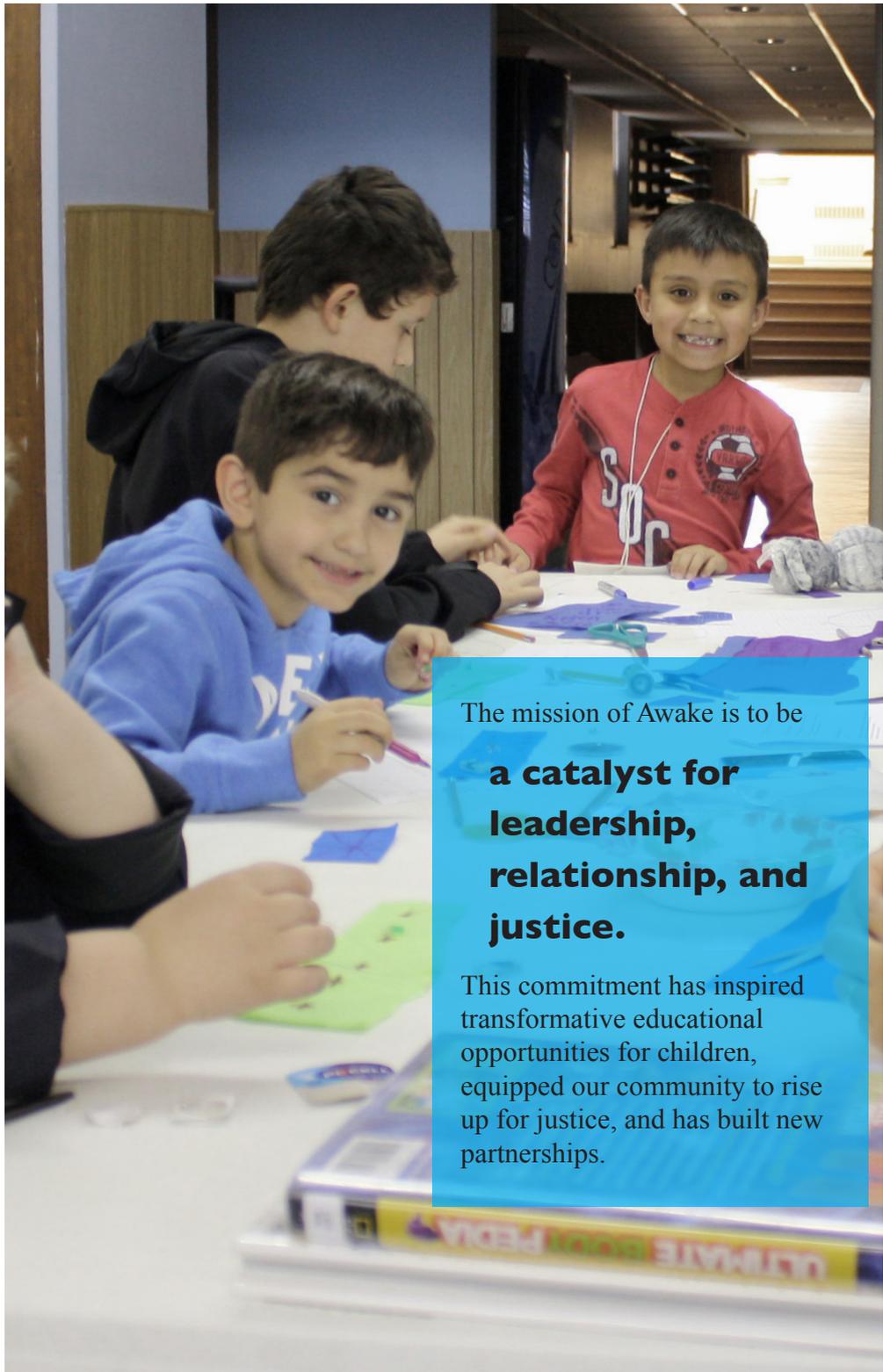




impact report





The mission of Awake is to be
**a catalyst for
leadership,
relationship, and
justice.**

This commitment has inspired transformative educational opportunities for children, equipped our community to rise up for justice, and has built new partnerships.



