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Grant Recipients and Project Descriptions

Bethesda, Maryland (January 11, 2016) — The Bainum Family Foundation has made grants totaling \$575,000 to 11 organizations that will be part of the new Birth-to-Three Policy Alliance in Washington, D.C. The following pages contain descriptions of the projects to be funded by these grants.

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American Academy of Pediatrics, DC Chapter

In collaboration with Children's National Medical Center's Child Health Advocacy Institute and Medstar Georgetown University Hospital, the DC Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (DC AAP) will launch a health provider education series focused on raising awareness among child health providers regarding the devastating effects of adverse childhood events (ACEs) on children within their first five years of life. DC AAP's initial symposium will convene members of DC AAP and other local child health provider organizations for a screening and panel discussion on the Raising of America series (a documentary that explores what science tells us about the enduring importance of early life experiences on the brain and body, and what policies help or hinder the raising of healthy, happy children who are ready to learn). DC AAP also will conduct educational sessions at local hospitals to educate residents and medical students.

By bringing medical professionals together to screen and discuss this series, DCAAP will help them scrutinize their preconceptions, strengthen their commitment, and become adept at informing and involving other stakeholders. In subsequent years, with the Bainum Family Foundation's support, DC AAP will undertake targeted projects in pediatric practices, conduct an awareness campaign to increase policy maker and key stakeholder knowledge of the elements of an effective early learning system for infants and toddlers, provide medical/technical assistance to policy makers on early childhood health issues, and convene joint policy forums with health providers, civic leaders, and policymakers to promote policy and regulatory solutions and build support for expanded public funding for infants and toddlers.

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The Early Childhood Innovation Network — Children’s National Medical Center and MedStar Georgetown University Hospital

The Early Childhood Innovation Network (ECIN) — a newly formed collaboration between Children’s National Medical Center and MedStar Georgetown University Hospital/Georgetown University Medical Center — will work together with the DC Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics to educate child health care providers and policy makers about the impacts of poverty, trauma, and adverse childhood experiences in early childhood on long-term health and development, and advocate for policy and practice solutions to eliminate or ameliorate these harmful effects. Emerging evidence reveals that toxic stress during a child’s youngest years can disrupt developing brain architecture, other maturing organs, and metabolic regulatory systems, emphasizing the pressing need for interventions focused on preventing, reducing, and mitigating the long-term negative consequences of these stresses.

Activities of this project include innovative and individualized educational activities and the development of a toolkit of strategies for primary care providers — who have frequent contact with children and families during the first three years of life — to identify and reduce toxic stress, including screening recommendations and targeted educational materials. By linking the health care and early childhood education systems through the Birth-to-Three Policy Alliance, and advancing the capacity of the pediatric community to recognize and respond to toxic stresses, we will strengthen the voice of pediatric providers to become even more effective and engaged advocates for comprehensive policy solutions.

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Children's Law Center

Children's Law Center fights so every child in DC can grow up with a loving family, good health, and a quality education. A critical step to achieving this goal is to intervene early when children are abused or neglected to minimize their exposure to and aid in their recovery from trauma, which can have long-lasting effects. With the Bainum Family Foundation's support, Children's Law Center will advocate for the healthy development of children who live in families where abuse and neglect has been identified. This includes working hand-in-hand with DC's child welfare agency to reform programs, policies, and practices to better meet the needs of the youngest children in the agency's care.

Another critical issue is to ensure that children with special health or educational needs do not languish without appropriate care and support. That's why Children's Law Center will advocate for the full funding of early intervention services to ensure the District can reach as many infants and toddlers with developmental delays as possible.

Finally, in recognition of the long-lasting, negative impact of extreme poverty on young children, we will advocate for changes to the District's TANF policy to ensure families have the financial stability they need to provide safe, stable care for their youngest children. By working in these three areas, and as part of the new Birth-to-Three Policy Alliance, Children's Law Center's policy efforts will improve outcomes for DC's most vulnerable young children.

