

James F. Mikulski Memorial Group



www.jfmmemorial.org

Annual Report 2021

James F Mikulski Memorial Group Inc.
February, 2022
info@jfmmemorial.org

Executive Summary

We are pleased that 2021 turned out to be a “comeback’ year for the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group. We were once again able to visit with our scholarship students at all three schools, we restarted the tradition of providing fully stocked backpacks to children at the Erie Neighborhood House before they returned to school, and we held a very successful fundraiser in August.

Additionally, volunteering at races is back as in-person events return. We were happy to hold two Savers Clothing Drives and organize a Jim’s Bridge Holiday Toy Drive.

We were able to maintain our support levels for the schools and the Erie House. Thanks to our generous supporters and volunteers, our revenues were up for 2021. We continue to have an overall expense to revenue ratio of 5.1%.

We are hopeful that this trend carries well into 2022 as schools, businesses and events return and COVID-19 restrictions lessen.

Jim’s Bridge to a Brighter Future Accomplishments Since Established in 2014

\$165,261	Total Funds Granted to help Children
44,888	Pounds of goods collected for Savers
1,949	Volunteers provided to Run/Walk events
579	Donations Received
234	"Likes" on Facebook
66	Scholarships Awarded
58	Volunteer events supported

We are very grateful that we are able to honor the memory of our son Jim in ways which benefit others.

Best regards,

Maureen and John Mikulski

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....1

Mission.....3

About the Organization.....3

Accomplishments for 20214

 Help Children in Need in the Chicago Area4

 Enhance Fundraising5

 Coordinate Volunteer Groups as a Source of Revenue5

 Get the Word Out About our Organization6

 Keep Operating Costs Low – Financial Analysis.....6

Our Board of Directors8

Plans for 2022.....9

Ways You Can Help Support Our Mission.....10



Visitation Catholic School



St. Gall School



Academy of St. Benedict the African



Erie Neighborhood House

Mission

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group, Inc. was formed to establish a legacy of sharing, caring and helping others in memory of James F. Mikulski, a wonderful and loving husband, stepfather, son, brother, family member and friend who passed away by suicide on October 2, 2013.

This charity was created to honor Jim's life by giving back in a way that will directly benefit underserved children in the Chicago area. The organization accomplishes its mission by providing scholarships and support for academic and after school activities. This is made possible through fundraising and volunteer activities that promote wellness, service and the opportunity to support the education of school aged children. The organization is entirely run by volunteers. The grants awarded by the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group are directed to grade schools and institutions that support young children in the Chicago area.

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group is funded through private donations, online contributions and donations in appreciation of organized volunteer services. Donations and volunteer services are accepted from anybody who would like to help make a positive difference in a child's life.



About the Organization

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group is an IRS Tax Exempt 501(c)(3) Charitable Organization, EIN 46-4519616. It was incorporated in the State of Illinois as a charitable organization on January 13, 2014. It has a five member Board of Directors.

Approval of tax-exempt status for The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group was received from the Internal Revenue Service on July 30, 2014 with an effective date of Exemption of January 13, 2014.

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group is registered with the Office of the Attorney General of the State of Illinois, under both the Charitable Trust and the Solicitation for Charity Acts, effective November 28, 2014.

The charity has an Assumed Name of Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future which was renewed at the end of 2019 for the next five year period.

Accomplishments for 2021

In 2021, we experienced a resurgence of many of our events and activities which were curtailed during 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. We are hopeful that the revival continues through 2022. Although the cautions around COVID-19 are still with us, we are pleased with the slow, steady comeback.

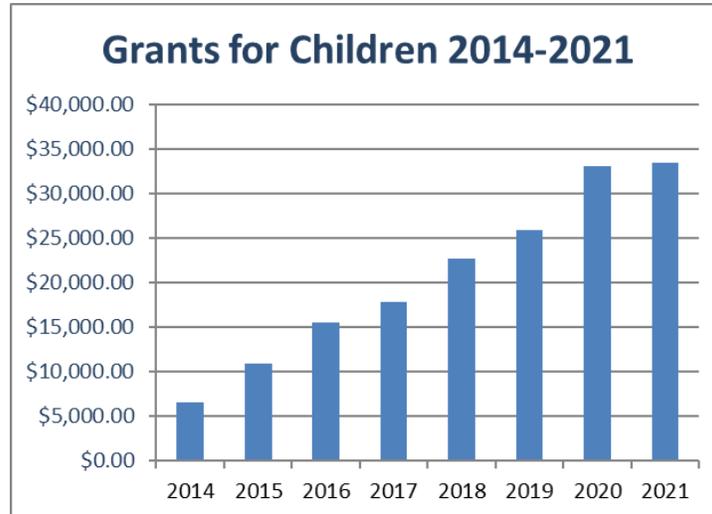
Help Children in Need in the Chicago Area

We are grateful that we were able to sustain our grant levels to all of the organizations that we support annually – Visitation School, St. Gall School, The Academy of St. Benedict the African (ASBA) and the Erie Neighborhood House.

