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# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

**Seeds 4 Success Inc.**

PO Box 4042, Annapolis, MD 21403

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## Current Board of Directors

Corey Galinsky - President  
Trish Irvin - Vice President  
Jean McCoy - Treasurer  
Lynne P. Evans - Secretary

Jane Lawrence - Director  
Trudy McFall - Director  
Donna Stephens - Director  
Helena Hunter - Director (non-voting)

## The Mission

Working together as a community to provide children from low-income communities with the skills and support to achieve success in school and life.

# Our Impact

## Understanding into Action

### We Activate The Community's Understanding of Poverty and Turn it Into Action

With over 90 volunteers we pair underprivileged youth with a tutor and a mentor. Together, with our support and after school programs, we help students build a path of their own, out of poverty. We can only achieve this because of our community.

#### The Mission

Working together as a community to provide children from low income communities with the skills and support to achieve success in school and life.

#### The Vision

Every child in Annapolis has the opportunity to build a bright future.

#### The History

Seeds 4 Success grew out of neighbors' concerns about escalating crime in nearby public housing communities and the well-being of children living there. With a \$500 check from the local civic association, seven women started a girls club. Right from the start, girls asked for homework help. The women soon came to understand the many challenges facing children growing up in poverty.

#### The Impact

Seeds 4 Success is the only organization in Anne Arundel that offers tutoring, mentoring, life skills and career coaching to students from kindergarten until 12th grade and beyond. We believe children living in economically disadvantaged communities can end their cycle of generational poverty through education. We help them build strong academic skills, and explore enriching activities to help them become successful in school and life. We pair each student with a one-on-one tutor as well as a one-on-one mentor, and give them a platform to work together on a weekly basis. Tutors and mentors are volunteers in the community who are recruited, screened and trained by our volunteer manager. Each student in our program receives between 162 and 222 hours of tutoring, mentoring, coaching, lifeskill building, summer camps, college visits and field trips per year. We partner with various other nonprofit organizations and community partners such as the Annapolis Maritime Museum and STAIR, to provide robust programming for our students.

Our long-term outcomes are: 100% of participating youth to graduate high school, and each student to develop a plan for post high school. The ultimate goal for our youth is self-sufficiency.

In 12 years, Seeds 4 Success has grown from a social girls club into an award-winning organization that offers several long-term programs. These programs provide academic support, soft skills and new experiences, and place caring adults who serve as tutors and mentors in the lives of the youth we serve. We are only able to achieve our mission through generous grantors, donors and volunteers.

#### The Programs

**Eastport Girls Club** - tutoring, mentoring, and after-school programming for girls in grades 3-8.

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**Academic & Career Exploration Club** - mentoring, and college/career planning for grades 9-12.

**Scholarship Program** - scholarship funding for graduating Seeds 4 Success seniors pursuing career education.

**Parent Workshops** - workshops for the parent/guardians of youth in our programs.

**Summer Programming** - provides access to robust summer camps, academic activities and internships to our youth.

**Foster Grandparents Program** - we pair retired, low-income seniors (Foster Grandparents) with low-income pre-K, kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students directly within the school to work one-on-one for an entire year.

# A Lasting Legacy

## Karen Feldman, Our Co-Founder Passed Away

By Ariana Perez

Published in the Capital Gazette

January 13, 2020

*Karen Lisa Feldman led her life with passion and hard work for the community, especially young children. She considered it most rewarding to see students begin the year as non-readers and, by the end of the year, seeing them sitting at their desks and reading full book chapters. In 2008, Feldman, along with her friend and neighbor Helena Hunter, noticed parallels between crime and low-income housing neighborhoods in Annapolis. Their efforts led to the creation of Seeds 4 Success, which served as a tutoring program for girls and later included boys in 2012. Feldman died January 9 after a long battle with cancer. The nonprofit celebrated 10 years of a charity in 2018 and today, it has provided children from low-income communities in Annapolis with the skills and support to achieve success in school and life. Feldman and Hunter "planted" an organization to give every child in Annapolis the opportunity to build a bright future and as a result, their crops flourished into happy children and families.*

