



Third Annual POWER UP! Boot Camp is Huge Success

Record Turnout Despite Overcast Weather



Drizzle, fog, and crisp fall weather greeted participants of our POWER UP! Boot Camp on Saturday, October 15, but that didn't dampen their spirits. Produced in partnership with the Chicago Park District and their Wellness Staff, we hosted the day-long event for children ages 6-12 at West Lawn Park (4233 W. 65th Street) with indoor and outdoor activities to teach youth about the importance of regular exercise and proper nutrition. Among the activities were yoga, an obstacle course, aerobics,

and kickboxing as well as learning how to read packaged goods labels, how calories get burned, how to make proper food choices at a fast food restaurant, and much, much more. Throughout the six-hour program, we challenged kids physically and mentally, while encouraging them to think more critically about the choices they make in regard to their health.

As a part of the camp, the participants took a pre and post Boot Camp exam to measure what they learned. At the end of the day, all of the participants walked away with a fitness/nutrition bag filled with all sorts of good stuff such as a pedometer, Frisbee, jump rope, water bottle, and healthy snacks. We hope our fitness packs encourage the youth to take an interest in their mental and physical health because being healthy is a lifestyle that is determined by the choices they make long after our POWER UP! Boot Camp is over. To help ensure the long-term success of the program, a new component was added to the program this year. Parents were informed of the importance of reinforcing what their children learned and how setting a good example is the best method to encourage their children to be active and eat right.

Special thanks to Professor Abel Galvan and all the University of Illinois Chicago students who spent their Saturday volunteering with us.

The Boot Camp would not have happened without the support of our major sponsor MoneyGram as well as in-kind donations from Kits for Kidz, Republic Bank, Chipotle Mexican Grill, KIND Health Snacks, Skinny Pop, and Gogo SqueeZ.



Save the Date for 2017's Kickoff Event

May 4th from 6:00pm-9:00pm at Galleria Marchetti



With the huge success of last year's Back 2 School Kickoff event including the change from a luncheon to a dinner, we've decided to go back to Galleria Marchetti in the River West neighborhood of Chicago. Mark your calendars now for May 4, 2017. Stay tuned for more details in the coming months. We promise next year's kickoff will be even bigger and better!

B2SI Hosts Outdoor Distribution with JCC Chicago

Students Celebrate Free School Supplies with Guest DJ



On September 23, we journeyed to Brentano Math & Science Academy in Logan Square to distribute kits in partnership with JCC Chicago. This school is particularly deserving of our supply kits as 89% of its students participate in a free or reduced-price lunch program.

For the distribution, students were brought out by individual grade for some recess and a guest DJ to get them up and dancing. Students got the chance to dance around school grounds before B2SI surprised them with our signature supply kits for the entire student body. The staff was very appreciative, and the students could not stop smiling after receiving their kits. One student even said, "This is the best day of my life!"

This distributions account for 400 of the 1,500 Back 2 School kits distributed through our partnership with JCC Chicago in 2016.

2016 B2SI College Scholarship Winner Update

Kailish Panchapakesan Tells Us About His First Semester of Undergrad



Every year at our Kickoff Event we give out five college scholarships (\$2,500 each) to

graduating high school seniors, courtesy of Community Currency Exchange Association of Illinois (CCEA) and the Tufano family. Among our recipients this year was Kailish Panchapakesan, graduating senior from Harry Jacobs High School in Algonquin, IL. This fall Kailish started his undergraduate career at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he is studying medicine.

Kailish told us he is a fan of the flexibility of his schedule as well as the independence he is given while at the university. He has already gotten involved on campus by joining a few clubs as well as playing Division I Tennis for the University. While Kailish is majoring in Pre-Med, his favorite course thus far is English 161 with Professor Gina Gemmel. The topics of poverty and race in our current age are very intriguing to Kailish and he says Professor Gemmel goes above and beyond while instructing the students.

Kailish said he is very honored to be one of the recipients of this year's CCEA Scholarship and has this advice for all current high schoolers in the search for schools and scholarships: "Time management and being proactive is key. The sooner you apply for scholarships and to schools, the better prepared you will be for unforeseen circumstances. Put in the effort on essays and use your resources to get information. This means meeting with high school counselors, emailing admissions staff, etc."

Check back in January for more information on our 2017 College Scholarship Program and how students can apply.

Green Dot & Currency Exchange Launch Promotion Benefitting B2SI Sales of Prepaid Debit Cards to Raise Funds



Once again this holiday season, Green Dot Corporation is donating a portion of the proceeds from the sales of prepaid debit cards at participating Currency Exchanges throughout Illinois. For every card sold with a load of \$50 or more, B2SI will receive \$2.00. There is no limit to the program so the more cards sold during November and December, the more money that will be raised to support our program to put more school supplies in the hands of children from low-income families. According to Timothy Weible, General Manager for Green Dot Corporation, "We are committed to supporting B2SI and their drive to make a difference in the lives of so many children in Illinois."

This partnership between Green Dot and the Community Currency Exchange Association of Illinois is the latest example of two of our sponsors getting together to improve the educational opportunities for kids in Illinois. We are most grateful for their support!

Community Currency Exchange Association Continues Their Support of B2SI Collection Canister Program Has Another Successful Year



In case you are unfamiliar with the beginnings of Back 2 School Illinois, we were created by the Community Currency Exchange Association of Illinois as another one of its ongoing efforts to give back to the community. While we have expanded and adapted our efforts since inception, CCEA is still a huge supporter of our work. One way in which they help us is through a “canning” program that the company participates in at 350+ locations.

How does this program function? Well, each spring we send collection canisters, teller window signs, and large four-color posters to all participating CCEA locations. Owners and employees are asked to promote our school supplies program and encourage customers to donate to our cause. Through a generous grant program by the Western Union Foundation, the contributions made by customers, employees and owners are then matched up to \$75,000.

This year the program was able to raise \$150,000. We thank CCEA and the Western Union Foundation for their continued support of our efforts.



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We like to keep those interested and involved in ICECF informed on what we are doing.

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