



BECOMING ALL STARS CAMPAIGN

10 years (2018-2027)

Creating Communities of Development,
with Youth at the Center

Becoming All Stars Campaign Newsletter | December 2024

HONORING AN INSPIRING LEGACY

Greetings, fellow All Stars! I am thrilled to share our second Becoming All Stars Newsletter with you, which features an inspiring example of the transformative power of legacy and long-term support for our youth development mission.

First, some exciting Campaign updates: As of November 2024, we have raised **\$97 million** toward our **\$150 million national campaign goal to transform 100,000 young lives by 2027**. Since the Campaign started in 2018, an amazing **8,754** generous and philanthropic households, foundations, and partner organizations have joined us in uplifting youth impacted by poverty in **Chicago, Dallas, New Jersey, New York, the San Francisco Bay Area**, and virtually nationwide.



Leslie J. Raffel Foundation Trustees, along with Founder of ASP Chicago, David Cherry, DSY alumna, Kaylyn, and Vice President/Director of ASP Chicago, Lauren Horn, at the ribbon cutting ceremony of The Leslie J. Raffel Development School for Youth on Nov 20, 2024.

Every gift we receive invests in the future of the extraordinary young people we serve in our four campaign pillars: **Programs, Presence, People, and Partnerships**. This year, we were proud to launch the public phase of the **Becoming All Stars Campaign** with a transformative gift for the All Stars Project of Chicago: **\$2.5 million** from **The Leslie J. Raffel Foundation** for the long-term success of our **Development School for Youth (DSY) leadership development program**. In recognition of this generous investment, on November 20, 2024, we officially renamed our DSY program in Chicago as **The Leslie J. Raffel Development School for Youth**. I am deeply grateful to the Foundation and the Raffel family, with special thanks to ASP Board member **Bobby Gerber**. It has been a privilege to work closely with Bobby, alongside CEO Chris Street and Chicago leaders Lauren Horn (Director) and David Cherry (Founder).

Recently, we sat down with the trustees of The Leslie J. Raffel Foundation, Marshall and Bobby Gerber, and Leslie's wife, Angela Arango Raffel, to hear more about Leslie's inspiring legacy. I hope you are as inspired as I am by the impact of his life and Foundation. And I look forward to sharing more stories of impact and legacy in future newsletter issues as we continue to grow the **Becoming All Stars Campaign**.



In appreciation,

Jenny Zak

Chief Development Officer

P.S. You, too, are a part of this national campaign to empower 100,000 underserved youth by 2027. Our campaign welcomes gifts of all sizes because every dollar has the power to transform a young person's life. Together, we are making a difference.

As of
November
\$97 million

GOAL:
\$150 million

WE'RE ON A MISSION:

\$150 million

10 years

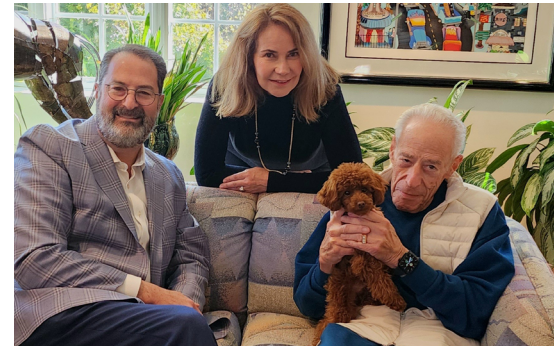
100,000 Young Lives Transformed

LESLIE J. RAFFEL'S JOURNEY

from Whiz Kid to Engineer to Philanthropist

The late Leslie J. Raffel (1942-2023), affectionately called "Les" by friends and family, was a man who exemplified unbridled curiosity, an adventurous spirit, and a profound belief in the power of education. Growing up in a Jewish family in suburban Chicago, Marshall Gerber recalls his younger cousin as a "brilliant young man with a unique innocence" and a strong desire for knowledge. After skipping a grade in high school, Leslie enrolled in Purdue University's prestigious Industrial Engineering program and later received his Master's Degree in Engineering at Stanford University.

While at Stanford, Leslie was recruited by the aerospace company Lockheed Martin and even worked on a defense project for NASA. Leslie's post-Stanford career led him from engineering at Lockheed Martin to starting his own company in the plumbing industry. His knack for problem-solving and ingenuity drove him to create products that **made life easier for others**. Leslie's philanthropic spirit and desire to give back grew alongside his passion for innovation. Over the years, **he created scholarships** at Purdue for Jewish engineering students, **helped fund college educations** for his family and employees, and established a Foundation that supports cultural and educational initiatives, including the Botanic Gardens and Highland Park Arts Center. **His Foundation's support of the All Stars Project is a beautiful extension of his values, furthering opportunities for youth in Chicago and beyond.**



Starting left: Bobby Gerber, Angela Arango Raffel, Marshall Gerber, and Peanut the poodle.



Bobby Gerber, a member of both our Board of Directors and advisory Chicago Board, shared:

“I saw an intersection between Leslie's passion for education and young people...and thought that was a good synergy for the Foundation. It was an opportunity for us to use assets from the Foundation to make a difference in his name and to keep the legacy going of investing in young people and education in Chicago.”



Starting left: Associate Director of Youth and Community Development, Dwayne Dixon, Founder of All Stars Project of Chicago, David Cherry, joined by All Stars youth at The Leslie J. Raffel Development School for Youth ribbon cutting ceremony.

The All Stars Project is deeply grateful to Bobby Gerber and The Leslie J. Raffel Foundation for its generous gift, which empowers us to continue making a difference in underserved communities for years to come. As we celebrate the dedication of **The Leslie J. Raffel Development School for Youth**, we look forward to expanding our programs and partnering with like-minded foundations and organizations committed to investing in **FREE outside-of-school programs to support and empower marginalized youth nationwide.**

Thank you to the Raffel and Gerber family for sharing Leslie's legacy with us and helping bring his passion for learning and community to a new generation of All Stars.

Re-inspired to support underserved youth?

Their journey of Becoming All Stars begins with you.



CLICK or **SCAN CODE** to get started.
For more information, contact Jenny Zak
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Join Us!

www.allstars.org/becoming

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