



a century of social innovation

Mission Statement:

The Wells Foundation drives entrepreneurial social innovation resulting in lasting change in our community.

<https://wellsfound.org/>

Site Visit Report: The Family Partnership Four Directions Therapeutic PreSchool

Organization visited:

Family Partnership Four Directions Therapeutic Preschool

Date of visit:

July 18, 2019

Wells Foundation board member(s) visiting:

Inez Bergquist, Gene Sandler

Staff members visited:

Kit Briem, VP of Advancement

Caroline Hood, VP of Programs

Mary Rainey, Director of Four Directions Family Center

Key Points:

The Family Partnership is a 141 year old nonprofit which predates even the United Way in Minneapolis. The United Way was actually spun off of the Family Partnership some time ago, as it originally was the fundraising arm of the nonprofit. They have 100 employees, 80 of whom are full time. Our grant was for their preschool program, which we saw on a short tour.

Their mission is building strong families and better futures for children. All of the students, age 16 months to age 11, but primarily 16 months to kindergarten age, are low income and are funded by the state or other money. Some of the classes are immersion classes in the Dakota and Ojibwe languages, and they offer speech, play and occupational (involving day to day tasks) therapy.

Their two-generation (2Gen) philosophy is to treat both children and parents as their lives affect each other. As one of the NAZ partners, they have worked with many of our other Wells grantees to stabilize patient's lives, such as Simpson Housing, PLP, and others. They have a Mobility Mentoring model to help families assess their situation one on one. Also, they have completed an initial pilot for the 2Gen Executive Functioning Coaching Curriculum for preschoolers and parents. They use metrics to track the effectiveness of their programs.

Some of the families are homeless off and on, and many have incomes of \$16,000 a year. Family Partnership staff were some of the social workers who regularly did a walk-through in the homeless camp last summer, 2018, to help families and children there.

The Partnership is building a new structure at Bloomington and Lake as they are outgrowing their building, where we met, which is the old Holy Rosary school in South Minneapolis. (St. Mark's used to participate in Loaves and Fishes at the Holy Rosary Parish Church until we started Sunday Night Supper with other downtown congregations.) They will keep their North Minneapolis office, but close the East Lake Street office. They are \$300,000 short of their \$20 million goal, \$10 million of which was provided by the state of Minnesota.

Partnering/Volunteer opportunities:

They would be happy to come to a Forum at the church anytime.