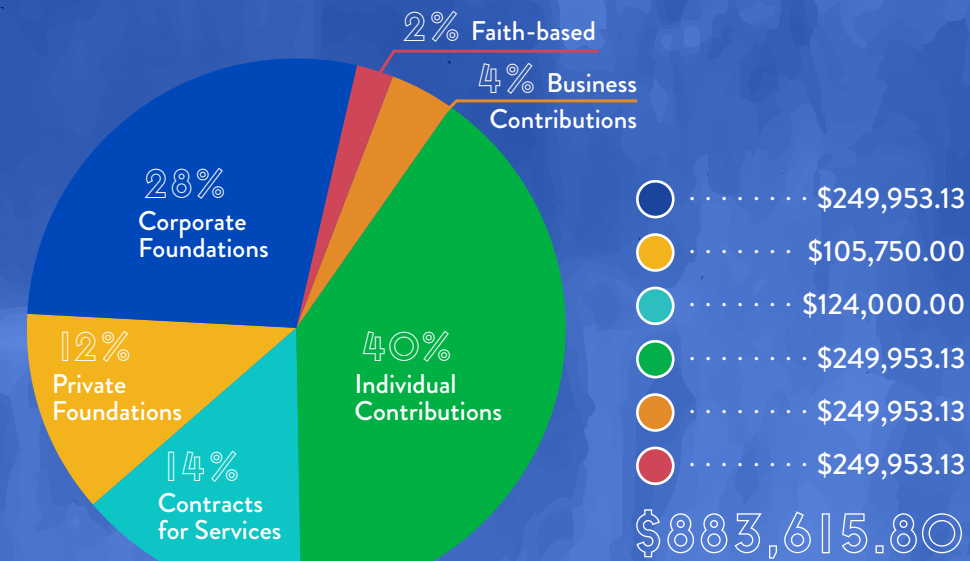
*Our members enjoy volunteering at the many service opportunities, from helping prepare materials to be used with the children, assisting at immunization clinics and reading to students during the school year. Ashley and Jacque always find ways for our Houston Junior Forum members to help!*  
- Karen Hardin, President of Houston Junior Forum

We also had 48 volunteers during Read Aloud Month who read at all of the schools we serve. Seven hundred and seventy-four students in 1st and 2nd grades were read to for 30 minutes every week during the month of March. Thanks to our classroom sponsors (Accumyn Consulting, Ascension Episcopal Church, CHUBB, Paula McHam and SCF Partners), each child received 1-2 books to add to their home libraries.



## FINANCIALS

### FISCAL YEAR SOURCES OF INCOME



### MAJOR SUPPORTERS • 2016-2017

Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation  
Kimberly & Scott Bayley  
Castex Foundation  
Chapelwood United Methodist Church  
Charity Guild of Catholic Women  
Anna & Frederick Charlton  
The Children's Fund  
Jacque & Mike Daughtry  
Vada & Stephen Earnest  
Jenny & Tom Fitzpatrick  
Freudenberg E<sup>2</sup>  
Frost Bank  
Gina Gaston & Mario Elie  
Mignon & Steve Gill  
Terri & Joseph Gugenheim  
Holly & Breen Haire

Cecilia & Emerson Hankamer  
Harris County Department of Education  
HEB Charitable Trust  
Holthouse Foundation for Kids  
Houston Foundation  
Houston Junior Forum  
Jennings Dincans Charitable Foundation  
JKJ Charitable Foundation  
Thomas Jones  
Al Kashani  
David Lintner  
Blake Moorman  
Shoaleh & Asghar Nosrati  
Payne Foundation  
The Powell Foundation  
Julie Rae

Laurie & Jeff Schmid  
Richard Schmidt  
Simmons & Company International  
The Simmons Foundation  
Frederick Smith  
United Airlines  
Vinson & Elkins LLP  
AnnaLee & Andrew Waite  
Walt Disney Company Foundation  
Wells Fargo Bank  
Kristie & Burton Welte  
Bret West  
Wiley Foundation  
Winstead Civic Trust  
Zions Management Services

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**THOMAS V. FITZPATRICK, CHAIRMAN**  
Senior VP, CHUBB

**GONZALO ANDERSON**  
Owner & Director, Alliance Tennis Academy  
Co-Owner, Cucile Baby

**SCOTT A. BAYLEY**  
Founder & President, Accumyn Consulting

**MCSTEPHEN DADZIE**  
Financial Analyst, AIG

**ILENE ECKERT**  
Business Dev. Officer, Stewart Title

**TREALLA EPPS**  
HISD Principal

**MONSTERVILLE HORTON IV, CWE**  
Monsterville's Catering & Events

**PAUL LEBLANC**  
Winstead PC

**LAURIE SCHMID**  
Owner, L Interiors

**ANDREW L. WAITE**  
Co-President, SCF Partners

**BRET WEST**  
Exec. VP, Wells Fargo Energy

SPECIAL THANKS TO  
THESE FOUNDATIONS FOR  
MAKING A DIFFERENCE



### ADVISORY COUNCIL

BILLY BRISCOE  
STEPHEN EARNEST  
KAREN & JOHN HOFMEISTER  
JACKIE & JEFF MOSELEY  
DR. JOCELYN MOUTON  
HONORABLE JIM MURPHY  
FELICIA & RAFAEL STONE  
DR. SCOTT VAN BECK

JERRY V. DAVIS, FOUNDER  
JACQUE DAUGHTRY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR