OUTFITTING the FUTURE
Shoes and Clothes for Kids marks 50 years with vision to double its size and impact
In 2019, Shoes and Clothes for Kids will mark its 50th year of positively impacting the lives of greater Cleveland’s neediest children. When our founder, Morrie Sayre, learned that many children in Cleveland lacked adequate footwear, he worked with the local YMCA to collect and distribute shoes. He and his friends sometimes kept supplies of shoes in the trunks of their cars so they could hand them out to kids on the playgrounds. Soon Mr. Sayre engaged his inner circle and began raising money to purchase new shoes. The organization continued to evolve and expand as the community’s needs grew.

Today, Shoes and Clothes for Kids is improving school attendance and equalizing the classroom learning opportunity for greater Cleveland’s neediest children by providing them brand new school uniforms, clothes, school supplies, and shoe gift cards.

As we celebrate being “50 years new,” we are inspired by our founder’s commitment to positively impact more students as the challenges for them and their families continue to grow and change. Our plans are big and bold, but we know we can achieve them with your support.

**OUR VISION**

At Shoes and Clothes for Kids (SC4K), we envision a community where all our children have the resources they need to learn, grow, and become successful. Each young student, regardless of his or her family’s economic situation, would have what he or she needs to thrive in school: new uniforms, a new pair of shoes, appropriate winter clothing and all the essential school supplies. Equipped with these resources, students become engaged learners – and ultimately engaged citizens. When a child stays in school, it helps us all.

**A CRITICAL NEED**

For some parents, replacing their child’s outgrown shoes or ripped pants is a minor inconvenience. But for thousands of Cleveland families living in poverty, lack of proper clothing causes great anxiety—and can even create a barrier between their kids and school. Through SC4K’s collaboration with Cleveland Municipal School District (CMSD), we have proven that by ensuring children have the basics items they need, we can improve attendance by up to 24%. While other barriers still remain, providing kids with school-appropriate clothing, shoes, and supplies creates a positive and lasting impact.

**OUR WORK**

Shoes and Clothes for Kids works to remove barriers to education and school attendance created by a lack of clothing and school supplies, and to equalize the learning environment for the students we serve. We do this through three core programs and a planned pilot program:

**Distributing through a network of qualified neighborhood partners:** SC4K distributes brand new items to children in need at no cost to them, including quality clothing basics, such as socks, underwear, t-shirts, pants, and school uniforms. SC4K leverages its connections and buying power to purchase new clothing at closeout prices, along with shoe gift cards, which recipients can then use to select the size and style of shoes that best fit their needs. These items are distributed through a network of 28 vetted neighborhood partners located strategically throughout Greater Cleveland.

**Providing school supplies directly to teachers in Greater Cleveland classrooms:** SC4K provides school supplies to under-resourced classrooms at no cost to participating teachers. Teachers can “shop” once per semester for school supplies with an average
By mid-semester, I know which of my students isn’t getting much support at home. I know which ones want to be in school and want to learn, but can’t because of a family situation. It’s helpful to have an organization to turn to that can help meet their basic needs.  

– A Cleveland school teacher

retail value of more than $1,000. Available items include basic supplies, craft items, books, and even furniture. Supplies are also included in SC4K distributions that go directly to students. The program is open to any certified classroom teacher working at a public, parochial, or nonprofit charter school in Cuyahoga County where 60% or more of students are eligible for the National School Lunch Program. Educators have expressed appreciation for this service, which saves them from paying out of their own pockets when school budgets or students’ families fall short.

One grateful teacher remarked, “Without the Resource Center, my students would not have the tools they need to learn. Many of our students are homeless, poverty-stricken, and in foster care. This is the best resource our district has.”

Distributing to Cleveland’s neediest students through direct referrals: The cost of required uniforms is a financial obstacle for many CMSD families. Working with CMSD and the Cleveland Browns Foundation/Browns Give Back, SC4K helped launch the Special Teams Package program in 2017. The Special Teams Package consists of school uniforms, socks, underwear, shoe gift cards and school supplies. The program has served 6,000 kids in the past few years. Data from CMSD shows our programs are helping improve school attendance up to 24% in certain categories of students.

THE SC4K 50TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM GROWTH FUND

Thousands of children risk their futures by staying home from school because they simply do not have the necessary clothing, shoes, and supplies they need to attend. Education is available to them, but they must show up to benefit from it.

With your support, SC4K can help eliminate this barrier for thousands of students and families with the greatest need, and create more success stories like these:

“I see the faces light up when students and parents get the clothing, shoes and supplies. The kids know they can go to school the next day. And the parents tell me now they don’t have to decide between spending money on clothing or rent, or food.”

– A SC4K distribution partner

“Too often, our kids’ living situation changes two or three times in a school year. They can’t always bring their clothing and school supplies with them when change happens. Your program gives those kids, sometimes homeless, a chance to get to school where they can be warm, safe, and fed. We need you.”

– A local school official

AN INVITATION FOR SUPPORT

To celebrate 50 years of serving Cleveland’s families in need, SC4K is committed to doubling our impact and raising an additional $1 million during our 50th anniversary year. Raising an extra $1 million is our largest fundraising goal ever, but we believe it is attainable because the community cares, teachers care, and you care. We invite you to join us in honoring the founding work of Morrie Sayre, who saw a need and took action. With support from philanthropic friends like you, that small step was nurtured into an organization that now serves thousands of children each year but could do so much more. Can you help us?

The SC4K 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund is our gift back the community—an opportunity to express our gratitude for the many years of support and a commitment to deliver more services to many more families in the coming years. Our current budget for expanded programming allows us to serve nearly 7,000 students per year. With the $1 million raised, SC4K will provide an additional $200,000 per year from 2020 to 2025 which has been designated by our Board of Directors to be used solely for program needs.

These new funds will allow us to double our annual impact to serve 14,000 children each year with a complete service package, giving them the best chance possible to succeed in school and enjoy a healthy future. That means:

• 7,000 more kids can receive new coats, gloves, and hats during Cleveland’s cold winter months.
• 7,000 more kids will receive school supplies throughout the year, so they can be actively engaged in learning.
• 7,000 more kids can receive new coats, gloves, and hats during Cleveland’s cold winter months.
• 7,000 more kids receive new school supplies throughout the year, so they can be actively engaged in learning.
• Most importantly, 7,000 additional kids will have a better chance to graduate from grade-to-grade each year, eventually graduating high school with a real chance to break the cycle of poverty so many of them face.

