




# The Power of the Parent

2018 IMPACT REPORT





# Smile! Another 1 million neural connections just formed in Topher's brain.



Redefining early education,  
child by child, parent by parent.

#### VOCEL'S 2018 IMPACT REPORT

With acknowledgement of contributions made  
between September 1, 2017 and August 31, 2018.



5317 West Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60651

(773) 887 3736 • [Info@VOCEL.org](mailto:Info@VOCEL.org)  
[VOCEL.org](http://VOCEL.org) • [@VOCELKids](https://www.instagram.com/VOCELKids)

*Pictured on cover: Julio works with his  
son Dominic (16 months) at VOCEL's  
Child Parent Academy.*

In the earliest years of life, more than  
one million new neural connections  
form each second.\* Research shows  
that these connections build the brain's  
architecture for all future learning.

*Pictured: Topher (2.5 years) attends the  
Child Parent Academy with his father Brian.*

\*Center on the Developing Child  
(2009). *Five Numbers to Remember About  
Early Childhood Development* (Brief).



“

**Investments that bolster the parenting capacities of families are the most effective way to promote social mobility and foster equal opportunities for all.**

They empower children with the capabilities to flourish as dignified and engaged citizens and workers throughout their lives. Such investments provide significant returns to individuals and society.”

— **JAMES HECKMAN, PH.D.**  
Nobel Memorial Prize Laureate and  
Professor of Economics, University of Chicago

*Eva Marie (20 months) participates in the  
Child Parent Academy with her mother Gisela.*



VOCEL Child Parent Academy graduates on their first day of preschool at Piccolo School of Excellence in September 2018. Principal Michael Abello remarked at VOCEL’s Annual Luncheon just how ready they were for their transition to school.

Dear Friend,

Research tells us that that one million new neural connections are formed every second during a child’s first years; these precious days of early childhood development are more important than any other in positioning a child for a productive, successful life.

This past year, VOCEL strengthened its commitment to ensure that all children have the skills they need to thrive in school and succeed in life, regardless of the zip code in which they reside. After three years in development, we expanded our Child Parent Academy from two to eight sites in some of Chicago’s most under-resourced communities. This reflects our belief that the best way to fully capitalize on the powerful early years is to empower parents with strategies to develop their children’s communication, interpersonal, and executive function skills so they can flourish.

Our innovative approach is grounded in research-based best practices. By sharing it directly with parents in a community-based setting, we’re equipping them with the tools they need to be their children’s first and best teachers. But even more, we’re creating supportive environments for caregivers to learn from each other, share what works, and become confident early advocates for their children.

With your support, we’re seeing promising evidence that children are not only entering school prepared, but also that families and communities are becoming stronger. Thank you for helping our youngest learners and their parents thrive.

  
Barbara Koren  
Chairman, Board of Directors

  
Kelly Lambriatos  
Executive Director & Co-Founder

## We believe every child is an emerging leader.

Parents in the Child Parent Academy learn to recognize and cultivate what we have identified as three interconnected leadership traits in children, ultimately helping them lay the foundation for their child's future success in school and life.

*Jaeden (16 months) participates in the Child Parent Academy with his mother Yashira.*



Creative  
Critical  
Thinker



Connected  
Empathetic  
Individual



Effective  
Communicator



In 2018, after 10 months in the Child Parent Academy, 91% of children met age appropriate milestones, up from 56% at session start.

## We're changing the status quo for early learning in Chicago.

Access to best-in-class early learning opportunities has the greatest potential to break generational cycles of poverty. And yet, early education programs are often out of reach for many families in Chicago. In 2018, after three years of ideation, testing, and iteration, we transitioned our programming focus to the Child Parent Academy, a dynamic learning accelerator where young children ages zero to three and their parents learn side-by-side.

### VOCEL'S CORE STRATEGIES

Our model is informed by multiple lenses, including brain science, economics, child development, parenting best practices, and on-the-ground experience.



