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Bright Beginnings Acquires Land in Ward 8; New Center Planned to Serve 100 Homeless Infants and Toddlers

WASHINGTON, DC – Locally based non-profit Bright Beginnings announced today the acquisition of property in Ward 8. The site, 3418 Fourth Street SE, is slated to become a state of the art child development center serving homeless infants and toddlers.

The purchase of the vacant 1.31 acre property will add a vibrant resource that serves 100 homeless children to the neighborhood. The location is considered ideal because of its proximity to a large number of shelters that serve homeless families with young children who will benefit from the unique combination of comprehensive educational, therapeutic, and social services Bright Beginnings offers families. Additionally, the new center will create 32 new jobs with an initial operating budget of nearly \$2.5 million that will benefit the Ward 8 economy.

“We are committed to creating a safe haven at Fourth Street SE where homeless children can thrive,” said Bright Beginnings Executive Director Dr. Betty Jo Gaines. “Our new center will be perfect, a place that feels like home, a welcoming space that provides the services necessary for raising children and supporting families.”

A multi-year capital campaign is underway to raise revenue for the \$8.9 million construction and acquisition cost of the project. Construction at the site is scheduled to begin in spring 2016. The building design, by Hamilton Associates, LLC, includes five classrooms for infants, six toddler classrooms, space for therapeutic services for children, and a parent resource center. The land purchase was guided by attorneys working pro bono at the law firm of Ballard Spahr. Alexandria based F. D. Stonewater is assisting Bright Beginnings with site planning and development.

The acquisition of the Fourth Street SE property is part of Bright Beginning’s strategy to address the needs of the growing number of homeless families with vulnerable young children in Washington, D.C. The organization has been working to assist homeless families since 1991. As part of this work, in 2015 the organization joined a new coalition to combat homelessness in the nation’s capital with a commitment to [Mayor Bowser's Pledge to End Homelessness](#).

Bright Beginnings is nationally accredited by NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) and is the only child development center in the District that is dedicated solely to the needs of homeless children and their parents with essential comprehensive educational, therapeutic and social services at no cost for families. Since its founding in 1991, Bright Beginnings has provided services for over 2,500 homeless children in the District of Columbia.