Diversity is one of the reasons my family moved to Berwyn. Diversity of culture, race, socio-economic levels, family structure, professions – Berwyn has it all. But as is the case elsewhere, we have the tendency to seek out the social bubble that is most comfortable. I remember waiting outside my daughter’s preschool on her first day of school, struck by how quickly and fully all the parents had formed groups based on race and culture. I wanted to pop those bubbles – including my own - but I didn’t know where to begin.

I am proud to say that Awake is helping to change this dynamic. With others, we have played a role in giving power to a greater diversity of people. We have created educational opportunities that were once only accessible to the wealthiest families in Berwyn. We have helped connections happen between those social bubbles. And we’ve accomplished this with the most basic of tools: friendship, conversation, shared interests, and invitation.

Lisa Polderman
mission director



Summer reading is crucial to reading development. Each year we provide a research-based, high quality reading program to children from low-income families to help them combat “summer slide” - the loss of reading achievement over the summer months. Our program helps students improve their reading skills and increase their enjoyment of reading.

We also invest in leaders, raising up people who believe in the value of building relationship and justice.



Enjoyment of Reading

“My kids really enjoyed the program. All three loved their teachers.”
— parent

“My daughter now travels nearly everywhere with a book! She’s on her second Ramona book that she’s reading herself!”
- parent



Leadership

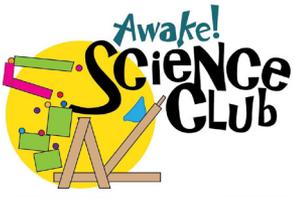
“I felt more confident and like I was able to help the community for a better thing.”
- Summer Reading Program, high school program aide



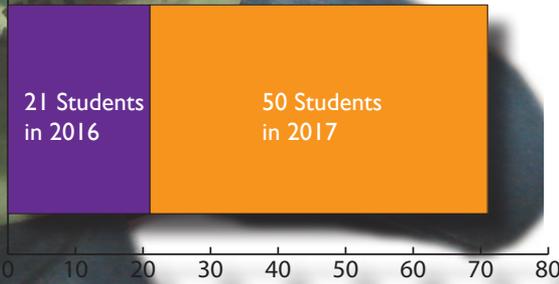
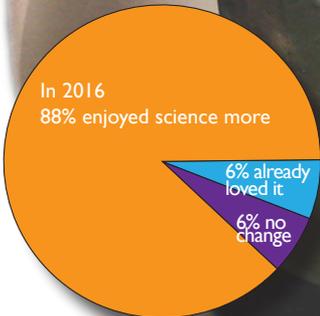
Reading skills

Herbert attended our Summer Reading Program in 2015 and our Homework Help and Science Club in the fall of 2016. This past summer he attended our Summer Reading Program again as an entering 6th grader. His parents reported that reading had always been a struggle for Herbert and that he did not like reading prior to the program. They noticed improvement in the summer of 2015 and were excited to attend again. Over the course of the six weeks, Herbert's reading fluency increased by 23% (five times the expected growth). And perhaps even more important is that Herbert now enjoys reading. When we asked him what he was most proud about, he said that for the first time in his life he liked and finished an entire book on his own. We are hopeful that this will change Herbert's sense of self as he heads into middle school. We also deepened our ties with Herbert's family this summer, and they have asked that we inform them of volunteer activities.





The goal of Science Club is to develop students' interest in and aptitude for Science. Each class will include an engaging, hands-on project that students will work on individually or as a part of a group. Students may attend every week or drop in when able. Resources are provided to parents who want to extend learning beyond the program.



Keeping at It

Benjamin participated in our Science Club in the fall of 2016. In Benjamin's first class, he became so frustrated with his project (an engineering exercise called a marble run) that he tore it apart. The instructors worked with him to help him better manage his frustrations, and to learn to accept mistakes and setbacks as a part of the process. In the second half of the session, Ben's project again didn't work out on his first try. He took a break, and came back after 10 minutes saying, "I used to give up, but I don't do that anymore."



