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In October 2014, Brandi Ambrose, a Counselor/Designer of the College Knowledge Project at OPRHC, approached the Foundation with an idea and vision. After meeting with Kristin Carlson Vogen, OPRHC’s President & CEO, she identified a community need and a way to address it.

In October 2014, Brandi Ambrose, a Counselor/Designer of the College Knowledge Project at OPRHC, approached the Foundation with an idea and vision. After meeting with Kristin Carlson Vogen, OPRHC’s President & CEO, she identified a community need and a way to address it.

Through her research, Ambrose identified that traditional strategies aimed at underperforming students were not addressing the foundational gaps students needed to close to reach their full potential. She saw a potential program that could provide added support to students who had not remedied their grade point averages or were not meeting their College Readiness Benchmarks yet still had the potential to be successful in college.

With the idea of a school-based college advising program, Ambrose and Kristin Carl...
Outstanding individual Philanthropist: John Harris

John Harris has been a driving force in our community for the past 17 years. He is known for his dedication to improving the lives of children and for his passion for philanthropic work. He has served as a board member for several organizations, including the Park-River Forest area and beyond.

Young Outstanding Philanthropist: Ella Olson

Ella is a youth who stands out among her peers. She is passionate about making a difference in the lives of children and has connected with them through their community in valuable ways.

Outstanding Young Philanthropist: Elfie Olson

Elfie, a youth who stands out among her peers, is passionate about making a difference in the lives of children and has connected with them through their community in valuable ways.

PlanItGreen 2014 Report

In 2011, 3% of the district’s students were enrolled in the PlanItGreen program. The district has made significant progress in reducing its carbon footprint, with a 38% reduction in energy consumption and a 24% reduction in water consumption. Additionally, the district has seen a 20% increase in recycling.

Quick Glance Trends & Metrics:

- Green Community Leaders: 8,000
- Energy consumption: 38% reduction
- Water consumption: 24% reduction
- Recycling: 20% increase

In 2013, the district met its $1.8 million energy savings goal, with an overall increase in energy savings of 38%.

Success of All Youth (SAY) has moved from “Exploring” to “Excelling,” with a new focus on evidence-based practices and a clear vision for future success.

The 3% goals of the PlanItGreen program are yet to be fully realized. However, the program has made significant progress, with an 8% increase in recycling, a 10% reduction in energy consumption, and a 15% increase in water conservation.

StriveTogether supports partner communities such as ours by providing resources and expertise to help them achieve their goals.

The district has seen a 17.5% and 15.7% increase in energy savings and water conservation, respectively, exceeding the 2013 goals.

The district has met its 105,000-person capacity, with an overall increase of 5% in sustainable efforts.

The district has met its 16,000-person capacity, with an overall increase of 10% in sustainable efforts.

The district has met its 2,000-person capacity, with an overall increase of 4% in sustainable efforts.

The district has met its 500-person capacity, with an overall increase of 2% in sustainable efforts.

The district has met its 100-person capacity, with an overall increase of 1% in sustainable efforts.

The district has met its 5-person capacity, with an overall increase of 0% in sustainable efforts.
Outstanding Individual Philanthropist: John Harris

• Began his work with TNGP in 1998
• Has encouraged over 1,000 Oak Park and River Forest high school students to find opportunities to serve and give back

• More Than 100+ Projects

• Fundraiser in 2010

- PING! Workshop for 4th and 5th Graders
- PING! Workshop for 4th_5th Graders
- Elementary school students learning music in one of many workshops provided by PING!

• Three workshops in total

• Online graduation ceremony

Multiple online graduation ceremonies

• 100% of participants received a certificate of completion

• Music, Music, Music

Trends & Metrics:

Quick Glance

The Quick Glance below provides an assessment of our... practices – while 31% have policies - opening the door for increased policy development and implementation.

Thumbs Up: Met Goals

1. More than $50,000 raised for Red Ribbon Week.

2. 479 students attended presentations by speakers who talked for information. She has shown great courage surveying hundreds of children, and has connected them with their communities in valuable ways that have exceeded expectations.

3. The plan is implemented through the collective work of communities to align resources around shared outcomes.

Thumbs Down: Did Not Meet Goals

1. Of course, individual contributions to the PING! Fund or any of our other local organizations for the benefit of its organization for the benefit of its donors as well as organizations that PING! supports.

2. The minimum amount of an individual's capital goal, and is earned through our capital campaign.

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4. There are more than thirty local organizations who have also established endowment funds for low income residents. The PING! Fund has more than $1 million in assets, providing periodic investment income that is reinvested to support the organization for the benefit of its donors as well as organizations that PING! supports.

5. The minimum amount of an individual's capital goal, and is earned through our capital campaign.

6. For more information about the PING! Fund, visit the website.

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Thumbs Up: Exceeded Goals

1. Ella Dixon and Outstanding Individual Philanthropist, John A. Harris.

2. Ella Dixon was a huge barrier for low income students mentoring 20 PING! middle school students, and in addition to providing enrichment for low income students, Ella Dixon also mentors 20 OPRF High School music students.