Please help us set more kids up for success in school and life by supporting the SC4K 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO MAKE A DONATION, PLEASE VISIT WWW.SC4K.ORG, OR CALL US AT 216/881-7463. ON BEHALF OF ALL THE CHILDREN, PARENTS, AND TEACHERS WE SERVE...THANK YOU.
As part of Browns Give Back’s commitment to education, Browns players highlighted the team’s partnership with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District’s “Get 2 School. You Can Make It!” attendance campaign during a visit to Paul L. Dunbar School on April 17.

The third-grade class at Dunbar was selected to spend the afternoon with the Browns due to their commitment to and marked improvement in attendance – a key factor in students’ educational success.

During the event, the group discussed the significance of attendance for long-term educational performance, as well as took a pledge to remain dedicated to strong attendance.

Additionally, Browns players surprised select students, identified by CMSD, with Special Teams Packages. The Special Teams Package program, in partnership with Browns Give Back and Shoes and Clothes for Kids, provides CMSD students in economic hardship with necessary clothing items as part of the “Get 2 School. You Can Make It!” campaign.
Dear Friends,

For the last 50 years, Shoes and Clothes for Kids has been part of the community effort to support and help those Cleveland area kids most in need. We’ve done that by regularly updating and changing our programs to be more impactful, listening to our neighborhood partner organizations on how we can do better and by providing tangible, measureable results to the community.

Founded in 1969 by Cleveland businessman Morrie Sayre, we are now an organization whose mission is focused on making a positive impact on school attendance by ensuring local kids in poverty have access to new school uniforms and casual clothing, shoes and school supplies. School attendance is a key predictor of academic success, when students miss more than 10 days of school they will fall behind their peers. Our programs have proven that we can improve attendance up to 25% for students who are at risk of being chronically absent from school. More than $4 million worth of items that support school attendance are distributed annually to more than 10,000 students and 5,000 teachers in Cuyahoga County. We are having an impact.

Thanks to the support of our board directors, donors (large and small), neighborhood partners, school administrators and teachers, volunteers and amazing staff, we are one of the organizations at the forefront of helping Cleveland area kids get to school, graduate and create a life that frees them from the cycle of poverty and contributes to the economic growth of our community.

The short-term attendance gains are encouraging; the long-term impact will be rewarding for all.

We urge your reading of this special SC4K 50th Anniversary piece to learn more about what we do, the impact we have and how you can help us help more kids. For more information, visit sc4k.org.

We are grateful for your support,

Lamont Mackley, chair
Terence J. Uhl, executive director

Managing editor, custom and special projects: Amy Ann Stoessel,astoessel@crain.com
Graphic designer: Lisa Griffis
Cover art: Elaine Manusakis

For more information about custom publishing opportunities, please contact Amy Ann Stoessel.
Studies have shown that an adequately clothed and supplied student will have better attendance.

But better grades? That’s tougher to determine. Marcia Zashin, the director of Project ACT, which provides support for homeless students in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, said attendance is the first step toward progress.

“When a student is in school, they are learning,” she said.

And, even for those students who do attend school, not having the right shoes, clothes and supplies can have a negative impact, according to Emily Campbell, associate director of the Center for Community Solutions.

For example, without the right shoes, students can’t participate in physical education classes or even recess – both of which have been shown to be beneficial to students’ growth and development.

Shoes and Clothes for Kids aims to remove barriers to education and school attendance by providing new uniforms, a new pair of shoes, appropriate winter clothing and essential school supplies.
CONTINUING FROM PREVIOUS PAGE
The vision of the Cleveland-based nonprofit Shoes and Clothes for Kids is that all children have the resources they need to learn, grow and become successful.

SC4K—which this year is celebrating its 50th year of service—aims to remove barriers to education and school attendance by providing new uniforms, a new pair of shoes, appropriate winter clothing and essential school supplies.

The belief—which is increasingly supported by data—is that students who have all of these resources become engaged learners, and ultimately engaged citizens.

“If you are not dressed right or comfortable, you won’t be focused on getting your education,” said Lamont Mackley, chairman of the board of SC4K. “Of all of the organizations I’ve been involved with, this one is about the dignity of the student, helping the student cross barriers that stop them from being focused on getting a good education on a daily basis.”

‘Waterfall effect’
The city of Cleveland and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District are at or near the top of some lists where being No. 1 isn’t a good thing.

The poverty rate in the school district is, for all intents and purposes, 100%, and it’s estimated that nearly 3,000 of the district’s 39,000 students are homeless.

“Cleveland has the highest percentage of children in poverty of any big city—nearly 50%, and even more in some neighborhoods,” Campbell said.

And, while the child poverty rate of 48.7% in Cleveland represents a 10-year low, and poverty overall is on the decline in Cleveland, “the issue of adequate clothes and shoes faces a lot of people,” Campbell said.

So the economic impact of a group like Shoes and Clothes for Kids can be immediate, Campbell said. It’s estimated that parents spend $1,000 on shoes and clothes for a child during a school year, and with donations of a school outfit and shoes, the burden can be eased—even slightly—on parents.

“It helps families make ends meet,” she said. “They can use the money they’d spend on clothes and shoes on other necessities.”

The Center for Community Solutions estimates that for every dollar spent in an effort to reduce child poverty, it results in $7 in savings for the U.S. economy—but those are savings that might not be seen until after the child reaches adulthood.

“It can have a waterfall effect,” Campbell said. “Anything that helps kids in a disadvantaged situation helps lift them out of poverty, but those are the kind of results you’d see down the line.”

Making a difference
Shoes and Clothes for Kids, through its full scope of programs, distributes uniforms, clothes and school supplies to students in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and other disadvantaged schools, which are defined as those where the average socioeconomic background of its students is below the national average.

About half of the roughly 500 schools in Cuyahoga County are termed as disadvantaged.