In 2021, a total of thirteen scholarships were awarded across the three schools. For the Erie Neighborhood House, we were delighted to renew our tradition of funding and distributing fully stocked backpacks to the children as they prepared for a new school year.

During the year, we were able to visit with our scholarship students at Visitation, St. Gall's and ASBA. It was wonderful to be able to spend time talking with them and getting to know them better.

At the end of the year, we held the Jim's Bridge Holiday Toy Drive and collected over 300 toys, which were distributed to the schools. For the Erie Neighborhood House, we funded grocery gift cards to the families of their students, in lieu of their traditional Holiday with Heart Breakfast with Santa.



Enhance Fundraising

The return of the Jim’s Bridge Annual Fundraiser and Get Together was the fundraising highlight of the year. Over 100 people joined us at Zachary’s Grill on a beautiful late summer Sunday afternoon. Many supporters who were unable to attend the event were very generous with donations for the fundraiser. Plus, our Director Zachary Kubiak very kindly donated the food, which helped make this fundraiser our most profitable to date.



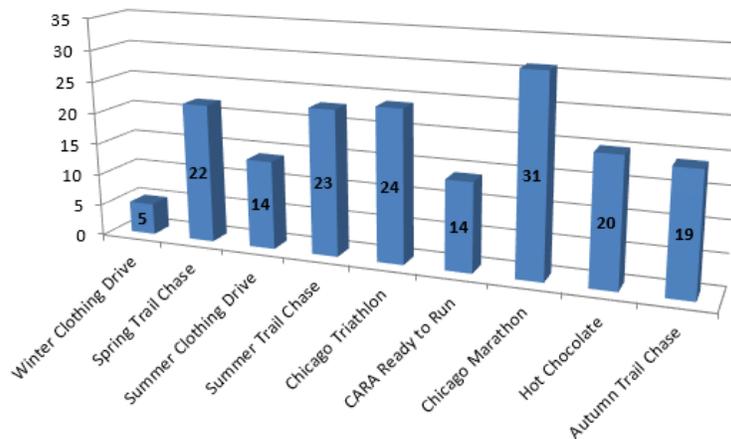
We held two successful Clothing Drives in partnership with Savers Thrift Stores. Savers provides a donation to our charity based on the number of pounds of goods we deliver to them. At the summer clothing drive, we collected a record amount of soft goods for Jim’s Bridge. We have received many comments from clothing drive contributors that they are very happy to donate to a good cause and clean out their closets at the same time!

Coordinate Volunteer Groups as a Source of Revenue

Volunteering at races as a source of fundraising is making a gradual comeback. While some of our regular races have not yet returned to in-person events, a new partnership with the Chicago Area Runners Association (CARA) has helped fill the gap. Jim’s Bridge recruited volunteers for three CARA events. We also volunteered at the return of the Chicago Triathlon, the Chicago Marathon and the Hot Chocolate 15K/5K.

Year to Year Comparison for Races	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Number of Volunteer Events	7	3	9	8	9	7	6	5
Total Number of Volunteers	163	34	353	320	322	269	268	206
Donations Received from Races	\$3,835.00	\$1,520.00	\$6,362.50	\$5,320.00	\$5,925.00	\$4,475.00	\$4,631.50	\$3,217.50

2021 Event Volunteers



Get the Word Out About our Organization

The Jim’s Bridge Facebook page, the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group website, email, and our semi-annual newsletter remain the primary ways that we communicate about the work our charity has performed as well as announce upcoming activities. This year we added Instagram and a Jim’s Bridge Tri-Fold handout for those who want to learn more about our charity. The Tri-Fold summaries our mission, fundraising events and accomplishments, as well as ways to participate and donate.

