

Oak Park Education Foundation Annual Report

2011-2012



Oak Park
Education
Foundation

23 years of fostering creative problem solving and helping children make meaningful connections between their studies and the real world.

Cover Photo: 'Ian Moss' taken by Ian Moss (2012 BASE Camp, 'Digital Photography' Class) 5th Grader at Longfellow



Dear Friends,

IMAGINE YOUR CHILD COMES HOME from school and says, "Guess what I did in school today?" What if the answer had nothing to do with lunch or recess? Instead, your child describes working with a real architect, experimenting with electricity and magnets alongside a visiting scientist,

or choreographing a dance about the moon and stars with a professional dancer. These are the kinds of mind-expanding experiences that the Oak Park Education Foundation brings to children in Oak Park's public schools.



Because most of our programs take place in classrooms during the school day, and all of our school-year programs

are provided free of charge, we make connections for all Kindergarten through 8th grade students in the District 97 schools. We spark "aha" moments for kids who think they hate science until they test their school for bacteria with a microbiologist, or third graders who didn't know they were good at engineering until they built a windmill using our Geared Up LEGO kits, or children who didn't want to learn math until our Architecture Adventure architect taught them to use it to build a model to scale.

Thanks to supporters like you, the Oak Park Education Foundation is celebrating our 23rd year of fostering creative problem solving and helping children make meaningful connections between their studies and the real world. Thank you for supporting OPEF and exciting, hands-on learning for all our students!

Angie Dodd

Angie Dodd
President of the Board

Deb Abrahamson

Deb Abrahamson
Executive Director



Q: What are
the Benefits of
OPEF Programs?

A: Oak Park
Teachers Talk...

Benefit #1: Career Education

"Exposing my students to outside experts lets them see how math and science can lead to an exciting career."

Benefit #2: Connections to the Curriculum

"I loved that with *Art Start* I was able to incorporate more movement activities into my classroom – and these activities helped support the curriculum."

Benefit #3: Connections Beyond the Curriculum

"Students were exposed to education outside the regular curriculum, with creative educators who did not have to worry about 'teaching to the test.'"

Benefit #4: Experts from the Community

"It is extremely beneficial to have a 'real' scientist instruct the class and lead them on a variety of chemistry activities. The children loved it and gained knowledge by participating."

Benefit #5: Professional Development

"I love the integration of the arts and I love learning from having others teach in my classroom. These programs also help with differentiating instruction and meeting the different learning styles of the students."

Benefit #6: Creative Problem Solving

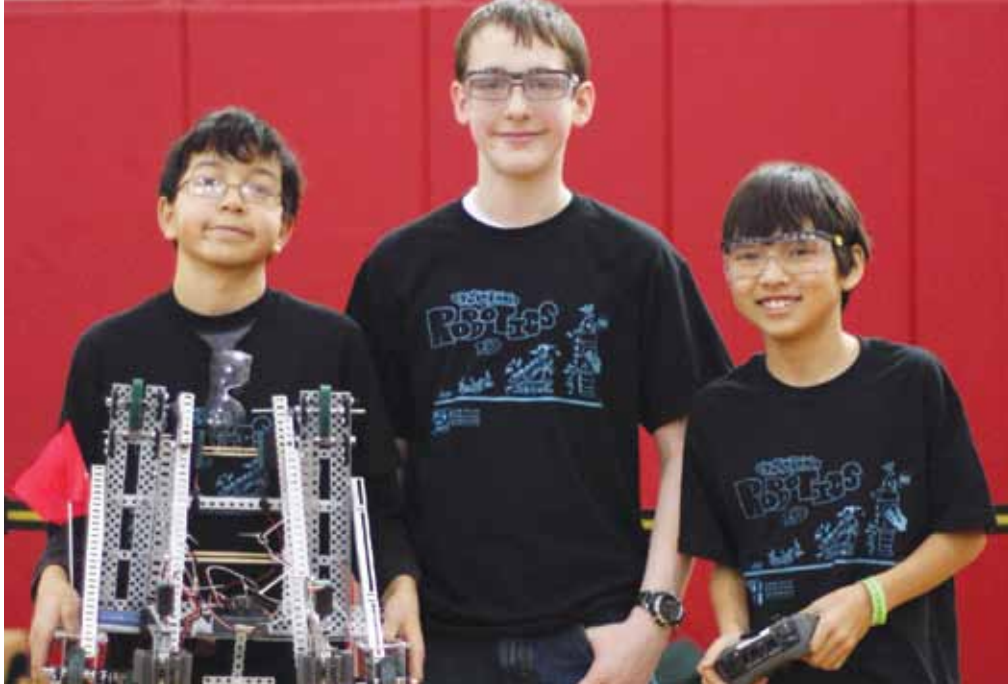
"Your programs help us to think outside the box, engaging students in higher-level problem solving and cooperative and collaborative projects."