Urban Community School, a school that educates primarily low-income children from Cleveland’s near West Side, became a new SC4K partner last fall. The school serves 580 students—75% who live at or below the federal poverty level.

“We serve an urban population and have some of the same challenges—one of the big ones is attendance,” said Tom Gill, president of Urban Community School. “We believe strongly in the data that correlates uniforms to attendance. If they don’t have clean clothes and feel good about themselves, especially in middle school, they may not want to come to school. From a confidence and self-esteem standpoint, if we can get uniforms to kids and families, there is a correlation to strong attendance.”

Gill said there also is data that if a child misses more than 10 days of school, academic performance can suffer. Looking at attendance, he said, uniforms became a very clear piece to the puzzle. That’s when Urban Community School turned to SC4K. Networking with established programs like SC4K, Gill said, helps his school have more of an impact.

Urban Community School annual fund coordinator Colleen DeJohn Pallett said it’s difficult to quantify the level of dignity these programs bring to a child. She related the story of a teacher who inquired about providing one of her students with a new winter coat. Because of the school’s partnership with SC4K, this student received a new coat almost immediately.

“He looked elated; he has a nice, warm, brand new coat and no one was aware of the interaction,” she said. “You have these small, but really wonderful moments you can actually help these people.”
To celebrate 50 years of serving Cleveland’s families in need, SC4K IS COMMITTED TO DOUBLING OUR IMPACT AND RAISING AN ADDITIONAL $1 MILLION DURING OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR. Raising an extra $1 million is our largest fundraising goal ever, but we believe it is attainable because the community cares, teachers care, and you care.

We invite you to join us in honoring the founding work of Morrie Sayre, who saw a need and took action. With support from philanthropic friends like you, that small step was nurtured into an organization that now serves thousands of children each year but could do so much more.

The SC4K 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund is our gift back the community—an opportunity to express our gratitude for the many years of support and a commitment to deliver more services to many more families in the coming years.

This expanded programming allows us to serve nearly 7,000 students per year from 2020 to 2025. By removing clothing as a barrier to attendance, we will get more students to school and more students in the classroom everyday will improve student success. Please join us in helping Cleveland kids succeed.

***For more information on how to help SC4K have a bigger impact on Cleveland kids, please contact Terry Uhl at tuhl@sc4k.org.
Thanks to its partnership with the Cleveland Browns Foundation, when the Cleveland schools identify and refer a K-8 students to SC4K, students are given a Special Teams Package.

A GAME CHANGER

Cleveland Browns Foundation involvement gives boost to SC4K

By VINCE GUERRIERI
Crain Content Studio-Cleveland

It took the Cleveland Browns to get Shoes and Clothes for Kids on the path it is on currently.

The organization started in 1969, with a group of people who would chip in money to donate shoes to needy children. By the late 1990s, when Terry Uhl joined the board, it had branched into giving out clothes as well, and the group became a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. In 2009, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District instituted a uniform policy, but it wasn’t until 2015, when SC4K was in a transitional period following the passing of director Valerie McCormack, that it focused on uniforms.

“We realized we had the opportunity to take a fresh look and refocus our mission,” said Uhl, who succeeded McCormack as executive director. “We knew we needed a new focus. It was a bit serendipitous. If the Browns foundation didn’t come along, I’m not sure we could have gotten here on our own. It was kind of right time, right place.”

The Browns and it owners, Jimmy and Dee Haslam, were making a commitment to philanthropy benefiting Cleveland schools, including player visits, new artificial turf for high school stadiums — and greater access to school uniforms.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

The Special Teams Package includes three uniforms, a casual outfit, three to six pairs of socks, three to six pairs of underwear, a bag of school supplies and gift card for shoes.
**School CEO Eric Gordon met our staff, and said one of the top barriers to attendance and achievement was access to uniforms,” said Renee Harvey, vice president of the Cleveland Browns Foundation. “We felt that was something we could help address.**

“The stars aligned. Shoes and Clothes for Kids was starting their five-year plan, and we were ready to make our own commitment. Everyone focused on what was best for the child. It really was that simple.”

Today, thanks to its partnership with the Cleveland Browns Foundation, when the Cleveland schools identify and refer K-8 students to SC4K, they are given a Special Teams Package – a bag that includes three uniforms, a casual outfit, three to six pairs of socks, three to six pairs of underwear, a bag of school supplies and a gift card for shoes.

“We probably spent about a full five or six months to create a program,” Uhl said. “Our first semester was January 2017. Kids with the worst attendance were improving their attendance up to 25%. We realized it was an immediate and real impact, and now we’re in our third year of doing it.”

Harvey said that given the progress to date, the foundation is even thinking about expanding beyond Cleveland schools, like it has with new fields. Last fall, the Browns dedicated a new artificial surface at George Daniel Field in Lorain – its first field beyond Cleveland schools.

**WHAT IT COSTS TO DRESS FOR SCHOOL**

**BOYS APPAREL**
- One pair of pants: $27.75
- One belt: $16.95
- One long-sleeve shirt: $18.75
- One short-sleeve shirt: $16.50
- One sweater: $32.95
- One pair of shoes: $45

**GIRLS APPAREL**
- One jumper: $37.95
- One pair of pants: $21.95
- One polo shirt: $16.50
- One belt: $16.95
- One sweater: $32.95
- One pair of shoes: $50
- One clear backpack: $21.95
Eric Gordon has served as CEO of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District since June 2011, after serving as the district’s chief academic officer for four years. He is responsible for the leadership and daily management of Cleveland’s 39,000-student school district.

Gordon – believing that lack of proper uniforms is one of the biggest hurdles to students coming to school -- has worked closely with the Cleveland Browns Foundation and Shoes and Clothes for Kids to connect students with the items they need.

Q. From your perspective, talk about the overall and individual impact that Shoes and Clothes for Kids has had on the students of Cleveland.

A. For children who are living in poverty, in households that have trouble affording uniforms, let alone appliances to keep them clean and dry, the lack of clean and appropriate school clothes can be a barrier to attendance. It also hurts self-esteem and morale. Data shows gains in attendance by students who have received Special Teams Packages, consisting of uniforms and other items that Shoes and Clothes for Kids provides with the generous support of the Cleveland Browns Foundation. Through this assistance and other means, we have reduced the number of students missing more than 10 days of school a year by nearly 22% over the last three years.

