

ADVISORY BOARD HIGHLIGHT: Meet the Board Chair Adam Landau

Interview with Katherine Paulikonis, Field Center MSW Intern

What field do you work in and what is your current role?

I work in the investment field, for a firm called Cerity Partners, which manages money and handles holistic financial affairs for high net worth families as well as endowments and foundations. The firm has a national footprint, and I am the co-market leader of the Philadelphia office. Most of my time is spent working with our clients, but I also serve as a member of our Investment Committee.

How did you get involved in philanthropy? Are there specific causes or interests you are particularly passionate about?

My first involvement in philanthropy was as a participant in various fundraisers while in high school. This was an activity that was fostered and encouraged both by my family and my school. My first meaningful board experience was for a school that at the time was called Arise Academy (now CB Community School), which is a high school in Philadelphia for kids in foster care. This touched me in a personal way, as the widely expressed belief in the school was that kids only need one person in their life to take an interest in their happiness and well-being, and having been raised by a single mother I knew that to be the case on a very personal level. I continue to be passionate about youth in the foster care system, and as the father of a child with autism I am also very passionate about providing supports for people with developmental disabilities, of all ages. At a higher level I'm passionate about advocating for vulnerable populations in order to elevate their voices and experiences.

What inspired you to join the Advisory Board of The Field Center?

It was my involvement with Arise Academy that introduced me to the Field Center and inspired me to join its Advisory Board when asked. At the time the Executive Director of the Field Center was Debra Schilling Wolfe, and she was a regular presence at Arise events on behalf of the Field Center. There was significant overlap in the work being done on the ground at the school and within the Center with respect to the Foster Care to College program. I originally joined the Board to make myself a more valuable Board member at Arise, but I stayed on the Board because I saw the value of the work being done by the Center and its contributors.

What sets The Field Center apart from other organizations addressing child welfare and wellbeing?

I think the biggest thing that sets the Field Center apart is the breadth of resources that are available by virtue of its interdisciplinary nature. By drawing from experience and expertise across child welfare, medical, legal, and business-focused entities the findings and solutions that are brought to bear are both unique and robust. The other thing that I believe sets the Center

apart is the passion brought to the issues of the day along with an openness to explore possibilities beyond those which were originally envisioned.

How can other professionals and community members get involved?

Time, talent and treasure. Anyone who wants to be supportive of the Center could certainly come to campus to spend time with the various stakeholders, and I'm certain that they'd come away both energized about the work and ready to spread the gospel to others in the community. For an organization as impactful as the Field Center the local awareness of its efforts is far less than one might expect. Similarly, anyone with talent, experience, and passion in any of the disciplines outlined above could certainly lend a hand to the various programs being run and established. Finally, like any philanthropic organization the financial contribution of the community – corporate, individual, and public entities – is essential.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Just that the Field Center is a worthy cause to support because I believe that support gets the benefit of leverage. What I mean by that is, the work being done by the Field Center is not generally siloed, but rather it addresses issues that are felt by vulnerable children around the globe. When you support the Center you are doing good in parts of the world you may have never dreamed of supporting. I'd also add that because there are not always faces identified as the recipients of contributions, because The Field Center is not providing direct support services, it takes a special and forward-thinking philanthropist to recognize what a worthy cause is at hand.