*"Karen was the embodiment of strength, beauty, will and selfless caring," said Corey Galinsky, Seeds for Success president. "Her unwavering contributions to Seeds 4 Success and our community will be celebrated and her spirited work for others carried on."*

*Since founding the organization, Feldman made it her focus and worked relentlessly for it to thrive. She raised funds, motivated and organized hundreds of volunteer mentors, recruited program participants, found program space and structured programs, and much more. If the organization was in need of anything, Feldman was always there to support — no matter how big the task.*

*"In the early days, resources were scarce and we worried," Hunter said. "Karen was our rock. She would never even let us think about giving up. In her mind, giving up was not an option because that would be giving up on the children we served. In Karen's every fiber, it was about children, their families and their futures."*



*Often, Feldman tutored and mentored the children of the program because although she enjoyed the behind-the-scenes work, she loved spending time with the children the most. She conducted reading programs and would transport children to theaters, ballet, museums and Washington, D.C., adventures when needed.*

*"I remember when Mrs. Karen took me out to eat to celebrate me getting into college and she shared great advice and tips that I continue to use and will always remember," said Tyjah Brown, a former student. "I will never forget her."*

*Feldman was especially known for her dedication to opening doors for others. In 2017, Feldman and Hunter were presented with the Volunteer of the Year award by the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County for their services to the community.*

*"I have seen many deeply committed volunteers, but I have never seen anything like the long term and total devotion Karen has given to helping improve the lives and long-term opportunities of Annapolis' disadvantaged children through the organization," said Trudy McFall, board member.*

*The Feldman family planned carefully to help sustain Seeds 4 Success after her death. To honor her memory and continue her impact, you can make a contribution to the Karen Feldman Endowment Fund for Seeds 4 Success at the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County.*

*Donations in her memory can be made online at: [www.s4sannapolis.org/Karen-Feldman](http://www.s4sannapolis.org/Karen-Feldman).*

*or by mail: Karen Feldman Endowment Fund for Seeds 4 Success, C/O Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County, 914 Bay Ridge Road, Suite 220, Annapolis, MD 21403.*