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Outstanding Individual Philanthropist: John Harris Harris was recognized for his efforts to engage young people into successful adults, leading to healthy, sustainable communities. Harris has not only provided funds to support his interests, but has also volunteered his time and expertise to the organizations he supports. This has allowed him to make a significant impact on the lives of many people.

TNGP’s program structure includes three kinds of service projects. First, TNGP has used the expertise of local professionals to address critical community needs. Patients are more than willing to donate their time, talents, and skills to impact our community in innovative and effective ways.

TNGP’s community involvement process facilitates Seven Generations Approach. The plan is implemented through the collective work of hundreds of children, and has connected them with thousands of adults. They have connected the young people, from elementary through high school, with dedicated community volunteers.

A significant milestone for Success of All Youth (SAY) was achieved in 2011, thanks to Community Choice Grants Program to lead the way. Anticipated Snyder-Gardiner Park Comp Plan is expected to signiﬁcantly complement the growing reality of education through gardens, and ecosystems, and green economy. PlanItGreen completed a number of new projects in 2013, and here are trends from the 2013 Report. Full details of the Report can be found at: planit-green.org.

The Quick Glance below provides an assessment of our past success. In 2011, thanks to Community Choice Grants Program to lead the way, Anticipated Snyder-Gardiner Park Comp Plan is expected to significantly complement the growing reality of education through gardens, and ecosystems, and green economy. PlanItGreen completed a number of new projects in 2013, and here are trends from the 2013 Report. Full details of the Report can be found at: planit-green.org.

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Thumbs Up: Extended Goals
Thumbs Down: Did Not Meet Goals

TNGP: Providing Instruments for the Next Generation
TNGP’s program on music began in 2008, and at the urging of the Community Foundation, TNGP offered a special program to River Forest elementary student.

TNGP has established an endowment fund with us for 2013. There are more than thirty local organizations that have also established endowment funds and are using them to support their annual programs.

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TNGP continues to be a volunteer

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In October 2014, Brandi Ambrose, a Counselor/College Advisor at Oak Park and River Forest High School, connected with the Foundation to discuss the possibility of a pilot program to help students who were not on substantial opportunities to be accepted, as well as to receive scholarships. By the end of junior year, students who had not remedied their grade point averages were dismissed. The students then applied to be accepted, as well as to receive scholarships, to colleges and universities that fit with their unique gifts and talents. In addition, the project works to increase college access for potential candidates who may be from underrepresented populations as well as first generation to College students. At a first-year college student benefit, she understands the additional hurdles that families and students experience when working to find the right college fit. Brandi pictured a program that would be able to identify 10 students by the end of their first year of college who, if the above parameters were met, could receive scholarships. The pilot program would include a comprehensive college advising curriculum, weekly coaching and advising sessions with each student, intervention recommendations, and weekly feedback with parents or guardians. The expectation is that through these relationships, the students will be able to reach their individual goals which may, in turn, open additional opportunities for college acceptances and enrollment opportunities. Over the course of two years, these students—many of whom had never been on a college campus, and may not even be aware of the possibility to attend college—will be able to reach their individual goals. This pilot will include visits to large, small, private, and public colleges and an HBCU (Historically Black College and University). Brandi designed the program in her dreams, but didn’t have the funding to support the pilot.

In January, Terry and Jana McIlroy explored ways they might utilize the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation to provide a benefit to students in the area. The McIlroys met with the Ambrose and discussed their interests, it became apparent that the College Knowledge Project would be a perfect fit to the McIlroys’ mission and desires. As we discussed the program, we confirmed that this approach is well thought out and the resources are in place to help the project grow. In addition, they are creating a donation advisor fund with the Foundation that, in addition to the McIlroys, has been established for use by local higher education institutions.

To date, the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation has established the Fund for Diversity at the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation. The endowment will provide a strong and reliable base of ongoing support with this type of endowment, funds are invested so that income can be allocated to the organization each year.

Excellence in Philanthropy awards are given once a year in the three categories identified in this newsletter. Nominations can occur at any time before December 1. Nominations can be made by faculty, students, or the general public. To learn more about the Community Foundation and how to make your philanthropic dream become reality, please contact Elyse Chadri at 708-848-1560 or e-mail is echadri@oprfcf.org. To learn more about our new Program Officer please visit: http://www.trip.org/excellence-awards.

Oak Park, Illinois 60301 Non-Profit Org
708-848-1560
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For more information or to nominate another recipient. These awards are a great way to honor those who, through their interest in helping this project succeed, or would like to explore other ways the Community Foundation can assist you in making your philanthropic dreams become reality, please contact Elyse Chadri at 708-848-1560 or e-mail is echadri@oprfcf.org.

Our New Program Officer
Elizabeth Chaij purchased the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation as Program Officer on February 24th. Prior to this, she worked at the MacArthur Foundation as Program Officer in the international program focusing on education and sustainable development. For over 14 years, she has worked in the education and capacity building sector. Elizabeth has a Master’s degree in Education and Women’s Studies and a Master’s degree in Education Administration.

Visit us at www.oprfcf.org