Benefit #7: Opportunities for all Students

"OPEF programs happen in school so all students can participate."

Benefit #8: Engaged Learning

"The Oak Park Education Foundation is providing the most exciting curriculum my students have in District 97."



VEX Robotics

OPEF'S VEX ROBOTICS TEAMS HAD a wildly successful year! In February, three of our teams took first place in a Midwest regional competition, triumphing over mostly high school competitors. We sent them on to the VEX Robotics National Championship in Omaha, Nebraska with the help of many supporters in our community. Armed with their bots and their motto: "We Gear It – You Fear It!" the Oak Park boys and girls all qualified for the finals...and one of our teams finished 2nd in the nation among middle schools!

We are proud of all 82 VEX team members at Julian and Brooks, who convened after school every week to design, build, program and compete with their robots in a challenging skills game. Mentored by their teachers, professional engineers, parents and high school VEX alums, the students honed not only their engineering skills, but also demonstrated impressive teamwork, dedication and perseverance.

"I was intimidated at first by the advanced parts I hadn't seen before and all of the experienced people. Then I was proud of myself because I could make this awesome creation that could move!"
 - 6th grade VEX Robotics student

Art Start

HOW MANY WAYS CAN YOU LEARN a lesson and communicate what you've learned? In our *Art Start* program, Kindergarten, first and second graders delve into academic subjects using the many tools and the guidance of professional visual and performing artists. Learning through art is a challenging, creative and often eye-opening process.

This year our *Art Start* students tackled big subjects using art. For example, they wrote plays about weather, made their own cave paintings and fossils, chalked art and haiku on the sidewalk, sewed a quilt about the Underground Railroad, and mastered dances from different cultures. They expanded their outlooks on themselves and the world around them.

"The students were engaged and ENTHRALLED with the projects and information they learned. I heard wonderful feedback from the parents." - Art Start teacher





Science Alliance

OUR EXCITING ROSTER OF VISITING SCIENTISTS in 2011-12 included environmental scientists from the EPA, a cardiologist from Children's Memorial Hospital, an astronomer from IIT and an evolutionary biologist from the University of Chicago. Working side by side with these professionals, our students learn that science has many practical applications that smart, interesting adults in their community use in their work every day.

Scientists, students and teachers in *Science Alliance* classrooms ran experiments to learn how electricity is conducted, discover what a comet is made of, and learn how lifestyle choices affect our health by examining actual human heart and lung specimens. Putting the scientific process into action inspires some students to consider careers in science, and inspires all students to look more closely and critically at the world around them.

"The greatest strength of the program is that kids get to see that members of their community are actual scientists. Some students may not have realized that being a scientist is a real job and a real option for them in the future." - 3rd grade teacher



Geared Up

THIRD GRADERS ACROSS DISTRICT 97 LEARNED HOW simple machines work using LEGOs to explore force and motion in our *Geared Up* program. *Geared Up* uses LEGO Motorized Mechanisms to teach exciting hands-on lessons, with students testing their own ideas and working in teams of two. In fifth grade classrooms, students built windmills as part of their studies on generating and storing energy.

In addition to LEGO engineering, numerous District 97 students participated in LEGO Landmarks this year, a joint project with our *Architecture Adventure* program. Kids studied notable buildings around the world, learned how to create models to scale, and worked in groups to design and construct their own landmarks using LEGOs.