Belonging

"Speaking with the parents at the end of the program really helped me feel a sense of belonging"
- High School Program Aide



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Awake seeks to create opportunities for meaningful conversation and action around important community issues. We provide support to individuals and groups who seek to come together to address issues in Berwyn and the surrounding communities.



Hearing Our Neighbors

“Awake has come to Berwyn at a pivotal time for the city. .. It’s provided a community forum for critical dialogue and progress and has given a voice to those in the community who were previously unheard. When our school district was faced with a budget crisis, many of us wanted to mobilize but were unsure how to begin. Thanks to Awake, we were able to get the resources we needed, from meeting spaces to the dedicated expertise of fellow community members, and we were able to change the budget cutting conversation from a top-down driven initiative to a grass-roots effort representative of the entire community. We as a diverse community will only be able to continue moving forward with the resources which Awake provides.” - From Marie Clarke-Doan, Community Member / Save D100 Schools organizer



RELATIONSHIPS & LEADERSHIP

The most innovative aspect of our approach is the way that we build relationships with all stakeholders (students, families, teachers/aides, sponsors) to maximize the impact we have on children and increase the well-being of our greater community. Our sliding scale tuition makes our programming accessible to all. Our ongoing supervision, training, and professional development of staff allows them to contribute in meaningful ways to students and their families. The relationships we develop with participants and their families helps them become more involved in the community.



Leadership Development

“With the thoughtful coaching of the Director, Lisa Polderman, I was able to identify and utilize my leadership strengths and reached unforeseen levels of success in the position. My confidence in my ability to lead is stronger than ever and I am now actively seeking additional leadership positions to continue my development.”

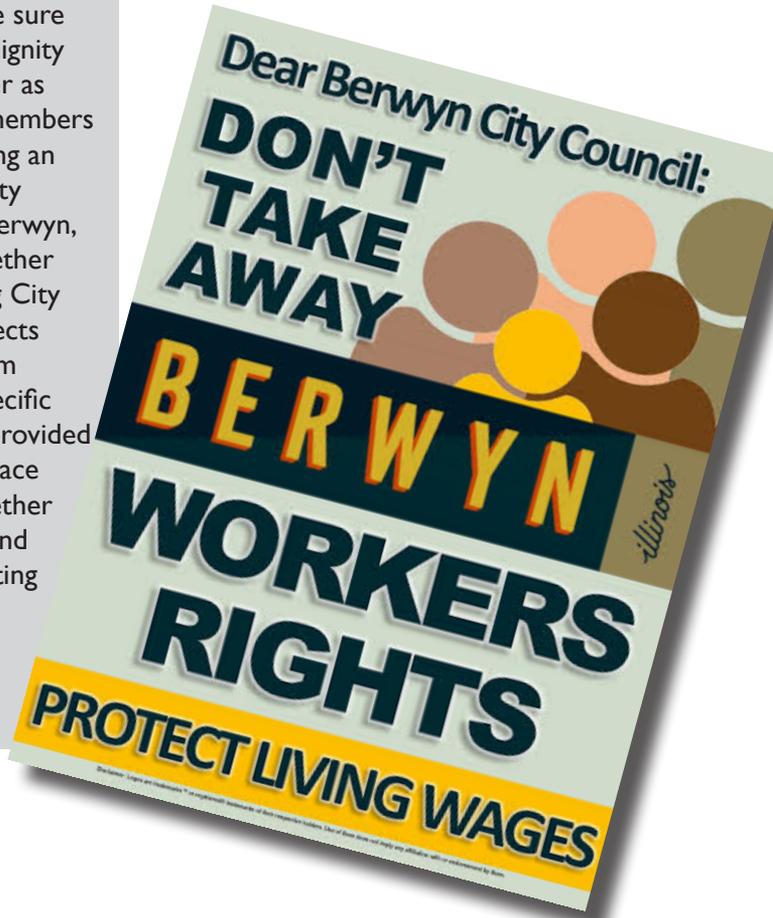
– Kristen McShane,
Summer Reading
Program, Program
Coordinator



Standing Up for Justice

I am proud to be a part of Awake in bringing the community together around two critical efforts to protect all the residents of Berwyn and to make sure we all have lives of dignity and fairness. Together as united community members we were able to bring an increase in the county minimum wage to Berwyn, and we worked together to pass a Welcoming City ordinance that protects immigrants here from injustice. Beyond specific actions, Awake has provided the much needed space to bring people together with shared values and a true sense of creating community.

