



# Growing up Healthy



**MEET ISANI.** As a child growing up in the South Bronx, she suffered from a potentially serious vision condition called amblyopia. But thanks to Children's Health Fund, the problem was identified and corrected, and now she's a freshman at one of America's finest colleges — with an eye on a bright future.

## Children's Health Fund ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Interactive report available online at  
[childrenshealthfund.org/2014annualreport](http://childrenshealthfund.org/2014annualreport)

Thank you for being part of our  
Children's Health Fund family and for  
helping kids get the health care they need.

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See our first interactive  
annual report now online.

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**[childrenshealthfund.org/2014annualreport](http://childrenshealthfund.org/2014annualreport)**

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# Building Childhood Resilience

At the Center for Child Health and Resiliency at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore in the South Bronx, a group of women file in pushing baby carriages. Weary and sleep-deprived, as new mothers will be, their faces still light up with smiles as they greet one another, excited to be back for their latest well- baby group care session.

"Group care is an alternative to traditional pregnancy and newborn doctor visits," says Barbara Hackley PhD RN CNM, Clinical Director Women's Health Services and Director of the Resiliency Initiative at our South Bronx Health Center. "In a traditional visit, a woman sits around in a waiting room and then gets a 15-minute visit with her doctor. Group care changes that by bringing women together in fully engaged two-hour sessions where there is not only time for learning and discussion, but also time to create a supportive community."

Each group meets on a regular basis. During the sessions, every pregnant woman gets a personal exam by the doctor, but she also gets a lot more. Each session features a visit by a medical professional from the health center who talks about stress management, exercise, nutrition, conflict resolution, financial issues, preparing for delivery, and other essential topics. Then the women have time to share experiences and concerns around a healthy communal meal.

Many of the women who go through group care during their pregnancy, give birth and then transition right into the well-baby group for new mothers, where they reconnect with the women they have come to know. By the time they are done, strangers have become friends and confidants, a fact that just adds to the overall benefit of the experience.

"We've seen tremendous improvements in the health of the babies – and the mothers – when compared to those who go through the traditional model of neonatal and pediatric care," says Hackley. "The outcomes speak for themselves – from lower rates of childhood obesity to improved social and emotional health."

The women in the groups feel the difference, too. "This has been just wonderful," says one mom as she cradles her newborn in her arms. "They teach you everything a mother needs to know."

WATCH:  
[In a Family Way](#)



# Targeting Health Barriers to Learning

Through decades of experience caring for low-income children on the Children's Health Fund national network of mobile clinics – which visit hundreds of schools to provide health care to students – time and again our medical teams have witnessed the transformational change that happens when a child is finally relieved of a health burden like uncontrolled asthma or poor vision and can return to the classroom healthy and ready to learn.

In 2014, Children's Health Fund activated a new initiative to tackle health barriers to learning with laser like focus and develop solutions to this health crisis in the classroom.

One strategy has been to develop a demonstration model for a school-based intervention, which launched with the start of the school year in 2014 at three New York City elementary schools in high poverty neighborhoods. There are gaps in the medical literature on the prevalence of health barriers to learning. Our extensive presence in these schools has provided the opportunity to assess the true scale of the problem of health barriers to learning in impoverished communities and explore how to address these challenges at a systemic scale.



The results in the first year have been startling. For example, when all 2,000 students in the three demonstration schools were assessed for vision problems, we found that 21% of children failed the screening. Think of a classroom where 1 in 5 kids may not be able to see the blackboard or read their text book, and imagine being the teacher in that class.

The conventional response to school vision screening protocols is to send a note home to parents alerting them of the need to take a child to an eye doctor for follow up. In households that are below the poverty level, this response is inadequate. Too many barriers stand in the way – a parent that can't take time off from work to take a child to an optometrist or the budget-busting cost of a pair of glasses. Children's Health Fund took a different approach, working with community partners to bring optometrists into the schools to do full eye exams and then providing each child with two pairs of glasses, one for school and one for home, at no charge. [As the New York Times reported in December 2014](#), teachers immediately know when a child can't see. "This is my 14th year teaching, and this has been an epidemic for the length of my teaching career," Christopher Alden told the Times. But now with the Healthy and Ready to Learn initiative, teachers, parents and school administrators have a partner to work with to ensure that kids get the help they need.

