

Brown/Oak Hill Giving Project 2015

NOMINATIONS

Please check out all these amazing organizations nominated by members of the Brown and Oak Hill communities for the Giving Project! Find out what makes these initiatives so special, the inspirational ways in which they are helping children, families and individuals in need, and why they deserve our support!

Acacia in Kenya
Alray Scholars Program
Back On My Feet
Best Buddies*
#BumpOutCancer
Circle of Hope
Cradles to Crayons
Hope for Arlang
Loaves and Fishes Meal Program
Lucy's Love Bus
MA Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE)*
National Brain Tumor Society*
OUT Metrowest*
Outreach Africa Lost Boys Foundation
Pros for Africa
Relay for Life
Three Point Foundation*
Waltham Creative Start

**Selected to present at the Giving Project Potluck, April 16, 6pm*

Organization: Acacia in Africa
Website: www.acaciainkenya.org

Acacia in Kenya

The mission of Acacia in Kenya is to raise awareness and funds to provide the support necessary to increase the educational, medical, and social services at the St Elizabeth Lureko Girls' High School in Mumias, Kenya.

Acacia in Kenya was founded in 2005 by Joyce Mohr and Sammy Lutomia. Joyce is a member of my church, the First Parish in Waltham. She had traveled to western Kenya that year and learned about the struggles the community was having trying to provide educational opportunities for young women there. At that point in time there were 18 girls attending school. They had limited space, limited equipment and volunteer teachers. First Parish decided to establish Acacia in Kenya as an official outreach project. We have been raising funds for the past 10 years. We have run fundraisers, found sponsors, and received donations, all to support the young women and their education. The program has also developed other projects to increase the student's attendance and quality of education. I participated in one of the projects to make reusable sanitary napkins so that the girls will not have to miss school for a week each month. Every two years, the church has sponsored a group to go over to deliver equipment and funds to build more classroom space. Two years ago, the group built the first dorm, so that some of the students could stay on campus during the week and not have to make the dangerous trip back and forth from their home. This summer, my mom and I will be traveling with the group to deliver supplies and help build the second dorm building. I am also collecting toothbrushes and toothpaste to distribute to the students.

In 2008, the first seniors began taking the exams that would qualify them for post secondary school. The school currently has multiple classroom buildings, a science laboratory, books, equipment and paid teachers. There is also medical staff and social workers to support the young women with the other parts of their lives. A donation from the Giving Project will go directly to Kenya this summer for equipment for the almost 200 young women to help give them more opportunities for their future, which will also directly affect the improvement of their community.

Submitted by: Chandra Penton, 8th grade (written with adult)

Organization: The Alray Scholars Program

Website: <http://alray.org>

The Alray Scholars Program

This non-profit helps students who graduated from Boston Public Schools get back to college after they've had to leave, through both scholarships and mentoring.

My dad, Neil Swidey, started the Alray Scholars Program after he wrote a book in 2008 about inner-city high school kids who played basketball for Charlestown High School. After he saw how easy it was for these students to get off track from graduating college, he created this organization. There are two parts of the program, the scholarship part and the mentoring part. The scholarships help the scholars pay tuition and keep their loans smaller and, in most cases, are the difference that gets the scholars back to college. The mentors are an important part of the program, too. They give advice to the scholars about things like college classes and careers.

The donation from the Giving Project would help provide scholars with scholarships that are a huge reason they can get back to college. The organization can always use more volunteer mentors as well.

This is a great organization and means a lot to me because it's a way for us in Newton, where we have so many opportunities, to make a difference in these people's lives who live just a few miles away. On average, having a college degree doubles someone's lifetime earnings. The organization was named after Alray Taylor, a promising basketball player and Charlestown High graduate who tragically lost his life. He had to leave college because both his parents died and he had to take care of his siblings. When he was just about to return to college, right before he turned 22, he was shot in front of a Hyde Park convenience store in broad daylight. He was unarmed. The program honors Alray by helping students in similar situations pursue their college degrees.

Submitted by: Nora Swidey, 7th grade

Organization: Back on My Feet

Website: www.backonmyfeet.org

Back on My Feet

Back on My Feet is a non-profit organization that uses running as a way for people experiencing homelessness to change the way they view themselves so they can get back on their feet for employment and independent living.

