

Giving Parents a choice. Giving children a chance.

the BASIC fund



Seeds of Spring!

We're planting new seeds at The BASIC Fund. Earlier this month, we were excited to facilitate more than 30 science and math teachers from BASIC Fund schools to attend a day-long workshop at The Exploratorium in San Francisco, designed to inspire them in current theory and practice of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) instruction. Exploratorium instructor Fred Stein demonstrated techniques specifically related to integration of inquiry based learning into classroom and field lessons. These teachers will now go back to their schools, and inspire others- like seeds of change in their own communities. An attendee and 4th grade teacher told us, "I loved everything about this workshop! I thought it was very productive, helpful, and engaging."

In our spring stories in this edition you will hear from BASIC Fund family, the Zekarias. Their story demonstrates the importance of the stability our scholarship program offers families who are going through tough times, and makes clear how much joy and hope your children's success brings. Lydia, the principal of St. Raphael School reminds us of the words of St. Catherine Siena, "Be who God meant you to be and you will set fire to the world." Such an inspiring idea, knowing that we have close to 3,700 BASIC Fund students in school today, each with a different dream of what impact they will have on the world. Like flowers, these children, and their families, are blooming. Finally, you will hear a few words from a longtime, generous donor, Mr. James Herbert, on what has inspired him to support The BASIC Fund for so many years.

Evidence of spring can be seen all around us in the budding flowers of BASIC Fund schools and playgrounds all over the Bay Area. I like to think of each BASIC Fund student as a seed planted in the rich ground of a quality and safe school. These schools provide the tender care needed for young seedlings to thrive; who knows where these students will grow to take themselves and their communities!

We hope that you will take advantage of the opportunity to witness the magic of BASIC Fund students and schools with your own eyes by visiting a school. There is really no better way to witness what a donation to The BASIC Fund can do. It will also make your day, trust me. We will be conducting close to a dozen school tours before June across the Bay Area. If you are interested in joining us on a school visit, please contact Michelle Harris at michelle@basicfund.org. As always, thank you for your support of BASIC Fund families.

Sincerely,



Rachel Elginsmith, Executive Director

Want to see the impact your donation is having first hand? Do you have friends, family or co-workers who would like to learn more about The BASIC Fund? We have school visits every week around the Bay Area, and we would love to include you. Please contact Michelle Harris (michelle@basicfund.org) for future school visit dates, or to schedule a private tour.

Visit a school!

Family Spotlight

The Zekarias Family

Saint Rose Catholic School

Santa Rosa, Sonoma County

Our family faced several hardships in 2014, even with my wife working part-time and going to school part-time, life's financial demands left us falling behind in our mortgage. I was left no option other than to deplete my entire 401K to get caught up with the mortgage, bills, and put a down payment on a much needed used minivan.

With your help my wife and I have been able to provide our children with a strong education foundation. My children have excelled greatly from the support that The BASIC Fund has provided over the years. My oldest son Isaiah has exceed all of our expectations. He has been skipped a grade and has gone on to achieve the Principal's Citizenship Award for excellence in effort and conduct, and Academic Honors at his school Saint Rose. My daughter Layla has also thrived at Saint Rose, she strong academically and expressively artistic. She won the first prize drawing contest for the Sonoma County AG festival. We are now so happy that you have offered our youngest son Malachi the same opportunity, he started kindergarten this past fall.

Thank you so much for your support from our whole family.



Why I Give

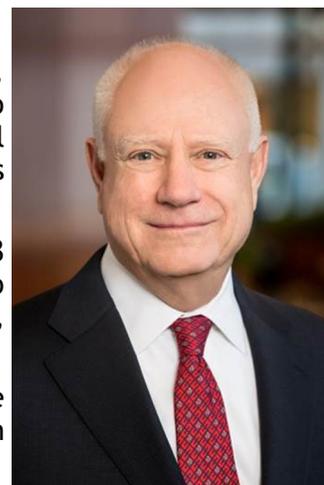
Jim Herbert, Chairman & CEO, First Republic Bank

I have always believed that education is the single most important, potentially life-changing opportunity any person can have to improve his or her situation. All young people should have equal opportunity, regardless of their home life, to better themselves and to achieve their goals.

When Jim & June McCarthy and Jim Conn approached me in 1998 about becoming an initial Board member of their organization to provide scholarships to underserved families in the Bay Area, I knew this was an opportunity to truly make a difference.

In those early days, we housed The BASIC Fund for about a decade in the basement at First Republic Bank - it was, and still is, an extraordinary experience. The BASIC Fund is the single most

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Why I Give (continued)

focused, efficient, and productive non-profit that I've ever been associated with. I support the BASIC Fund unequivocally and without hesitation - it has been and continues to be life-changing for thousands of young people and their families.

School Spotlight

Saint Raphael School, San Rafael, Marin County

"Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire!" St. Catherine of Siena

Imagine the power of hearing such words, from Kindergarten on, in a school that encourages academic excellence for all students. Since 1889, the Dominican Sisters of Saint Raphael School, provided children with a quality education that enabled those students to be future civic leaders in the local community. Today, with the help of the BASIC Fund, we can provide the power of such a transformative education to families that thought it could only be a dream for their children.

My name is Lydia Collins and I am the Principal of Saint Raphael School in San Rafael, California. In my 13 years at Saint Raphael School I have seen the demographics of the school change. With the help of the BASIC Fund, we can invite the new faces of San Rafael to be part of our rich tradition of educating leaders.



Marin County is one of the wealthiest counties in the country. Ironically, there are also families who live below the poverty level. We serve a diverse economic and ethnic population and believe that every child deserves academic excellence and the dream of making a difference in this world. The BASIC Fund empowers our parents by providing a choice in their child's education. With the financial assistance provided by the BASIC Fund, our families can choose Saint Raphael School and the unique opportunity to be part of our newly implemented Veritas program.



The Veritas vision helps students identify and develop the unique strengths that God has given them so that they can build self-confidence and pursue their highest level of academic success. Veritas is building a culture of excellence at school and at home. As part of the program, Saint Raphael teachers explicitly teach and cultivate 21st century skills: Innovation, Adaptability, Critical Analysis, Cross-Cultural Communication, and Teamwork. We are seeing phenomenal results. For example, transfer students in the lowest quartile in reading in third grade were brought to grade level by October, increasing their STAR reading score by 52% in that period.

We see parents stand in awe of their child giving a student council speech in front of the student body. "I can't believe that is my daughter," cried one mother who long ago dreamed of attending Saint Raphael School herself. The BASIC Fund has taken the dreams of the parents and made them a reality for their children.

Saint Raphael School is grateful to the supporters of the BASIC Fund for empowering our children to dream big; to see themselves as excellent students and leaders who will "set the world on fire!"

Lydia Collins

Principal, Saint Raphael School

We have moved!

Please update your address books:

1301 Clay Street, #70450, Oakland, CA 94612

Our telephone, and fax numbers, and email address all remain the same.



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The online versions of the articles in this newsletter can be found on our website at:
www.basicfund.org/blog

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