Q. The organization also makes available to teachers access to supplies for their classroom. How critical is this function of Shoes and Clothes for Kids?

A. Kids in poverty have a long list of needs. Their families are often unable to afford school supplies, and our dedicated teachers often end up filling the gap. Viewed through that lens, this access becomes yet another source of valuable support for children.

Q. How important has community and corporate support been to the success of the organization?

A. Shoes and Clothes for Kids has been serving children and their families for a half-century, and it has grown and evolved to meet ever-expanding needs. Nonprofit organizations, CMSD included, cannot thrive for that length of time without strong community and corporate support.

Q. How have student needs changed through the years?

A. The change is largely by degree. Children today face more severe pressure and trauma than ever before. We see this clearly in Cleveland, which has perhaps the nation’s highest rate of child poverty. As a result, schools that may have once stood as silos now need what we call community wraparound services, including those provided by Shoes and Clothes for Kids.

Q. As SC4K hits 50 years, what is your hope for the future of the organization?

A. The need for the help that Shoes and Clothes for Kids provides may change in scale, but it will always be with us. Whatever the level of need, my hope is that CMSD, our families and the community will be able to count on strong support from SC4K for another 50 years and beyond.

Thanks to our partners at the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and the Cleveland Browns for helping us create the Special Teams Package program. Nearly 6,000 students have received new school clothing, shoe cards, and school supplies during the past three years. In some categories, school attendance improved 24% in the next 30 days.

Let’s keep up the good work!
SC4K programs eliminate barriers to education by meeting critical needs

By KIMBERLY BONVISSUTO
Crain Content Studio-Cleveland

When children have clean clothes, shoes that fit and a backpack full of school supplies, they have a better chance at being successful in school, which sets them up for success in life.

That has been the mantra of Shoes and Clothes for Kids for the last 50 years as it works to serve Cleveland’s neediest children in grades K-8 through a network of distribution partners located throughout Greater Cleveland. The organization’s programs aim to place clothes, shoes and supplies directly into the hands of children in need.

Throughout its existence, the organization has transitioned to adjust to the needs of the population it is serving, adding to and adjusting its programs and distribution.

For example, after the Cleveland Metropolitan School District made the transition to require school uniforms of students, some families faced additional struggles. Today, SC4K programs make available to students new uniforms, a move that has made all the difference, according to those working closely with the district’s families and children.

“Prior to three years ago, we had one program, and that one program was having an impact,” said SC4K programs director Monica Lloyd. “Looking at how we’ve changed over the years, we’re able to have actual numbers to show the impact. Our distribution partners tell us their families really needed uniforms and complete outfits. They needed to walk away with a shirt, pants, underwear, socks and shoes. Hearing the feedback from our partners let us know we’re moving in the right direction.”

To that end, SC4K today serves the community through a variety of programs:

**Legacy program**

The Legacy program is the basic core program upon which SC4K was founded. The organization began 50 years ago providing shoes to children in need. The board determined in the late 1990s that children who needed shoes probably needed clothing as well.

In the beginning, the clothing that was provided to students was leftover clearance items from major department stores. The clothes were not necessarily school appropriate, but it was bought in bulk and distributed through neighborhood partners who best knew the city’s families and children.

“Prior to three years ago, we had one program, and that one program was having an impact,” said SC4K programs director Monica Lloyd. “Looking at how we’ve changed over the years, we’re able to have actual numbers to show the impact. Our distribution partners tell us their families really needed uniforms and complete outfits. They needed to walk away with a shirt, pants, underwear, socks and shoes. Hearing the feedback from our partners let us know we’re moving in the right direction.”

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To that end, SC4K today serves the community through a variety of programs:
We fill those orders every week. We deliver them to the school so the principal or teacher can call the parent, guardian or caregiver in and hand them a bag of clothing and school supplies,” said SC4K executive director Terry Uhl.

The program began in January 2017 with a $100,000 grant from the Cleveland Browns Foundation. By the end of this school year – the third year of the program – the organization will have served 6,000 students. Uhl said the best news is that the program is showing that the students missing the most school – five or more days in the 30 days prior to receiving a bag of clothes and supplies – improved attendance up to 25% in the following 30 days.

“They are coming to school for a whole other week the following month,” Uhl said. “It gives schools a chance to get them back in the system.”

**Cleveland Kids in Need**

The Kids in Need Foundation is a national program that provides free school supplies to students in need. In January 2017, SC4K took over the national program’s mission for the Greater Cleveland area, becoming Cleveland Kids in Need.

Each year, the program receives from major national and local companies – including Elmer’s, Dixon Ticonderoga, OfficeMax and 3M – more than $1 million worth donated supplies for distribution. The program also accepts monetary donations to buy other core supplies – such as earbuds and dry erase markers – that teachers need but are not normally provided. The supplies are stored at a 15,000-square-foot facility in Cleveland, where eligible teachers can shop for school supplies free of charge, once a semester.

“At the resource center, we allow teachers from approved schools to shop for school supplies for their students and their classrooms,” said Lloyd, adding that eligibility is based on 60% or more of students at a school participating in the free or reduced federal lunch program. “Teachers shop twice a year for free. Each shopping trip has a value of about $750.”

Since taking over the local affiliate program, Cleveland Kids in Need has increased the number of teachers participating in the free school supply program from a couple thousand to 4,500 this school year.

“While the end customer is the students, it gets to the students through the teachers,” Uhl said. “There are about 500 schools in Cuyahoga County – about half qualify for the teachers to shop for free.”

**SC4K IMPACT | Teacher**

“It’s so empowering for kids to have brand-new materials. Shoes and Clothes for Kids affords teachers to come in two times a year and freely get those things for our students. The community and the people that give, please know that everyone is grateful and that is your investment in our best resource – and that’s our babies.”