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DC Action for Children

DC Action for Children’s mission is to provide data-based analysis — using DC Kids Count data — and policy leadership on critical issues facing DC children and families, to promote policies that optimize child and family well-being. With the Bainum Family Foundation’s support and in partnership with Birth-to-Three Policy Alliance members, DC Action for Children will build citywide support for a comprehensive birth-to-three agenda that includes access to quality child care, early intervention, and the expansion of home visiting services.

DC Action will provide research and analysis with DC Kids Count data through reports, including a publication focused on children aged birth to three. We will provide testimony at City Council roundtables and hearings, and host at least one educational forum. DC Action aims to create a city-wide commitment to establish high-performance birth-to-three programs and services that produce results for children and families and develop a flexible funding stream to create and sustain quality programs and services.

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DC Appleseed

DC Appleseed is an independent research and advocacy organization that strives to make the National Capital Area a better place to live and work. We collaborate with experts and the best legal minds in the area to tackle some of the region's most difficult policy problems. Working with the Bainum Family Foundation's Birth-to-Three Policy Alliance, DC Appleseed will continue its efforts to improve economic security for infant/toddler teachers through increased public investment in early education, and through teacher access to higher education and professional development opportunities linked to increased pay.

Investing in the early childhood workforce benefits the District in several ways. First, improving economic security for teachers reduces stress and turnover, and brings greater stability to children in care. Second, better-educated and higher-skilled individuals in the field means higher-quality instruction in infant/toddler classrooms. Third, greater economic security for workers means fewer children and families in the District living in poverty, with all of the costs and hardships that entails.

Our work with Bainum aims to identify the most effective and strategic investments for the District to make in its early childhood workforce, and to understand how to make these investments work best for the workers we have. This work will include collaboration with partners in the policy alliance to improve the ability of our infant/toddler programs to serve children with developmental delays and disabilities.

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DC Early Learning Collaborative

Research confirms that highly trained and credentialed teachers and center directors, with specialized training in infant and toddler development, can make a significant difference in the social and cognitive development of infants and toddlers, preparing them to succeed in school and in life. The East End Infant & Toddler Workforce Improvement Project will focus on promoting public awareness and investment to address the challenges, opportunities, and changes needed to ensure that the infant and toddler workforce in Wards 7 and 8 has the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and credentials necessary to provide high-quality care and education.

During the first year of the project, the Early Learning Collaborative will gather data on the professional credentialing of the teachers and directors in the 61 centers and 60 family child care homes in Wards 7 and 8. The three strategic objectives are to gather data on the professional credentials and any specialized training the workforce has earned to date; to assess the workforce's level of awareness of existing credentialing and training opportunities and identify any barriers that might prevent them from participating; and to share information on existing workforce development programs sponsored by the city and the private sector in order to connect teachers and directors with those programs. Data will be collected from OSSE subsidy reports and a series of focus groups with a sampling of staff from East End infant and toddler centers and family child care homes. A report will be published at the end of the first project year, and the Early Learning Collaborative will host a series of events to disseminate the report and discuss its findings.

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DC Fiscal Policy Institute (at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities)

The DC Fiscal Policy Institute (DCFPI) will engage in research, educational, and advocacy efforts to promote the well-being of DC's families with young children, and to support creation of comprehensive early childhood services in the District.