The organization finds homeless shelters and gives the people who want to run running equipment (sneakers, socks, shirts, and shorts) so they can thrive when the group goes running three days a week. The organization has found that, to homeless people, running isn't only a way for exercise, but a whole new perspective in life. It also creates self-discipline in committing to going all of the days and going to the meeting spot on time.

I support the organization because it is showing the people that there will be bumps in the road and you can either persevere through them or you can turn around and make excuses. When my sister went to the orientation to be able to run (she isn't homeless), she met a homeless man there, and he said that he was very grateful because now he has the opportunity to train for something, which gives him a new purpose in life. Also, now he has the opportunity to meet a lot of new people, and it has given him the chance to turn his life around by having a job and move out of the shelter to a place of his own. He is currently training for the New York City marathon, and he has a job.

The Giving Project will impact the organization because it can buy more running equipment to give more people the opportunity that this man was given.

Submitted by: Micaela Yudelman, 7th grade

Organization: Best Buddies

Website: www.bestbuddiesmassachusetts.org

Best Buddies

Best Buddies is dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Imagine if you woke up one morning feeling sad and alone - you had no one to share your lunch with, and no friends to talk to or text. What if you wanted to go to the movies, but you had no way of getting there or anyone to go with? That's what life can be like for a lot of children, teens and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Have you ever felt a little awkward meeting someone who has a disability? If so, you are not alone; it's a very normal initial reaction. But after you've had a chance to hang out and get to know that person, you probably don't feel awkward anymore. The goal of Best Buddies is to end the isolation and rejection often experienced by individuals with IDD by providing opportunities for friendship and integration, breaking down the social barrier created by fear and discrimination.

Best Buddies chapters in middle schools, high schools and colleges foster one-to-one friendships between people with IDD and people without IDD. Middle and high school can be socially and emotionally challenging environments for any students, but particularly for students with IDs, who are often under-appreciated and left out. Best Buddies is changing that by creating an inclusive school climate, and providing students with IDD with opportunities to make friends and get involved with school life. For adults with IDD, Best Buddies not only offers opportunities for friendship and social interaction, it also provides training in leadership and advocacy skills, as well as employment opportunities and support. Best Buddies is empowering people with IDD to become active and respected members of their communities.

We support Best Buddies because not all kids with IDD are as lucky as our friend Josh, a 6th grader at Brown, who doesn't let his disabilities get in the way of having a great day. He loves school, loves singing, loves the Red Sox, and above all loves hanging out with his friends and family. He injects joy into every environment. Josh is lucky because he has a very supportive family, lives in a caring community and goes to an inclusive school. We'd like more people with IDD to experience a similar friendly and supportive environment, in middle school, high school and beyond.

A donation from the Giving Project could help us set up a Best Buddies chapter in the Newton Public Schools, and help all our students with IDD find friendship and support.

Submitted by: Team Believe (the Yood, Barnes, Cable, Harder and Fitzpatrick families)

Organization: #BUMPOUTCANCER

Website: www.mwoy.org/pages/ma/ma15/lfitzgeral

#BUMPOUTCANCER

The mission of the **#BUMPOUTCANCER** campaign is to raise money and awareness for Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL)

Liam Fitzgerald is a nine-year-old boy who was born with Down Syndrome. By all accounts he was a normal little boy. He is fully integrated in school and participates in many activities. Then one day he started limping and within a week he couldn't walk at all. In 2009, Liam was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL). Liam battled this disease for the next four years of his life.

Liam gained notoriety while fist-bumping the Bruins as they exited the ice. After this summer's Ice Bucket Challenge, Liam and his family decided to follow suit. He has publicly challenged five schools to take on this challenge.

Submitted by: Ms. Daoust and a group of 6th grade students

Organization: Circle of Hope

Website: www.circleofhopeonline.org

Circle of Hope

Circle of Hope is dedicated to serving people in need. Its mission is to promote the dignity and wellbeing of people when they need it most.

