

Reflections from Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future



James F. Mikulski Memorial Group

Volume 12 Issue 1

#GivingTuesday Gives Back to Students

Thanks to the tremendous response to the Jim's Bridge #Giving Tuesday campaign on November 2nd, we were able to provide special year end grants for the schools.

Each school had its own unique way to use its grant to benefit their students.

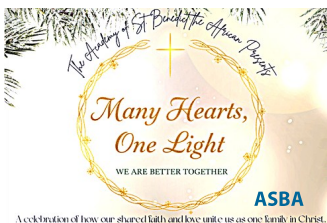
Old St. Mary's School used it to fund student tutoring.

The Academy of St. Benedict the African applied the grant to

its "Many Hearts, One Light" Holiday campaign.

Visitation used its grant to host Santa and Mrs. Claus as a treat for the students as well as a Christmas breakfast.

St. Gall School held a "Student Appreciation Day" during Catholic Schools week, where the grant was used to celebrate its students with a hot dog/chips lunch along and a movie for the whole school!



Blasting Past 100K Lbs for Clothing Drives

WOW! We did it! The Jim's Bridge Winter Clothing/Book Drive easily pushed us well beyond 100,000 pounds of goods collected since 2017!!!

It happened on February 14th when Jim's Bridge delivered 8,233 pounds of clothing and books/media to Savers Thrift Stores. What a lot of stuff!

That means, since 2017, Jim's Bridge has collected 105,589 pounds of goods in our clothing/book drives. Savers

compensates Jim's Bridge based on pounds delivered, so that adds up to over \$20,000 to benefit school children.

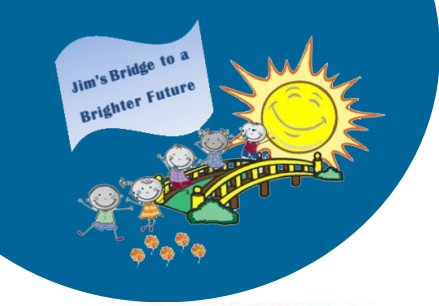
Our thanks to everyone who donated items as well as those who helped us load, deliver and unload everything collected in the Jim's Bridge Winter Savers Clothing Drive.

Special thanks to Callaghan's Moving Services for donating the truck and crew to transport everything to Savers. Thank you to St. Gall School for

hosting a family drop off day and to those in Park Monroe condos who contributed to their building drop off location. And finally, a big shout out to the volunteers from Marist High School who did an awesome job helping us move all the bags from our house to the truck.

Next drive will be in the summertime – See the back page for details.





Cheers to Our Volunteers

Volunteering at races is a fun and rewarding way to help raise funds for Jim’s Bridge. The race organizers make a donation to Jim’s Bridge based on the number of volunteers we recruit for the event. Here are recent races and our planned 2026 event calendar.



Hot Chocolate 15K/10K/5K Runner Info Nov. 2, 2025



Shamrock Shuffle Packet Pickup March 21, 2026



2026
Volunteer
Events for
Jim’s Bridge

Event	Date
Corporate Challenge	Thu., May 14, 2026
CARA Spring Trail Chase	Sun., May 17, 2026
BTN Big 10K	Sat., July 11, 2026
Chicago Triathlon (Shift 1 & Shift 2)	Sun., August 23, 2026
CARA Ready to Run 20 Miler	Sun., September 20, 2026
Bank of America Chicago Marathon	Sun., October 11, 2026
Hot Chocolate 5K/10K/15K	Sun., November 1, 2026

Jim's Bridge in Action



Catching up with ASBA

Since we were not able to schedule a visit with the Academy of St. Benedict the African in time for our last newsletter, we made a point of visiting them early in the year.

And what a great time we had meeting with the assistant principal and our scholarship students on January 27th.

The assistant principal brought us up to date on the

good things going on at the school. Then we met with our three scholarship students, all in grades 3 and 4.

We had fun talking about their favorite subjects in school (they all liked Math!), what they will dress up as for Career Day that week, their favorite cake flavor (chocolate was the winner) and our shared love of playing with Legos!



