



## LACE UP STEPS UP FOR STARFISH

**They translated their passion for shoes into a meaningful mission. In 2015, five women leaders, all working at Cooper Standard, launched Lace Up Detroit, a nonprofit that provides new shoes to underserved children and women. Their mission? To provide a head start on success through the power of new shoes. To date, Lace Up Detroit has distributed over 5,000 pairs.**

On November 21, 2019, our Hiveley Center gym in Inkster was transformed into a giant shoe store. Tables were covered three-foot-high with boxes of top-brand (and super stylish) shoes and sturdy winter boots, chairs were arranged in circles for sitting and fitting, and mirrors were staged to provide a full-length view.

It was "Step Up with Lace Up" day at Starfish, and by 9:00 a.m. nearly 30 community volunteers were quietly buzzing and at the ready. Until 9:05 that is, when the doors opened, and the first classroom of preschoolers danced in. Then the music started, and the dancing never stopped until noon.

Lace Up Detroit ladies were joined by volunteers from Delta Airlines and Cooper Standard. Naturally, Lace Up tackled shoe choosing and fittings, with each child selecting their own pair of shoes and boots. According to Lace Up Co-Founder and President Suzanne Seitz, "It's important for the children to have freedom of choice.

This may be their first pair of brand-new shoes, and choice leads to confidence."

While waiting for shoes, Starfish three- to five-year-olds visited activity stations. They proudly wore their Delta wings, made airplanes, and colored. At Cooper Standard tables, they constructed bridges with balsa and mini marshmallows (we won't comment on how many were eaten) and created mini storms in plastic cups with shaving cream and food coloring. And local artist Gail Kaplan helped them craft bookmarks dipped in every-color-of-the-rainbow glitter.

But, mostly, they showed off their shoes. By leaping into the air, hopping down the aisles, prancing in front of the mirrors, and thrusting their little feet forward. As Delta volunteer Dan Bovair shared, "I kind of melted when one little girl showed me her feet and said, 'Look! I have shiny boots . . . for the first time!'"

By the event's end, nearly 500 pairs of shoes and boots were distributed. Thanks to Lace Up and all our supporters, it was truly a best-foot-forward day!



### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Visit our website for more Lace Up photos. You can also find out how you can launch a Drive-2-Thrive for Starfish kids and families.



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Hungry kids can't learn. And hunger has myriad negative impacts, including missing school or a child's inability to focus or hit developmental milestones. At Starfish, we ensure that each of our children has access to the food they need to succeed.

- 329,994 breakfasts, lunches, and snacks are served each year.
- Nearly 80 different menus are prepared each day to accommodate food allergies & dietary restrictions.
- We receive only \$6.43 per day to feed each child.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Our children's favorite meals are macaroni & cheese and vegetarian chili.

### COME LUNCH WITH US!

Our kids would love to eat lunch with you and our teachers would love for you to lend a hand during mealtime. Book your "lunch date" now by emailing [devpt@sfish.org](mailto:devpt@sfish.org) or call (734) 728-3400.

## HIGH-OCTANE GIVING

We know that some of our children eat most of their meals at Starfish. And the meals they enjoy might be the brightest part of their day. Because it may be the only fuel they get.

Our staff does an amazing job, but the cost of food continues to go up, the dietary needs become more complicated, and sometimes it's nearly impossible to keep stretching. **An easy way to stretch YOUR donation is to give monthly.**

**\$10 per month = \$120.** And that means covering the cost of feeding nearly 20 babies or toddlers for one day---which could be an entire classroom. To rev up your monthly giving, visit us online at [StarfishFamilyServices.org](http://StarfishFamilyServices.org)



## THE STARFISH SUPERMAN

We call him Superman. Because it takes dedicated superpowers to get up at the crack of dawn to prepare breakfast, lunch, and snacks for 719 children. Starfish Food Service Coordinator (aka Chef) Shaune Fairley started as a Head Start dad, so he knows how critical it is to make sure our little ones are fed nutritious (and yummy) meals. Shaune also coordinates the transporting of meals from his Inkster Hiveley Center kitchen to all 12 of our early childhood centers across metro Detroit. He really is Superman!