"I want to sincerely thank you for this awesome opportunity for my students to combine math and LEGOs. The kids were engaged, had fun and felt very proud and successful of their Chicago landmarks. I really enjoyed watching them apply their math knowledge, work cooperatively and take pride in their hard work." - Beye Elementary 3rd grade teacher





Architecture Adventure

ARCHITECTURE ADVENTURE IS A SHINING EXAMPLE OF our community working together to educate its children. Our visiting architects share their expertise and enthusiasm with students, helping them imagine, design and create models of buildings, landscapes, and communities. They collaborate on projects that directly relate to the children's studies – not only in art and social studies, but also in math, literature or science.

This year, many of our students saw their work proudly displayed in the windows of area businesses and in public spaces at their schools. They drew sketches and plans, built models, and learned to design on paper and on the computer. They studied history, vocabulary, map making, city planning and structural design. They explored their own neighborhoods and became familiar with structures around the world.

“Students who normally were not engaged, or even interested in this topic, were thrilled with working with an actual architect and technology that allowed them to be creative as well as learn like a professional. An A+ program!” - 4th grade teacher



B·A·S·E Camp

BASE CAMP PARENTS TELL US THAT OUR FUN AND educational summer programs, open to all students, fill a void in the Oak Park camp scene. We expanded our offerings in 2012 to include nine different classes, variations on all of OPEF's school-year programs. We provided imaginative activities, challenging curricula, enthusiastic teachers and lots of fun. We also awarded many scholarships for kids in need and employed 43 local high school and college students as teaching assistants.

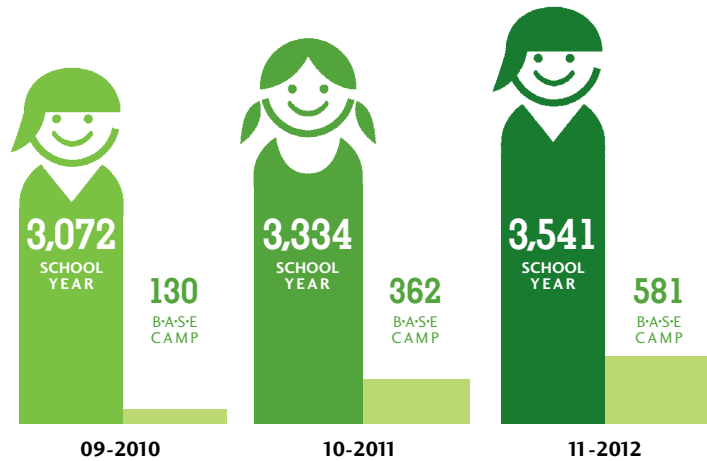
Our BASE Campers studied genetics research and created a mural about Henrietta Lacks under the “EL,” used a Computer Aided Design system to create a model train, constructed complex structures using architectural tools and materials, designed robotic tentacles for Ursula in BRAVO's summer production of The Little Mermaid, composed and performed songs, and much, much, more.

“The hands-on projects were great...they keep the kids engaged and not feeling like they're in school. My child came out of BASE Camp with a smile on his face each day” - BASE Camp parent



2011-12 Annual Report

Children Served

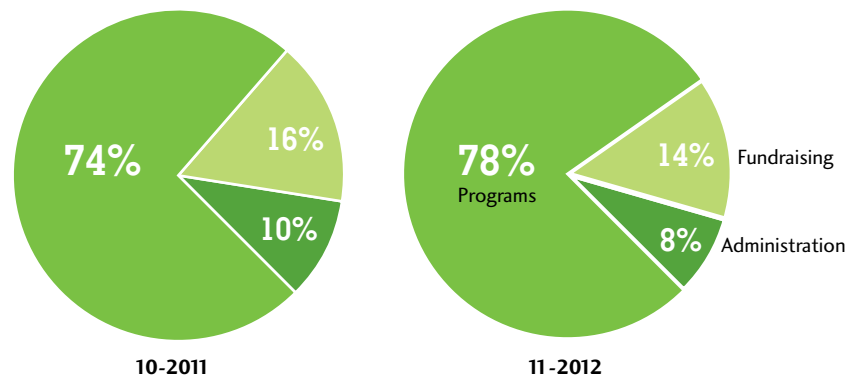


Time Donated

15,166 Volunteers
2,302,590 Hours Volunteered
\$72,000 **\$118,000** Time Donated