77

{ Youth Served Across All  
Seeds 4 Success Programs }

180

{ Days of Programming }

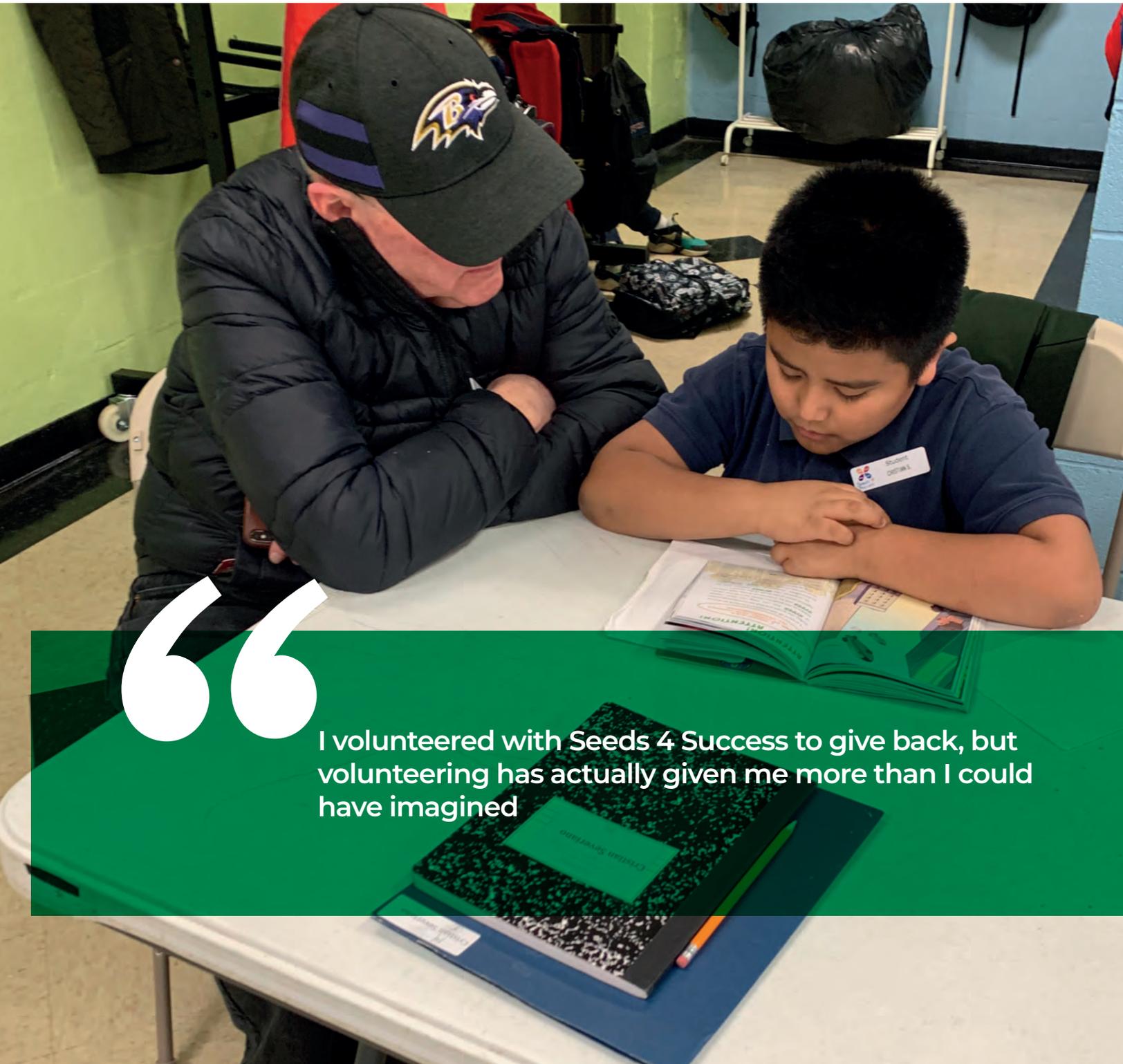
15,080

{ Program Hours Delivered }



“

Our vision is that every child in Annapolis  
has the opportunity to build a bright future



“

I volunteered with Seeds 4 Success to give back, but volunteering has actually given me more than I could have imagined

# Our Volunteers

# 89

{ Active  
Volunteers }

# 7

{ Mentor and  
Mentee  
Outings }

# 12

{ Volunteer  
Trainings }

# \$89,081

{ Value of  
Tutoring Time }

## Volunteers are the backbone to our impact and the success of our youth

### MIA'S STORY

By Marguerite Welch  
Seeds 4 Success Tutor

Six years of tutoring with Seeds 4 Success often reminds me of early motherhood. My first child was a sunny blond baby, always calm, cooperative and smiley. I could tote him around everywhere like a wind-up doll. Of course, it was my superior skills at motherhood. I smugly smiled while other mothers battled screaming children and flailing bodies. Then I had a second son and discovered what real parenting was about. My initial four years of tutoring were similar in that my first tutee was gracious, grateful, attentive and willing. I looked forward to our time together and often worked with her extra days during the week. Over the years we formed an unusually close relationship. While other tutors bemoaned the challenges of connecting with their tutees, I inwardly gloated believing I, of course, possessed superior skills.

Then two years ago I met Mia. A whirlwind of energy and attitude, angry, slouching, hooded and rude. I stuttered with bewilderment. No matter how much I cajoled or lectured I could not reach this girl. Each session was fraught with confrontation. She hid under a table or behind her friend when I entered The Zone. She squirmed, she wandered off to talk to her friends or go to the bathroom for the third time. Getting her to read was like negotiating a North Korean treaty. Writing in her journal was deemed: "Too BORING. I don't got to do this. I knows how to write." I would have rather endured a root canal than walk through that door every Wednesday. But thanks to my own stubbornness, guilt and pride, I returned every week to be rebuffed and embattled. I consulted with the staff and Mia's mentor and seriously considered not returning the next year but everyone counseled patience and perseverance. "Just keep showing up" they pleaded---and I did. The next year I still had to drag her out from under a table, but finally persuaded her to settle down and read a new book she had been assigned. Reluctantly she began in her uninflected, runaway train style, trampling periods and commas like dead mice on the track. However, I sensed a new

