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**BIG NEWS & PLANS FOR OUR CAMPUS!**



*Paul R. Williams rendering of the original building.*

We are fortunate to have owned our property and building since 1952, when Dr. Lillian Titcomb and other visionary Delta Gamma alumnae purchased the lot at 4120 Marathon Street and selected another visionary, architect Paul R. Williams (*more below*), to design the first preschool of its kind for children who were blind or visually impaired. The 12,000 square foot

**In December of 2021, the Blind Children's Center** entered a transformative partnership with LACOE (The Los Angeles County Office of Education) which will enable us to double our enrollment over the coming years and strengthen our financial position well into the future. In addition to providing significant revenue to support our programs and services, LACOE is also making a significant investment to renovate and remodel our facility. This is the first capital project BCC has entered in nearly 15 years, and the most ambitious in our 84-year history.

main school building is an architectural treasure and site of 70 years of changemaking service and history. It will be the focal point for the project which includes:

- Remodel of 4 preschool classrooms and restrooms to increase total service capacity
- Significant ADA upgrades including the addition of an elevator and updated ramps
- Redesign of play yards and outdoor spaces
- Overall refurbishment of shared spaces & offices, networking, electrical, and key infrastructure
- Incorporation of historic preservation for Paul R. Williams legacy

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**JOIN OUR SUSTAINER PROGRAM**

**Please help us continue our critical services into the future by joining our sustainer program today!** For as little as \$10/month, you will become part of our special community of monthly supporters dedicated to helping children who are visually impaired thrive in a sighted world.

**BENEFITS OF MONTHLY GIVING**

**EASY** – A simple online portal lets you give according to your budget and provides secure record-keeping.

**EFFICIENT** – Recurring gifts cut our administrative costs allowing more of your donation to go directly to serving our students.

**ESSENTIAL** – Dependable monthly support ensures our students have consistent access to critical educational programs and interventions, enabling us to plan for the future and continue to expand services.

**ENDURING** – Your generosity builds a long-term foundation of support for children who are blind or visually impaired.



Go to [www.SustainBCC.org](http://www.SustainBCC.org) Or call our Director of Development Scott Kassel at 323.664.2153 ext. 2330

**About Our Architect**



**Paul Revere Williams** was born in February of 1894 in Los Angeles. Although he passed away as a celebrated architect in 1980, true recognition for his life's work and

legacy has accelerated during the ensuing decades, and he is now regarded as one of America's preeminent 20th century architects.

Orphaned as a young child, Mr. Williams faced adversity throughout his life. The only African-American child in his elementary school, he showed incredible promise as a young architect, which led him to USC where he designed several buildings while still a student. After winning a prestigious design competition when he was 25, Williams opened his own practice and began spreading his wings. During this time Mr. Williams taught himself to draw "upside down" so he could share his sketches with clients who were unwilling to sit beside him due to his skin color.

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**News & Plans cont.**

Thanks to LACOE's lead investment and partnerships with private foundations we are committed to completing this project without relying on donor support. So, rest easy, any donations you make this year, and into the future, will be applied directly to programs and services for our students and families.

*LACOE is funded by the Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, and California Department of Education.*

**Architect cont.**

Maybe it was fitting then that the founders of the Blind Children's Center chose someone who understood the pain of being perceived as different to design a school for children who often face the judgment of others. When the Center was first constructed, Mr. Williams worked closely with the Delta Gamma Building Committee to ensure an inclusive, nurturing space for all of its students and families, a feeling that very much remains to this day.

Mr. Williams designed homes for Frank Sinatra, Lucille Ball & Desi Arnaz, Tyrone Power, Barbara Stanwyk, and other celebrities. In all, he designed more than 2,000 homes, mostly in Los Angeles,



and notable commercial buildings including the Hollywood YMCA, the Beverly Hills Hotel, and St. Jude's Hospital in Memphis. Yet the sad irony is that many of

the homes Mr. Williams designed were in areas with restricted racial covenants, areas he was unable to live in at the time, and his due recognition from the architectural community has largely come posthumously. Nevertheless, in 2004, USC recognized Mr. Williams among its distinguished alumni, and in 2017, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) awarded him its Gold Medal.

We couldn't be prouder of our architect, our history, and the amazing building we call home! We aim to honor Mr. Williams' design, and his vision of what our building might look like today.

**OUR FIRST LIVE EVENT IN MORE THAN TWO YEARS WAS A HIT!**

The Los Angeles River Center & Gardens proved a beautiful venue on May 12, 2022 as our host and emcee Blake Stadnik of NBC's "This Is Us" entertained a crowd of 150. A talented singer as well as actor, Blake began and closed out the gala with rousing performances.

Thanks to a lead grant of \$40,000 from the Youssef & Kamel Mawardi Foundation, the event more than doubled that amount in total donations and was a great opportunity to share updates about the Center and reconnect with old friends. The South Bay Delta Gamma Alumnae Chapter was honored for its years of dedicated service

**Light the Way CELEBRATION**



Blake Stadnik interviewing Johnny

and our parent speaker Crystal Robinson spoke about the impact the Blind Children's Center has had on her daughter Zariah. After four years in our program, Zariah has made huge progress and will be moving on to her local public school this fall.

But the highlight of the event for everyone was when our student Johnny, who plays the younger version of Blake Stadnik's character on "This Is Us" joined Blake on stage for a one-on-one interview. It quickly became unclear who was interviewing who.

It was a thrill to see our future star interacting with a hero from Hollywood. Thank you to everyone who joined us and supported online! See you next year.

**Year End Celebration**

We closed our year out with a blast of fun on June 30! Our teachers went all out to make sure our students and their families had a great last day of the school year! Here are some photos from a memorable day outside in the sun!



**In Memoriam: Frank A Warsinski**



"He loved talking to people, and everyone loved talking to him," is how Rick Warsinski remembers his father Frank. "He was particularly proud of the time he spent in Europe working at Headquarters Command during World War II."

Ironically, Frank's poor vision led him to headquarters rather than the front lines, but his supervisors found him an asset with his quick mind and great memory.

After returning home to Michigan, Frank met the love of his life, Vernita, and they began a family, yielding sons Thom, David, and Rick. Despite facing continued vision problems, Frank worked for a brass company for much of his life, leading their shipping department for decades. Finally declared legally blind by 70, Frank also experienced hearing loss that most likely was a result of his time in the service.



Despite his vision and hearing challenges Frank continued to adapt and live an independent life, becoming a proud grandfather, remaining active at his local church, and exploring new artistic hobbies, including making trinkets and ornaments. When Vernita passed away, after more than 60 years of marriage, Frank lived on his own for ten more years, continuing to remain active and upbeat until he passed at the age of 97.



"My brothers and I were looking for an organization where we could honor my father's legacy and help support people who were facing some of the challenges he did," Rick said. "My father loved being a grandfather, he loved children, and what better way to remember him than by helping future

generations of children who can use a great head start in life." Rick and his brothers have joined together to create a Memorial Fund for their father, Frank A. Warsinski, and hope to continue to water his memories by supporting the children and families at the Blind Children's Center.

We are honored to memorialize & honor the people you love. To make a gift in memory of a friend, family member or loved one, please select In Memoriam on the enclosed or online donation form, and enter the individual's name. For more information please email [scott@blindchildrenscenter.org](mailto:scott@blindchildrenscenter.org)