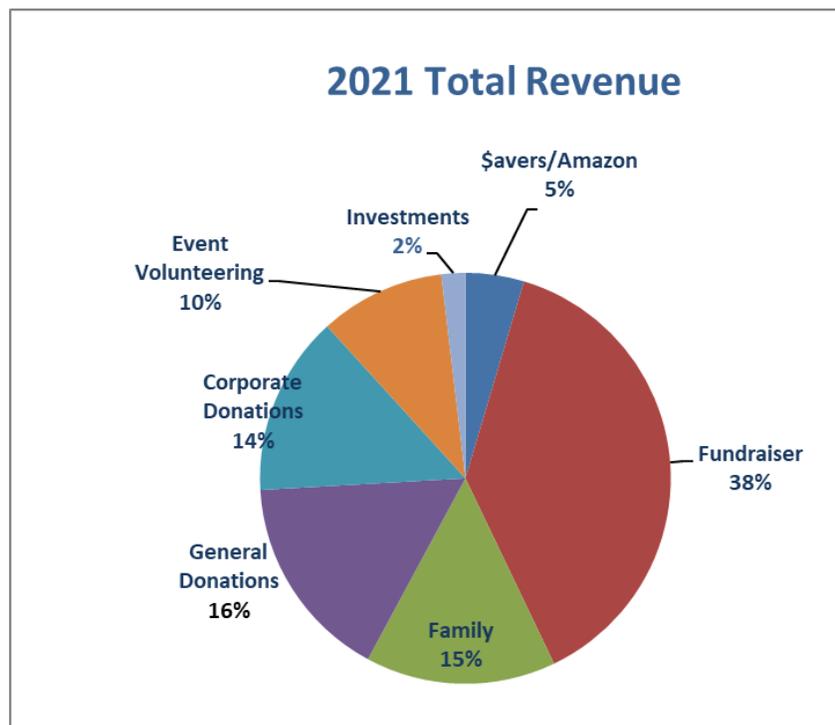
Our Facebook “Likes” continue to steadily rise with 234 “Likes”. The Facebook page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/JimsBridge/> The Yankee Runners website, a local running group, links to the Jim’s Bridge website as a volunteer organization.

The charity has achieved greater recognition through activities like volunteering at races, the Holiday Toy Drive and the Savers Clothing Donation Drives, attracting new contributors to those events. We are happy that we have great support from local businesses like Zachary’s Grill and Running for Kicks.

Keep Operating Costs Low – Financial Analysis

Revenue and Expenses

Our overall revenue was up slightly from 2020. That actually highlights the effectiveness of our 2020 Special Appeal in lieu of the fundraiser last year. The largest driver in this year’s revenue was the 2021 Fundraiser. Donations outside of the fundraiser also accounted for a large part of our revenue. This year, we had a record high of 98 donations. Over 80% of the donations were from repeat donors, with close to 20% from new contributors.

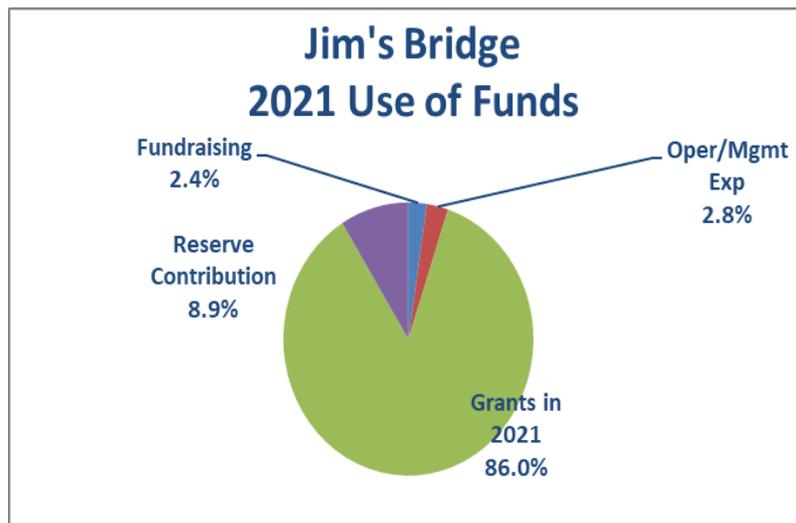


Our expenses were only slightly higher than 2020. We helped keep fundraiser expenses low by making use of supplies we already had in stock. Our expense to revenue ratio is at 5.1%, including our fundraising cost. Looking only at operations and management expense, it is at 2.8%.

Our reserve stands at \$63,321.26, which is more than enough to cover an equal number of grants in 2022 as we awarded in 2021.