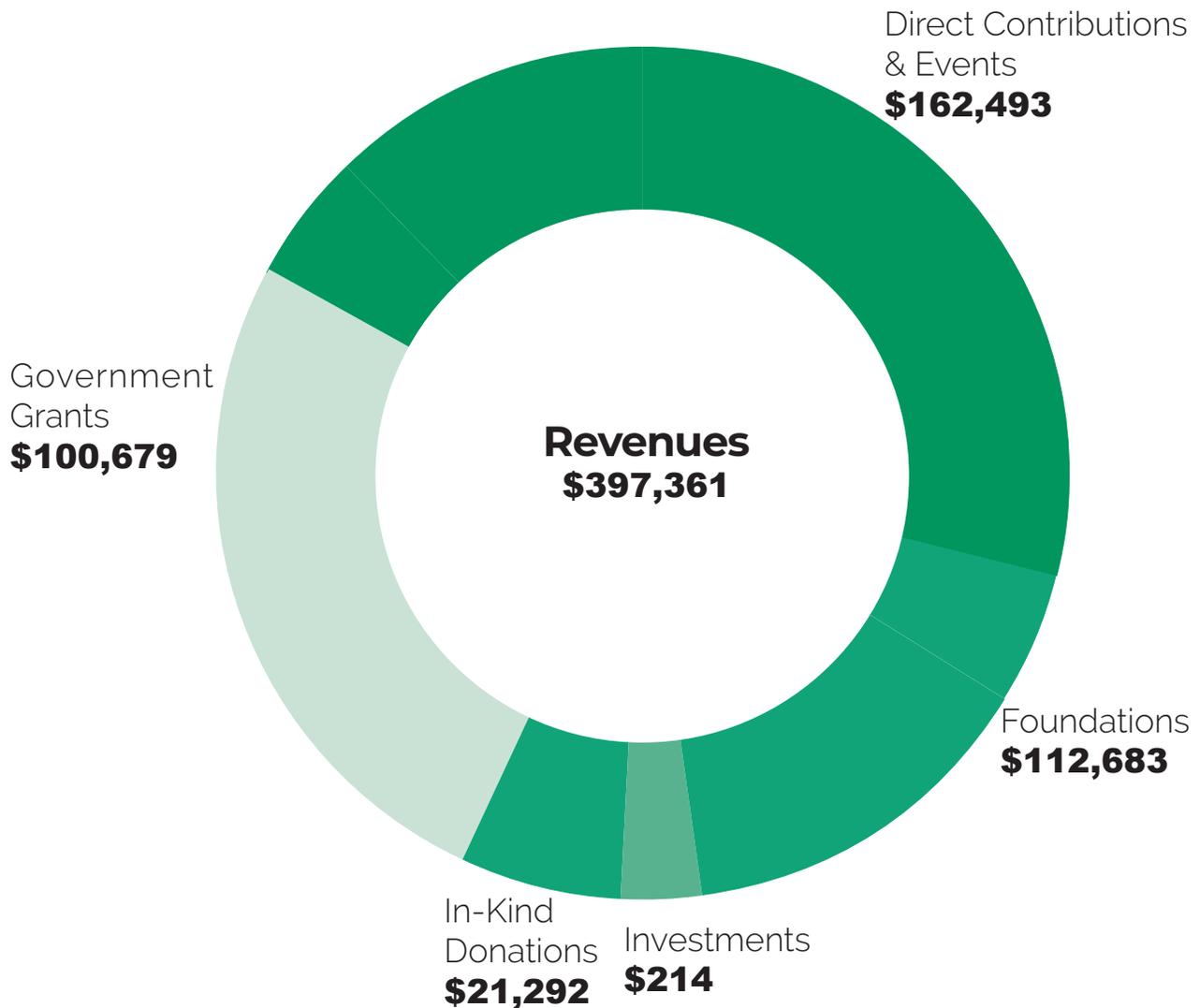
attentiveness, as the story about a girl who couldn't read and who hides her anger and loneliness behind a mask of indifference and dismissive behavior unfolded. I asked her if the main character reminded her of anyone she knew and we both laughed. When it came time to write in her journal, to my amazement, she actually wrote a complete sentence before she was distracted by a friend and reverted to the old behavior patterns. But in that brief ten minutes I glimpsed a completely different personality. Gradually, over the next weeks this other personality periodically surfaced for longer and longer periods of time. Her beautiful smile, her engaging thoughtfulness and sly sense of humor began bubbling up more frequently through the mask of rage and dissatisfaction. Journal writing, while a battle, increased from one sentence to two to a whole paragraph. One day, after a slight back slide of resistance, I said, "Okay if you don't want to write about this story, write your own story." A light switched on. Her whole face brightened, her eyes looked off in the distance as she started to spin out a story about a girl looking for her real home and finding a friendly monster to help her. She started writing and thinking, and writing and thinking, and as six o'clock approached and everyone was putting away the chairs and clearing the tables, Mia kept writing. My eyes welled up with tears as I watched this girl become totally swept up in the world of the imagination and the wonder of words, a world that I myself love more than any other.

