

First Lady Karen Pence Awards Grant to Indiana Parenting Institute



Photo provided

(From right) First Lady Karen Pence provides the Indiana Parenting Institute a check in support of parenting education in NWI families.

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INDIANAPOLIS | First Lady Karen Pence hosted the second award reception for grant recipients of the Indiana First Lady's Charitable Foundation at the Governor's residence on Wednesday, where she awarded \$15,000 to 19 organizations and charities that serve Hoosier families and children across the state. Indiana Parenting Institute (IPI) was represented by its Founder and Executive Director Laura Smith-Wynn and its Marketing & Community Relations Director Jená Bellezza, who were on hand to receive the award.

"When Mike was elected Governor, I was overwhelmed with requests from so many worthy organizations to get involved in their efforts. However, it quickly became clear that I couldn't be at every event nor could I champion every cause. That is why I, along with a team of dedicated board members, started the Indiana First Lady's Charitable Foundation as a way to shine a light on the organizations across Indiana who lift up our communities and make our state strong," First Lady Karen Pence continued.

"Indiana Parenting Institute is one of those organizations that is doing great work for our Hoosier children and families, and it is an honor to recognize them today," said First Lady Karen Pence.

First Lady Karen Pence started Indiana First Lady's Charitable Foundation in August of 2013 as a

way to recognize organizations and charities across the state. At the inaugural First Lady's Luncheon held in April 2014, the Foundation awarded its first major grant of \$100,000 to the Art Therapy Program at Riley Hospital for Children. Throughout the year, the Foundation will recognize organizations with smaller grants.

"These grants are a first step toward making a big impact in recognizing these deserving organizations. We hope it can help give them a boost and bring more interest to their causes," said First Lady Karen Pence. "These organizations are the backbone and the heart of our communities. Indiana Parenting Institute represents the very best of what it means to be a Hoosier, and we thank them for their service."

Indiana Parenting Institute offers parents essential, useful and livable educational opportunities that address the social and developmental needs of children birth to eighteen years.

"We are truly honored to be recognized for a work that we love," said Ms. Wynn. "At IPI, our attention is not on helping parents address the challenging behavior of one child or circumstance, but on how to make and implement decisions that serve the needs of the entire family."

First Lady Karen Pence presented a check to each organization ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 in grant money from the Indiana First Lady's Charitable Foundation, including Center for Early Childhood Education, Camp Rave (www.casonline.org), Deaconess Jacobsville Playhouse (www.deaconess.com/foundation), Indiana Parenting Institute (www.indianaparentinginstitutue.org), Youth First, Inc. (www.youthfirstinc.org), Leadership Hendricks County (www.leadershiphendricks.org), Stair Steps to Success, Inc. (www.stairstepstosuccess.com), Legacy House (www.Legacy-House.org), Ft. Wayne Children's Choir (www.fwchoir.org), Kids Dance Outreach (www.kidsdanceoutreach.org), Booker T. Boosters of Evansville, VSA Indiana (www.vsai.org), Indy Honor Flight (www.indyhonorflight.org), Fortune Academy (www.thefortuneacademy.org), Middle Way House (www.middlewayhouse.org), St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf-Indpls (www.sjid.org), Fischhoff Natl. Chamber Music Assoc. (www.fischhoff.org), Buttermilk Mountain, Inc., Joe's Kids (www.joes-kids.org).

Wednesday's reception is the second reception this year. An additional reception is scheduled for March of 2015 with next year's luncheon scheduled April 23, 2015.

The Indiana First Lady's Charitable Foundation is a 501 (c) (3). The First Lady receives no compensation. Donations are tax deductible. Learn more about how to make a donation or request a grant or monetary award on the Foundation's website at:

www.IndianaFirstLadysCharitableFoundation.org.

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