DEBORAH S. EVANS, teacher, Cleveland Metropolitan School District

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**UPCOMING SC4K EVENTS**

**COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER FORUM**

5:30 pm on May 14th
First Energy Stadium

**ARAMARK GOLF CLASSIC**

9 am on June 17th
Chippewa Golf Club

**“NIGHT AT THE SHOREBY” FALL GALA**

6 pm on September 17th
Shoreby Club

For more information, visit www.sc4k.org or email info@sc4k.org

Shoes and Clothes for Kids
Three-year pilot program targets K-3 population

By KIMBERLY BONVISSUTO
Crain Content Studio-Cleveland

Shoes and Clothes for Kids this fall will pilot a three-year program targeting K-3 classrooms, combining all its core services and providing them to the entirety of a specific student population.

“We’re working with senior leadership to pick five schools that need to improve their third-grade reading passage, and for three years we will provide every K-3 classroom the school uniform package, school supplies for each student and classroom supplies for every teacher,” said SC4K executive director Terry Uhl.

“We’re hoping over three years to see an extended impact on attendance and improvement in the third-grade reading scores.”

Known as the Classroom Guarantee program, the pilot’s main sponsor is French Toast, a national school uniform supplier that has partnered with SC4K for several years.

Uhl projects the program will impact 1,000 students by using teachers as “first responders.”

Richard Sutton, CEO of LT Apparel Group, the New York-based parent company of French Toast, said sponsoring the Classroom Guarantee program is the next step in strengthening its partnership with SC4K.

“Shoes and Clothes for Kids is really focused on what’s important and getting the maximum benefit to kids,” Sutton said. “Our goal is to see if we provide more uniforms to kids in these schools, is attendance going to improve dramatically, and are test scores going to improve? We’re giving back in a way that will correlate to good results.”

Sutton said giving back in the industry where the company makes its livelihood tied together at the corporate level the idea of being charitable and doing something important for education.

The company will provide more than 4,000 school uniforms and school-appropriate outfits annually through the pilot program. He added that if the pilot is successful, there could be the potential to expand it to other cities.

The impetus for the pilot program was SC4K’s takeover of the local affiliate of the national Kids in Need Foundation program.

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A photograph of two children is shown.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ELAINE MANUSAKIS

The total number of children served by SC4K’s clothing programs

10,695

The average rate by which attendance increased for recipients of the Cleveland Browns-sponsored Special Teams Package within the first 30 days

25%

The number of CMSD students who received the Cleveland Browns-sponsored Special Teams Package

2,000

The number of community volunteers who helped sell 50/50 raffle tickets at Cleveland Browns home games, raising thousands of dollars for SC4K

300+

*ALL NUMBERS FROM 2018
Distribution partners serve as connection to students

Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland has been a SC4K partner for more than 20 years, serving children ages 6 to 18. The King Kennedy Club location, led by director Richard Starr, recently earned the SC4K Partner of the Year award.

The King Kennedy Club has 250 members enrolled, with about 50 families participating in each of its SC4K distribution events. Starr said he’s gone from being a kid at a Boys & Girls Club to being a director, and he’s seen what SC4K does for children.

“The mission they started off with is the same mission today,” said Starr, adding that the relationship he’s built with SC4K means families have access to resources when they need them. He said that last year 32 families lost everything to a major apartment fire, but they had new clothes and shoes delivered to them after a quick call to SC4K. “That type of relationship and those resources and opportunities are amazing to be able to provide for our kids.”

Starr said when children look good, they feel good.

“It’s critical that kids get new uniforms during the year so they have the ability to continue to go to school,” said Ron Soeder, president and CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland.

Soeder said that SC4K is evolving its distribution method intelligently with its direct method of support through Cleveland schools. “From my perspective, it’s really important, and I fully applaud and embrace them,” Soeder said.

PHOTO BY ELAINE MANUSAKIS

The King Kennedy Club of the Boys & Girls Club of Cleveland earned SC4K Partner of the Year. Distributions take place five times per year with neighborhood community partners publicizing events to the communities they serve.

By KIMBERLY BONVISSUTO
Crain Content Studio-Cleveland

SC4K’S DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS

- Bethany Baptist Church
- Boys & Girls Club - Broadway Club
- Boys & Girls Club - King Kennedy Club
- Boys & Girls Club - Walton School Club
- Catholic Charities Head Start - Garden Valley
- Catholic Charities Head Start - Riverside
- Catholic Charities Head Start - St. Ignatius
- Cleveland Chesed Center
- East Cleveland Neighborhood Center
- East End Neighborhood House
- Famicos Foundation
- Friendly Inn Settlement
- La Sagrada Familia
- Lexington Bell Community Center
- May Dugan
- Merrick House
- Mt. Sinai Baptist Church
- Murtis Taylor - East Cleveland
- Murtis Taylor - Garfield
- Murtis Taylor - Mount Pleasant
- Murtis Taylor - Warrensville Heights
- New Sardis Primitive Baptist Church
- St. Martin de Porres
- The Centers - Cleveland Heights
- University Settlement
- Urban Community School
- West Side Catholic Center
- William E. Sanders Family Life Center
SC4K 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund: Doubling the size, doubling the impact

By KIMBERLY BONVISSUTO
Crain Content Studio-Cleveland

More.

That’s the message behind Shoes and Clothes for Kids’ (SC4K) 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund. The organization is working to raise an additional $1 million to double its impact in the community.

The vision of the organization is that all children have the resources they need to learn, grow and become successful. SC4K removes barriers to education and school attendance by providing new uniforms, a new pair of shoes, appropriate winter clothing and essential school supplies. The belief – which is increasingly supported by data – is that students who have all of these resources become engaged learners, and ultimately engaged citizens.

“That money will be reinvested right back into the community with kids – clothing, school uniforms and supplies,” says SC4K executive director Terry Uhl. “We want to purchase more things that kids need and get it into their hands.”

The organization’s budget allows it to serve about 7,000 children annually. Raising $1 million will provide an additional $200,000 annually between 2020 and 2025 to double the organization’s impact to 14,000 children through its programs.

SC4K has more community partners, more volunteers and more distribution partners than ever. Combine that with a strong working relationship with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and the organization hopes to reach every student who lacks what is necessary to be a success story.

Through that collaboration with the Cleveland schools, SC4K is helping to improve school attendance.

By doubling its impact, Uhl says SC4K has the opportunity to give students a better chance to successfully complete each grade and eventually graduate, providing them a real chance to break the cycle of poverty.