#### TWO-GENERATIONAL AND COMMUNITY-BASED

Intentionally designed programming for child and parent that increases access to early education in under-resourced neighborhoods.



#### OUTCOMES-DRIVEN PROGRAMMING

With a commitment to measuring outcomes, VOCEL monitors and tracks child and parent progress and adjusts course to ensure results.



#### EVALUATION AND RESPONSIBLE GROWTH

Constant evaluation and iteration drives program efficacy and strategic expansion efforts.



#### CONTINUOUS AND STRATEGIC INNOVATION

We look to advancements in the field and participant input to refine our program and adapt to families' changing needs.

Over 10 months, parents and children meet weekly at sites across Chicago's south and west sides.



**CLASSES AT PARTNER SITES**  
SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY CENTERS

Outside of class, VOCEL provides tools and resources to practice new strategies at home.



**PRACTICE & REINFORCEMENT**  
AT HOME



**WRAP-AROUND**  
SUPPORTS



**1. Learning together**

Children and their caregivers convene weekly with VOCEL teachers to learn through play and interaction. Parents observe teachers in action and see how they model key concepts.



**2. Fostering independence**

Children practice separation and continue learning with VOCEL staff and volunteers while parents and caregivers separate for discussion time.



**3. Building connections and gaining knowledge**

Parents and caregivers meet to converse as a community of peers and discuss child development milestones with VOCEL's Family Support Team.



**4. Sparking discovery at home**

Families take home VOCEL's curated Brain Bags with learning tools and books that encourage discovery and language development. In partnership with research-based Ready4K, parents receive texts throughout the week that prompt parent-child interactions and promote learning.



**5. Connecting families with hard-to-access resources**

VOCEL's Family Support Team partners with mental health, employment, and other community programs to secure additional resources and support as needed.



"At VOCEL I don't have friends, I have a family. This group doesn't just support my children, they support me and my own growth."

**THEMNEA WITH CJ (7 MOS) AND MASON (3 YRS)**

"I started VOCEL's program to get parenting strategies for my older son. Now he's in preschool and I come for Logan and my friends, and because I learn something new each week."

**CLAIRE & LOGAN (18 MOS)**

"So much of the Child Parent Academy is about relationships. The community is non-judgemental and it's amazing to see how quickly trust builds and parents open up. And when parents feel supported, they can focus even more on their relationship with their child."

**JAMIE, FAMILY SUPPORT MANAGER**

"As a mom of three, I know that no person matters more to a child than their parents. So it's an honor to walk alongside parents, to share in their joyful and challenging moments, and equip them with the knowledge and tools that I've learned as a professional in this field."

**KINYA, MASTER TEACHER**

# For parents: a community and confidence.



## At the conclusion of the 10-month program:

93% of parents say their knowledge  
of child development increased.

83% of parents say they now have  
more support from other parents.

*Tereza participates in the Child Parent Academy  
with her twin daughters Afnan and Bayan (age 4).*

## Meeting families where they are.

Only 22 percent of children in Chicago  
enter kindergarten on track to learn.<sup>1</sup>

And yet, outside of formal daycare, parents who want early learning opportunities for their children ages zero to three (when brain development is most critical) don't have access. The Child Parent Academy was designed in response to this need. We partner with schools and community-based organizations in under-resourced communities to coach caregivers to become exemplary teachers during the critical early years so their children start school ready on day one.