- From Anna Marin, Berwyn Community Action Organizer



Staying Connected



Celia first became involved with Awake when we helped organize parents who wanted to oppose

possible school closures in the district. We developed a relationship with Celia,

and invited her to get involved in several other community projects.

As a result, she canvassed door-to-door for Fix the Funding, a community-led school referendum campaign. Celia is now Vice President of her school PTA and an active volunteer in Awake's Berwyn News initiative.

Her older daughter, Elva, served as a program aide in our Summer Reading Program, and one of her younger daughters, Joana, attended the reading program as a participant. Joana's reading level jumped four Fountas & Pinnell levels as a result of the program, and she feels much more confident as a student.

Ana, another one of Celia's daughters, is now interested in volunteering with BCA, our

community partner that works on

"I am grateful to you for inviting me into this work, so that I can live out my values."

immigration issues.

Celia said that she has always wanted to be involved more in the community, but she didn't know how to get started: "I am grateful to you for inviting me into this work, so that I can live out my values."



**NO HATE
NO FEAR**

WELCOME TO
RWYN
OF HOMES

**GRANTS
WELCOME**

RE



Beginnings

In 2013, members of Unity Lutheran Church began a conversation about community engagement. We wanted to more deeply know the people around us, and we wanted our faith to take action beyond the walls and windows of the church. We saw huge potential in Berwyn, but we also saw that community initiatives often failed due to lack of organization or relationship or resources or power.

Many of those involved in this early conversation were educators, so we were drawn to having an educational component to our work. We were influenced by the Highlander Folk School, as this group used the talents of community members to strengthen the community as a whole. We saw talent and ability in the people around us – talent not always recognized by those in which it was contained – and we wanted to tap into that and not wait for someone to come from the outside to provide for us.

In 2014, we began to offer classes to children and adults taught by community members. We charged a small tuition to cover supplies and/or the instructor's time, and a volunteer team organized and promoted the classes. The volunteer team also began to research and apply for grants, so that we could expand our work. And in January 2015, these efforts paid off when we were awarded a \$100,000 grant from our denominational headquarters, the ELCA Metropolitan Chicago Synod. This allowed us to hire a part-time director and explore and experiment with how best to live out our mission to be a catalyst for relationship, leadership, and justice.

We have learned a lot in the past 2.5 years. We more deeply know the people around us. We've seen the potential of our community blossom into new leaders, new relationships, and greater community engagement. And we want to continue this work.





INCOME & EXPENSES

Awake 2016 Income & Expenditures

Income	2016
Public Support	
Individual Giving	\$ 726.00
Grants	\$ 10,200.00
Crowdfunding	\$ 2,694.54
Denominational Support	\$ 32,000.00
Tuition	\$ 2,804.69
Special Events	\$ 107.00
Reserve from 2015 grant	\$ 8,003.68
Uncategorized Revenue	\$ 50.00
Total Income	\$ 56,585.91

Expenses	
Educational Program Subcontractors	\$ 11,372.50
Educational Program Supplies	\$ 1,355.88
Building Usage	\$ 1,790.00
Communications	
Printing	\$ 214.94
Translation services	\$ 103.33
Marketing	\$ 533.34
Website	\$ 33.17
QuickBooks	\$ 10.00
Special Events	\$ 10.00
Administrative	
Mission Director/Taxes	\$ 36,891.18
Forefront membership	\$ 125.00
Insurance	\$ 663.00
Bank Fees	\$ 97.78
Background check	\$ 354.00
Stationery - Office Supplies	\$ 19.99
Continuing Education	\$ 450.00
Community Funds	
Donation to CBS Food Pantry	\$ 72.00
Total Expense	\$ 54,096.11
Net Income - Reserve	\$ 2,489.80