Circle of Hope's Greater Boston Community Exchange serves individuals and families living in homeless shelters, as well as those in transition to permanent housing and struggling for independent lives. Headquartered in Needham, the organization collects, sorts and distributes new and gently-used clothing for children, women and men, as well as linens and toiletries. Donated items are gathered and transported by volunteers and distributed directly to people in need. Volunteers also help by organizing clothing drives, or bedding/towel drives, and by creating Toiletry Bags or Welcome Bags for New Babies.

Circle of Hope in Haiti provides stable medical care to people in rural Haiti by Haitian medical professionals and volunteers who periodically travel to the area to provide services.

A donation from the Giving Project would allow Circle of Hope to purchase specific goods, medicines and other vital supplies.

Submitted by: Ms. Lysaght

Organization: Cradles to Crayons
Website: www.cradlestocrayons.org

Cradles to Crayons

Cradles to Crayons provides children from birth through age 12, living in low-income or homeless situations, with the essentials they need to thrive – at home, at school and at play.

There are about 300,000 children in Massachusetts who are in need of the basic essentials like clothing, coats, shoes, boots, toys, books, and school supplies. Cradles to Crayons supplies these items free of charge by connecting communities that have with communities that need. Cradles to Crayons relies heavily on volunteer help and donations. People clean out their closets at home and donate items, bringing them to one of the many drop-off collection locations or the warehouse in Brighton. Some volunteers host a collection in their community, then take all the items to the warehouse. In the warehouse, volunteers sort and inspect the donations to make sure that only high quality items are received by the children in need. Cradles to Crayons' inspection motto is "quality equals dignity," in order to increase the self-esteem of the recipients. They want the children to open their package and be very excited about what they receive. Once the best items are selected, volunteers create individualized KidPacks with needed items for children as requested by social service agencies across the state, such as homeless shelters, hospitals, and early intervention programs. They include things like clothes, coats, sneakers, boots, backpacks, books, school supplies and toys. There are also items for babies, like diapers, wipes, toiletries, and crib sheets.

In 2014, Cradles to Crayons helped more than 100,000 children in need – but there are many more children in MA who can benefit from their services. This is why it is important to spread awareness of this wonderful organization, so that more people can donate their time, clothing and funds to purchase additional items. Donations of clothing are very helpful, but some items such as winter boots and sneakers that are not donated as often as they are needed. Financial contributions give Cradles to Crayons the ability to purchase these low-inventory items, and can go further than in-kind donations because of discounts from generous retailers. Our family hopes that the more people who know about Cradles to Crayons, the quicker they will be able to reach the goal of helping all Massachusetts children in need. We also love this organization because they allow kids ages 5 and over to volunteer at the factory. We have had first-hand experience in cleaning toys, quality checking and sorting supplies. It helped us have an appreciation for all the great things we have, and also understand that there are many kids who are not as lucky as us and need our help. We also think that the Teen Leadership Corps program that they offer for middle and high school students is a great opportunity to develop leadership and public speaking experience while giving back to the community. www.cradlestocrayons.org/boston/teen-leadership-corps.

Submitted by: Rachel and Josh Shepard, 6th grade (written with adult)

Organization: Hope for Ariang
Website: www.hopeforariang.org

Hope for Ariang

For my nomination, I chose hope for Ariang. Hope for Ariang is a non-profit organization that allows students to get an education in South Sudan.

South Sudan has just recently gained independence from Sudan and is war-torn. Children in South Sudan aren't getting the needed education and that is a big problem. What Hope for Ariang does is it builds schools for the children, it builds wells, and gives people new jobs. Gabriel Bol Deng, founder of Hope for Ariang, was born in South Sudan, and he said his dream was: "I saw your learning conditions as well as your determination to get an education. I encouraged you to persevere under these extreme conditions in your school under trees and, God willing, we will be able to build a concrete school building with a roof some day." So he did so.

Now there is a newly built school in the village of Ariang that not only now allows children to get an education, but it also supplied the village with jobs. The organization allowed people to get jobs as teachers. Hope for Ariang provided teachers' training and a formal education to people in the village who wanted to be teachers. The school now houses over 500 students!