### WHERE WE WORK

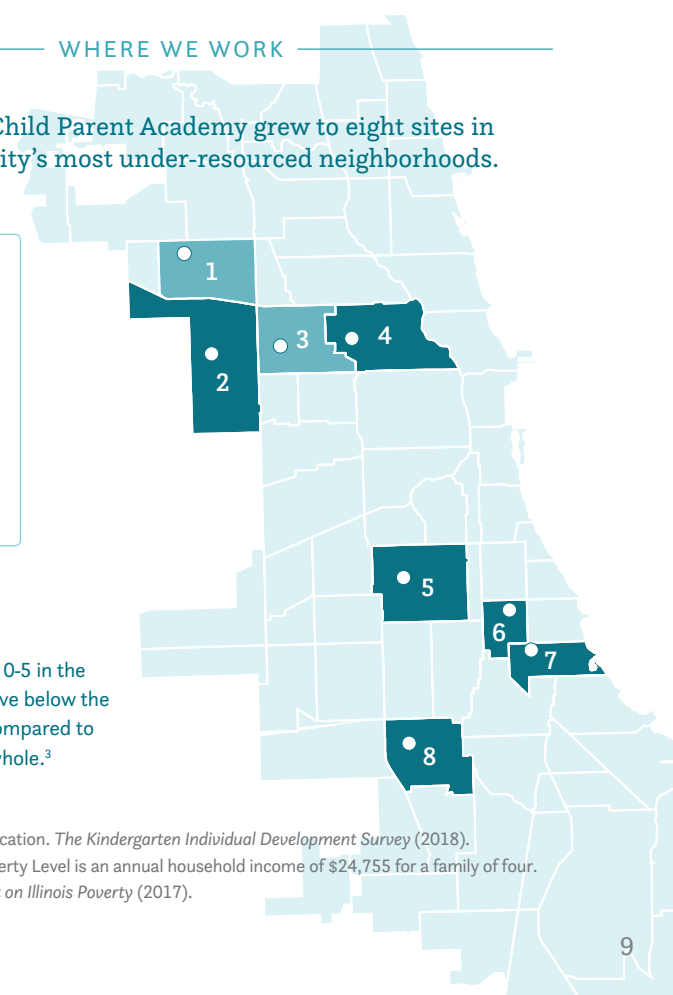
In 2018, the Child Parent Academy grew to eight sites in  
some of our city's most under-resourced neighborhoods.

1. Belmont Cragin
2. Austin
3. Humboldt Park
4. West Town
5. New City
6. Washington Park
7. Woodlawn
8. Auburn Gresham

■ New for 2018  
■ Returning

## 44.8%

percent of children ages 0-5 in the  
communities we serve live below the  
federal poverty level,<sup>2</sup> compared to  
31.1% for the city as a whole.<sup>3</sup>



1. Illinois State Board of Education. *The Kindergarten Individual Development Survey* (2018).  
2. For 2018, the Federal Poverty Level is an annual household income of \$24,755 for a family of four.  
3. Heartland Alliance. *Report on Illinois Poverty* (2017).

# 2018 Highlights



**EXPANDING TO THE SOUTH SIDE.** We established new partnerships with schools and community centers on the South Side to ensure VOCEL's programming reaches across Chicago and serves more children and families. *Pictured: the entrance to HelloBaby, our partner site in Woodlawn.*



**SHARING OUR PARENTING BEST PRACTICES.** We shared our program expertise with 450 individuals by leading coaching sessions at corporations, facilitating group learning at conferences, and speaking on panels and in keynote addresses. *Pictured: Training early childhood teachers at Concordia University.*



**ENGAGING WITH HARVARD'S FRONTIERS OF INNOVATION.** Our team attended the Frontiers of Innovation training through Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child, refining our Theory of Change and preparing for fast-cycle evaluation and iteration. *Pictured: VOCEL's program team.*



**GRADUATING OUR FINAL CLASS OF PRESCHOOLERS.** We proudly transitioned 30 children from VOCEL's Early Learning Center to kindergarten and other local learning programs, allowing us to focus on scaling the Child Parent Academy.



