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'Celebrating Generations Of Service' Annual Dinner Raises $550,000 for Chicagoland Families

- *More than 300 attended first in-person event in three years*
- *More than $550,000 was raised to support Family Focus programs and families*
- *Elizabeth Sonnenschein and Rose Johnson awarded for their service to Chicagoland*
- *Dara Munson delivers inspiring call to action in keynote speech*

May 19, 2022 (Chicago) – Family Focus, one of Chicago's most trusted agencies for early childhood education, youth development and family support services, is celebrating the success of its May 19th Annual Dinner themed 'Celebrating Generations Of Service'. Held at the Four Seasons Hotel in downtown Chicago, more than 300 attendees raised $553,095 to fund critical services for children and families at 11 different centers across Chicago and northeast Illinois.

A highlight of the event was recognizing the accomplishments and success of our honorees. The Dream Builders Award–given to outstanding servant leaders who are models of caring for children, youth and families–was presented by John Levi to Elizabeth Sonnenschein, for her passion and dedication in improving the lives of South Side families.

The Bernice Weissbourd Award for Family Support–given to individuals or organizations in recognition of their work in early childhood development–was presented by Camille El-Amin to Rose Johnson, a devoted life-long public servant who continues to fight for equitable education and civil rights in Evanston.

Also celebrated in memoriam with their families in attendance were the lives of two Legacy Leaders, Betsy McCormick, for her lifetime of passionate, purposeful volunteerism, and Gwendolyn DuBose

Rogers, for her lifetime of philanthropy and board service shaping the programs at the heart of Family Focus.

Family Focus President & CEO Dara Munson delivered the keynote speech for the evening, framing the struggles and obstacles that Family Focus participants–who are over 80% Black and Brown–face on a daily basis. As an issue of human rights and human dignity above all, Dara asked attendees to *"keep asking the question: what do families need, not just to* survive *but to* thrive. *What do families* need *and what do children* deserve*?"*

We are especially grateful to our corporate and private sponsors, whose generosity helped underwrite the event, including Gold Sponsors Caragh DeLuca; Crown Family; Elizabeth Sonnenschein; Katie & Brent Gledhill; and ReaderLink; Silver Sponsor Karen and Jim Frank; and Bronze Sponsors Abbott, Inc.; Beverly and Warren Hayford; Block Stineman Family; Harper Collins Publishers; Morgan Stanley; Nancy and Joseph McMullen and William Blair; Patricia Mulcahy and Vaughn Gordy; Penguin Random House; Sharad Kapur; Sidley Austin LLP; Walmart; Wells Fargo; and Wintrust.

About Family Focus:

Family Focus invests in strengthening families and their children in Chicago and NE Illinois so they build social capital and achieve upward economic mobility through high-quality innovative programs and services, grounded in anti-racism and social justice.

Photos:

https://photos.app.goo.gl/JotrAsewbM3B4Fsv8

Family Focus President & CEO Dara Munson (L) smiles alongside noted Chicago civic leader and philanthropist, Judy Block.

Family Focus President & CEO Dara Munson delivers her keynote speech.

Family Focus Board Member John Levi (L) hugs Elizabeth Sonnenschein, who received the Dream Builders Award.

Rose Johnson accepting the Bernice Weissbourd Award for Family Support.

Elizabeth Sonnenschein (L), received the Dream Builders Award; and Rose Johnson received the Bernice Weissbourd Award for Family Support.