

MAC Charitable Society For Children – Guardian Angel Nomination

Founded in 1859, Guardian Angel Settlement Association is a local non-sectarian non-profit that serves impoverished children in St. Louis City. The agency was originally founded as an orphanage for immigrant girls, but has modified its programs throughout the years to meet the needs of the community. Today, Guardian Angel provides social services and developmental childcare to families and children living in poverty in the City of St. Louis.

Daily the agency cares for almost 160 children in its new, state-of-the-art Child Development Center. Parents can enroll their children in the Center if they are working or attending school; payment is charged on a sliding scale fee based on what the parent can afford. Most of Guardian Angel's parents pay only \$10 per week per child while it costs the agency approximately \$250 per week per child to maintain their care. While attending the licensed and accredited Center, children are provided with three nutritious meals each day and engage in age-appropriate developmental curriculum administered by the staff.

Children also participate in community field trips throughout the year, such as visiting the St. Louis Zoo, Magic House, and pumpkin patch. This is especially important for the children attending Guardian Angel's childcare program since they are less likely to be exposed to these cultural activities due to their parents' economic situation. Additionally, the children grow and cultivate a year-round garden located next to the Center where they learn about flowers, insects, vegetables and fruits. They are taught how to plant the seeds, bring the plants to maturation, and how to incorporate the produce into their meals. Children are also enrolled in the agency's special programs, such as Back To School, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. They receive new backpacks, school supplies, and shoes as well as food for their family for Thanksgiving and new toys, gifts, and clothing for Christmas.

Guardian Angel Settlement is a founding member of the United Way and is listed as an approved charity of the Better Business Bureau. The Childcare Program is not only licensed and accredited, but also a contractor with Early Head Start and Head Start. 80% of parents who enroll their children in the agency's Childcare Program make less than \$10,000 per year, 25% of these children have teenage mothers. All of the children Guardian Angel cares for come from households whose income is below the federal poverty line.

Guardian Angel Settlement is completing its brand new, state-of-the art Child Development Center at Cook and Vandeventer Avenues in the City. This facility, built in conjunction with the Guardian Angel's 150th Anniversary year, will enable the agency to serve 25% more children in the Childcare Program, and triple the after school program enrollment. The agency would greatly appreciate any support available from the MAC Charitable Society so that more impoverished children could benefit from this philanthropy at the new Center.

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