**HOSTING OUR 6TH ANNUAL SUMMER SOIRÉE.** VOCEL's Associate Board hosted its 6th annual Summer Soirée at Great Central Brewing and raised nearly \$10,000, a new record for this event! *Pictured: VOCEL Associate Board Co-Chair Phil Lee and VOCEL Manager of Events Hannah Morley.*

**PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:** NEW COAST FOUNDATION Skender Foundation

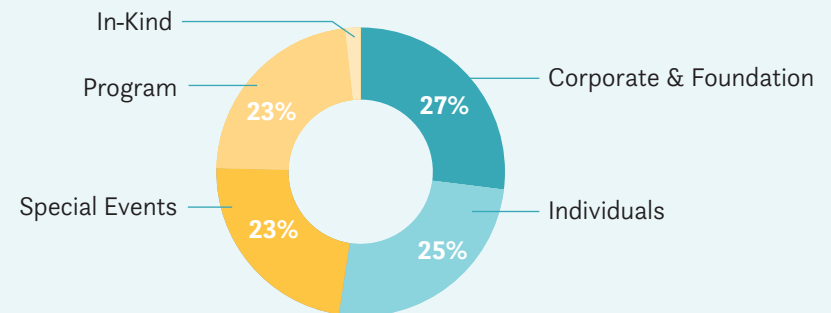
## We are excited to announce our selection as the inaugural investment of Chicago's newest venture philanthropic fund.

In January 2018, the New Coast and Skender Foundations formed a strategic partnership to pool funding and resources to support an emerging nonprofit organization in Chicago working to alleviate poverty. After a rigorous vetting process, VOCEL was selected as the venture fund's inaugural investment, receiving \$300,000 of general operating grants over three years, along with additional resources and access to networks to fuel our growth.

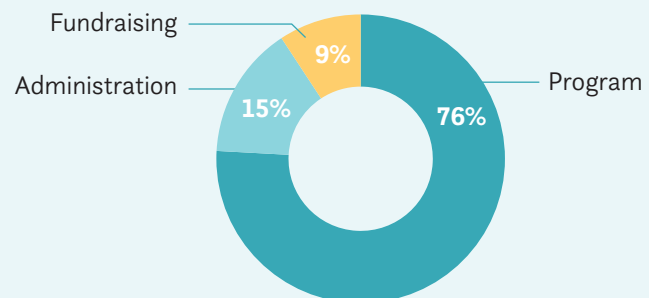
## Financials

For the fiscal year running September 2017 through August 2018. Audited statements available on request.

### REVENUE BY CATEGORY



### EXPENSES BY CATEGORY



## Annual Contributors Gifts received from September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018.

### \$75,000+

The Crown Family  
IMC\*

### \$50,000–\$74,999

New Coast Foundation\*  
Skender Foundation\*

### \$25,000–\$49,999

Finnegan Family Foundation  
Mary & Paul Finnegan  
Lindy & Michael Keiser  
Lincoln Park Preschool &  
Kindergarten\*  
Daniel Tierney & Anke Faber

\*Indicates a multi-year gift.

### \$10,000–\$24,999

Char & Larry Damron  
Paul Gearen  
GEM Realty Capital  
Lindy Hirschsohn & Chris  
Coetzee\*  
Houlihan Lokey  
Kayne Anderson Capital  
Advisors Foundation  
Winnie & Lawrence Kearns  
Barbara Koren  
Tom & Sally Powers  
The John Buck Company

### \$5,000–\$9,999

Baird  
Amy & Gabe Cahill

Robert & Loretta W. Cooney  
Family Foundation  
Patricia & Jerry Fellows  
Jonathon & Valencia Fellows  
Jennie Funk & Brian Jansen  
Good Heart Work Smart  
Foundation  
Greenbriar Asset  
Management, LP  
Thomas & Alison Hafner  
Ben & Jesse Ilhardt  
William McIntosh  
Ellen Morgan & Sheldon  
Zenner  
Neuberger Berman  
Foundation  
Selati Family Foundation  
Wege Foundation

