

CSFI Update



“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give!” (W. Churchill)

The Florida Association of School Psychologists (FASP) Children’s Services Fund, Inc. (CSFI) recently hosted its charity auction at the FASP’s 39th Annual Conference. CSFI’s mission is to provide support to needy, school-aged children and their families in the state of Florida. However, you may not know what this actually means. Since its inception, CSFI has distributed well over \$100,000 in grants, most of them for emergency situations. The money has been used to help students and their families cope with financial crises which would otherwise have interfered with or prevented their education. Specific examples include things like house fires, deaths in the family, and hurricane damage. Some of the funds have been used to buy food for hungry families with school-aged children and to provide after-school tutoring for students who were struggling.

Recently, Kim Berryhill, a School Psychologist in Palm Beach County, shared with the CSFI executive board an inspiring story about how CSFI has helped a family:

I wanted to share this story with you and let you know what CSFI was able to do for one of our Palm Beach County families. A few weeks ago, a second grade student at one of my schools fell to the ground while walking to her class. The paramedics came to assess. Paramedics took her to the hospital where they proceeded to run a multitude of tests. A few days later, I was informed that the doctors diagnosed her as having leukemia. In a matter of a few weeks, she has lost her hair due to chemo and continues to remain in the hospital due to spiked fevers. The student's mother is a single mother of two and has a very limited income. I contacted the CSFI board and asked for a \$1,000.00 emergency grant to help the family as mom continues to struggle to make ends meet. Mom has had to take an extended period of time off of work (Walmart) so that she may be with her daughter in the hospital. The CSFI board approved my request for the grant. This afternoon I went to the hospital and gave the mother a card with a \$1,000.00. She hugged me several times and told me repeatedly that she felt very blessed that angels (like CSFI) are looking out for her and her daughter.

CSFI generates funds to assist in situations like these through donations as well as the auctions at the FASP Conferences (Annual Conference and Summer Institute). More than 95 percent of all funds raised go directly to Florida’s students and families in need of assistance. The money is distributed through two types of CSFI grants. The first is

considered an emergency grant for when a crisis occurs in the state of Florida and involves our school-aged children and youth and their families. The second type of grant, or a planned grant, is applied for through a CSFI member and can be used for a project to benefit children academically, socially, and/or emotionally as long as the services do not supplant those which are or should be provided by the school(s).

Please consider donating and encouraging others to donate whatever amount you and they can afford to CSFI. Visit the FASP CSFI website http://www.fasp.org/Liaison_Positions/CSFI.html in order to submit your donation today or contact Sarah Valley-Gray, CSFI President (valleygr@nova.edu) or Gene Cash, CSFI Treasurer (gcash1@aol.com). CSFI and you: Together we make it happen!