If people donate money, they can either help buy new chalkboards for the classrooms, purchase uniforms for students, provide student lunches, help keep a child healthy in school from parasites, help build a well, supply students with school materials and textbooks, or provide the needed education and training for teachers. People can also buy a Hope for Ariang t-shirt to support the school. Those examples show why we need to support the Hope for Ariang organization.

Submitted by: Phillip Amitan, 6th grade

Organization: Loaves and Fishes Meal Program

Loaves and Fishes Meal Program

The organization's mission is to serve food to the homeless or low income families and make them feel in one community, so that they can be physically and spiritually nourished.

The Loaves and Fishes Meal Program is an independent non-profit organization that has been working for about thirty years every Saturday evening at the area of Cambridge. It serves a variety of warm cooked food and freshly prepared vegetables to people with low income or without homes to live in. Another key part of the program is that it collects a selection of foods donated from local grocery stores and distributes them to people in need. During the hard times of winter, the program gives winter care kits with items that are necessary for winter such as a pair of gloves. Since my parents introduced me to this program, I have been volunteering almost every week for about one and half years. I usually work on setting up the eating utensils and the tablecloth, and sometimes I help set up the trays of food or serve warm cooked food. Serving for the meal program makes me feel grateful because I get to serve the needy. I want to keep serving at the Loaves and Fishes Meal Program, so that I'll be able to contribute to accomplishing the mission the organization has.

The presence of this organization is crucial to homeless people and low income families. First of all, it is one of the largest meal programs in Cambridge that serves every week on Saturday without stop for the whole year. Secondly, the meal program is serving a variety of warm food every week that feels like the warmth of a home-cooked meal. The third reason is that the increasing number of people has made this meal program a place where a lot of people can go with trust.

Financial support is important to fulfill the program's mission. Since the Loaves and Fishes Meal Program is one of the only meal programs in Cambridge that opens weekly on Saturdays on all seasons of the year, financial support is important to keep the doors open consistently. If this meal program was unable to open, then the people that come will be very disappointed and sad because for some people it is the only time when they have good quality food. The meal program now needs to be supported financially more than ever because the increasing number of people has led to an increase of demand in what the meal program offers, so the donation will enable to resolve the challenges the meal program currently faces.

Therefore, I would certainly nominate the Loaves and Fishes Meal Program for the Giving Project. The donation from the project will allow to help the program serve the homeless and low income families consistently.

Submitted by: Daniel Seong, 6th grade (written with adult)

Organization: Lucy's Love Bus

Website: www.lucyslovebus.org

Lucy's Love Bus

Lucy's Love Bus was started by a young woman who died of cancer at age 12. Her mother runs this organization to raise money so that kids with cancer can have special times.

The goal of Lucy's Love Bus is to:

- deliver comfort and quality of life to pediatric cancer patients by providing funds for free integrative therapies.
- offer young people lifelong lessons in leadership and service to others through philanthropy.

Lucy Grogan was 8-years-old when she was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia. Throughout Lucy's long illness, concerned individuals like you raised money to help support Lucy. Lucy learned about the benefits of integrative therapies such as massage, acupuncture, art therapy, and therapeutic horseback riding during her treatment.

When Lucy was 11, she told her mother that when she was "done with cancer" she wanted to start a program that would provide free integrative therapies to all children with cancer to help manage the side effects and late effects of traditional cancer treatment. Since 2006, our generous supporters have helped us deliver love and comfort to over 280 children with cancer.

To learn about Lucy's Children Integrative Therapies Program, [click here](#).

To learn about how to donate, [click here](#).

To learn about why you should donate, [click here](#).

Submitted by: Ms. Zaiger

Organization: MA Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE)

Website: www.MAREinc.org

Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE)

MARE's mission is to find "a permanent place to call home" for children and teens living in foster care in MA, including sibling groups and children who are traditionally hard to place.