### \$2,500–\$4,999

Fifth Third Bank  
Arthur J. Gallagher  
KPMG  
Lisa Kueng & Tony Green  
Latham & Watkins  
McCormick Foundation  
Northern Trust  
Charles Osweiler  
The Retirement Research  
Foundation  
Matthew Steinmetz  
Susan Toth  
VSA Partners

### \$1,000–\$2,499

Erin Amico  
Anonymous  
Arkes Family Foundation  
Sonny Balani  
Tracy & Tom Brooker  
Tamara & Robert Buday  
Lisa Burik  
Ann Byrne  
Amy Carbone  
Marcy Carlin  
Brian & Zada Clarke  
Congregation Solel  
Kevin & Linda Conway  
Theresa Corrao  
Patricia Cox  
Fogelson Family Foundation  
Jim Gearen  
Molly Gilles  
Keith & Rodney Goldstein  
Andrew Gore  
Great Rate Mortgage  
Louis & Meredith Hellebusch  
Dawn & Ted Helwig  
Patty Henderson  
Mary Ellen Hennessy  
Nicole & Scott Jackson  
Cathy & Ethan Kahn  
Ruth Kahn  
Chris & Elizabeth Keiser  
Kellcie Fund  
Lisa & Doug Klotnia  
Kathleen Kolodgy

Jack & Becky Krasaeath  
Kelly & Jerry Lambrinatos  
Michael & Barbara Lauesen  
Carolyn & Mike Laughlin  
Michael & Sheri Lehmann  
Chase Levey  
Adam Levy & Dana Keiser  
Rose Lizarraga  
Terry Maxwell  
Stephen McLaughlin  
Miske Family Charitable Trust  
Alexander Moody  
NIU CAUSE  
Jana O'Brien  
Michelle Parekh  
Ashley Pletz  
Viki & Tom Rivkin  
Jason Rosenthal  
Sagalyn Family Fund  
Darren Snyder  
Scott & Patti Swakow  
The Athena Fund  
Tina Wardrop  
Kathy Wolf  
Mary Yang  
Ronna & Steven Zoll

### \$500–\$999

Jennifer Alter-Warden  
David Bierman  
Matt & Colleen Bogue  
The Boston Consulting Group  
Deborah Brown  
Terri Abruzzo Callahan  
Kim Chen  
Martin Cohen & Myrtis Meyer  
Jeff Cohen  
Alexis Colianni  
Amy Cox  
Discover Financial Services  
Melissa Skoog Dunagan  
Jennifer Edgcomb  
Cassie Eng  
Andrew & Lisa Falconer  
Larry & Marilyn Fields  
First Presbyterian Church  
of La Grange  
Nick & Lisa Foussianes

Ruthie Friedell  
Katie Froelich  
Christina & Adam Hachikian  
Hajax Partners  
Julie & Stephen Hellebusch  
Wendy Heltzer  
Jenny Hurd  
Robin Josephs  
David & Karie Katz  
Jennifer Kim  
Adeline Koren  
Kristin & Greg Kranias  
Shermin Kruse  
Amy & Mike Manelli  
Andy Marek  
Mark & Sandy McLaughlin  
Robin Newberger  
Robert & Molly Powers  
Albert & Debbie Ricchio  
John & Therese Rigas  
Alex Ross  
Lizzy Scheinfeld  
Dan & Julie Schuman  
Katie Shannon  
Kendall Shearer  
Ben Wozniak

### \$250–\$499

Tom & Deb Abrahamson  
Allison Bacon  
Gretchen & John Barko  
Carol Barron  
Lee Benisek  
Jennifer Benson  
Patricia Bidwill  
Mary Ellen Callow  
Donna Carroll  
Ian Coelho  
Nancy Curotto  
Scott & Anne Davis  
Nancy Erickson  
Elizabeth & Brian Farmer  
Jenny Friedes  
Ken & Karen Gardstrom  
John & Ann Gearen  
Globetrotters  
Jeff & Kathy Grimes  
Elena & Josh Grotto