Ever since that day our relationship has blossomed. We are genuine friends who have found a way to reach each other through a shared passion. We still clash over failing grades, missing homework and unexcused absences. She still retreats under her hood and rudely rebuffs me until I could strangle her, but we have found a sunny space where we can meet, the sunny space of spinning stories, through which I trust everything else will be resolved given time.

*(Mia has since moved to another part of the county where there is not currently a Seeds 4 Success program.)*

# The Financials

Thanks to the generosity of many donors, grant providers, companies, local and federal government agencies, we are able to fulfill our mission.



**73%**

**Expenses On  
Direct Program  
Services**



**27%**

**Expenses On  
Supporting  
Services**

**Expenses By Programs**

**18%**

**Eastport Girls Club**  
Includes summer programs and family nights.

**18%**

**Eastport Boys Club**  
Includes summer programs and family nights.

**22%**

**Academic & Career  
Exploration Club**  
Includes scholarship program.

**42%**

**Foster Grandparents**

**Total Expenses  
\$360,071**

# Historical Timeline

- 2008** Seven women meet to address gun violence in nearby housing community. With a \$500 grant from the Eastport Civic Association, Eastport Girls Club (EGC), the tutoring program is formed.
- 2010** Mentoring component is added to the Eastport Girls Club tutoring program to provide additional support to youth by pairing each with a one-on-one mentor.
- 2011** EGC incorporates as Seeds 4 Success (S4S) and receives 501(c)(3) status.  
  
Parent Workshops added to expand services to parent/guardians.
- 2012** I Am a Reader program is added to help low-income 1st and 2nd grade boys increase reading ability and comprehension.  
  
Summer programming added to serve all youth in programs.
- 2015** Academic and Career Exploration Club (ACEC) added to expand services to high school students from 9th to 12th grade.
- 2018** Eastport Boys Club (EBC) program is created to replace I Am a Reader, and run parallel to EGC.  
  
10<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary Celebration.
- 2019** Scholarship program launched for high school graduates and funded by the Jim and Linda Humphrey Foundation.



# The Future

## Onward and Upward!

At Seeds 4 Success we have a saying "*onward and upward!*" Despite the learning curves, we've moved onward by developing a formula that actually works! We call it the Seeds 4 Success method. It begins with finding the right people. First, we are constantly recruiting, screening and training a team of volunteers who serve as mentors and tutors. Second, we implement specific program components: career education, guide youth to identify their passions, weekly tutoring, mentoring, and life skills education. We use these program components and remain active in children's lives as they graduate high school and continue on their path out of generational poverty. Finally, we find amazing supporters to fund our programs.

Students enter Seeds 4 Success in elementary school, and we continue to guide them until they graduate high school.

We see that those who remain active in our programs graduate high school. Those who maintain close relationships with their mentors go to college or a career program. Today, we are now ready to move upward, by growing our programs into new communities. In the next several months we will be updating our strategic plan to incorporate a growth strategy to serve more youth, potentially starting at birth! Together, our dedicated Board of Directors, staff and supporters, have begun planning the future of Seeds 4 Success for the next 10 years.

Our continued success and the success of our students is made possible because of your generous support. You've given us funds, time, skills, many great ideas and the energy to continue to strive for our mission. Our work lives on because of the incredible community of supporters around us. Thank you for 12 wonderful years.





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