## GM CARES: ALL-STAR AWARD

Volunteers from GM Cares have literally adopted our Cecil Early Childhood Center in Detroit. They've tackled projects from cleaning classrooms to reading activities to erecting racetracks and gifting GM hot-wheels cars. In 2019, they donated an astonishing 400 hours of service. As such, we're awarding them the first-ever Starfish All-Star Volunteer Award. From Amanda Willis, GM team leader: "I'm so happy my team could come out and work directly with the children. We don't typically do that, so this was special for us. We'll go back to the office and tell all 22,000+ employees about the great work we did and how they can help."

## NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

**At Starfish, we help empower families from the very beginning. Our agency is known for being leaders in infant-mental health care, but now we are working in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to expand a Detroit home-visiting program that pairs nurses with first-time expectant mothers.**

### What is Nurse-Family Partnership?

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is a national nonprofit that, for nearly four decades, has delivered a life-changing community health program model in locations throughout the United States. The goal: empowering first-time moms to create strong futures for themselves and their babies.

### How does NFP work?

Specially trained nurses regularly visit young, first-time moms-to-be, starting early in their pregnancy, and continuing through a baby's second birthday. Early = week 16 (4 months).

Nurses and mothers make a 2.5-year commitment to each other. This equals about 60 planned home visits. That's a lot of quality time! Our Starfish nurses help guide a first-time mother through the emotional, social, and physical challenges as she prepares for a healthy birth.

### Are there benefits beyond prenatal?

Prenatal support is just the starting point. We support mothers after delivery to continue positive growth for mom, dad, baby, and family members and friends.

Examples include:

- Challenges faced the first few weeks after delivery (e.g., breastfeeding).
- Child development milestones and behavior.
- Individual coaching to develop self-sufficiency based on a mom's vision: school, employment, and planned future pregnancies.

### What is the NFP program cost?

The NFP program is provided at no cost to families. But, according to an NFP-RAND Corporation study, the dollar benefit is priceless:

- Net benefit to society = \$34,148 per higher-risk family served.
- A community recovers the costs of the program by the time a participating child reaches the age of 4.



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Visit our website to view a Fox 2 interview with our NFP staff and an NFP mom success story.

[starfishfamilyservices.org](http://starfishfamilyservices.org)

OPENING FALL 2021



*Starfish preschoolers and parents take center stage at the ECE Center groundbreaking. Joining them (starting second from left) are SF Board Member Jean Overman, SF ECE Project Director Celina Byrd, SF CEO Ann Kalass, SF Board Member Sabrina Smith-Campbell.*

## STARFISH BREAKS GROUND

**In September, we revealed renderings for our Early Childhood Education Center on the Marygrove College Campus. Our latest major milestone: the official groundbreaking!**

It was standing-room-only, on Friday, November 22, 2019, when metro Detroit community dignitaries and friends gathered for a ceremonial groundbreaking of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Center. It was the capstone to the 2019 Hope Starts Here Summit, that brought together advocates who support a coordinated, high-quality early childhood education system in Detroit.

According to Starfish CEO Ann Kalass, "Today's groundbreaking may be ceremonial, but it's also a tangible milestone for what's to come: putting children first. The new ECE center at Marygrove will serve precious babies, toddlers, and preschoolers along with their families."

Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan and officials from the Marygrove Conservancy, The Kresge Foundation (the linchpin foundation that invested \$50M in the Marygrove project), and W. K. Kellogg Foundation (which launched Hope Starts Here) echoed Kalass's sentiments. In fact, speakers kept coming back to the word "hope." As June Montgomery Tabron, president and CEO of the Kellogg Foundation shared, "All of us are bringing back hope as a given for all of the children in the community."



**STARFISH**  
FAMILY SERVICES

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Strengthening families to create  
brighter futures for children

### CONNECT WITH US!



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Chief Executive Officer

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