As the year progressed, the Healthy and Ready to Learn team at each demonstration school introduced hearing and dental screenings, worked with the school to offer mental health counseling, reached out to children missing school due to asthma to connect them to pediatric care, and started parent education workshops to empower parents to advocate for their children. Now these new protocols are expanding into the Children's Health Fund national network as we lead a growing movement to address health barriers to learning that contribute to the cycle of poverty.



# Building Relationships That Save Lives

As soon as Dr. Darlene Melk saw Efrain Gonzalez, she knew something was seriously wrong. Normally a healthy, friendly kid who came to the mobile medical clinic for his sports physicals, Efrain looked emaciated and exhausted.

Dr. Melk had gotten to know the Gonzalez family while providing primary care to both Efrain and his sister in Sierra Vista, a remote town in the desert of Southern Arizona that the mobile clinic travels to weekly. This regular care enables the clinical staff to develop relationships with patients and their families that can be lifesaving in an emergency.

And this was an emergency. Efrain was very sick. He had lost 20 pounds in the prior week, and he was constantly extremely thirsty. At first his mother, Marisa, thought her son had the flu. But Efrain was just not getting better. The family had no health insurance, so they brought Efrain to the mobile clinic. Dr. Melk immediately recognized his symptoms as the sudden onset of Type 1 diabetes. Efrain was in critical condition and needed to be rushed to a hospital intensive care unit 75 miles away. He was in urgent danger of lapsing into a coma.

Efrain recovered from the medical crisis, but he needed to learn to live with this chronic condition. That means testing his blood sugar throughout the day and taking insulin daily. Dr. Melk has been there for him every step of the way, supervising his recovery and nurturing his renewed health. Efrain joined the Type 1 diabetes support group that Dr. Melk began for kids in the area when she saw that the children of rural Cochise County were not receiving the same standard of health care as children in the cities, and he is thriving under her watchful care.

“Dr. Darlene and the mobile clinic saved my life,” says Efrain. And then he goes to play football with the Sierra Vista High School team, just another 15 year old with a bright future.

## Red Nose Day Raised Critical Funds and Public Awareness



Red Nose Day has been a fundraising phenomenon on the BBC in the U.K. for over two decades. In 2014 Children's Health Fund was selected to be one of only six domestic charities to benefit from the first Red Nose Day telethon in the U.S. to fight child poverty here and abroad. The NBC Red Nose Day telethon was broadcast this spring, and Blake Shelton, a star of NBC's The Voice, visited with staff and patients aboard our Los Angeles mobile clinic for a video segment that was part of the special. Children's Health Fund garnered extensive press coverage in conjunction with the campaign.

**WATCH:** [NBC NIGHTLY NEWS told Efrain's story in the lead up to the Red Nose Day broadcast](#)



# Leveraging Technology to Improve Care

Throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, Dr. Seth Ammerman is a local hero to vulnerable teens dealing with challenges ranging from homelessness to depression. “He is one of the most loyal, kindhearted doctors,” says his longtime patient, Grace, a young woman who credits Dr. Ammerman and his mobile clinic team with helping her through some of the toughest days of her young life.

Dr. Ammerman’s potential impact was turbocharged in October 2015 when Children’s Health Fund delivered the most technologically advanced pediatric mobile clinic ever designed for the program it supports in the Bay Area in partnership with Stanford Children’s Health and the Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford. This beautiful new “Teen Health Van” brings together the latest technologies to make it easier to provide primary and preventive health care services to at-risk young people.

**WATCH:** [animated virtual tour of the mobile clinic.](#)

Largely funded by a landmark gift from Samsung to Children’s Health Fund, the Teen Health Van includes flat-screen monitors in the exam rooms and tablets loaded with interactive technology. These resources help physicians and other members of the clinic team educate patients about their medical conditions. Paper forms will be replaced with new tablet-based health assessment questionnaires to make better use of patient waiting time, and clinic staff are now wearing ‘Gear Fit’ bracelets so they can communicate more privately and efficiently in the tight spaces of the mobile clinic. Even the exterior of this high-tech doctor’s office on wheels is enhanced with a flat screen monitor that presents health videos, clinic schedules and other information.



Using a customized telehealth toolkit that Children’s Health Fund assembled to include an array of highly portable digital diagnostic tools, the mobile medical team in San Francisco, as well as several other teams across our national network, have the potential to connect patients to a distant specialist for diagnostic consultation. Children’s Health Fund began evaluating the use of this technology in our South Florida program in 2013 thanks to a grant from Verizon, and we have seen significant results there, including initial outcomes of a groundbreaking telehealth initiative to reduce childhood obesity.

