



# STAR/CSF-Ft. Worth Times

Making a difference...one student at a time!



## Vision Statement

The Board of Trustees of the STAR Sponsorship Program, Inc./CSF FW is dedicated to increasing educational options for children in Tarrant County whose parents do not have the financial means to provide an education best suited to their children's unique needs.

We believe the well-being of the entire community is enhanced when children are given a quality education that allows them to achieve to their utmost ability. Therefore, we intend wherever possible, to encourage partnerships with schools, parents, community organizations and concerned citizens in supporting its children to achieve the American Dream!

## Board of Directors

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Co-founder-President,  
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## A STAR Angel



For the past twenty years, the STAR Sponsorship Program, Inc. has been privileged to connect numerous students with life-changing opportunities. But it didn't happen overnight. What has steadily grown into a source of hope and opportunity began with humble roots.

In 1993, program founders Paul Greenwell, Janet Carter, and Mark Walton had a vision in which they dreamed of giving underprivileged families a choice in education. Inner-city parochial schools equipped students with a quality education, and yet they had empty seats. Knowing that families in those schools' neighborhoods could not afford a private education, these individuals set about to provide a solution to this pressing need. Research confirmed that students in this demographic were able to attain college scholarships, but in many cases were ill-equipped for collegiate rigors. Eventually, these dedicated philanthropists' dream turned into reality, and the STAR (Success Through Academic Readiness) Sponsorship Program, Inc. was born.

Over the years, the program has grown beyond these parochial schools and expanded to a larger portion of the educational landscape of Tarrant County. Since the beginning, Paul Greenwell has been steadfastly involved as Board of Trustees President. When asked about what inspired him to begin STAR, he responded, "I had a strong desire to provide opportunity of educational options for parents." He added, "It's impressive to see the willingness of the parents to give up so much to provide this opportunity for their children. For me, it's very gratifying to see so many taking advantage of the program and achieving their goals in life."

During this time, Greenwell has also sponsored numerous students and he has been personally touched by their achievements and own burgeoning success stories. One of his former students, Maria Barragan, invited

Greenwell to her high school graduation at Nolan High School, at which he saw first-hand the cumulative impact of his support over the years. Among other things, Maria received the highest honor given to a Nolan female high school student: the Marian Award.

Greenwell's impact on her siblings, Rafael and Jesus Barragan, later fully culminated at Jesus' eighth-grade graduation. Jesus was the last student of the three Barragan children whom Greenwell had supported. As reported in a October 2013 North Texas Catholic interview, Greenwell stated: "I'm proud of the kids I've helped, but I'm just as proud of their parents. The commitment to their children in time and other things is pronounced. They have a vision of what they want their children to achieve in education."\*

Maria's father was a sheepherder in Mexico and received no formal education. At present, her mother works tirelessly as a cafeteria worker. Through STAR and Greenwell's support, the Barragan children have benefited tremendously and, in Greenwell's words, "have the opportunity to move forward toward the American dream."\* "That's what this program is about," Greenwell concluded.

His dedicated vision hasn't gone unnoticed. Greenwell was recently featured in the book "Legendary Locals of Fort Worth" by Emily White Youree and Joan Kurkowski-Gillen.\* When asked about the future, Greenwell shared his enthusiasm. "We plan to continue to provide as many opportunities as possible for students to achieve their potential."

And what would he say to someone who is considering a donation? "Education and experience are the keys to good decision-making. With all donations toward scholarships, we're confident about the return on investment a donor's gift achieves. We believe it's an effective vehicle to empower students to achieve goals, as we outlined 20 years ago. It's truly a powerful way to create memories and opportunities that span a lifetime."



STAR Sponsorship Program, Inc.



@starcsffw



Children's Scholarship Fund  
giving parents a choice • giving children a chance

# A Silent Service

Behind the success of the STAR Sponsorship Program, Inc. is a dedicated and resourceful Board of Trustees. These committed philanthropists joined in the mission at different periods of time, but founder Janet Carter has been a program cornerstone since the beginning. And in the process, she has been far more than just a source of support to the program – she has continually given of herself to program students and enriched them with her passion, knowledge, and wisdom.

When asked about her motivation for founding STAR, Carter said she wanted students to gain access to opportunities they would otherwise not have. As she explained in an October 2013 North Texas Catholic



*Janet Carter with student at National Junior Honor Society induction*

article: “Why should anyone be confined to one choice in education when children learn so many different ways? It's gratifying to see the area's best high schools interested in our eighth grade graduates. And beyond high school, our students offer colleges diversity and academic excellence in one package.”\*

In our discussion, she elaborated: “Education is a powerful way of leveling the playing field. It's a means by which today's students are prepared to be tomorrow's leaders. And in private education, they learn the value of self-discipline and personal motivation – and they're equipped to reach the next level.” Carter also related her belief that the students' parents are active partners in education. This powerful motivator instills in the parents respect for the donors' generous commitment and drives them to encourage their children to achieve – and exceed – STAR's program expectations.

Carter witnessed this at STAR's annual meeting, at which students are recognized for exemplary academic and personal achievement. For instance, 85 percent of all program students achieved the honor roll for the final quarter – a significant achievement given this population's demographics.

In the program, Carter has been a constant source of support and wisdom. Over the years, she has contributed her expertise in numerous ways both large

and small, including maintaining program accounting since STAR's inception. And her passion for helping children in education has been strongly present in other ways, as well. Her involvement has spanned from personally tutoring students to attending their award ceremonies and sending them notes of encouragement. One student whom Carter sponsored wrote: “Your words of encouragement helped me through some tough times. And it made me realize that my education is important. Thank you so much for believing in me!”



Over the years, Carter's unwavering commitment to the students and their success has been noteworthy. She has sponsored many students and been an active mentor in the course of their academic journey. One common thread behind her generous patronage is her connection with her students – upon meeting face-to-face for the first time, there is an immediate connection. And the students continue to lean upon this emotional and personal bulwark in times that are good and bad. For many, it's been a decisive factor that plays out not only in their current struggles, but also adds to their future.

Carter noted that the program has been a source of solace for many families in Tarrant County. But she recognized the flip-side of this situation, as well. “It's just heartbreaking that we don't meet the full need that's out there. And we're looking for ways to fill that big gap and get our message out in an engaging and informative way.”

When asked about what she would say to a prospective donor, Carter stated: “A donation is not just an investment in a student. It's an investment in the community.” She feels that it's a leap of faith and confidence in a student who might not otherwise receive that encouragement. Carter added: “You'll see your rate of return every time you get a letter and the student's report card. And it's one of the few charitable investments you can make in which you have hands-on proof that you are really helping somebody.”



*Carter with students at Barnes and Noble*

\*Sources: “STAR Scholarship offers educational opportunities,” *North Texas Catholic*, Joan Kurkowski-Gillen, 10/24/13, “Legendary Locals of Fort Worth,” *Arcadia Publishing* 2014, Emily White Youree and Jonathan Kurkowski-Gillen

**Please introduce us to a friend who may be interested in providing hope and opportunity for a family who values education. Give a student a chance for a better future. All donations are tax-deductible and make a wonderful year-end gift.**



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