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school on wheels inc.

Tutoring Homeless Children Since 1993

**“I worry
about the future a lot,
and how I’ll be able to help
my family survive. Sometimes
it’s hard to stay motivated. But
my mother supports all of us.
She has helped us grow strong,
although things have been
tough. Luckily I like school.
Math makes me happy!”**

- Taree Mayfield , 13

Annual Report 2015





A message from President of the Board, Joshua Fein

Thousands of school aged children living throughout Southern California may not have a place to call home but, because of you, they have School on Wheels. We are helping these kids succeed in school, giving them the educational support and confidence they desperately need. In supporting their education, the true equalizer in life, we give these economically disadvantaged youth the opportunity to balance the playing field and give them much needed hope. I want to thank all our volunteers who spend tens of thousands of hours tutoring and commuting to our students. Thank you to our School on Wheels staff who are so passionate about their work, to our committed Board and to our unparalleled and tireless Executive Director. Your continued commitment to School on Wheels is making a real difference.



Joshua Fein

Joshua Fein
President of the Board

Cover Story



From left to right, Tajiri(13), Kelyese (9), Kamylah(9), Taree(13), Killiy(11), Tasir(11) are siblings and three sets of twins! Taree (cover) has been invited to represent children who are homeless as a new World Children's Prize jury member. He will be representing the US and putting a human face to the problems faced by homeless children and youth. Agnes Stevens, received the World's Children's Honorary Award in 2008.

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Our Mission

Since 1993, our mission has never wavered: to enhance educational opportunities for homeless children from Kindergarten through Grade 12. These children live in shelters, motels, group foster homes, cars or on the street. We work hard to shrink the gaps in their learning and remove the barriers that stand between them and the education they will need to succeed.

ANOTHER RECORD BREAKING YEAR

A letter from Executive Director, Catherine Meek

Dear Friends,

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." African proverb

Reflecting on this past year, I realize that the only way School on Wheels can go anywhere (fast or far!) is by partnering with you - our wonderful network of volunteers, donors, supporters and friends. Big dreams need great teams and we certainly have one. Our amazing staff and dedicated Board work every day to achieve our mission of helping homeless kids with their education.



2015 was another record-breaking year for us: we tutored more students, welcomed more volunteers and raised more funds than ever before. But even as we celebrate our achievements, we must continually commit to reaching more kids. California has the dubious honor of ranking number one in the number of homeless children – over 526,700 children experience homelessness each year in the Golden State. I know with your support we can continue to find ways to bring hope and stability to more homeless students. This includes students like Taree, our cover story, who lives in a shelter in Skid Row with his mother and five brothers and sisters in one room, sharing a toilet and shower with others. He dreams of being an author, *"I like writing my own stories. It takes a long time to perfect them, but that doesn't matter because I have a lot of patience. If I make it as an author, first I'll help my family and then other homeless people."* May Taree's dreams come true.

Our annual report is a reflection of your generosity your treasure, talent, time and spirit. I know that with your partnership and commitment, we will go far. I am honored to take this journey with you. As always, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

With deep appreciation,

Catherine Meek, Executive Director



Kevin Bacon visited our learning center



Student performs at our talent show



Award winning student tutor



Reaching More Students Than Ever

Our volunteers tutored in almost 300 locations in six counties throughout Southern California. Every week, our amazing tutors give of themselves and their time going to a shelter, a library or a book store to encourage their students to learn. They provide friendship, stability and support at a time of darkness and chaos in their students' lives. They are truly changing those lives.



3,491

Students

2,223

Volunteers

4,162

Backpacks

794

Digital Learning

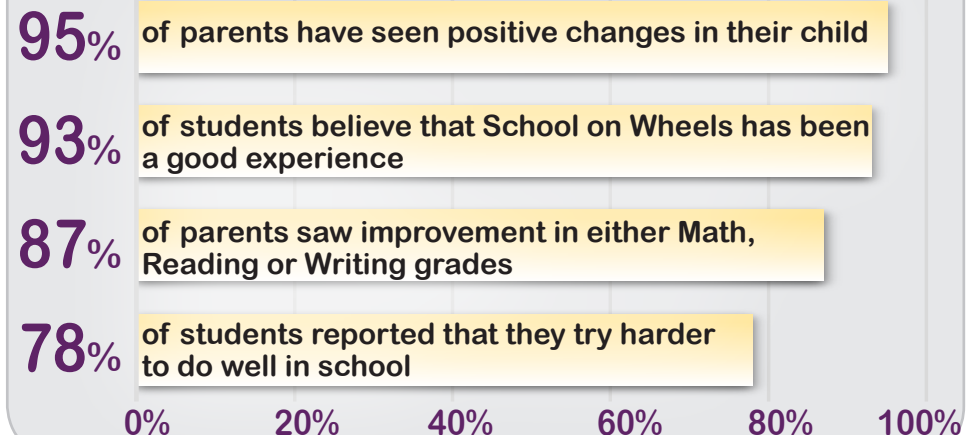
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Scholarships



- ✓ We launched three Digital Learning Centers; reached 620 students with computer-based adaptive learning programs; and tutored 174 students through our Online Tutoring program.
- ✓ Distributed 4,162 brand-new backpacks filled with school supplies -- important tools for kids who have nowhere to keep their "stuff."
- ✓ Partnered with LAUSD and FAME to provide 3,000 bus tokens for parents to get our students to and from school.
- ✓ Awarded scholarships to 19 students.
- ✓ Presented the Presidential Service Award to 124 remarkable tutors.
- ✓ Became certified as a Service Enterprise by Points of Light Foundation, the world's largest organization dedicated to volunteer service.