- 1) **Early childhood resource map.** An updated "resource map" will highlight services for families with young children and identify possible overlap or gaps in services. That will be complemented by a policy brief on model state efforts to create effective early childhood systems.
- 2) **Costs of supporting quality child care.** A report in conjunction with DC Appleseed will examine the costs of providing high-quality child care to infants and toddlers. The report, based on interviews of providers in the District, will recommend increasing the provider reimbursement rate to support high-quality care, along with other recommendations for improving DC's child care subsidy program.
- 3) **Supporting families through TANF.** DC's TANF program is critical to the success of families with young children, providing financial assistance and employment and social services. DCFPI and partners will engage in research, educational, and advocacy efforts to modify a rigid time limit that risks leaving thousands of children in deep poverty; to implement an exemption to "stop the clock" for families with newborns; and to improve services for vulnerable families.
- 4) **Expanding Home Visiting with federal Medicaid funds.** A report will highlight opportunities to expand or deepen services in DC's Home Visiting program using Medicaid. It will include recommendations for policy and administrative changes needed to take advantage of these opportunities.

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DC Head Start Association (DCHSA)

The District of Columbia Head Start Association (DCHSA), a membership organization whose mission is to provide unified leadership and support to all Head Start and Early Head Start programs within the District of Columbia, will expand its membership and communication to the growing number of Early Head Start providers in DC; and increase opportunities for providers to share ideas with, and learn from, regional and national experts in order to build providers' ability to offer care that meets Head Start quality standards. In addition, DCHSA will gather and utilize provider input to develop and advocate policy recommendations on behalf of its members at the local and national policy level.

DCHSA will focus on the following key goals:

- Ensure that DC's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) incorporates the quality Head Start and Early Head Start standards.
- Provide learning opportunities to better inform parents and staff about quality Early Head Start best practices and systems.
- Contribute to the development of a state early childhood data system in order to provide a single source of child and family information, to identify and reduce areas of duplication, and to streamline transition between agencies serving early childhood populations.

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Empower DC

Empower DC is a citywide community empowerment organization with a strong track record of developing the leadership and ability of people directly impacted by social issues to advance systemic and policy-oriented solutions. Through support from the Bainum Family Foundation, Empower DC will dedicate a full-time Community Organizer to extensive outreach and community engagement in order to identify and understand the needs of low-income families with young children, and develop a grassroots-led campaign to support policy change that advances solutions to the needs identified.

With an initial focus on public housing communities in Ward 7 and 8, Empower DC will offer user-friendly trainings, forums, and events to advance community members' understanding of how policy is developed in the city, to strengthen advocacy skills and to inform the community about opportunities to share their views at key City Council hearings on TANF, child care, and other areas of concern to low-income families. Empower DC will support dozens of residents as they engage in self-advocacy around critical safety-net issues, providing testimony at hearings, meeting with elected officials and undertaking other advocacy activities most will be experiencing for the first time in their lives.

Empower DC will also facilitate the process of people coming together to form and carry out an action campaign to address policy issues identified as priorities for their families. Through supportive relationships, training, and leadership development, Empower DC will build the personal empowerment and collective power necessary for low-income families to be heard by policy makers and seen as a political force to advance systemic change.

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Raise DC

As the District's cross-sector collective impact partnership focused on improving the lives of D.C. youth from cradle to career, Raise DC exists to move the education community forward on a set of five high-level goals, one of which is kindergarten readiness.

Through funding from the Bainum Family Foundation, Raise DC will build out its early childhood capacity by hiring a Senior Director of Early Childhood Initiatives. This position will manage the strategy, implementation, and data collection and analysis around the Early Development Instrument (EDI), a population-based measure of school readiness that can be used to predict health, education, and social outcomes. The EDI will become a platform for increased citywide focus on the needs of 4-year-olds, which will allow Raise DC to expand the shared knowledge base of key stakeholders in the early learning space.

The Senior Director of Early Childhood Initiatives will also work with other Raise DC staff and partners to create and define an awareness and advocacy campaign around the needs of young children in the District — both educating relevant stakeholders and developing new ones.

Lastly, Raise DC will relaunch its Early Childhood Change Network (ECCN) by leveraging the right partners and resources that will fully utilize the organization's collective impact model to improve outcomes for young children. Raise DC will also target the transition to pre-kindergarten through the alignment of data, cross-system conversations, and on-the-ground input to support a working group on this transition.

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