10-2011 11-2012

Distribution of Expenses



2011-12 Financial Statements

Statements of Activities

June 30, 2012

June 30, 2011

REVENUES

Contributions and grants	\$ 72,611	\$ 72,402
Special events	\$ 83,009	\$ 86,509
Summer program income	\$ 83,235	\$ 51,605
In-kind goods and services	\$ 123,173	\$ 71,990
Interest income	\$ 556	\$ 802
Miscellaneous income	\$ 334	\$ 1,396
Total Revenues and Support	\$ 362,918	\$ 284,704

EXPENSES

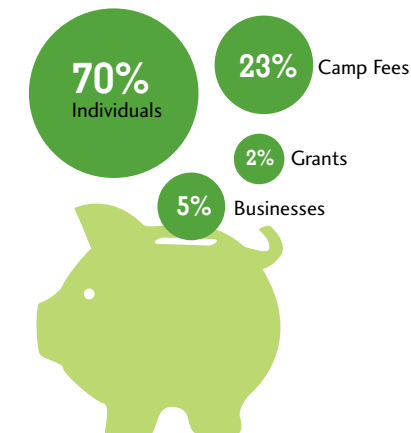
Program	\$285,459	\$ 193,288
Management and general	\$ 30,069	\$ 25,412
Fundraising	\$ 50,286	\$ 41,549
Total Expenses	\$ 365,814	\$ 260,249

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS \$ (2,896) \$ 24,455

NET ASSETS

Beginning of the year	\$ 153,718	\$ 128,842
Prior period adjustment	\$ -	\$ 421
END OF THE YEAR	\$ 150,822	\$ 153,718

Sources of Funding



Investment/Interest	\$ 556
Grants	\$ 8,413
Businesses	\$ 17,420
Camp Fees	\$ 83,235
Individuals:	
In-Kind Services	\$ 123,173
Donations	\$ 130,121
TOTAL	\$ 362,918

Partners

PATRONS (\$200+)

Aria Group Architects, Inc.
Automated Lifestyles, Inc.
Beyond Properties Realty Group
Community Bank of Oak Park River Forest
DLA Architects, LTD
Dressel's Hardware
DTKindler Photography
Exquisite Smiles Oak Park
Forest Park National Bank and Trust Co.
Paul Goyette Photography
Greenline Wheels
Hodges, Loizzi, Eisenhammer Rodick & Kohn
It's A Sign
J.C. Licht/Epco
Lakeview Bus Lines
Marion Street Cheese Market
Oak Park Jewelers
PMA Financial
viaForensics

SPONSORS (0-\$200)

AA Rental Center
Compass Eye Care/Dr. Albert Licup
Fashions Anew
Formula Fitness Clubs
Frame Warehouse
Hoy Landscaping
Inside Edge: Public Relations and Media Services
Oak Park Kitchen and Bath
Red Hen Bread
Starship Restaurant and Catering
Sugarcup Trading
Wednesday Journal
West Suburban Medical Center

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Good Heart Work Smart
Oak Park Area Arts Council
Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation
Oak Park-River Forest Community
Foundation/Future Philanthropists
Rotary Club of Oak Park and River Forest
Target

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Hatch School PTO
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GRAPHIC DESIGN

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The background of the slide features a green grid with various hand-drawn sketches in black ink. At the top left, the binary sequence '1001101' is written. Below it, a large pi symbol (π) is circled. To the right of the pi symbol is a calculator. Further right are several geometric shapes, including a triangle and a square. In the center, the letters 'C', 'R', and 'D' are scattered. Below these, the equation 'E=mc²' is written. To the left of the equation is a large 'H₂O' molecule. Below 'H₂O' is a small diagram of a water molecule with two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom. To the right of the water molecule is a test tube. At the bottom left, there is a flask on a stand. In the bottom center, there is a rack with four test tubes. To the right of the test tubes is a small drawing of a fruit with a face. The text 'Thank you for supporting Oak Park Education Foundation and exciting, hands-on learning for all our students!' is written in white over the grid.

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