Nearly 400 early education advocates from across Chicago gathered for VOCEL's 4th Annual Early Expressions luncheon on October 30, 2018. Pictured, clockwise from top left: Board Member Char Damron (right) with sponsors Larry and Winnie Kearns; Co-Founders Jesse Ilhardt (left) and Kelly Lambrinatos (right) with our 2018 keynote speaker, Dr. Phil Fisher of Harvard University; Michael Abello (right), Chief of Early Childhood Education at the Chicago Public Schools and former Principal of VOCEL partner school Piccolo Elementary, with Woody McCally of the Finnegan Family Foundation; and Child Parent Academy participant Claritza with daughter Mila with Principal Melissa Sweazy of VOCEL partner school ACERO Santiago.



Geraldine Guichardo  
Polly Heavenrich  
Doug & Bonnie Ilhardt  
Janis Johnston  
Abbie Kelley  
Kick@55 Fitness  
Shelby King  
Susan Kossiakoff  
Mark & Carrie Kuberski  
Linda Loving  
Jonathan & Stephanie Marks  
Lorel & Robert McMillan  
Jens A. Millings  
Jeffrey Mowery  
Neal Nath  
New Moms  
Marcia Opp  
Jodiann Pacer  
Thania Panopoulos  
Edward Poropat III  
Michele Rivkin  
Mary Beth Rooney  
Ellen Rosen  
William Russell  
Greg & Debbie Schirf  
John Schmidt  
Sandra Sebolt-Pogge  
Reed Snellenbarger  
Megan Sullivan  
Chrissy Swanson  
Haley Swanson  
Jean Roberts  
Leslie Taylor  
The Robert Thomas Bobins  
Foundation  
Robert & Marie Weissbourd  
Matilda Wilhoite  
Liz Winnen

---

#### \$100–\$249

Lisa & David Allen  
Kathleen Almaney  
David Arel  
Tanja Babich  
Lucy Baird  
Tony & Jean Barbato  
Patty Barbato  
Catherine Barnhart  
Jordan Barnhill

Alejandra Esqueda Belmonte  
Catherine Benjamin  
Keith & Jessica Zander  
Carol Brandt  
Julie Brooks  
Mary & William Burke  
Liz Bushaw  
Jenelle Chalmers  
Michele Chudik  
Rob Crawford  
Emilie Creehan  
Sue & Doug DeRock  
Stephen Dieter  
Emily Dominski  
Dan & Stephanie Douglas  
Paul Durbin  
Barbara Elmer  
Emily Engel  
Julie Fedeli  
Stephen & Susan Felker  
Sandy Fencik  
Jon Findley  
James Flink  
Jonathan & Rachael Fritz  
David & Heather Geon  
Karen Gersowsky  
Katherine Gilbert  
Brittany Graunke  
Great Central Brewery, LLC  
Cornelia Grumman  
Amy Gudgeon  
Charles Hammerslough  
Joshua Hoen  
Jacqueline Horn  
Kent & Lora Ilhardt  
Oliver Jory  
Susan Kaden  
Liz Kaiser  
Beth Kaufmann  
Heather Khalaf  
Alice Kohn  
Danette Krogh  
Jonathan Krogh  
Sarah Lang  
Carrie Littman  
Doug & Amanda Marks  
Patricia McKee  
Jordan McKirahan  
Cheryl McPhilimy

