Dear Friends,

It's not too late to register for BBI's 5K Fun Run, Walk, and Stroller Brigade this coming Saturday, April 27. The community event is free and open to the public, and will have something for everyone! Join us for some fitness, games, music, light refreshments, and community-building. I hope to see you there!

DC is a recognized leader in early childhood education (ECE). The Birth-to-Three for All DC Act laid the groundwork and chartered a path toward universal childcare and holistic improvements in ECE, like increasing pay for ECE educators. DC Public Schools are looking to build on the success of DC's universal PreK 3 and PreK 4 expansion. Over the last decade, many public and charter schools expanded their standard K-12 grade offerings to include PreK 3 and PreK 4. Knowing that organizations like Bright Beginnings are already specialists in ECE, DCPS is actively looking to partner with ECE providers to open centers on their campuses.
I've shared this background with you because I'm extremely proud and excited that BBI has been selected as the ECE provider to open four PreK classrooms at Garfield Elementary School! After a competitive application process, we were notified in March of our selection. The site is currently under construction and slated to open for the start of the 2024-2025 school year. I am thrilled to have this opportunity and partnership to bring BBI's programming and expertise to more DC children and families and provide a continuum of service and care from birth through graduation.

Our "Garden of Respite and Learning" is coming along and ready for spring planting. While construction of the deck will be completed in the fall, the cherry trees planted last spring actually bloomed this year and bathed our grounds in pink petals. It has been exciting for students and staff to see this project come to fruition. Everyone at BBI is eager to begin using it. Look for an invitation later this year to a grand opening event. I hope to see you there too!

Sincerely,

Erin Fisher
Chief Executive Officer

2-Gen In Action

Our programming supports both children and their families. This creates a long-lasting impact and helps the family unit as a whole move along a spectrum that could range from crisis to self sufficiency.

Guerilla Arts in Evening Care

Building on the successful implementation of Wolf Trap arts programming in our daytime program, we now offer similar arts programming to our Early Head Start students in evening care! Guerilla Arts is an arts education consulting agency that employs local artists to serve as teaching artists for youth and underserved communities through innovative arts and cultural programming, training, and community engagement. In addition to weekly dance, creative movement, and drama offered to our infant and toddler classrooms, the artists provide professional development directly to the teachers, enabling them to develop, write, and teach their own lesson plans that incorporate newly-acquired arts education skills.
Parent Support for Potty Learning

On April 1, in partnership with Healthy Futures, BBI hosted a workshop for parents and caregivers on social-emotional tips for children to start using the toilet. The term "potty learning" or "toilet learning" indicates the child is involved in the process, whereas "training" is adult-directed. BBI's HighScope curriculum centers the child in the learning process so "potty learning" aligns with our educational approach. Among the strategies and tips shared for potty learning were staying positive, avoiding the use of the term "accident," consistency in routine, and using clothing that is easy for a child to get on and off, like bottoms with an elastic waist.

MOBILE GROCERIES AT BBI

Food insecurity is a critical issue facing many families in Wards 7 and 8. In addition, Ward 8, where most BBI families live, is considered a food desert as a result of the closure of the Good Food Market and limited transportation options to access grocery stores in other areas. BBI has met these challenges using several strategies. First, we hold bi-monthly farmers markets where families shop for seasonal and fresh foods at no cost. Second, we've dedicated more resources to providing grocery gift cards to families in need. Lastly, we are excited to have a partnership with Curbside Groceries - a mobile grocery store delivering quality produce, meat, and shelf-stable items to communities without a traditional supermarket. Curbside Groceries - a Capital Area Food Bank initiative - comes to BBI every Thursday from 3:30 - 4:30pm and accepts Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits. Feedback from families has been positive and we are excited to continue this partnership to combat food insecurity in our Ward.

DATA STORYTELLING
Children and families are eligible for Head Start programs if they are without housing, in foster care, live below the federal poverty line, or qualify for public assistance through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Last year Head Start eased the eligibility requirements for families on SNAP, which removed barriers and enabled more families to access high quality early childhood education and wrap-around services. Bright Beginnings is required to report to Head Start the eligibility make-up of its enrolled population, which the graph depicts from our latest report.

### NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

March is National Nutrition Month, and the BBI team delivered a wide variety of workshops, activities, and programming for both children and the adults and caregivers in their lives. Chef Tommy offered three healthy cooking demonstrations throughout the month. A farmer's market was held on March 12. Dads Against Diabetes was held on March 19 where a representative from CoreLife MedStar shared Diabetes prevention and awareness tips unique to men, followed by a Healthy Happy Hour on March 20 for all BBI families. PreK children participated in an activity making tasty fruit-infused water, and lastly, Zumba and pre-natal yoga classes were held.

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to support our parents on their career journeys, BBI is offering new programming in Workforce Development. First, we began holding regular workforce office hours two days each month where parents can drop in for support and guidance on things like navigating the job market, resume writing, and practicing soft skills. On April 11 we held a Career Fair where employers like Amerigroup, Truist Bank, and the University of the District of Columbia were on site to accept resumes and discuss employment opportunities. Lastly, BBI is poised to re-launch its partnership with Condensed Curriculum International later this fall to offer certifications and training for high-demand careers in health care and IT fields.
The Easter Bunny visited BBI on March 28 and every child was able to sit for pictures.

Our Valentines Day "Daddy and Me" dance is a family favorite. Check out our Facebook reel!

Our spring literacy night was a success thanks to the generous donation of books from the Junior League of Washington.