

## *Illinois Fatherhood Initiative - February Update*

### **2016 IFI Chicago White Sox Fatherhood Essay Contest**

Now in its 19th year this popular essay writing contest has attracted more than **400,000** entries and annually involves more than **700** volunteer readers and encompasses three celebrations.

**All** school-aged Illinois children are welcome and encouraged to participate by writing an essay about their; father, stepfather, grandfather or father-figure to the theme

### ***'What My Father Means To Me'***

**All** students receive a certificate of participation and gifts from IFI's sponsor partners.

**156** state-wide essay finalists will be recognized at the May 22nd ***IFI Faces of Fatherhood Celebration*** and then treated to a Chicago White Sox baseball game.

**12** of the 156 will also be invited to the June 8th ***IFI Fatherhood Dinner Celebration*** being held at the Union League Club of Chicago.

**4** of the 12 will also be treated to a Chicago White Sox baseball game where they will have a special on-field experience and throw out a ceremonial first pitch to their dads.

#### **In addition to the above: Here is a brief overview:**

**- 12 students will receive BrightStart college scholarships**

**- The top 25 participating schools will receive a Starter Kit of Fathering Resources, and**

**- All dads who provide a "dad's response" to their child's essay will become charter members in the new IFI 21st Century Dads Club.**

**The deadline for submission is March 15, 2016.**

**[Click Here](#) to download entry materials.**

**Please forward this message to your local superintendents,**

**principals, and educators with an encouraging word to have their students participate.**

**Remember:**

***Greater Father Involvement = Greater Student Achievement***

## **Volunteer Readers Needed**

to select the winners of the  
Chicago White Sox 2016 Illinois Fatherhood Essay Contest

Approximately 10,000+ children are in the process of writing essays to the theme "What My Father Means to Me" as part of the 2016 Chicago White Sox Illinois Fatherhood Essay Contest.

Each volunteer reader is asked to read a packet of 40-50 essays and select two essays that will be considered at the final essay on Friday, April 15th @ Metropolitan Family Services.

156 essayists (12 per grades K-12) and their dads will be recognized in May at a Chicago White Sox baseball game. The culmination of the essay contest will occur June 8, 2016 when 12 essayists and their fathers (3 dads, 3 stepdads, 3 granddads, and 3 father-figures) will be recognized at the 19th Annual IFI Fatherhood Dinner Celebration at the Union League Club of Chicago.

We need your help to evaluate essays. [Click here](#) for information to host a group of volunteer readers. [Click here](#) to volunteer to read essays at the final essay reading on Friday, April 15th.

Thank you for supporting IFI!!!

## **IFI ANNOUNCES THE IFI COLLEGE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

All undergraduate education majors are welcome and encouraged to participate. IFI is looking to recruit 20 interns who will be assigned to one of the 35 ISBE Regional Offices of Education.

Each intern will help gather information on father involvement in 30 schools within their ROE and then work with those schools to identify opportunities to engage more fathers in the education of children. **It's a WIN, WIN, WIN situation.**

## **IFI accomplishes its mission**

**Schools & Students benefit by getting more dads involved &**

**Interns get some meaningful career-based experience.**

**Send an email to: [information@4fathers.org](mailto:information@4fathers.org) to learn more about the IFI College Internship Program.**

## **CONGRATULATIONS**

to the following individuals (IFI Champions) who were recently elected to serve a one year term on the IFI board of directors:

**Kenya Brooks  
Al Brown  
Sonya Chapman  
Stanley Dembouski  
Marv Dyson  
Mark Fabish  
Jose Garcia  
Jeff Kelch  
Gerry Kostuk  
Randa Kuziez  
Kevin Masukevich  
Dernard Newell  
Dana O'Banion  
Jessica Skwir**

## **Wanted Additional IFI Champions**

IFI is still looking to recruit a few more Champions to serve as board members. IFI is seeking women and men to serve as volunteer board members in one or more of the following areas: School Assessment, Essay Contest, TALKS Mentoring, Volunteers, Celebrity Golf Outing, Faces of Fatherhood Celebration, Fatherhood Dinner Celebration, Fall Fatherhood Celebration and Digital Media. If you or someone you know is interested in serving on the IFI board please [Click Here](#) or send an e-mail to [information@4fathers.org](mailto:information@4fathers.org).

**[Click here](#) to make a donation to support IFI's mission of:**

***"Actively Engaging Fathers in the Education of Children"***

**Thank You For Your Generous Support !!!**

**About Illinois Fatherhood Initiative** - IFI was established in 1997 to address the epidemic of father absence in society. Four out of 10, or an estimated 24,000,000, youth grow up in a father absent home across U.S. One third or an estimated 60,000 children are born in Illinois each year without a father's name on their birth certificate. IFI's mission is to connect children and fathers by actively engaging fathers in education of children. [Click here](#) to watch the organizational video.

Thank you for supporting IFI's mission of connecting children and fathers. For more information, please go to: [www.4fathers.org](http://www.4fathers.org).