Across our national network, Children’s Health Fund is innovating to leverage the power of health technology for kids who need it the most.



**WATCH:** [Ride on the Teen Van with Dr. Seth Ammerman.](#)

# Providing a Safe Place for Healing

For immigrant children in the Children's Health Fund Terra Firma program, eating a meal together, playing soccer together and slowly starting to feel safe are all part of the healing process after traumas no child should have to endure.

An unprecedented number of unaccompanied immigrant children – tens of thousands – crossed the U.S. border this year escaping from escalating violence and abject poverty in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. In their hometowns, they lived with the pervasive threat of gangs, and many have witnessed the murder of relatives or friends. On their journey to America, many of these children lived with hunger, physical or sexual abuse and the fear of being sent back. In New York, they try to find a haven, and Terra Firma is there for them.

Co-founded by Dr. Alan Shapiro, Senior Medical Director of Children's Health Fund New York programs, and Brett Stark, an immigration lawyer with Catholic Charities of New York, Terra Firma addresses both the health and legal issues these kids face. Based at the Center for Child Health and Resiliency in the South Bronx, which Children's Health Fund operates in partnership with the Children's Hospital at Montefiore, the program provides integrated medical, mental health and social services all under one roof for these unaccompanied immigrant children.

While Dr. Shapiro and the medical team – including Cristina Muñiz de la Peña, a pediatric psychologist who leads a weekly support group – address the children's health needs and help these isolated kids bond with one another to find new strength, Stark works to secure legal asylum for them in the U.S. Testimony from the doctors can support that case. For example, one teenager who found his way to Terra Firma still has a bullet in his back from gang violence in Honduras. Stark has found it's very powerful to be able to say to an immigration judge, "Here's a letter from Dr. Alan Shapiro where he reports this child has a bullet lodged in his spine in the L6 region." For cases involving emotional trauma, a psychologist's description of symptoms of PTSD can be compelling and persuasive when the children are unable to speak for themselves. By working together, the doctors and attorneys are able to give these kids the hope they risked so much for.

[As reported in The New York Times](#), "Everybody recognizes the Terra Firma model, which is geared towards children and trauma, seems to be the way to go," said Jojo Annobil, director of the Immigration Law unit for the Legal Aid Society.

For the children trying to make a home here, the road ahead is still long. "These kids have lost so much of their childhoods," say Dr. Shapiro. "At Terra Firma, after we take care of the most urgent medical and legal challenges they face, we are trying to restore some normalcy so they can settle into new lives here, connect with a community and start to look to a more secure future."

**WATCH:** [Terra Firma in action in this Univision report](#)





# Promoting the Health of the Whole Family

Growing up healthy is a process that involves not just the child, but a whole circle of support. For children to be truly healthy, they need attention not only from medical professionals, but also from their parents, guardians and teachers.

That is why our Healthy and Ready to Learn initiative includes parent workshops and teacher training. And why Children's Health Fund is committed to an enhanced medical home model, so that the at-risk kids we serve not only have access to health screening, prevention, and management of acute and chronic conditions, but also guidance to community connections for helpful services and health education for themselves and their families. This goal has resulted in some extremely innovative solutions, including a unique microwave cookbook.

Good nutrition is a key to continued good health for everyone, regardless of their economic situation. But for many families, financial challenges can make it extremely difficult to prepare nutritious meals affordably. Because many of the families we serve live in homeless shelters – where the only approved cooking appliance is a microwave oven – Children's Health Fund began special cooking and nutrition classes at some of the shelters as well as at our South Bronx Health Center. Working with the participants in these classes, we developed a collection of recipes to make tasty, healthy and affordable dishes using only a microwave oven.

This year, with support from a grant from **Walmart Foundation** that funds nutrition education services for our national network as well as the pro bono design services of **The Studio**, we published [Microwave Chef](#), a beautiful cookbook that we are distributing throughout our national network to empower families to improve their diets and the overall health of their families.

Says one of our medical directors, “These cookbooks are flying off our shelves. Everyone wants one!”



## BEING HEALTHY MEANS BEING PREPARED FOR THE WORST

Disasters can strike anyone anywhere. But children and families with few resources are especially susceptible to catastrophic events such as hurricanes, earthquakes, industrial accidents and epidemics.

