



“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”  
*Benjamin Franklin*

November 2, 2017

Visit a Path To Shine program, and you’ll be greeted by a joyful energy and contagious enthusiasm. Each week, over 170 elementary students burst through the doors of 14 different Path To Shine programs, eager to reconnect with their mentors and share stories from the past week. Their excitement is palpable, and it’s a living testament to the meaningful contributions of time, talent, and treasure from our community and friends like you.

***Thank you for sharing in the mission of Path To Shine and believing in the power of hope-filled dreams.***

As I reflect on the past year, my heart fills with gratitude, humility, and awe. The generosity of our supporters has helped Path To Shine achieve important successes in 2017, including:

- Expanding our programs to 14 and serving children across middle and north Georgia
- Training dozens of new volunteer mentors
- Welcoming children back to school with backpacks, books, and supplies
- Opening young eyes to career opportunities through fantastic guest visitors
- Modeling respect and good manners with our unique, character-building curriculum
- Providing educational field trips and memorable extracurricular experiences
- Celebrating the achievements of hundreds of hardworking and deserving young students

Looking ahead, we know there remains much more work to be done.

***May we please count on your continued support of our Path To Shine children, mentors, and programs?***

Genuine, effective mentorship of children requires a blend of individualized elements—it’s a web of personal attention, friendly engagement, educational focus and patience, consistency, safe surroundings, and sometimes, gentle encouragement during challenging moments and even failure. While the celebratory moments above are everyday occurrences at Path To Shine, we also know that life brings challenges.

For many of our young Path To Shine students, their daily experiences involve very grown-up worries like poverty, hunger, and uncertainty. Through dedicated mentors and thoughtful programming, Path To Shine helps under-served children build the skills, self-confidence, and resiliency needed to chase – and achieve – their hope-filled dreams.

This past spring, we gathered with Path To Shine students, parents, siblings, friends, and mentors to celebrate the milestone of another successful year, and I was reminded of a saying often attributed to poet William Butler Yeats.

*“Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire.” Lighting that fire is precisely our aim.*

Since launching our first program in 2010, Path To Shine has trained more than 300 volunteer mentors and provided over 26,000 hours of caring, adult mentorship. The positive impacts of our mentors' service are reflected in the actions of the children themselves—many of whom join Path To Shine as kindergartners, remain committed and involved throughout their elementary years, and graduate from the program in fifth grade as self-confident, capable young leaders.

We've read hundreds of books, tackled countless pages of math, and shared thousands of healthy after-school snacks. We've giggled, played games, told stories, and witnessed the immense inner pride that shines from within when a child's lightbulb flickers on and a new understanding is achieved.

In the spirit of togetherness, we cheer on graduates as they transition from elementary to middle school, ready and prepared for their next step. We recognize the contributions of amazing volunteer mentors, many of whom have faithfully served for three, five, even seven years! And we offer prayers of thanksgiving for the friends and community that continue to faithfully lift up Path To Shine's mission.

Your financial support directly contributes to generating positive and lasting impacts in the lives – and futures – of very deserving children. *Thank you for joining us on this journey.*

In faith,



Lesley-Ann Drake  
Executive Director  
678-279-4308  
[lesleyann@pathtoshine.org](mailto:lesleyann@pathtoshine.org)

p.s. Consider inviting friends to donate to Path To Shine in honor of a special occasion, or contemplate including us in your estate planning. More information is on our website [www.pathtoshine.org](http://www.pathtoshine.org)

p.p.s. *Let's get social!* Connect with Path To Shine on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pathtoshine) for program updates, great stories, and fun photos from around our community!

### **Donating to Path To Shine is quick, secure, and easy!**

- **Online** at [www.pathtoshine.org](http://www.pathtoshine.org) using **PayPal**
- **Check** made out to Path To Shine, or **Credit Card** using the donation form and enclosed **Return Envelope**
- We are a self-sustaining ministry of St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, and all donations are tax-deductible