MARE helps recruit adoptive families for children and teens who, for whatever reason, cannot be raised by their birth parents. Today there are over 500 kids living in MA foster care who are waiting to be adopted, but have no potential adoptive families. Often, they have been put into foster care because their birth parents abused and/or ignored them, and they have no other family or community members who can take them in. It can be challenging to find loving adults who want to adopt these kids, because many of the kids are older (the average age is 8), have siblings they want to live with, need extra help dealing with their sadness or anger, or have disabilities. MARE knows that these kids can succeed with the support of a loving home. It advocates for the children and spreads the word about the importance of adoption from foster care. For example, MARE's Heart Gallery features 24 photographs of kids living in foster care who are waiting to be adopted. The Heart Gallery travels to different locations, so as many people can learn about these kids as possible. A donation of just \$60 can fund the creation of one of these very special photographs, and greatly increase a child's chance of being adopted. If a family is interested in adopting from foster care, MARE helps by providing useful resources and information, and supports them through the adoption process.

We think MARE is important because so many kids in MA are not as lucky as we are to have supportive, loving parents. Also, if we were in foster care, we would really want to stick together as siblings, and MARE helps make that happen for siblings waiting to be adopted. Another reason why we support MARE is that it helps children and teens with disabilities or special needs who are in foster care because their families can't provide the extra care they need. MARE helps them find permanent, happy homes with nurturing and supportive families.

Last year, MARE was able to find adoptive families for 164 kids, including 33 sibling groups! A donation from the Giving Project can help raise awareness about these kids and the need for more families to adopt them. It can also help fund counseling and education services for families who are thinking of adopting a child from foster care, and help them find the child that is right for their family. We believe every child has the right to live in a happy, safe home with their siblings, but, for many kids in foster care, that seems like an impossible dream. MARE helps make that dream a reality.

Submitted by: Tommy and Jock Cable, 8th and 6th grades (written with adult)

Organization: National Brain Tumor Society

Website: <http://braintumor.org>

National Brain Tumor Society

I want to raise money for the National Brain Tumor Society, for the many people who suffer from these horrible types of tumors, including my mom.

Did you know that 688,096 people suffer from brain tumors today? The National Brain Tumor Society is trying to prevent that by raising money to find better treatments and fund research to find a cure for brain tumors. My family and I are supporting this cause because my mom was first diagnosed with a brain tumor in 1995. She was very lucky to survive, because more than 50% of the people diagnosed with brain tumors end up passing away.

Brain tumors can affect a person in so many ways because the brain is the operator in charge of the body. Depending on where the tumor is located in the brain, it can affect someone in different ways. For instance, my mother has trouble walking because the tumor is located on her motor cortex, but someone else may go blind, or someone else may go deaf.

I want to be able to help lower the amount of people with brain tumors in any way I possibly can. A donation from the Giving Project would help raise more money to help improve the treatments and find a cure for brain tumors, ultimately saving many lives.

Submitted by: Joshua Shapiro, 7th grade

Organization: OUT MetroWest
Website: <http://outmetrowest.org>

OUT MetroWest

The mission of OUT MetroWest is to support the health and emotional well-being of GLBTQ teens in the Boston MetroWest area by offering youth-led and adult-supported social and educational programs.

OUT MetroWest runs programs for LGBTQ middle and high school youth in MetroWest Boston. Through educational, social, and supportive programs, OUT MetroWest provides a space for young people to meet other youth, be provided resources, and connect with adult mentors. Now serving middle and high youth from 46 towns, the WAGLY Program of OUT MetroWest offers meetings for all LGBTQ teens every Monday night throughout the year. In addition, transgender and gender-non-conforming high school youth enjoy a dedicated twice monthly program known as Umbrella.

On March 11, OUT MetroWest launched a new monthly program for middle school LGBTQ youth. This "First in the Commonwealth" program attracted 23 youth from sixteen schools and thirteen towns to its first meeting. This new meeting is a pilot program and continued financial support will ensure its continuation and possible expansion. The financial support of the Giving Project will ensure that middle school youth are offered the support and resources they are requesting and that we know they require.

Submitted by: Mr. Tordo

Organization: Outreach Africa Lost Boys Foundation

Website: <http://lostboysus.org/nav4/donate-professional-services/>

Outreach Africa Lost Boys Foundation

Outreach Africa Lost Boys Foundation helps children regain their life, education and safety.