That's why Children's Health Fund partners closely with the [National Center for Disaster Preparedness](#) (NCDP), part of the Earth Institute at Columbia University. Since 2005, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Children's Health Fund and NCDP have worked together to develop a series of multi-faceted research and disaster response initiatives. These efforts have helped scores of severely devastated communities to endure and recover from the ravages of disaster so families can get back on their feet.

## LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDERS

**F** For 16 million children who live in poverty in America, growing up healthy is a tremendous challenge. From birth through adolescence, these kids face countless obstacles to good health. Doctors are scarce in the communities where they live. Medication may run out when a family doesn't have the money to refill a prescription. Poor nutrition and environmental pollution often contribute to declining health. Poverty can ratchet up the stress at home.



That is why Children's Health Fund reaches out to tens of thousands of America's most vulnerable kids each year, providing access to the high-quality health care that can give a child the chance to grow up healthy, happy and productive.

From our flagship mobile medical program for homeless children in New York City, which expanded over the decades to include a campus of state-of-the-art health clinics for low-income families in the South Bronx, Children's Health Fund has also built a national network of mobile clinics – some medical, some dental, and some providing mental health services.

But it's not just the geographic reach, it's the depth of the care we provide that makes such an impact. At Children's Health Fund, our mission has been to provide a medical home for kids who are most at risk. We take a comprehensive view of the health issues that can affect children – from poor vision and uncontrolled asthma, to mental health challenges that can be a burden for kids in low-income families, to problems like obesity that can have long-lasting impact on wellbeing. With your help we have reached over 400,000 children across the country, and we are constantly working to increase our impact, share best practices and ensure more kids get the support they need to grow up healthy.

[Explore our  
National  
Network](#)

Innovation has always been part of our DNA at Children's Health Fund, ever since we built our first doctor's office on wheels in 1987 and created a system of electronic health records that would provide continuity for our often transient patients. So in 2014 we have begun a strategic transition with the launch of two innovative initiatives that will amplify our impact and can scale up increased access to health care. The [Healthy and Ready to Learn](#) initiative and the [Samsung Innovation Center at Children's Health Fund](#) build on our proud legacy and set our course for the years to come.

And as we come to the conclusion of 2015, we also welcome [Dennis Walto](#) who has recently taken the helm as executive director of Children's Health Fund. Dennis worked with Children's Health Fund in the early 1990's and returns now with 25 years of senior leadership experience with nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and around the world. His leadership will advance our agenda of expanding service for America's most vulnerable kids.

We envision a future where all children in America get the care they need to be ready to reach their potential in learning and in life. Thank you for your support in helping us to achieve this goal.



**Irwin Redlener**  
[Co- Founder & President](#)



**Paul Simon**  
[Co- Founder](#)



**Karen Redlener**  
[Executive Vice President](#)

## HEALTHY AND READY TO LEARN

Building on decades of experience caring for vulnerable kids, Children's Health Fund launched the Healthy and Ready to Learn initiative in 2014 to tackle the health crisis we see that impacts the ability of kids to learn. Our national network of mobile clinics provides services at approximately 200 schools, so we know well the health barriers that burden children in the classroom and make it difficult for teachers to help kids learn.

Part of our groundbreaking Healthy and Ready to Learn initiative includes a demonstration school-based intervention model in New York City. In 2014 we launched this innovative model at two schools in the South Bronx and one in Harlem with generous help from **Jaguar Land Rover**, the **H&M Conscious Foundation**, and **individual supporters**. At each school, we have an on-site team that includes a health coordinator and a behavioral health

professional. They work with the students and their parents as well as teachers and school administrators to identify kids with health problems and connect them to the services they need.

We are also reaching out to build awareness of health barriers to learning with pediatricians, primary care physicians and other healthcare providers. Children's Health Fund is currently developing tools to help clinicians bring extra vigilance to screening for health conditions that can impede a child's classroom success.

[Children's Health Fund created a national PSA campaign to raise awareness of health barriers to learning.](#)

There are solutions to the health crisis in the classroom, and Children's Health Fund is finding them. We are calling for swift reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to replace No Child Left Behind. Children's Health Fund has been instrumental in pushing for important new provisions in the bill that help states and school districts to identify and address health barriers to learning.

For millions of American children, education is the path out of poverty. But untreated health problems make it impossible for some children to succeed in school. We are committed to changing that. Children's Health Fund president Dr. Irwin Redlener has been calling for this change nationally in media as diverse and far reaching as the [New York Times](#), [Education Week](#) and [PBS](#).