Allyson Metcalf  
Christopher & Amanda Miller  
Pam Mischel  
Amy Moy  
Sara Nagy  
Jane Nolan  
Christina Nugent  
Pat O'Brien  
Kristen O'Rourke  
Morlie Patel  
Eva San Pedro  
Christine Anderson-Pogue  
Paige Ponder  
Serena Puri  
Nancy Quinn  
Mary Beth Rampolla  
Laura Roberts  
Vibeke Roesch  
Ken Rolling  
Diana Rosenbrock  
Jeffery & Mary Roth  
Jennifer Rotter  
Cailie & Jeff Ryan  
Juliana Schafer  
Margie Schaps  
Kristin Schrepferman  
Elizabeth Shaw  
Karen Shields  
Paula Smith  
Stacey Solotorovsky  
David Stewart  
Sugar Beet Food Co-op  
Michelle Sunder  
Matthew Abu Taleb  
Margaret Terry  
Stephanie Thai  
Jamie Thomas  
Olivia Tuck  
Dirk & Donna Vos  
Anita Weinberg  
Ron & Patty Weiss  
Roxanne Wendel Lostroscio  
Steven & Susan Wilde  
William Woolfolk  
Lucy Yang  
Julie Zaideman  
Laura Zumdaahl

---

#### Up to \$99

Jenny Achuthan  
AmazonSmile  
Alex Amrein  
Trish & Christopher Anest  
Mary Belovich  
Nicole Berg  
Ava Berry  
BMO Harris Bank  
Jessica Bohorquez  
Lindsay Campbell  
Jose Cerda  
Rachel Cohn  
Claire Conway  
Amanda Coulombe  
Erin Cowgill  
Karen Desai  
DonateWell  
Meghan Donovan  
Kelly Dorsey  
Jason Esser  
Alli Ettlinger  
Kelsey Evans  
David Feldman  
Jacqueline & Shawn Gaines  
Erik Gardstrom  
Gina Giambalvo  
Rick Grobart  
Morgan Haefner  
Yvonne Hangsterfer  
Christopher Hoffmann  
Katie Hollerbach  
Laurie & Joe Holloran  
Jimmy Holloran  
Alisha Hsu  
Laura Hull  
Meg Hutter  
Aviva Jacobs  
Sean Jucas  
Alison Jung  
Vicki Juran  
Paige Keenan  
Nate Kelsey  
Vasili Kharchenko  
Peter Kroner  
Joanna Krystek

Britney Kummerer  
Derek Kuns  
Pauline Lazzarotti  
Phillip Lee  
Jessica Lisnich  
Alyson Marguerat  
Rachel Mayo  
Quadale McCrea  
Jenny McGowan  
Brittney McIngvale  
Debra Michaels  
Hayley Monahan  
Natalie Monterastelli  
Devin Muntz  
Laura Muriello  
Diva Neims  
Wendy Newberger  
Melissa Oglesby  
Cindy Ogrin  
Sara Olkon  
Jacqueline Ostrowski  
Pratik Patel  
Raj Patel  
Marissa Pellegrini  
Valerie Pokladowski  
Steven Polasik  
Mary Prunty  
Laura Raine  
Luis Rodriguez  
Colleen Rooney  
Matt Rubin  
Francesca Rugo  
Safet Sarich  
Andrea Sarther  
Wade Schaaf  
David Schnettler  
Matthew Schrage  
Bradleigh & Shelby Smith  
Austin Smith  
Kristen Sotakoun  
Jeff Stone  
Taryn Stricker  
Melissa Swakow  
Bradley Templin  
Anjali Thakrar  
Joran Thompson

Matthew Tilley  
Sarah Tolman  
Keven Trinidad  
Patrick Verhoef  
Brendon Vickery  
Marian Walsh & Peter Gundy  
Kate Warach  
Robert Warnock  
Thomas Weigle  
Annaleigh Wetzel  
David Zivan

---

#### In Kind Support & Volunteers

Derek Bekebrede  
Liz Bushaw  
Amy Cahill  
Aurea Chambers  
Alexander Chi  
Carlie Daniels  
Sarah Dickerson  
Cassie Eng  
The Fellows Family  
Renato Flores  
Anisha Ford  
Elizabeth Healy  
Houlihan Lokey  
IMC  
The Kindness Club  
Cindy Laegeler  
Latin School, 6th Grade Boys  
& 8th Grade Girls  
Lincoln Park Preschool  
& Kindergarten  
Amy Manelli  
Sarah Maxfield  
Wendy Nieslawski  
Oak Park Girl Scouts  
Lisa Peloquin  
Tom Powers  
Sarah Rassey  
Viki Rivkin  
Annemarie Spitz  
Sukkat Shalom  
Sandi Weiskirch  
Wildwood Photography