The organization has a target date of Dec. 31 to secure enough pledges to meet its $1 million fundraising goal.

SC4K 50TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM GROWTH FUND

To celebrate 50 years of serving Cleveland’s families in need, SC4K is committed to doubling its impact and raising an additional $1 million during its 50th anniversary year, its largest fundraising goal ever.

TO DONATE

MAIL:
Shoes and Clothes for Kids
3500 Lorain Avenue #301
Cleveland OH 44115

ONLINE:
www.sc4k.org
PHONE:
Call 216-881-7463, ext. 3

● For more information on how to help SC4K have a bigger impact on Cleveland kids, please contact Terry Uhl at tuhl@sc4k.org.

$1.061 million
Community support in 2018 for Shoes and Clothes for Kids programs

2,000
The number of Cuyahoga County students who last year received back-to-school uniforms and school supplies through the partnership with the Christ Child Society of Cleveland

$3 million
The value of school supplies distributed in 2018 through the Cleveland Kids in Need Resource Center

4,300
The number of Cuyahoga County school teachers in 13 school districts served through the Cleveland Kids in Need Resource Center

10,000
The number of hours community volunteers donated to SC4K – the equivalent of four full-time employees

* ALL NUMBERS FROM 2018
What’s in a package provided by Shoes and Clothes for Kids?

**LEGACY PACKAGE**
- 2 uniforms
- 3 school-appropriate casual outfits
- Socks
- Underwear
- School supplies
- Gift card for shoes

**BROWNS SPECIAL TEAMS PROGRAM**
- 3 uniforms
- 1 casual outfit
- Socks
- Underwear
- School supplies
- Gift card for shoes

**BACK TO SCHOOL PROGRAM**
- 2 uniforms
- 1 casual outfit
- Socks
- Underwear
- School supplies
- Gift card for shoes

School supplies vary, but can include:
- Colored Pencils
- Markers
- Pens
- Crayons
- Notebooks
- Pocket Folders
- Erasers
- Pencils
- Rulers
- Glue Sticks
- Pencil Sharpeners
- Scissors

(Non-uniform schools receive 3 casual outfits rather than 2 uniforms and 1 casual outfit)
Volunteers needed!

Volunteers play an essential role in the operation of SC4K.

Without them, we’d be unable to provide new shoes, school clothing, school supplies and more to thousands of kids throughout the Greater Cleveland area.

Opportunities are available year-round for individuals and groups to help us sort, count, organize, stock shelves, fill orders and more.

Or, do you want to host a special collection drive?

For more information, visit www.sc4k.org/volunteer or email volunteer@sc4k.org
Humble shoe drive grows into a legacy of giving to Cleveland school children

By JUDY STRINGER
Crain Content Studio-Cleveland

I t’s not that Don Sayre doesn’t agree his father, Morrie, was a big-hearted man. The elder Sayre, who passed in 2010 at the age of 95, was the founder and driving force behind Shoes and Clothes for Kids, which has evolved over the last 50 years into one of Cleveland’s most recognized causes.

It’s just that generosity was only part of it.

“Dad was one of those rare people that when he saw something that was not right, he would take action,” Sayre said.

What Morrie saw in the late ’60s – as a regular jogger and board member at the old Central YMCA – were children and teenagers walking around with tattered shoes, even during the harsh Cleveland winters. In 1969, Don said, his father got on a few radio stations and appealed for used children’s shoes and boots. A furniture manufacturer and prominent community member, he raised money from a handful of business associates, had the donated footwear refurbished and handed it out from the trunk of his car.

Before long, however, Morrie set his sights on supplying new shoes to children in need, rather than hand-me-downs. He used his business contacts to raise seed funding and fill seats on a nonprofit board, and in 1970, Morrie officially launched Shoes for Kids.

“We were still working mainly out of the back seat of his car and the trunk,” said Allan Krulak, a retired Forest City Enterprises executive who joined the cause in the ’70s. “But, we were buying shoes now and giving them away at the YMCA downtown and some other places they were needed.”

Krulak said soon the YMCA gave Shoes for Kids an office in the Prospect Avenue building. Morrie began buying winter essentials, like mittens and hats, to distribute to area children, as well as shoes. When Don returned to Northeast Ohio in 1986 to join his father, after serving as executive director for a school outside of the area, he became the nonprofit’s first executive director.

With Don’s help, Shoes for Kids diversified its board, moved to newly donated office and warehouse space on the first floor of the Cleveland Municipal School District’s Woodland Avenue data center and added socks and underwear to the items it provided to inner city students. He also oversaw the organization’s expansion into other area school districts.

“Basically, what we did was a couple of times a year, mostly in the fall at the beginning of school, we would distribute the shoes and clothes to schools based on their request for shoes,” Don explained. “School officials would come to our warehouse, take the items back and set them up in a gym, and the kids would come in and get their stuff.”

In addition to regular distributions, Don said Shoes for Kids responded to referrals from schools and social service agencies year-round.

A new playbook

Janus Small and Valerie McCormack, a former Hawken School educator, succeeded Don as executive directors. The nonprofit experienced a number of changes over the next 15 years, including amending its name to include “Clothes” and distributing Payless ShoeSource gift cards that allowed children to pick out their own new shoes.

Following McCormack’s passing in 2016, Terry Uhl, who had been on the organization’s board for 20 years, stepped in as executive director. Uhl said the leadership transition came just as Shoes and Clothes for Kids was analyzing how to improve its value proposition.

“We were doing a good job of getting clothing and shoes out to the community through neighborhood partners, and we knew it went to families who needed help, but could not identify really any measureable tangible impact that we were having other than we were doing good based on anecdotal information,” he said.

A call from CMSD marked the beginning of SC4K’s most recent transition. Tracy Jemison, who was chairman at the time, said the school district invited him and Uhl to attend a meeting with the Cleveland Browns Foundation and Uniforms for Kids, a small charity operated by East Cleveland businessman Alan Silverman.

The Cleveland Browns Foundation – under the direct urging of Dee Haslam, according to Uhl – had targeted school attendance as a focus for giving. CMSD CEO Eric Gordon wanted to discuss how the local nonprofits along with the foundation might be able to help remove school uniforms as a barrier to regular attendance.