Children's Health Fund is leading a growing movement of stakeholders including people in the corporate, educational, healthcare and policy sectors to raise awareness of health barriers to learning and level the educational playing field to help break the cycle of poverty.

[The Healthy and Ready to Learn team at Children's Health Fund authored this influential paper issued by the Education Commission of the States.](#)

healthy  
AND READY TO  
learn



CHILDREN'S  
HEALTH FUND



## SAMSUNG INNOVATION CENTER at CHILDREN'S HEALTH FUND

Samsung Electronics honored Children's Health Fund in 2014 with a major grant to support our programs, and then Samsung took its support even further to create the Samsung Innovation Center at Children's Health Fund.

Health care and technology are both experiencing rapid change. Samsung and Children's Health Fund are uniquely positioned to understand the current landscape and the potential of future developments. Working together, our goal is to lead the way in using health technology to improve quality and break down barriers to care for children in poverty.

Access to health insurance is improving across America, but low-income families still face many barriers to actually getting health care. An estimated 60 million Americans live in areas where there is less than one doctor for every 3,500 people. Technology can help us overcome these challenges.

High-speed data transfer and intelligent devices offer the promise of faster, more accurate diagnosis and improved communication. Sophisticated electronic health records are making it easier for doctors to track issues like immunizations and asthma management. Text messaging can help teens manage their asthma or quit smoking.

Children's Health Fund has already started to deploy these new health technologies, including equipping our fleet of mobile clinics with portable diagnostic equipment that improves the efficiency of patient care. New high-speed videoconferencing connections can transmit data collected by diagnostic tools on a mobile clinic to a specialist based at a hospital that is many miles away. This saves time and money and makes it easier for underserved children to get the highest quality care. The [Samsung Innovation Center at Children's Health Fund](#) is leading to ensure that families in poverty don't become trapped in a "digital divide" that puts the potential of these technologies out of reach.

The first of our series of white papers, [The Health Technology Revolution: Closing the Gap for Children in Poverty](#), was released at the Children's Health Fund annual spring conference in Washington D.C. Then medical directors from the Children's Health Fund national network visited dozens of Congressional offices to seek support for policy measures aimed at closing the health care technology gap for children across America. Children's Health Fund is committed to extending the benefits of health technology to kids who often face the greatest health burdens with the fewest resources, and we are moving forward quickly.



SAMSUNG INNOVATION CENTER *at*  
**CHILDREN'S HEALTH FUND™**



The Samsung Innovation Center at Children's Health Fund was announced at the Clinton Global Initiative 2014 Annual Meeting in New York City.



The Children's Health Fund Board of Directors is committed to supporting innovation and excellence as we work to expand the reach of the service we provide to vulnerable kids, share our knowledge to contribute to scalable solutions and lead a national conversation focused on securing the health of the next generation.

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*"Kids who live in poverty face the greatest health burdens, and it is imperative that we level the playing field with appropriate health care so that these children have a shot at a productive and happy life. It is the right thing to do for them, and the critical thing to do for our society. For almost 25 years, I have seen how effective Children's Health Fund is in meeting this challenge."*

- ROBERT ESSNER, Chair, Board of Directors



Executives of many corporations that support Children's Health Fund represent their companies on our Corporate Council for America's Children, providing their expertise, guidance and resources to envision a bright future for America's next generation

*"It has been my privilege to lead the Corporate Council and work with colleagues in leadership across many industries to find new ways that we can support the incredible work of Children's Health Fund. Through resourceful and coordinated efforts, we are tapping into our strengths to help Children's Health Fund expand health care for America's most vulnerable children."*

- GREG IRACE, Chair, Corporate Council

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*“It has been exciting this year to help Children’s Health Fund create a strategy for the first annual Women’s Leadership Luncheon. Women are often “chief medical officer” in their family and they know how difficult it can be in even the best of circumstances to assure that family health needs are taken care of. Through the Leadership Luncheon, we enlisted new supporters to tap their corporate and community networks to develop additional ways to strengthen the health care safety net for at-risk kids.”*

- JILL DESIMONE, Member, Advisory Council

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MARSHALL UNIV. SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

