

The Mary Crane Center promotes the comprehensive early development of children through school-readiness programs, personal enrichment activities, and family support services.



mary crane CENTER newsletter

FALL 2008

Mary Crane Center celebrates 100th anniversary

Centennial event attended by community leaders and members of the Crane family

The history of the Mary Crane Center and the inspired work of Jane Addams have been intertwined since Richard Teller Crane and his daughter Frances Crane Lillie laid the groundwork for the Mary Crane Center in 1907 by donating a building to Addams' Hull-House.

“My great-grandmother, Frances Crane Lillie, and Jane Addams became acquainted,” says Joan Kammire of Charlottesville, VA. “My great-grandmother went to her father, who had a factory down the road, and convinced him that this was an important effort to help with children’s development.”

Early in 1908, teachers and children moved into the Mary Crane Day Nursery, named in tribute to Mr. Crane’s late wife. One hundred years later, on August 2, 2008, the Mary Crane Center hosted a gala at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum and University of Illinois at Chicago in recognition of a century of service.

State Senator Iris Y. Martinez, Alderman Joe Moore, Alderman Vi Daley, and the staff of Alderman Manny Flores joined more than 125

donors, supporters, board members, staff, and former Mary Crane moms and students in celebrating the Center’s dedication to Chicago children and their families.

As part of the event, the teachers of Mary Crane created an exhibit in the reception hall that documented the children’s work, including activities with wire, clay, and cooking. “The exhibits told our story and helped show how children are learning through play” says Executive Director Lavetter A. Terry.

Terry continues, “Having the Crane family members there spoke volumes about their continued support of the work Richard Crane and Frances Crane Lillie started 100 years ago. We were able to showcase the good work we do and show that we have built a strong community of people who really care.”

Kammire says, “At Mary Crane, the values and feelings for the children and their families are strong and clear. I was thrilled to be part of the whole centennial celebration. I love Chicago. I love the work of the Mary Crane Center.”

FROM THE DIRECTOR

It has been a busy time at Mary Crane, and we have much good news to share with our children and families, donors, supporting agencies, and the community.

In August, we hosted a celebration at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum to honor 100 years of continuous service to children and their families. We have transitioned two new centers formerly operated by Bethel New Life into the Mary Crane organization. We continue to introduce our teachers to new ideas and training that they can use to enrich the learning experience for our children.

As you read this newsletter, we hope you experience a taste of the joy and inspiration that we receive every day through the curiosity, excitement, and richness that the children in our Centers bring into our lives.

—Lavetter A. Terry
Executive Director

Descendents of Mary and Richard Teller Crane were honored guests at the Centennial Celebration (from left): Joan Kammir of Charlottesville, VA; Susan Atkinson of Mechanicville, VA; Brian Slocum, Paul Slocum, and Mary Crane Slocum of Wilmette, IL.



DID YOU KNOW?

- The Mary Crane Center serves more than 300 children each day, from six weeks to five years old.
- We now have six locations across Chicago.
- We have full service kitchens and serve 500 meals every day—breakfast, lunch, and snacks.
- A \$25 donation is the equivalent of a week's worth of healthy meals for one child.
- Mary Crane had 16 foundation and corporate donors in 2008, the highest number in our history.
- More than 150 individuals and small businesses also annually support the work of the Mary Crane Center.

DONATE ONLINE

By donating to the Mary Crane Center online at www.marycrane.org, you give a Chicago child the opportunity to create a bright future through education. Online donations are handled safely and securely through the services of Network for Good. With the click of a button, a donor can make a one-time contribution or set up a recurring donation.

Two new sites bring total Mary Crane locations to six

The Mary Crane Center and Bethel New Life have worked successfully together to transfer two of the Bethel New Life child development centers to the Mary Crane organization. The centers are located in the Austin and West Garfield Park neighborhoods. "This is an excellent example of two organizations that are committed to serving the community working together to reach a solution that makes the best use of resources and skills," says Lavetter A. Terry, executive director of the Mary Crane Center.

"Our intent was to provide continuity of service at these two centers through this transition, and because of the good work our two teams did together, we accomplished that," says Marcie Bates, the site director of the Molade center in the Austin neighborhood. The next order of business is to let the community know that there are enrollment opportunities at both new sites.

"We are reaching out to more families," says Bates. "Mary Crane is actively recruiting to bring in more diversity with the families we serve in the community. We want people to know that we are here, what we are doing, and the services we provide. When a parent goes to work, they don't have to worry about their child. They can have a sense of comfort that their child is in good hands, is receiving loving care, and is getting a quality education. That's what we do at Mary Crane."

Each new location has a highly-qualified staff. Bates herself has been in the early childhood profession for over 30 years. "You walk into a classroom, and every child is unique in his or her own way," she says. "They have their likes and dislikes, their strengths and their weaknesses. It is so exciting for me to see them exploring and discovering. You can see it in their faces. It's a field that I have never gotten tired of. Every day is different; no day is the same. That's why I love it so much."

Giving society launched

The *Mary Crane Society for the Second Century* has been launched to give donors the opportunity to make a significant long-term investment in the future of the Mary Crane Center. All donations will support Mary Crane's programs for children and families.

Members of the Mary Crane Society will have access to activities and events that will lead them to a stronger understanding of the critical issue of early childhood education. For example, Mary Crane's teaching philosophy is child-centered. What does that mean? What does research show about the effects of such a strategy? Where does bilingual education fit in? Members of the Mary Crane Society will be invited to learn about these issues, and also to meet with individuals who are involved in the education of Chicago's children.

Membership in the Mary Crane Society is open to donors who generously donate \$1,000 or more each year. For more information, please email Laura Jansen, Resource Development Coordinator, at ljansen@marycrane.org.



INFANT CLASSROOMS NOW OPEN

The Mary Crane Center now has the capacity to enroll infants as young as six weeks old at the Lathrop location. The classrooms, opened in February 2008, are specifically designed for the needs of infants, giving them safe space to grow and explore, and even take an early lesson in finger painting (above).

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