

OPERATION

Breakthrough

Our mission is to help children who are living in poverty develop to their fullest potential by providing them a safe, loving and educational environment. The center also strives to support and empower the children's families through advocacy, referral services and emergency aid.

IN THE NEWS

They've got the beat!

Operation Breakthrough's African dancers and drummers wowed the audience at their first-ever performance, according to one of their biggest fans.

In April, 16 of the Center's children attended a two-day music and cultural camp, "99 Drums," with youth from across the metro area. The camp culminated in a public performance, where our children were chosen to perform the opening act and the finale.

"They looked so professional," says Sister Corita Bussanmas, co-director. "Just the intense expressions on their faces – they lived the dance."

The Center's children have been studying African drumming and dance for only a few months, as part of the "Betsy's Kids" talent exploration program.

Mental health grant

A grant from Employer's Reinsurance Corp. will help Operation Breakthrough continue providing therapy and psychiatric care. ERC awarded \$10,000 to the Center in March to ensure that the children receive the mental health services they need.

Often, this care has a big impact on children's success in school. We thank ERC for this potentially life-changing support.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Auction items needed

The bidding will be silent at the Center's Oct. 3 auction, but the auction's benefits will be seen and heard for months to come at 31st and Troost.

Please call Jennifer Heinemann at 816-365-5059 if you have goods or services to donate to the auction or know someone else who might want to give.

Tulsa's Mabee Foundation boosts building expansion project

A major challenge arrived on Operation Breakthrough's doorstep in April. The challenge essentially said: "Raise \$1.5 million for your capital campaign in one year, and we'll give you the rest of the money you need for the project."

This offer brought joy, relief and thoughts of groundbreaking to 31st and Troost.

It came from the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation of Tulsa. The Foundation's trustees approved a challenge grant of \$750,000 for Operation Breakthrough's building expansion project on April 8.

To date, Operation Breakthrough has received gifts and pledges of nearly \$6 million toward our \$8.2 million fund-raising goal, thanks to a variety of foundations, individuals and corporations, as well as government support at the city, state and federal levels.

To meet the Mabee challenge, Operation Breakthrough must raise an additional \$1.5 million by April 9, 2004. As long as we meet the

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"I call Operation Breakthrough the 'Miracle on 31st Street and I can think of no one more worthy of the community's support than the children and families the Sisters and their staff care for day in and day out."

-Bill Dunn Sr.



The Center's African drumming troupe perform at a May 30 event announcing the Mabee challenge grant.



Kansas City Councilman Troy Nash has been instrumental in garnering city support for the Center's building expansion project.



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Tulsa's Mabee Foundation boosts building expansion project

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deadline, the Mabee Foundation will give the final \$750,000 needed to reach our \$8.2 million goal.

Sister Berta Sailer and Sister Corita Bussanmas, Operation Breakthrough's co-founders and co-directors, praise the Mabee Foundation for giving such powerful incentive for donors to join the project.

"This is a well-known vote of confidence," says Sister Berta. "It makes me even more sure that we will make our goal. I think people like to know that their money generates more money, especially in this economy. This will help us give the children the building they deserve."

The expansion includes construction of classroom space adjacent to our existing building. The new classrooms will be for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Space in the existing building will be renovated for use by the school-age children. This expansion and renovation will enable the Center to better serve the 450 children who attend daily and enroll at least 100 additional children from our waiting list of 500. It will also allow us to move our health-care programs to street level and open them to the community. We



The Center's children close the May 30 festivities by singing, "When I Grow Up."

expect to break ground by fall.

"Everybody is surprised that we are as far ahead as we are with the campaign during these trying times," says Sister Corita. "It shows that there are a lot of really good people out there who are still thinking of our children."

The Mabee Foundation approved the challenge after reviewing our grant application and meeting in Tulsa with Sister Berta and other members of the capital campaign committee. The Foundation concentrates its giving in six states, with most grants going toward facility construction and renovation for religious, charitable and educational organizations.



Adele Hall, a member of the Center's capital campaign committee, urges her listeners to applaud Sisters Berta and Corita at a May 30 event announcing the Mabee challenge grant.

"Greater Kansas City has been fortunate to be the beneficiary of a number of Mabee Foundation challenge grants over the years," says William Dunn Sr., chairman emeritus at J.E. Dunn Construction Co. and a member of Operation Breakthrough's capital campaign committee. "I am very pleased that their Trustees have made a commitment to Operation Breakthrough."

"I call Operation Breakthrough the 'Miracle on 31st Street,'" Dunn says, "and I can think of no one more worthy of the community's support than the children and families the Sisters and their staff care for day in and day out. I am confident the Mabee challenge will be met."

For more information about the capital campaign, call Operation Breakthrough's director of development, Sheila Park, at 816-329-5225. Or, check our web site at www.operationbreakthrough.org.

Mabee, but not "maybe," is the word on Operation Breakthrough's capital campaign. This is one challenge we definitely plan to meet.



Capital campaign committee member Bill Dunn Sr. calls Operation Breakthrough "The Miracle on 31st Street."