



Advocate

Research

Mobilize

The Power of Change  
Annual Report 2014

Educate

Educate

# Our Mission

The Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition is a coalition of organizations, parents, and other concerned individuals committed to improving the well-being of Bridgeport's children through research, education, advocacy, and mobilization.

BCAC provides the vehicle for the Greater Bridgeport community to take concerted action on issues that affect children's health, education, and safety. Our coalition is grassroots and independent, diverse and motivated. Together, we are advocating for policy and systems change that will clear a path to a better future, particularly for Bridgeport's most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.



# Letter from the Executive Director and Board Chair

**Power:** The ability to do something or act in a particular way, especially as a faculty or quality

**Change:** The act, process, or result of making different or transforming

When talking to colleagues, we often hear discussions about how difficult making change in our world can be. Change can be frightening, and many people, systems and organizations resist tackling the hard work that is needed for sustainable change. Yet, embracing change is empowering – and necessary to the work we all do.

Since 1985, BCAC has been an objective and trusted voice for children and families in our community. In the year we were founded, the price of a gallon of gas was \$1.20; pay phones were on every corner; and instant-print cameras were quite the rage. Back then, we could not have imagined the extent of the internet, cell phones, or people using a phone as a camera! These changes have revolutionized the way we all live.

In light of all this change, we recognized that we needed to adapt to meet the world in this new place. Therefore, we invested in re-energizing our look and improving our communications. In addition to designing a new logo, we developed a new website, redesigned the State of the Child, and entered the world of social media.

We are very excited with this new BCAC look; however, while things may look different, our identity and deep commitment to children and families is unwavering. The steps we've taken to refresh our look, hone our messaging, and build out our communications tools will ensure that more people hear our story, better understand the issues, and know how to take decisive action.

## A NEW BRAND



# BCAC 2014 Highlights

Yet, we cannot do this work alone. We need our families to be confident communicating Bridgeport's story. Hence, BCAC partnered with PLTI (Parent Leadership Training Institute) to conduct civic engagement training this past year. These sessions taught parents effective ways to convey their stories to civic leaders and lawmakers. Now, more than ever, community residents need to understand the power of their collective voices to effect changes in our community.

This past year, BCAC also helped residents take advantage of the positive changes that were the result of the Affordable Care Act's passage. We know that good health is the cornerstone of a child's well-being. So, enrolling families in health insurance was a natural extension of our past work. BCAC staff worked tirelessly, and ultimately enrolled over 300 people into health insurance and engaged another 850 through community outreach efforts.

But our work is not over. With the ever-changing landscape in healthcare, we must educate these families about how to use their new insurance and how to use the power of their voices to advocate for their own health.

For 29 years, BCAC has been committed to improving the well-being of children and families in Bridgeport and beyond through the four pillars of our work – research, education, advocacy and mobilization. Because we do not accept government funding, we rely on the support and generosity of the individuals, businesses, organizations, and foundations listed in this report. We are proud to stand with our supporters who recognize that there is power in numbers. And all of us together – harnessing the power of our strong united voices for children and families – make change happen.

Thanks to all of you for supporting our work!



**Mary Pat Healy**  
Executive Director



**Diane Brassell**  
2014-2015 Board Chair

## Civic Engagement Training

BCAC partnered with the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) to train parents how to use their voice to influence local, state and federal policymakers and civic leaders.



20,856

STUDENTS  
 IN THE  
 BRIDGEPORT  
 SCHOOL SYSTEM

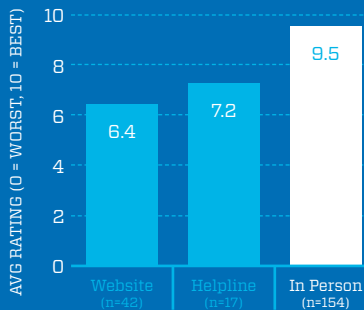
## Education Forum

On a bitterly cold evening last winter, over 100 people attended our forum to listen to experts from The Consultation Center at Yale University and University of Connecticut discuss best practices to improve school climate.

## Healthcare

As an assister organization, BCAC staff helped families from Bridgeport, Norwalk and Stamford enroll in health insurance through Access Health CT.

