



Family Newsletter

May 2005

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Report from the April Family Meeting

This newsletter will begin a regular feature of providing a summary from the meetings with the Board of Directors.

Board President Faith Arter introduced our new Executive Director - David Hastings - who spoke briefly to the families, stressing that he wanted to both learn from and hear from the families on all issues they deemed important.

Financial Report - Faith explained the balance sheet and profit and loss statement provided to the families, indicating the funds are separated by their purpose and any restrictions placed on them as a result of their source. For example, particular funds are dedicated to provide assistance to families in certain states and cannot be commingled. She explained that she and David are working on the development of a budget which will outline the program and functional areas the Fund is prioritizing. That budget is in process. One of Faith's priorities is to identify the appropriate amount of reserves to put aside for the purpose of being able to continue specific functions of the organization (for example, the annual commemoration) for the long term.

Projects and Programs - David and Social Work Coordinator Diane Nealon presented updates on the following projects:

Health Insurance Project - we are working with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts to develop a proposal for subsidizing family health insurance for those who are coming off of COBRA benefits.

Remembrance Book Project - Faith has asked David to work closely with the design team to

Scholarship America - David briefed the families on his conversation with the Vice President of

identify a time frame and necessary decisions in order to produce a book during the summer. (more on this later in the newsletter).

Family Fitness Day - David spoke about the upcoming May 15 - Family Fitness Day at the Sports Club LA in Boston, encouraging everyone who can to attend (more on that program later in this newsletter)...

Boston Center for Adult Education Classes - As detailed in the April newsletter, this program offers a \$50/person/class maximum reimbursement for selected BCAE classes. One family member who wanted to attend a class some months away, but did not want to miss out on the reimbursement program in the event it was used up by then, asked the Fund to consider the request. In response the Fund is going to set-aside reimbursement Funds for families that ask, in advance, with the intention of registering for a course list that is offered later on in the year. David explained that the program was being offered in the hope that groups of individuals might attend classes, providing a social activity as well as personal development. In response to a suggestion from family members present, Faith stated that groups of individuals interested in taking courses together that might be at facilities in other parts of the state should forward their requests to David for consideration of inclusion in this effort.

Collaboration and Information Sharing Project for Young People - Diane explained some of the logic behind the upcoming initial gathering of parents and young people in Waltham. She invited parents to come by themselves if their child is not interested in attending, and to also follow-up with her with phone contacts about issues they may

(editor's note: this event is being rescheduled to enable a larger number of parents and young people to attend).

Scholarship America The families present and some board members expressed continued frustration with the lack of responsiveness of the Scholarship America organization. Faith asked David to make this the number one priority, given the proximity to the deadline for application (June 15) and the necessity of being able to put together financial plans for college in the fall for some of our families.

Needs Analysis Survey - Diane reviewed the summary data, cautioning the group that this was based on a small sample of respondents, and that we intend to continue gathering additional responses. A suggestion was made to offer the survey instrument on the web. Due to the confidentiality of the material, there are no plans to offer a web-based survey at this point in time. Family members who have not yet submitted a survey are encouraged to do so and can ask Diane for another copy.

Discussion of a proposal for Family Members to serve as Board Representatives - Faith summarized the decision taken earlier that evening at the Board member such that the Board will be working to increase the size of the Family Advisory Committee, clarify its roles and responsibilities, and identify a selection method to use in selecting some subset of those Committee members to serve on the Board. She cautioned that such service on the board needs to be designed carefully, to avoid conflicts of interest that could compromise the Fund's ability to follow required state and federal regulation and law. David will be leading an effort to develop proposed policies and procedures for consideration at the June Board meeting.

Moving Our Offices

The Hill/Holliday company has graciously hosted our administrative offices rent-free and will continue to do so until June 30, 2005. We are in process of identifying new office space, and will provide our new email, phone and mailing address information as soon as it is available.

you have already submitted, please contact

Upcoming Board and Family Meeting

Save the date - June 13 - details on time and location to follow.

Register for May 15 Family Fitness Day - ...it might not be too late...

We may still be able to make some provision for those who have not yet RSVP'd to attend this unique event. An opportunity like this, to spend a wonderful Sunday with family and friends at one of the nation's leading sports and fitness club does not come along every day. Full time professional day care is available on site for children as young as 3 from 10:30 AM to 3:00 PM as an added bonus. Plus - you'll enjoy a light mid-afternoon lunch after all this great exercise! Please RSVP to LaNitra when you get this newsletter and she can tell you if we still have space. Our own Mary Kakas, Vice President of the Board, may even be able to lead you on a fitness walk that morning. We invite you to contact LaNitra to sign up.

Remembrance Book Project

More than seventy families have been working over the past two years in helping the Fund and its professional designers put together a most special collection of memories of our loved ones lost. The project now has a detailed completion schedule, which outlines thirteen weeks of work to finalize the layout of the individual pages, prepare the material for reproduction, and then the printing. You will have received at least one email prior to getting this newsletter, if you have provided us with an operable email address. If not, this will be your notice of this first deadline. We would like to list all of the scholarship and memorial funds, and other organizations and efforts that have been established in the name(s) of your loved one(s) in the introductory booklet of the Remembrance Book. Project. Please call LaNitra with the information. **In order to produce the project on schedule, and to include the information about the organization/effort you have established, we need to have it by May 12.**

If you have any questions about the material youyou have already submitted, please

you have already submitted, please Contact David
In the coming five to seven weeks we will be making arrangement to return your originals. We are planning on have the printing completed by the end of the last week in July and distribution the first week of August. So many of you have put so much of yourselves into this project. We want to make sure you will have our shared best attempt at honoring those in whose memory it is being put together. More details will be made available regarding the numbers of copies of the full project book and individual remembrance pieces as it is available. be available the first week of August for distribution. We will be working with the family leaders of this project to develop the logistics for

www.massfund.org

We invite all of you to offer suggestions for content on our website. The website will be refreshed in the coming months, and this would be an excellent time for you to tell us the kind of material you would like to see on the site. In its next iteration, we expect the website to become an important two-way communication vehicle for all of us, and pledge to make this next version one that will be continuously updated and where you can find the latest information about our programs and events.