



*Rendition of the new Bright Beginnings location. Photo courtesy of Bright Beginnings.*

## Bright Beginnings' Second Child Development Center to Bring Hope to Needy Families

### *Countdown to Groundbreaking*

By Courtney Battle and Denise Douglas

The countdown is on to a big day for Bright Beginnings. The shovels will be turning and digging into the dirt as the non-profit breaks ground on its second child development center. The state of the art facility will be built on 1.31 acres in Ward 8. One of the many benefits is that it will be located near homeless shelters in that area, making it accessible to families who need it. The center will provide educational, therapeutic, and social services.

BBI Executive Director Dr. Betty Jo Gaines said of the new location, "We are committed to creating a safe haven at 3418 Fourth Street SE where homeless children can thrive." She added, "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."

Others who share BBI's commitment to the well-being of families are its financial donors like Washington Wizards' player John Wall. Wall contributed \$400,000 to the project and spent some time with the staff and children during a visit at the Perry School location. BBI is grateful for his contribution and will dedicate a wall in his honor in the new center.

The acquisition of the Fourth Street SE property is part of Bright Beginnings' 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.

A representative from the mayor's office along with Ward 8 council member LaRuby May are expected to attend the groundbreaking on March 15th. The event begins at 11 a.m.