### Satisfaction with In-Person Assistance Extremely High

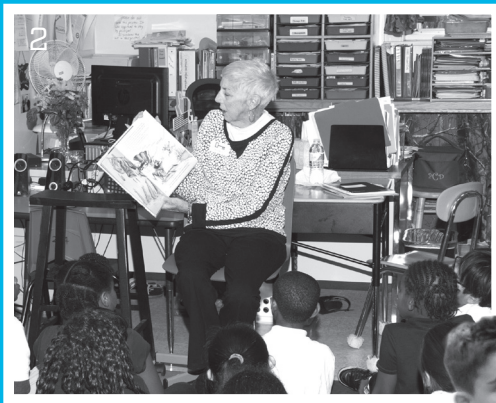


SATISFACTION WITH POINTS OF ENTRY INTO AHCT

"Evaluation of the Access Health CT Enrollment Experience in Connecticut: Raising up the Voices of Urban Consumers, Assisters and Navigators" funded by the Universal Health Care Foundation, Connecticut Health Foundation, and The Donaghue Foundation



# The Power of Change: Mobilizing for Children and Families



## 1. PT PARTNERS

PT Partners is a partnership amongst residents, community organizations, neighbors, and government agencies working together to improve the quality of life at the PT Barnum Apartments and the surrounding community. This unique approach is resident-driven and BCAC is proud to be a member of the Steering Committee. The collaboration aims to strengthen the PT community while also addressing issues of concern that residents have identified and prioritized.

## 2. READ ALOUD

The School Volunteer Association of Bridgeport held its 29th annual Read Aloud Day this fall. Over 600 volunteers from all over Fairfield County shared the joy of reading with every pre-kindergarten through sixth grade class across the city. Read Aloud Day demonstrates how many people truly care about the education and lives of the students of the Bridgeport Public Schools. BCAC staff participate every year. It's a great way to start the morning!

## 3. SENATOR MURPHY VISIT

Last spring, BCAC worked with our member organizations, Hall Neighborhood's Care Around the Clock and the Bridgeport Alliance for Young Children (BAYC), to plan a child care site visit for Senator Chris Murphy. The Senator spent time touring the facility, reading to children, and learning about childcare issues facing families in Bridgeport. Accessible, affordable child care is a critical issue for working parents in our community. And, quality child care greatly improves the educational readiness of our children.

# The Power of Change: Honoring Our Generous Donors

## **BCAC Members Above and Beyond Gifts of \$1,000 or More**

United Way of Coastal Fairfield County  
Greenfield Hill Congregational Church  
Hall Neighborhood House, Inc.

## **BCAC Member Organizations**

*We thank our Members who  
make the Coalition possible!*

A Child's World, Inc.  
ABCD, Inc.  
All Our Kin  
American Association of University  
Women - Bridgeport Branch  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of SWCT  
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Laura Hurwitz



## Did You Know?

TOTAL  
CHILDREN IN  
BRIDGEPORT

36,574



Doris and Frank Jacoby  
Edith and Bennett Katzen  
Barbara and Jeffrey Kiernan  
Beth Lazar  
Chris and George Markley  
Andrew Martinez  
Patricia and Robert McCorkle  
Janet Carroll Memoli  
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In Honor of Dale Janoski, Marian Azryla and Kim O'Malley  
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Jessica Wolf

**Gifts Made in Memory**

In Memory of Josephine Biazzo, Elizabeth Birney, Eleanor Curran and Edna Healy  
Jan Birney

In Memory of Joe Goloff  
Lynn Axelroth  
Ruth Fine  
Meredith Hostetter

Christine Ingenito and the Mental Health Staff at Manhattan VA  
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In Memory of Marianne Conaty Healy  
Marge Hiller