The booms and cracks reverberate as bombs soar through the air and bullets come racing towards you. Knowing that the person next to you or anyone you love could be the unlucky person at any moment. Fear strikes you and your heart beats so fast, you feel sick. This would be a terrifying experience, right? The children of Sudan have experienced it. They see their loved ones and neighbors they've known since they were born lose their lives as bombs and bullets find their destination. Nobody should have to go through this, and, although we cannot erase the memories of horrible war, at least we could help them get a home, safety, medical services, education and a job in America. That is why I want to support the Lost Boys Foundation.

Outreach Africa Lost Boys Foundation helps refugees of war in Sudan. Sudan has been attacked by soldiers and many families have been killed and separated. Survivors walked thousands of miles to get to safety and in the journey lost many more lives. This foundation helps survivors get to America so they can get an education and safety and help survivors who are still in Africa have food, education and medical care. This makes a huge impact on these people because, unless they were wealthy, they had no education, but now they can get the education they have always wanted and needed. They can also get the medical care and dental they might need. In Sudan they do not have as much medical technology as we do, but if they get to America, they can get the medical and dental care they didn't have back in Sudan. Given that the organization is made of all volunteers, the profits are most likely to go to the people of Sudan. If these people can survive a war, then you can survive donating some money and helping people who need it.

Submitted by: Audrey Shuler, 7th Grade

Organization: Pros for Africa
Website: www.prosforafrica.com

Pros for Africa

Pros for Africa gives hope and a new start in life to women and girls who have been abducted as child soldiers in Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan.

Pros for Africa is a non-profit organization that was started by a catholic nun, Sister Rosemary. She has devoted her life to helping girls and their children get an education and money to start a new and better life. The girls and women were abducted by Kony, a power-hungry man who started a civil war in Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan. He kidnapped children for his army. The children were treated horribly, and some even had to kill family or friends. When they come back, they have nothing and are shunned by their community.

Sister Rosemary is helping girls and their children that have been saved get an education and start a new life. They learn to craft bags out of soda can tabs. I support this charity because it helps girls my age get through a life that is so hard. Nobody else would take care of these girls. This charity helps girls get over both mental and physical trauma. The girls are taught how to tailor so they can support themselves and their children. They make beautiful accessories that are great for presents of just for wearing and using. Most of the accessories you can use for everyday life. They are fashionable and they are helpful. Sister Rosemary gives these girls hope and inner strength to go on and not think of the past. As Sister Rosemary says: "It's very difficult to define hope... I would just say I start living it now." She tells the girls, "The past is gone. You're not going to recover it. But you can live today. And if you live today, you are living tomorrow."

A donation from the giving project would help because all of the money goes to the girls and their education. When the girls make bags or get donations, Sister Rosemary uses the money for either building schools, paying for education or giving it to the girls so they can build up their own life. Please help these girls rebuild their lives that were viciously ripped from them. To find out more, read the book and watch the documentary [Sewing Hope](#).

Submitted by: Madeline Sinclair, 6th grade

Organization: Relay for Life

Website: <http://relay.acsevents.org/site/PageServer?pagename=relay>

Relay for Life

Mission: Fighting cancer one lap at a time.

We nominated the Relay For Life charity for this event for many reasons. We got involved with this event because our elementary school principal and some teachers had cancer and now participate in Relay For Life, which raises money for cancer research by walking around a track throughout the night. With each lap you walk, you are raising money for cancer research. We have been doing this for 3 years, and we love it both as a charity and an event.

If you vote for Relay for Life, this charity will benefit from the extra money and the exposure that it will get, because Relay for Life is a charity that really needs volunteers for it to work. Cancer research is expensive, and donations and volunteers would give it even more of a boost, that will push the charity to farther reaches. With more money and volunteers, Relay For Life will be able to support medical breakthroughs across the world, saving one life at a time.

Cancer has impacted virtually everyone. From teachers, to policemen, to even the presidents. One in two men will develop cancer in their life, and one in three women will develop cancer. Vote for Relay for Life to help stop this world-wide epidemic. Even if we just save one life, then we are making a difference. To families, patients, and even doctors who have to deal with the disease. With your donation, together we will make a difference in the world. But my question to you is, will you help the cause?