“Gordon basically said lack of proper uniforms were one of the biggest items that inhibit way too many kids from coming to school,” Uhl said.

The program hatched over the next several months and subsequent meetings resulted in the merger of Uniforms for Kids and Shoes and Clothes for Kids, Jemison said, and completely retooling the latter’s framework.

Rather than making bulk clearance rack purchases and conducting regular distributions of non-specific sizes and types of clothing, Shoes and Clothes for Kids was reborn as an organization that receives referrals about specific students in need and provides those children with what are known as Special Teams Packages, a week’s worth of school-appropriate clothing.

With support from the Cleveland Browns, Shoes and Clothes for Kids has already supplied nearly 7,000 high-value Special Teams Packages to students and early data suggests the program is helping improve school attendance, in some cases by roughly 25 percent.

“The big hearted business people who started this, like Morrie and his friends, deserve all the credit in the world,” Uhl said, “and we are just so proud to carry on their legacy as we really take Shoes and Clothes for Kids to the next level.”
1969
Cleveland businessman Morrie Sayre notices children wearing tattered footwear during his visits to Central Cleveland YMCA. He jumps on the radio airways in pursuit of used shoes for kids in need, and with a little help from his friends, Morrie collects, refurbishes and distributes used shoes from the trunk of his car.

1970s
Believing new shoes would provide kids with more dignity and pride, Morrie began raising money to purchase shoes. The Shoes for Kids program is founded as an independent nonprofit with Morrie as chairman of the board, which is made up his inner circle of business associates. The organization begins operating out of the Central YMCA on Prospect Avenue.

Early 1980s
Shoes for Kids adds mittens, hats and other winter essentials to keep children warm during Cleveland winters.

1986
Morrie’s son, Don, joins the organization as its first executive director.

1987
The organization attains status as a 501(c)3.

Late 1980s-1990s
The Cleveland Board of Education provides Shoes for Kids office and warehouse space on the first floor of its Woodland Avenue data center for $1 per year. The organization sees growth in its distribution network with the inclusion of schools outside of the Cleveland school district, serving thousands of children in Greater Cleveland each year.

Late 1990s
The Shoes for Kids board is modified to include active community members. T-shirts, underwear and socks are given to children in addition to new shoes.

1999
The organization formally adds clothes to distributions and amends its name to Shoes and Clothes for Kids.
2000s
Payless gift cards are added so that kids can pick out their own shoes. SC4K forms an associate board of young professionals.

2010
$1.9 million in free items are given to children through SC4K’s expanded distribution network.

2016
The Cleveland Browns Foundation rolls out an initiative to help impact student attendance at the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. CMSD involves the organization Uniforms for Kids, which is supplying free uniforms to students in need, and SC4K. SC4K’s mission evolves to “removing barriers to school attendance” as the organization narrows its focus to school-appropriate clothing.

2017
SC4K merges with Uniforms for Kids and another local nonprofit, Kids in Need, which provides 3,000 area school teachers with supplies for their classroom. The expanded organization partners with Cleveland Metropolitan School District to leverage SC4K’s distribution network and deliver school uniforms and schools supplies. The Cleveland Browns get in the game by supporting SC4K with Special Teams Packages for students. Each package includes a week’s worth of school clothing, including uniforms, casual clothes, socks and underwear, as well as school supplies and shoe gift cards. The first Special Teams Packages are distributed in January 2017.

2018
SC4K gears up for its 50th anniversary, setting a fundraising goal of $1 million in order to double its impact over the next five years. During the fall distribution, the organization partners with Coats for Kids to include winter coats in the Special Teams Packages.

2019
With support from the Cleveland Browns Foundation, SC4K distributes nearly 7,000 Special Teams Packages in the first two years.

Today
SC4K is improving school attendance and equalizing the classroom learning opportunity for Greater Cleveland’s neediest children by providing them new school uniforms, clothes, school supplies and shoe gift cards.
Corporate partners long have provided support for SC4K

By BARRY GOODRICH  
Crain Content Studio-Cleveland

Somewhere, Morrie Sayre is smiling.

Sayre, who founded the Shoes for Kids program 50 years ago, began his nonprofit by working with the Central YMCA to collect and distribute new shoes to Greater Cleveland’s children in need, often keeping shoes in the trunk of his car to hand out at area playgrounds. Known throughout the community as Mr. Shoes, Sayre remained an advocate for the program until his passing in 2010.

As Shoes and Clothes for Kids celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, Sayre’s original concept has blossomed into an organization that has committed to doubling its impact by raising an additional $1 million in 2019. Through the SC4K 50th Anniversary Program Growth Fund, an additional $200,000 in funding will be provided per year from 2020 to 2025.

Thanks in large part to corporate partnerships, SC4K has expanded its programs well beyond new shoes to include school uniforms and supplies. Teachers in under-resourced classrooms now benefit from supplies, books and even furniture.

Working with the Cleveland Browns Foundation and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, SC4K’s efforts have resulted in roughly a 25% increase in attendance. “We are very focused on removing barriers to school attendance,” says SC4K executive director Terry Uhl. “Having an immediate impact has been the most rewarding thing I’ve done in my career.”

Beyond the checkbook

While grants are still an important asset for SC4K, the days of checkbook philanthropy are long gone. “Our partnership goes beyond financial contributions,” says Benjamin Kroeck, senior philanthropy coordinator with the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation. “We have a volunteer program each year and also provide a meeting space for relationships partners to Chippewa Golf Course each year.

One of the biggest annual fundraisers for Shoes and Clothes for Kids is its golf outing, under the sponsorship of ARAMARK. The event has raised over $800,000 and is led by ARAMARK district manager Kevin Kearney. All of SC4K’s distribution partners. We’re always looking for ways to help their organization.”

Knowing Dominion Energy’s resources are helping to reach those in need is a game-changer for Kroeck. “They’re such a smart organization,” he says of SC4K. “You want to see the money meet the need and they are constantly evolving their mission.”

One of the biggest annual fundraisers for Shoes and Clothes for Kids is its golf outing, now in its 21st year under the sponsorship of ARAMARK, which manages concessions at Quicken Loans Arena, FirstEnergy Stadium and Blossom Music Center. The event has raised over $800,000 under the direction of ARAMARK district manager Kevin Kearney, who brings SC4K suppliers, his own clients and community partners to Chippewa Golf Course each year.