Erie Neighborhood House At Christmas

A special Christmas event for Jim's Bridge is sponsoring and participating in the Erie Neighborhood House "Holiday with Heart" celebration.

On December 13th, we joined other volunteers to help wrap gifts for the 673 children in the Erie House Programs. The gifts

were delivered in the days before Christmas. Jim's Bridge donated to help sponsor the gifts and delivery festivities!

For the Holidays, Jim's Bridge also participated in the Catholic Charities "Sponsor a Family" program, providing gifts for a family of seven.



Running for Jim's Bridge — "Go Mo in Tokyo"

Yes, one more time, one more marathon! Our thanks to everyone who joined in to sponsor Director Maureen as she ran the 2026 Tokyo Marathon for Jim's Bridge on March 1st.

By finishing this marathon, she also earned the Abbott World Major Marathon Six Star award

having completed the Chicago, Berlin, Boston, New York and London marathons in prior years.

Great job and a great win for Jim's Bridge with close to \$4,000 raised for her run.





Our Thanks for a Successful Year



We are very grateful that the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group / Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future continues to grow and gain new supporters year over year.

In 2025, Jim's Bridge granted the most amount in a single year to benefit school children in lower income areas of Chicago, including twenty scholarships. Since 2014, a total of 145 scholarships have been awarded from Jim's Bridge.

The Jim's Bridge Annual Fundraiser, the #GivingTuesday campaign and the "Running for Jim's Bridge"

Accomplishments Since 2014

\$331,827	Total Funds Granted to help Children
105,692	Pounds of goods collected for Savers
2,844	Volunteers provided to Run/Walk events
1107	Donations Received
145	Scholarships Awarded
91	Volunteer events supported

campaign were all very successful.

The Jim's Bridge clothing drives with Savers Thrift Stores continue to help raise funds as well as introduce new people to the charity. It is also great to see many new volunteers with Jim's Bridge at race events.

The relationships that Jim's Bridge maintains with the schools and the Erie Neighborhood House remain strong and positive.

It is an honor that Jim's Bridge is highly regarded by the organizations we sponsor, the race directors we assist and our clothing drive

liaisons as a quality, dependable and well operated organization with a purposeful mission to help children.

We look forward to continuing the work of the charity to benefit school children from lower income areas of Chicago in ways that promote wellness and service into 2026 and beyond.

Thank you to all of our donors, supporters and volunteers! We could not do it without you!

P.S. Mark Oct 4th on your calendar for the Jim's Bridge Annual Fundraiser! See below.

Jim's Bridge to a Brighter Future

2026 Fundraiser

Sunday, Oct 4, 2026

1:00 PM — 4:00 PM
Zachary's Grill
13415 Ridgeland Ave
Palos Heights, IL 60463

Featuring
Games, Raffles
& Silent Auction

Jim's Bridge Summer Clothing Drive

Jim's Bridge will hold a clothing drive in partnership with Savers **from Saturday, June 20, 2026 until Saturday, Aug 29, 2026.**

That gives you plenty of time to clean out your closets and get your donations to us. More to come on Facebook and in email. Text or call 708-267-9343 to arrange a drop off or a clothing pickup.

Our Mission - You Can Help

October 2, 2025 marked 12 years since we lost our dear son, brother, husband, step-dad and friend to suicide, and we will probably never understand why. Not a day goes by without remembering Jim, still loving him and wishing he was with us.

We knew from that day in 2013 that we wanted to do something positive as a tribute to him. We set up the James F. Mikulski Memorial Group, a tax exempt 501(c)(3) charity EIN 46-4519616, to honor his life by benefiting children while emphasizing wellness and helping others. We are proud that our charity, with your help, has been able to accomplish this. Without our generous donors and wonderful volunteers it would not be possible. We continue to keep operating expenses well below 10% of revenue.

Please consider a donation: www.jfmmemorial.org/donate, Zelle to john@jfmmemorial.org or mail to:

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

James F. Mikulski Memorial Group



www.jfmmemorial.org

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