Year over Year Comparison	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Revenues	\$38,862.09	\$36,805.51	\$48,914.13	\$37,178.60	\$32,472.13	\$23,712.68	\$16,152.43	\$17,850.78
Total Expenses	\$1,995.86	\$1,583.98	\$4,685.80	\$3,352.50	\$3,580.34	\$3,931.22	\$1,364.23	\$2,420.87
Grants for Children	\$33,423.43	\$33,008.98	\$25,827.83	\$22,696.73	\$17,820.40	\$15,501.61	\$10,936.23	\$6,497.08
Total Expense to Revenue	5.1%	4.3%	9.6%	9.0%	11.0%	16.6%	8.4%	13.6%
Opex to Revenue	2.8%	4.2%	2.1%	2.0%	2.4%	4.4%	6.6%	5.8%
Opex	\$1,077.69	\$1,529.52	\$1,035.98	\$758.46	\$783.16	1,047.95	1064.23	\$1,027.00
Reserve Contribution	\$3,442.80	\$2,212.55	\$18,400.50	\$11,129.37	\$11,071.39	\$4,279.85	\$3,851.97	\$8,932.83

As always, our charity manages all of its own fundraising. No outside or professional fundraising organizations are used.



Our Board of Directors

We are fortunate to have a Board of Directors comprised of family and friends skilled in business and wellness professions. There is frequent communication among the Board of Directors throughout the year, with two formal meetings per year.



Maureen Mikulski, President, has more than 40 years of experience in Information Technology and Business in the Chicago Area, with an advanced degree in Computer Science and Certification in Project Management.



Kathleen Diaz, Vice President, has more than 15 years of combined experience working for non-profit organizations and in the wellness field, with an advanced degree in Psychology.



John Mikulski, Treasurer, is retired after having acquired more than 35 years of experience in Information Technology and Business in the Chicago area, with an advanced degree in Computer Science.



Kathleen Grady, Secretary, is a Registered Nurse with an advanced degree in Nursing and more than 30 years of experience as a volunteer or volunteer coordinator.



Zachary Kubiak, Sergeant at Arms, is an entrepreneur with a very popular restaurant in Palos Heights. This restaurant, Zachary's Grill, is the location of our Annual Fundraiser.

Plans for 2022

Supporting the Children

The James F. Mikulski Memorial Group will sustain its level of support for the children at Visitation, St. Gall, the Academy of St. Benedict the African and the Erie Neighborhood House in 2022. With reduced COVID-19 restrictions, we expect to visit the schools and meet with our scholarship recipients at times throughout the school year.

Fundraising

We plan to hold our Annual Fundraiser in 2022 as another fun afternoon of meeting with friends, making new friends, enjoying delicious food and having a chance to win great prizes. The Board of Directors will meet in the first quarter to discuss possible dates.

We will continue to hold semi-annual Savers clothing drives. As in 2021, we will be reliant on individual and corporate donations. We will actively look for additional ways to raise funds for the charity.

The Savers Clothing Drives, the Holiday Toy Drive and volunteering at races have been good ways of attracting new supporters of Jim's Bridge.

Coordinating volunteers as a source of revenue

We anticipate that volunteering at races as a source of revenue will continue to increase as races return to in-person events.

We have stayed in contact with the race organizers we have worked with in prior years, such as RAM Racing, CARA and Chicago Events Management. We expect that some new events will be added to our roster to replace those that will not be returning this year, such as the Rock N Roll Half Marathon/10K and the Corporate Challenge.

Getting the word out about our organization

We will continue to publish our semi-annual newsletter and promote the charity through email, Facebook and Instagram. The annual fundraiser, Savers clothing drives and the Holiday Toy Drive have expanded our reach to those who may not have known about the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group/Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future. Thanks to Director Kubiak, we have reached out to our local alderman, who has announced our fundraiser event at the Palos Heights City Council. We will actively seek other opportunities to promote our work and grow the organization.

Keeping our Operating Expenses low through strong financial management

Efficient management of expenses and monitoring our revenue stream will always be a priority. We will actively identify ways to keep our expenses as low as possible, ensuring our donors know their dollars will be spent to benefit the children that we support. We are pleased that we have maintained expense/revenue ratio well below 10%.

Ways You Can Help Support Our Mission

Please consider helping our cause with a donation at the James F Mikulski Memorial Group website <http://www.jfmmemorial.org/donatePP.html>, on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/JimsBridge/>, by Instagram “Jimsbridge” or by mail to

James F. Mikulski Memorial Group
405 Shadow Creek Court
Palos Heights, IL 60463

If you would like to volunteer with us or if you would like to be included on our distribution list, please send an email to info@jfmmemorial.org



From the Erie House Peace Mural
1347 W. Erie, Chicago, IL
Sponsored by James F. Mikulski Memorial Group
Dedicated August 2015