“We took what was a client relations golf outing and converted it into a fundraising event,” says Kearney. “We wanted to select a charity that was small enough where the money we raised would make a difference. We saw that 94% of SC4K’s income went right back out into the community … it was a pretty easy selection.”

Kearney joined SC4K’s board of directors in 2004 and has since encouraged some of his own managers to join the organization’s associate board. “I’ve grown to really respect this cause and the impact it has,” he says. “Being able to get some of my own team members involved in little ways and big ways has been very rewarding for me.”

A new perspective

With a degree in education, UPS Region International coordinator Candice Dempsey feels a special kinship with Shoes and Clothes for Kids. “Our future lies in our children so for me it’s like a perfect marriage,” says Dempsey, who has been involved with SC4K for the past 12 years. “It’s really where my heart is and being able to bring this into my professional world is great.”

Being engaged with the local community is a core pillar for UPS, which employs 430,000 worldwide. UPS is able to streamline the distribution process for SC4K by providing transportation services to its partner sites.

“I have almost the exact same volunteers every year,” says Dempsey. “I have people who have retired but come back to do this each year. It really gives people a lot of perspective to do this in the same community we’re serving.”

Fifth Third Bank’s regional marketing director Laura Passerallo has worked with SC4K for the past 16 years and remains impressed with the organization’s operations. “I’ve always looked up to them as a well-run organization,” she says. “Our employees love working with them, and we often have sock and underwear drives around our office.”

Passerallo says once Fifth Third Bank employees participate in trips to SC4K centers, it becomes easy for them to connect with the ultimate goal of helping students rise above their daily economic challenges. “We’ve had a couple of employees who wanted to go back the next day,” she says. “When you’re there you can see the impact of their work and you feel good about having a small hand in that.”

Fifty years later, the growth of Morrie Sayre’s original concept has been bittersweet. “The good news is it shows we know what we’re doing,” says Uhl. “The bad news is there’s still a need, and it’s not going away anytime soon.”

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KEVIN KEARNEY, district manager for ARAMARK
Lending a helping hand: ‘A chance to step out of your life a little bit’

By Barry Goodrich
Crain Content Studio-Cleveland

A s director of community engagement for Sherwin-Williams, Maria Spangler coordinates volunteer work for various worthy causes throughout the year. But her heart has a special place for Shoes and Clothes for Kids.

“We love them,” says Spangler. “They’re breaking down a critical barrier for kids and doing it in a way that preserves the dignity of families.”

Whether it’s providing groups of 20 to 50 volunteers to help sort and package clothing and school supplies or supporting the nonprofit with financial grants, Sherwin-Williams has been a constant supporter of SC4K over the years. And that support has yielded benefits not only to the community at large but to the firm’s employees as well.

“They’ve been a wonderful partner for us,” says Spangler. “It’s nice when you can show up as a team and connect employees to each other and help them to deeply engage with our company at the same time. We’ve had overwhelming positive feedback from our volunteers.”

Each Sherwin-Williams team excursion to a supply site includes the presence of a company executive (S-W’s Jeff Galla serves on SC4K’s board of directors). A large group of volunteers goes out to a site each June with smaller groups attending sites throughout the year.

“This is a chance to step out of your life a little bit,” says Spangler. “It’s a chance to empathize with folks in the community who otherwise wouldn’t be able to provide for their kids. These are things that all Americans should not want for – it’s heartbreaking to know people’s long-term outcomes are limited by circumstances that are no fault of their own.”

Another reason Spangler enjoys her firm’s relationship with Shoes and Clothes for Kids is an opportunity to reunite with SC4K’s program director Monica Lloyd. “I was Monica’s intern at Greater Cleveland Shares when I was a student at John Carroll. She runs a tight ship … the way they do things just keeps getting better and more efficient.”

Witnessing timely, tangible results while serving at-risk children may be the greatest benefit of all for a relationship with SC4K. “We know we can trust them with our resources,” says Spangler. “We’re looking to ramp up our activity with them this year and in the future.”

AN INSIDE LOOK

Cleveland-based Goldfarb Weber Creative Media, for the 50th anniversary of Shoes and Clothes for Kids, set out to document the transformative impact of the organization on the students and schools it serves.

See what happens when a student looks inside one of the bags provided by SC4K and hears first-hand from teachers and administrators about how having the proper clothes and supplies can boost self-confidence and improve school attendance.

Access the video – along with all of the content from this Crain Content Studio-Cleveland supplement – at CrainsCleveland.com/Shoes.

(The video will be available after its public debut during the Community Stakeholder Forum, which will be May 14 at First Energy Stadium.)

Shoes and Clothes for Kids

23 CRAIN CONTENT STUDIO

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- Stephanie Burris, Marcus Thomas
- R. Michael Cole, Jewish Federation of Cleveland
- Candice Dempsey, UPS
- Brendan Doyle, Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office
- Laurie Forbush, PolyOne
- Karen Fox, Cleveland Indians
- Jeffrey Galla, Sherwin-Williams
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- Tyrone C. McBee, Dominion East Ohio
- Sarah Melamed, SK Melamed, LLC
- Elizabeth Nici (secretary), Gusto Designs
- Laura Passerallo, Fifth Third Bank
- James C. Petsock, JCPetsock Consulting
- Joseph G. Podach
- Hallie Rich, Cuyahoga County Public Library
- Rockette Richardson Ewell (life director), US Bank
- Dennis Rose (vice chair), Hahn Loeser + Parks LLP
- Kelly Rudloff
- Patty Shipacasse, Hyland Software
- Alan Silverman, Dunn Hardware
- Scott M. Simon (life director), North Pointe Realty
- Melissa Trzaska, American Greetings
- Terry Uhl (life director/SC4K executive director), The Uhl Group
- Brian Vulpitta, Plus Innovate
- Thomas Wearsch, Jones Day
- Chalana Williams, First Federal of Lakewood
- Renny Wolfson, WLW Management
- Elissa Wuliger, Rodan and Fields
- Joe Yonadi, Squire Patton Boggs US LLP