In Memory of Bennett Katzen  
Lila and Milton Cooper

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In Memory of Pasquale Perillie, MD  
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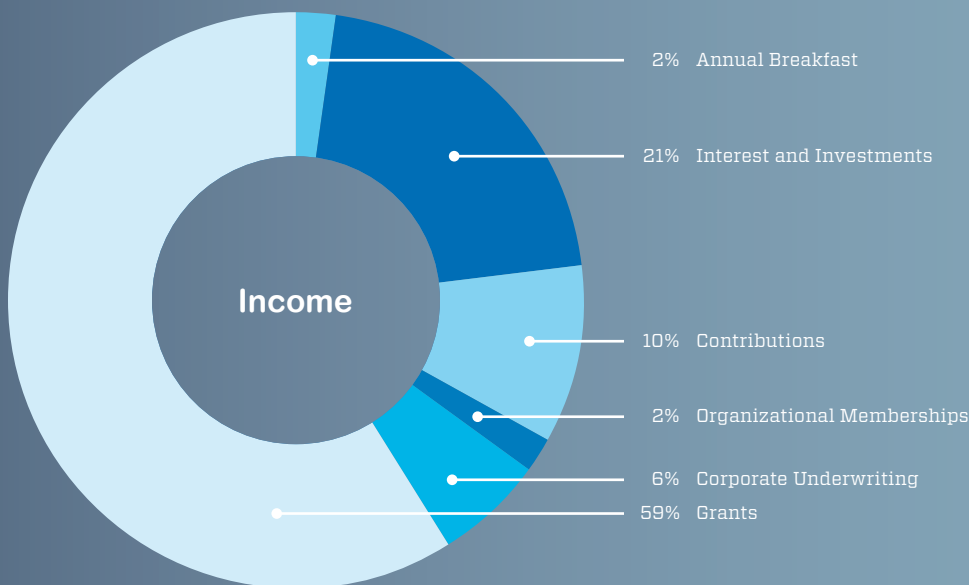
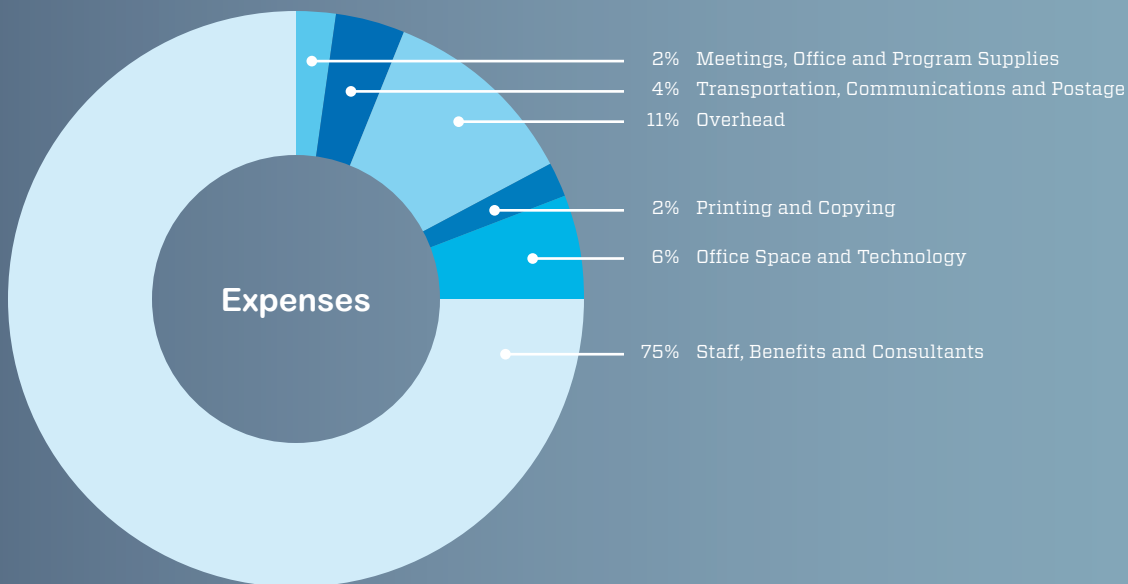
Barbara Findlay  
Jack Hickey-Williams  
Janice Park

**And Finally...**



Last spring, over 200 community members attended our 29th Annual Breakfast and were inspired by guest speaker Michel Nischan, President of Wholesome Wave and an advocate for a more healthful, equitable and sustainable food future for all. Michel has been a vocal and influential advocate for ensuring that everyone, especially people in low-income urban and rural communities, have access to fresh, wholesome, locally grown food.

# 2014 Financial Highlights



\*In order to maintain our independent voice, we do not accept government funding.

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Bridgeport, CT 06605  
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F (203) 549-0203

[bcacct.org](http://bcacct.org)

**Annual  
Report  
2014**

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The Late Janice Park

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