Since having a tutor:



COLLEGE BOUND

“Where you are right now does not mean you will be there forever.” Chynna Lloyd

Fewer than 25% of homeless students graduate from high school. Our students are working hard to change that statistic.



After Tatiana, her mom, and her little brother ran from an abusive relationship, they stayed at more homeless shelters than they can remember.

School on Wheels tutor Disha Patel met a shy Tatiana when she was in ninth grade, at a shelter in Ventura County. Tatiana was gifted in math and art but not really interested in school.

“I thought our situation was too complicated, with no money or home. What was the point of school? I would never get to go to college. So why even try?”

Disha kept Tatiana motivated to study and helped her get into an art summer program. Over the years they researched colleges and visited campuses as Disha kept reinforcing the importance and possibility of college. In eleventh grade, the family found a studio apartment, and Tatiana Obukhova is now a freshman, studying Animation at the California College of the Arts. Tatiana received several scholarships including one from School on Wheels.



When School on Wheels tutor Katie Balderas met Chynna in 2009, Chynna had already attended seven different schools.

Her life was hard. Chynna was teased because her clothes were old and she couldn't leave the Domestic Violence Shelter to play outside. Despite good grades, Chynna had missed a lot of school and needed help, especially in math. She was determined to go to college.

Katie and Chynna bonded over music and reading. They focused on school and math instead of Chynna's homelessness.

Seven years later, through the death of Chynna's father, and the birth of Katie's son, their friendship is especially deep.

“Chynna is resilient, strong, and smart and it's been one of the biggest joys of my life to know her. I knew how important education is to help families break the cycle of poverty, but I learned how poverty can make it so much harder to focus on education.”

“Katie is the type of person we need on this earth. School on Wheels cares and will actually help you with school. This is a great program.”

Chynna graduates in June. She has numerous college acceptances and is planning a career in law.

Katie is a Policy Analyst and has a master's degree in public health.



Diana Camarillo, a School on Wheels graduate, surprised us at a volunteer recruitment fair and shared her story:

“I had been homeless for two years, living in different shelters, when I was matched with a School on Wheels tutor because I struggled with language arts and composition. School on Wheels replaced my backpack with a beautiful new one and we worked together for six months before my family moved into permanent housing.

I decided to work hard and get a college degree, so I could have a career rather than just a job. With financial aid and two jobs, I now have my own apartment and am finishing my first year at Mount St. Mary's College.

When I was homeless, I didn't know that college was an option. But I am proud of my achievements and grateful to School on Wheels for helping me to understand the importance of education.”

Diana's tutor, Carol Yee, was thrilled to hear from Diana seven years later.

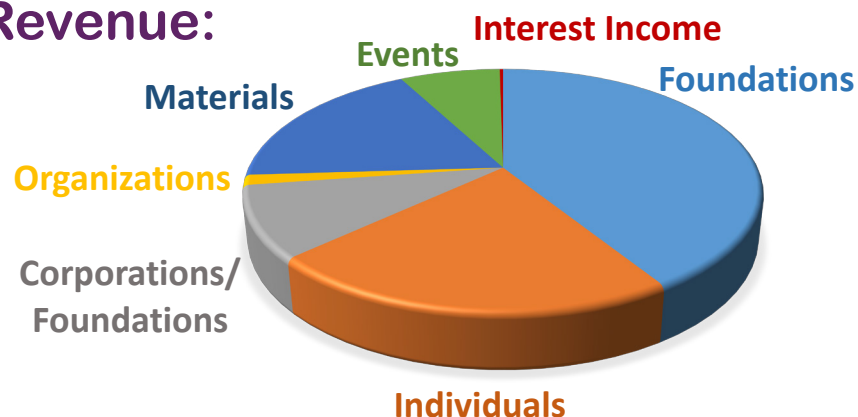
“I am very proud of her and not a bit surprised with her success!”

FINANCIAL RESULTS

Thanks to you, we increased our support by 26% in 2015, with an increase of 20% in financial contributions and 64% in material donations. Thanks to you, we continue to add improvements to our program services.

"Every dollar donated is maximized by the use of volunteers and the volunteer program. Volunteers are well trained, there is a great support system and you are made to feel appreciated."
- Katie Baldaros, Tutor

Revenue:



Foundations	\$832,106	41%
Individual Donations	\$447,258	22%
Donated Materials	\$368,214	18%
Corporations/Corporate Foundations	\$193,269	10%
Special Events	\$152,286	8%
Organizations	\$27,476	1%
Interest Income	\$5,139	0.3%
TOTAL	\$2,025,748	

Expenses:



92%
of donations went
directly to our
programs in 2015!

Program Services	\$1,655,817	92%
Supporting Services	\$84,592	5%
Fundraising	\$63,346	3%
TOTAL	\$1,803,755	



OUR FRIENDS



We are honored to be supported by so many long-time donors, new friends and supporters, and all our partners who believe in our mission and invested in our homeless students. Our ability to serve homeless students relies on generous, committed supporters like you. A complete listing of our donors can be viewed on our web site.

Gifts of \$100,000+

Delmer Clarence Kallberg Estate
Dora F. Levit Fund for People
The Eisner Foundation
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Gifts of \$75,000+

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Yvonne & Michael Derse



Once again, thank you to our good friends, Bob & Kerry Morris, Steve & Stephanie Dahlberg, Glen Gerson, and Sheriff Mike Woodard for hosting the Annual Holiday Party for over 200 students! The staff at Paradise Cove Beach Cafe donate their time and wonderful talents to make this the party of the year.





School on Wheels, Inc | www.schoolonwheels.org

