

**EXCELLENCE IN NONPROFIT
ACTIVITY**



**The
Family
Center**

Resources for Families, Individuals and Professionals



Another organization reaching a milestone in 2015 is The Family Center of Grosse Pointe & Harper Woods, this year's Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce's Pointer of Distinction for Excellence in Nonprofit Activity. This fall, The Family Center will celebrate 15 years.

Diane Strickler founded The Family Center in 2000 when she discovered there were little resources readily available for parents. It seemed young parents were forced to "reinvent the wheel" when they started a family. Further, when problems arrived, parents were on their own seeking help and information.

Today, housed in Barnes School through a mutually beneficial arrangement with the Grosse Pointe Public School System, the Family Center of Grosse Pointe & Harper Woods serves not only the Grosse Pointe, Harper Woods and St. Clair Shores communities, but also a global audience that can access its print and video resources through its website and YouTube channel.

The Family Center addresses the needs and challenges of raising young children, guiding students through academic milestones, and helping adult children of aging parents make informed choices. In its Pointer of Distinction Nomination form, The Family Center wrote, "We listen to needs, then develop and deliver compelling new programs. 'Taking Care While Giving Care' is a prime example of bringing a wealth of information to people who are caring for aging family members."

Informative content is delivered to thousands of *Grosse Pointe News* readers through timely "Ask the Experts" columns that have appeared every



Debbie Liedel



Diane Strickler



Cathy Leverenz



Beth Vernon



Paige Domzalski

week for more than 10 years. Newsletters reach nearly 5,000 local families and professionals, engaging readers with expanded content and detailed presentation schedules. Some 100,000 program fliers are printed and distributed every year. The Family Center's Association of Professionals and *Meet & Greet* events bring community organizations, professionals, faith members, health care professionals — and more — together as resource

partners that can respond as needed. Programs like "Preparing for Kindergarten," "Finding Normal in the Middle School Years" and "The College Selection Process" are presented with the expert help of school and counseling professionals.

The Play Central program at Barnes brings children, parents, grandparents and caregivers together every week from October through May for fun and camaraderie. Annual events like the "LEGO Challenge" and the "ChariTea Tea Party" bring children and adults together for educational, entertaining, fun times.

The Family Center's formidable program is made possible by strong Board of Directors — led by President Cathy Leverenz — and an active Advisory Council made up of past board members and community leaders who serve as ambassadors. The Family Center manages to do all this with one full-time executive director, Debbie Liedel, and two part-time staff members, Beth Vernon, assistant to the director, and Paige Domzalski, communications and program support coordinator.

Oh, and last but not least are the 100 volunteers and generous donors who continue to make The Family Center's mission possible.