## REVENUE

## Contributions

Foundations	\$ 2,084,308
Corporations	\$ 8,176,899
Individuals	\$ 1,220,016

Government Grants \$ 222,294

Special Events \$ 1,128,786

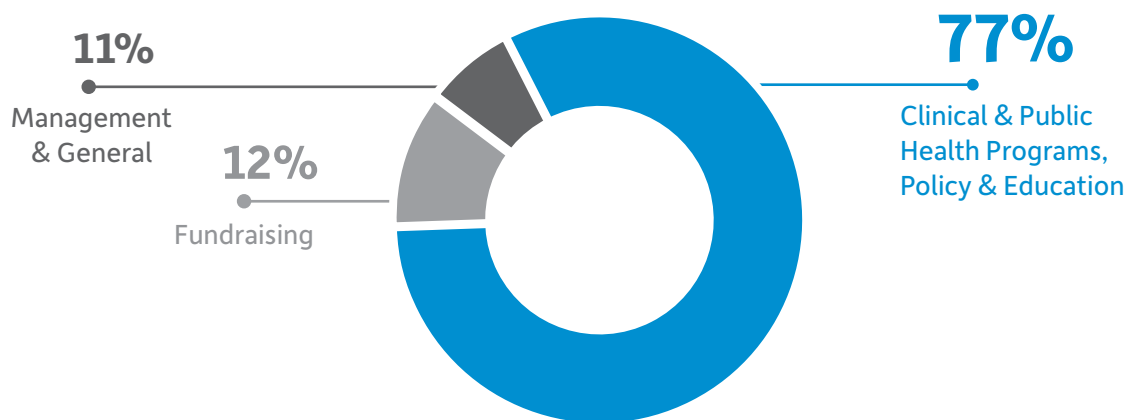
**Total Revenue Raised \$ 12,832,300**

Interest & Dividends \$ 474,165

Loss on Investments \$ 402,274

**Total Revenue \$ 12,904,191**

## EXPENSES



National Programs \$ 5,776,775

New York City Programs \$ 2,827,514

Public Health & Crisis Response \$ 631,059

Education \$ 1,442,548

**Total Program Services \$ 10,677,896**

Fundraising \$ 1,694,563

Management & General \$ 1,557,362

**Total Expenses \$ 13,929,821**

Net Decrease in Funds \$ (1,025,630)

Net Assets  
BEGINNING OF YEAR \$ 7,338,781

Net Assets  
END OF YEAR \$ 6,313,161

# INDIVIDUAL DONORS

(17

## \$100,000 & OVER

The Carson Family Charitable Trust\*

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MJS Foundation

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Jane and Garry B. Trudeau\*

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## GALA

A glittering view of Columbus Circle was the spectacular backdrop for cocktails and dinner at the Children's Health Fund annual spring benefit at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall in June 2015. The evening's program included an eye-opening demonstration of innovations in telehealth technology that Children's Health Fund is implementing in its National Network of mobile clinics as well as remarks by a mother and her children who received eyeglasses and other health services through the Healthy and Ready to Learn initiative. Banjo legends Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn as well as the jam band moe. provided memorable entertainment for the gala evening.



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## WOMEN'S LUNCHEON



Jane Pauley and Karen Redlener hosted the first Children's Health Fund Women's Leadership Luncheon in April 2015. Spearheaded by the membership of the new Women's Leadership Network, the luncheon brought together 200 influential women from different sectors to contribute their expertise, surface ideas and explore ways they could leverage their diverse networks to support our mission and enhance our impact. Congresswoman Nita Lowey delivered a powerful keynote and CHF Board Member Jane Pauley led an informative panel discussion about the Healthy and Ready to Learn initiative featuring the PS 140 school assistant principal, a member of the school's parents group and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Delaney Gracy.

## PARTY FOR POTENTIAL

The third Party for Potential, which was held this year at the downtown club 1 Oak, brought together young professionals with an interest in learning about our mission and supporting our work. Honorary Chair Richie Akiva and Benefit Co-Chairs Dave Jacobs and Bobby Steinsdoerfer presided over an evening of drinks, mingling and dancing to the tunes of DJ D-Nice. The evening, which was sponsored by the Butter Group and Gotham Magazine among others, featured an auction that gave guests the opportunity to bid on providing specific health services to kids in need.




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## FALL RECEPTION

Donors and new friends came together last November for the Children's Health Fund annual Fall Reception to share in the accomplishments of the year and learn more about plans for the work that lies ahead. Generously supported each year by CHF Board Member Skip Keesal and held at the 21 Club in New York City, the Fall Reception program celebrated the launch of the Healthy and Ready to Learn initiative. Heather Jean Baptist, the principal at P.S. 36, offered penetrating insights on the health barriers to learning her students face and the benefits she already sees from this new program.

