

Bright Beginnings Newsletter Fall 2021



Dear Friend of BBI,

Welcome back everyone to a fresh start this fall at BBI! It has been a pleasure bringing in the new school year with plenty of old and new faces.

I want to introduce myself as the new President of BBI's Board of Directors. Starting October 1st, I'll be taking the reins from our previous President, the very talented and capable Maria Estefania.

As one of the individuals associated with the founding of BBI 30 years ago, I find myself thrilled and humbled to be taking over this role today.

We at BBI are so proud of the ways our families have adapted to the difficult and always-changing landscape of COVID-19 over the past year. It has been such an honor seeing some of our young scholars transition into kindergarten, and many return smart as ever and nearing kindergarten-readiness despite these challenges.

As BBI adapts to these changes as well, and out of an abundance of caution in the wake of the Delta variant, we have chosen to postpone our in-person **Champions for Children** event. Health and safety is our top priority. We hope that we will be able to have an in-person awards ceremony as soon as it is safe to do so.

Furthermore, upon FDA approval, the Biden administration's recent mandate that all Head Start employees become vaccinated, and the DC Mayor's child care vaccine mandate, BBI is now requiring all staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Nov. 1, 2021. This measure is intended to ensure the health and safety of our employees, families, visitors, and the community at large. Our vaccine mandate is a vital step forward that will allow us to proceed safely towards an exciting future. We look forward to many positive changes, including the installation of a third playground to suit the developmental needs of our active and energetic 3- and 4-year-olds.

As the leaves begin to change and the school year leans into full swing, we are excited for our students and families to continue learning and growing. Thank you as always for your continued support and enthusiasm. Please enjoy our updates on the goings on at BBI this fall.

Sincerely,



Nancy P. Register
President, Bright Beginnings Board of Directors



2-GEN IN ACTION

Our programming supports both children and their families. This creates a long-lasting impact and helps the family unit as a whole move from crisis to self-sufficiency.

Student Transition Ceremony

BBI closed out its 2020/2021 school year with a graduation and transition ceremony for its Pre-K 5 class. During this time of transition, BBI helps parents with the My School DC Lottery process and partners with them to find a good school for their child. We also provide uniforms, backpacks, and supplies for each child as they enter kindergarten. Preparing our children to start kindergarten ready to learn is a key piece of our mission.



Parent Orientation Day

BBI kicked off the 2021/2022 school year on August 6th with Parent Orientation Day. Each family met with their child's teacher and toured their classroom. They also received information about BBI programming for both parents and children, including Fatherhood and Workforce Development Programs, the Parent Policy Council, Health and Therapeutic Services, and our Infant and Maternal Wellness initiative. A special "Thank You" to our friends at [Passion City Church](#) who provided back to school bags stuffed with books and learning materials for all of BBI's center- and home-based children, as well as [Washington National Tax / RSM US](#) who provided resources for families on the new Child Tax Credit and wrote inspirational "Back to School" cards for our families and children.



INCREASING VACCINE UPTAKE IN BBI'S COMMUNITY

BBI has partnered with Dr. Yolandra Hancock, AKA Dr. Yola, to support its #GetVaxxed campaign to increase vaccine uptake in the BBI community. Dr. Yola is a pediatrician and health and wellness expert serving the Washington area. On the last Wednesday of each month at 9:00pm, Dr. Yola holds a [Facebook live info session](#) to provide the latest information on the Covid-19 virus and answer questions from event participants. You can join these sessions by going directly to [Dr. Yola's Facebook Page](#) the last Wednesday of the month at 9:00pm or by visiting [BBI's #GetVaxxed webpage](#).

HOME VISITING IMPACT

BBI conducted an assessment of its Home Visiting Program during the 2020-2021 program year. The assessment, conducted through our Self-Sufficiency Matrix, showed that our families experienced growth in power domain areas -- the building blocks of self-sufficiency that need

immediate support when a family is in crisis. These areas include income, housing, food, safety, and mental health. Amazingly, our families experienced growth in all domains except for mental health -- no surprise given the pandemic.



SUPERINTENDENT GRANT VISITS BBI

BBI was happy to welcome Dr. Christina Grant, Acting State Superintendent of Education for the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, to our center on August 19th. Dr. Grant was able to tour the building, see our playgrounds and garden, and chat with a few of our teachers. She was well-received by our students as well, who were excited to see a new and friendly face.

TEAM BUILDING AT BBI

To kick off the new school and program year, the staff of BBI engaged in team building activities at Bowlero in Arlington, VA and at Terrapin Adventures in Savage, MD. Our day at Terrapin Adventures included giant swings, rope walks, zip lines, team-building activities, and lots of laughter. Due to social distancing and health and safety measures at our center, several staff members who began working with BBI in the last 12 months met face-to-face for the first time. The rope swing (photo right) was a favorite of the staff!



Save the Date!
Giving Tuesday will be on November 30th this year. It was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day to encourage generosity and goodwill. This is an important campaign for BBI, supporting our programming and operations.



Doing some Shopping?
Shop at smile.amazon.com, select Bright Beginnings as your favorite charity, and 0.5% of your eligible purchases will be donated to BBI!



Dr. Dean is now featured on PowerStation -- a podcast about change-making where nonprofit leaders share how they build community, advocate for change and make an impact. Catch the full interview on the [PowerStation site](#).

[Donate Now!](#)