---

## VOCEL Board of Directors

**Barbara Koren**

*Chairman*

The Edwards Consulting Group

**Erin Amico**

One North Interactive

**Amy Cahill**

Educator & Non-Profit Leader

**Charlotte Damron**

Damron Associates

**Jonathon Fellows**

DiMeo Schneider & Associates

**Louis Hellebusch**

GEM Realty Capital, Inc.

**Lindy Hirschsohn**

Alumna Partner, The Boston Consulting Group

**Jesse Ilhardt**

VOCEL

**Safiyah Jackson**

North Carolina Partnership for Children

**Jack Krasaeath**

Diversey Capital

**Lisa Kueng**

Invesco

**Kelly Lambrinatos**

VOCEL

**Ellen Morgan**

Former Dean, Northwestern School of Law

**Ashley Pletz**

The Primary School

---

## VOCEL Associate Board

**Jordan Barnhill**

*Outgoing Founding Co-Chair*  
University of Chicago

**Matthew Bogue**

Arthur J. Gallagher

**Ian Coelho**

*Outgoing Founding Co-Chair*  
Northwest Community Hospital

**Molly Gilles**

Ogilvy

**Geraldine Guichardo**

JLL

**Sarah Lang**

Lurie Children's Hospital

**Phillip Lee**

*Incoming Co-Chair*  
Mercy Home for Boys and Girls

**Jennifer Naguit**

University of Michigan

**Valerie Pokladowski**

Lincoln Park Preschool & Kindergarten

**Cailie Ryan**

Classkick

**Matthew Rubin**

Discover Financial Services

**Kendall Shearer**

*Incoming Co-Chair*  
Marmalade Agency

**Haley Swanson**

PwC

**Mary Yang**

The Boston Consulting Group

---

## VOCEL Staff

**Kelly Lambrinatos**

Executive Director & Co-Founder

**Jesse Ilhardt**

Director of Programs & Co-Founder

**Cristen Brown**

Family Support Specialist

**Heather Duncan**

Teacher

**Jamie Huenink**

Family Support Manager

**Debra Michaels**

Director of Development

**Hannah Morley**

Manager of Events & Office Operations

**Nelly Pineda**

Program Coordinator

**Ruby Rodriguez**

Classroom Assistant

**Alicia Stipe**

Classroom Assistant

**Sandi Weiskirch**

Finance Manager

**Kinya Willaby**

Master Teacher

---

## Program Locations

**VOCEL Headquarters**

5317 West Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60651

**ACERO Esmeralda Santiago Elementary School**

2510 West Cortez Street  
Chicago, IL 60622

**Edmund Burke Elementary School**

5356 South King Drive  
Chicago, IL 60615

**HelloBaby**

600 East 61st Street  
Chicago, IL 60637

**Piccolo School of Excellence**

1040 North Keeler Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60651

**Robert Fulton Elementary School**

5300 South Hermitage Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60609

**Scott Joplin Elementary School**

7927 South Honore Street  
Chicago, IL 60620

**The Chicago Academy Elementary School**

3400 North Austin Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60634



# VOCEL Brain Bags: Learning tools for home and on the go.

Every month, Child Parent Academy families take home carefully curated selections of books and learning tools that reinforce the concepts they learn in class. Brain Bags show parents that everyday objects can inspire discovery in young children.



5317 West Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60651

(773) 887 3736 • [Info@VOCEL.org](mailto:Info@VOCEL.org)  
[VOCEL.org](http://VOCEL.org) • [@VOCELKids](https://www.instagram.com/VOCELKids)