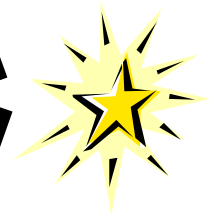




# RESILIENCE



Kids' Place Newsletter

FALL 2008

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 2

## Celebrating Our 10 Year Anniversary!



*"These are the reasons we keep taking this leap of faith, over, and over again."*

**K**ids' Place began in January 1998 with one afternoon a week, 22 children, 12 volunteers, and \$1,200 in donations. Over the last ten years, we have grown to four afternoons and two evenings a week, **over 40 children** and their families, eight paid staff, **over 100 volunteers from the community**, and a yearly operating budget **over \$125,000**.

Margaret Davis, a supporter of Kids' Place since its inception and a current board member, gave insight on the impact Kids' Place has had on its participants, "Kids' Place started with a handful of volunteers **and** a handful of families. Together we took a huge leap of faith...Recently, I ran into a young man who was working at the grocery store. He was one member of a...family [who] had been at Kids' Place when we started. This young man was finishing up high school with plans to attend community college. His older brother (who comes back every summer to work at Kids' Place) was finishing up his four year degree, and his younger sister was in high school and returning to Kids' Place as a volunteer. These are the reasons we keep taking this leap of faith, over, and over again."

As always, please help us continue touching the lives of these wonderful children for the next ten years and beyond.

### SAVE THE DATE!

NOVEMBER 9 : 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM  
WISH UPON A STAR 2008

**W**atch your snail-mail for your invitation to join us for **Wish Upon a Star 2008**, a reception and silent auction to benefit Kids' Place.

This year, the Kids' Place annual fundraiser will feature a gallery exhibit entitled **"My Life / Your Life"** - a cultural and art exchange between the children of Mozambique and those of Kids' Place reflecting the similarities and differences in their worlds - at **The Sheldon Concert Hall**. Tickets are \$50 per person and include a private guided tour of the exhibit, as well as a catered cocktail buffet. Auction items will include vacation packages, sports tickets, art objects, and much more!

*Wish Upon a Star is responsible for raising more than 25% of the Kids' Place annual operating budget.*

If you would like to donate your time, funds, or auction items for the event, or if you would like more information, please contact event co-chairs Ellen Langston at [elsu@aol.com](mailto:elsu@aol.com)/314.863.3027 or Karen Greening at [kgreening@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kgreening@sbcglobal.net)/314.843.0281.

**Wish Upon a Star** is responsible for raising more than 25% of the Kids' Place annual operating budget. The success of this event will ensure our commitment to the welfare of these children as well as to our community.

Donors can take a charitable deduction for gifts made to Kids' Place. Kids' Place is a charitable outreach program of University United Methodist Church. Kids' Place falls under the tax exempt status of UUMC as defined under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code. Kids' Place is governed by our committed Board of Directors.



## FALL 2008: OFF AND RUNNING



As our program year began on September 10, Kids' Place also added a new facet to our curriculum. Although we have always believed literacy to be a top priority for the kids we serve, it is becoming increasingly clear that many of the students we work with

"...an enthusiastic atmosphere in which the kids feel encouraged and supported."

are struggling with the development of their reading skills, and some are more than a year behind in their reading levels. Because of this, we have decided to offer a new group for these kids called the Reading Stars. This part of our program was made possible by a generous donation from the Spirit of St. Louis Women's Fund. This select group of children will meet each day with a certified

reading specialist in order to specifically target and improve their reading abilities. 7 children, or 16% of those enrolled in Kids' Place, will participate in this special program for the duration of the year. The overall goal for the program is for the participants to raise their reading assessment scores by an average of four reading levels. Ms. Lynda Wolpert, the lead teacher for the Reading Stars classroom, has already noticed effective new techniques filtering into her curriculum, "Focusing on reading with an emphasis on comprehension has created an enthusiastic atmosphere in which the kids feel encouraged and supported."



## SUMMER CAMP 2008

Kids' Place Summer Camp was literally a "blast" this year! 21 children participated in the science-themed week of fun, which was held August 4-8. Monday included many exciting earth science activities, such as composting, making rock candy, and creating tornadoes in a bottle. Tuesday was chemistry day, and the kids enjoyed making gloop and playdough as well as making their own ice cream for snack. Wednesday's fun activities revolved around biology and involved hands-on experiments

like dissecting owl pellets and making a nature collage. On Thursday, which focused on physics, the children made slingshots out of wire coat hangers. The week wrapped up on Friday with astronomy, as each child learned about the different constellations and then devised their very own constellation out of glow-in-the-dark stars and construction paper. Safiya Worth, one of the children who attended the 2008 camp, debated a while before deciding, "My favorite part was making ice cream and eating it for snack." Each day's festivities also included outings into the community. These included field trips to the movie presentation of *Wall-E*, the Magic House, the Children's Garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden, the City Museum, and the Heman Park Pool.