Submitted by: Aidan Oates and Collin Holson, 6th grade

Organization: The 3 Point Foundation

Website: www.the3pointfoundation.org

The 3 Point Foundation

The 3 Point Foundation's mission is to teach and inspire boys that don't have much opportunities to play and get educated.

The 3 Point Foundation helps kids to have a good life and education by using the many lessons learned in basketball. Two of those lessons are teamwork and respect. Teamwork is important because, if you cannot work in a group, then you cannot work with other people on a group project or in a business. Respect is important because, if you don't respect anyone, then you can get in a lot of trouble in school or get thrown in jail in life and work. Respect is important in everything, especially school and work. These lessons can turn a child's life around and that could lead to them changing another kid's life. One kid getting their life changed for the good can lead to many more. It is a chain reaction, and that chain could expand. In conclusion, the 3 Point Foundation is important because it helps kids that are underprivileged get the chances they want and deserve.

I support the 3 Point Foundation because of two main reasons. One is that basketball is my favorite sport and many kids can learn from it. Basketball can teach kids many lessons, but the 3 Point Foundation make sure that kids try to learn those lessons and use them in life and school. These lessons can change a child's future from poor to satisfactory, and that is why it is important. Another reason I support this foundation is because my brother's godfather helps organize it. That makes me want to support it even more, because he is very close to my family and I like supporting my family. In conclusion, I have many specific reasons to support it, but many people can have a reason to support it.

A donation from the Giving Project would be outstanding for the 3 Point Foundation. It would allow a great amount of hard and useful work to be done by people who care about children. The money would encourage countless amounts of children to turn their life around and make it valuable. Those kids could come back and donate back to the community and help to conquer the problem they went through. That could change the future of America and make children learn the lessons they need. If this change happens, then the organization would have done its job, and then they could make sure that kids can be more privileged. That would be incredible for the community and any kid who is scared of being underprivileged. The money would be amazing for the organization and the children getting influenced. Finally, if the 3 Point Foundation gets donated to, it will make a big difference.

Submitted by: Milton Newman, 6th grade

Organization: Waltham Creative Start

Website: <http://communitiesunitedinc.org/>

Waltham Creative Start

Mission: To provide high quality education and family services to a diverse population of children, ages 0 to 5 years by striving to ensure the success of the child, empower the family and strengthen the community.

One of the most helpful organizations in Waltham is the Waltham Creative Start Preschool. Enrolled in this school are 106 children of which five are homeless and 76 learn English as a second language. Also, 95 students' families live at or near poverty level which qualifies them for subsidized or free childcare. Most of these kids cannot afford other preschools and would be left in unhealthy and often unsafe conditions. Because most of these children are under the poverty level, without Waltham Creative Start, these kids would come into kindergarten not knowing English, math, or even behavioral skills.

Over the past year, I have been volunteering at Waltham Creative Start. The teachers really know what they're doing and the kids learn a lot! Most of the children can already recognize their own name and can even do a little math. The children also learn a lot about science and some of them can even write. The teachers also counsel the children on how to eat right, keep their teeth clean, and just how to stay healthy overall. On one day every year, they have a dentist come in to teach the kids on oral hygiene. They also got to the zoo to learn about animals and wildlife. On another note, I have seen kids come to school with a black eye and bruises from abuse at home. I have also seen children with no father who need a male role model in their life. This is exactly what places like Waltham Creative Start are needed for.

Funds from the Giving Project would be used for new tools to help with Health and Nutrition screenings. This new equipment would replace the old tools that were very hard to use and not very accurate. Specifically, funds would be used for a new scale and height bar. Any donations left over would contribute to a new vision kit to help refer the families of the students who need glasses or have any other medical issue to trained specialists. The Creative Start has found that most free clinics do not complete vision or hearing exams unless requested, which leads to children not getting glasses or hearing aids at the preschool age if they need them. Over the past several years, Waltham Creative Start has helped families identify these health needs and access services across their community. Overall, Waltham Creative Start is an amazing and empowering organization that should be recognized more.

Submitted by: Greg Corn, 7th grade