"My favorite part was making ice cream and eating it for snack."



Each day's festivities also included outings into the community. These included field trips to the movie presentation of *Wall-E*, the Magic House, the Children's Garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden, the City Museum, and the Heman Park Pool.

Thanks so much to the staff and volunteers who helped make this fun and unique opportunity happen for our children at Kids' Place! The entire week was a resounding success!

Thanks so much to the staff and volunteers who helped make this fun and unique opportunity happen for our children at Kids' Place! The entire week was a resounding success!

## MY LIFE / YOUR LIFE

The "My Life / Your Life" exhibition, opening at the Sheldon Art Gallery on October 3, 2008 and running through January 31, 2009, showcases some special connections formed through art and culture between youth of Mozambique, Africa and St. Louis, Missouri. The displays will feature drawings made over the past year by children on both continents, in workshops held in Chicuque, Mozambique and at our very own Kids' Place. Using the book **A Country Far Away**, by Nigel Gray and Phillipe Dupaspuier, as a starting point, the project leaders united the children by helping them to imagine and illustrate their lives in a shared exchange. The exhibition is organized by the Sheldon Art Galleries and curated by Rebecca Gunter.



### THE KIDS' PLACE WISH LIST

We would like to thank everyone who has furthered our mission through monetary donations, volunteer hours, or any of the other numerous ways Kids' Place has received help. We are currently in need of the following items, and we would greatly appreciate your help in providing these materials for our children to use throughout the year!

- Multicultural Books
- *Color Wonder* Activity Books
  - Backpacks
  - Umbrellas
- Construction Paper
- Dry Erase Markers
  - Index Cards
  - Rulers
- Flashcards, Math and English
- Maps, National and Worldwide

## THANK YOU TO OUR WISH UPON A STAR 2008

### SPONSORS!

#### Constellation (\$2,500 & above)

Macon & Peter Finley  
Jane & Kent McNeil  
Bill Solomon

#### Shooting Star (\$1,000-\$2,499)

Sandy & Steve Marsh  
Sigrid & Ed Renner  
Oscar Roeder

#### Astronomer (\$500-\$999)

Denise & Chris Herrington  
Ellen & Randy Langston  
Cindy & Tom Mitchell  
Risa Zwerling & Mark Wrighton

#### Stargazer(\$250-\$499)

Lynn & Jerry Breakstone  
Bethe & Keith Brightfield  
Michael & Emily Demerath  
Mya & Joel Emery  
Tammy Martin & Bob Forstot  
Jean & Glen Light  
Vicki Gonzalez-Rubio  
Karen & Frank Greening  
Bo Singer-Demerath  
Geri & Dick Schul  
Jennifer Shult

Kids' Place Staff & Volunteers  
Morgan Stanley—Clayton

# Kids' Place

A Safe Place for All Children to Shine!

6901 Washington Avenue

St. Louis, Missouri 63130

[www.kidsplace-stl.org](http://www.kidsplace-stl.org)



## Board of Directors

Bill Solomon, Chair  
Stephanie Beckley-Schuster, MSW  
Bethe Brightfield, MS, Eds  
Margaret Campbell-Davis, MSW  
Mya Emery  
Peter Finley  
Victoria Gonzalez-Rubio, Ph. D.  
Chris Herrington  
Ellen Langston  
Glen Light  
Jane McNeil  
Tom Mitchell  
Kitty Nangle  
Edward Renner  
Brenda Stobbe, M.Th  
Nate Suddeth

## Honorary Board Members

Karen Greening, MSW  
Robert Paine, MD  
Jane Paine  
Nora Porter, MD

## KIDS' PLACE: ABOUT US

Kids' Place - A safe place for all children to shine!

For the past 10 years, Kids' Place has operated to provide a free safe and nurturing after school experience, including mentoring and nutrition, for at risk children of Delmar-Harvard elementary school in University City. From a humble beginning of one afternoon a week with 22 children, 12 volunteers and \$1,200 in donations, the program has grown to four afternoons and two evenings a week with 50 children, one full time and seven part time paid staff and over 100 volunteers from nearby churches, synagogues and universities, and an operating budget of over \$125,000 a year.



Did you know that Kids' Place volunteers have already clocked 1,160 hours of service this year? To volunteer contact us at [volunteer@kidsplace-stl.org](mailto:volunteer@kidsplace-stl.org).