When I look back on the past year I well up with joy and emotion at the ways in which God is moving in the hearts of teens at GRIP Outreach For Youth. Through your partnership, it has truly been a year of defending the fatherless! I think of Savannah, a young lady who recounts her experience growing up, “I just don’t feel safe—in my own neighborhood. People were always getting into fights, and police officers were constantly outside my house. At times, I actually felt like I didn’t want to live life anymore. I felt alone. On top of that, I also don’t know who my biological father is, so I grew up with a lot of anger inside, which caused me to get into fights at school and talk back to my teachers.” By God’s grace, she found a safe way to have fun through SLAM—GRIP’s youth outreach connection point—and quickly discovered security with her mentor, Julie. Little did Savannah know that God was on the move in her heart from the moment she stepped through the doors of SLAM. By God’s grace, this past spring Savannah made a decision of eternal significance for herself and her future bloodline. This picture of life transformation has become familiar to me over the years as we’ve seen countless young lives walk through GRIP’s doors—but these stories never lose their power. To see a teen pass from death to life, and begin to hunger for Jesus is thrilling, and it drives our work at GRIP. In the following pages I am excited to immerse you in the Life-on-Life stories of how God is on the move in each of GRIP’s connection points (SLAM and GRIP The School) and tools and training (Streetlights Urban Multimedia Bible and The Legacy Conference). Please know this, your partnership, along with 1,363 other families this past year empowers GRIP to continue this ever important work of breaking the fatherless cycle through Christ-centered Life-on-Life relationships, and seeing teens’ lives transformed for eternity. Thank you so much!

Scott Grzesiak
Executive Director
GRIP Outreach For Youth
The moment you step foot into SLAM you can feel God on the move. Through high-energy games, hip-hop music, Bible teaching, and one-on-one mentorship, SLAM connects youth with adult mentors who build Christ-centered Life-on-Life relationships with them. An average of 101 students pour through the doors of SLAM each week, and this was a momentous year because SLAM encountered the highest consistent youth attendance ever! This is a strong indication that Life-on-Life relationships between GRIP youth and their volunteer mentors are going even deeper, both inside and outside the walls of the program.

When Jaden walked through the doors of SLAM little did he know that he would meet his mentor Gaston, who just so happened to also be a teacher at his high school. This presented Jaden and Gaston with a unique opportunity to immediately go deeper, not only at SLAM, but also in school. Before Jaden knew it he was also being drawn closer to Jesus as he started attending church with Gaston! “My favorite thing to do with Gaston is go to church. He’s taught me to follow God and trust Him,” shares Jaden.

Jaden now looks to his mentor, Gaston for guidance as he looks towards his future, how to navigate his studies at school, and how to be a man. Jaden recounts, “Gaston supports me by being hard on me and telling me the truth. If he wasn’t in my life I wouldn’t have learned how to be a man.”
“Awesome” and “Great” are just a couple words that Venita uses to describe her GRIP The School mentor, Chika. “She helped me with college applications and my personal statement,” shares Venita. However, even with her mentor’s guidance, Venita’s dream of becoming a nurse seemed too far out of reach. Venita told her mentor, “I’m not smart enough to be a nurse.” Chika quickly responded by encouraging her, “I’m a nurse. And you can do anything. If you work hard, and you apply yourself, you can do anything.” Chika says, “I had to really instill the idea that nothing is impossible.”

We’re celebrating that Venita graduated from high school, and is now attending Central State University in Ohio! Her mentor’s words continue to ring in her mind—Venita says, “[Chika] always tells me, ‘You’re strong. You’re beautiful. You can do it.’ She always encourages me.” While Venita has moved on to college, Chika knows that their relationship goes beyond distance and geography, because that’s what Life-on-Life is—it’s not a program or a class—it’s modeling what it means to be a man or woman of God as we walk life together.

Chicago Public Schools are a strategic doorway for GRIP to enter into the lives of youth in the city. GRIP The School Initiative (GTS) mobilizes volunteer mentors who serve in schools and build Life-on-Life relationships with teens outside the school. And we’ve seen ripples of God’s movement impacting the lives of youth this past year in Wells Community Academy, and Al Raby High School through GTS. Teens are connecting with volunteer mentors through debate club, boys and girls groups, chess clubs, and more. This truly was a year of growth with more students reached and more volunteers mobilized than ever before!
In an age when digital media is constantly vying for the attention of teens, Streetlights Urban Multimedia Bible makes Scripture accessible for GRIP youth in a unique way. Combining word-for-word Scripture with a dynamic hip-hop score, Streetlights is an audio, video, and curriculum resource that is engaging for young people of all literacy levels. This year, God moved through the release of the highly anticipated Streetlights Mobile App, giving youth and young adults alike direct access to Scripture on-the-go, or in small groups. Within the first month the number of app downloads doubled the industry standard. To date we’ve seen more than 34,000 app downloads! Download it for free today on iPhone and Android devices at streetlightsbible.com.

Fourteen year-old freshman Juan felt the call to minister to his classmates by starting a Christian club in his high school. “In today’s age, students are more keen to not want to hear the Word of God.” Juan shares. “At that point, I saw certain students awaken to their own brokenness and sinfulness,” says Peter. With Juan’s boldness, Peter’s support, and the Streetlights Urban Multimedia Bible, two students came to know Christ as their Savior through the Christian club. Now they have the ability grow in their walk with God by engaging Scripture on-the-go through the Streetlights mobile app!

With some support from Juan’s chemistry teacher, Peter—Streetlights became the perfect tool for students to engage Scripture. Juan reminisces, “Many of the students didn’t know how to connect to Scripture, but Streetlights would use pop culture references to help the individuals understand how Scripture connects to our world today. The Streetlights curriculum helped me lead the Christian club.”
Diagnosing the national need for urban outreach training, The Legacy Conference brings together over 2,300 young leaders from across the country to be equipped to do this work in their communities. With the explosive desire for this training, The Legacy Conference expanded beyond Chicago this year and hosted the first one-day Legacy Conference in Los Angeles, with plans to expand to Houston, Atlanta, and New York City. God also moved in far-reaching ways as we made available all of the audio from over 80 workshops available for free on the official Legacy Disciple mobile app! Now these crucial training resources can be used to mobilize leaders worldwide. Download it on your iPhone and Android mobile devices today at legacydisciple.org/app.

Drawing people back year after year, The Legacy Conference continues to create a culture of family. People come to be trained, and return to their cities being filled up and encouraged to continue the work.

Jasmine from Columbus, Ohio shares with The Legacy, “This is my fourth time coming to Legacy. One of the reasons I keep coming back is because I want to grow as a disciple. Everything that I learn, I bring it home and share with others, that’s pretty much the reason I come.”

Another young man named Jarvis has been changed by his mentor who was equipped by the Legacy Conference! “The more that people come to the Legacy Conference and learn from so many different tools, it sparks a movement of people who want to change the narrative about where they’re from,” Jarvis shares.
Life-on-Life is modeling what it means to be a man or woman of God—not just during a program or in a classroom—but while in our homes, running errands, playing ball, serving others in the community, or studying the Bible. And as we walk life together, we’re extending to our youth an invitation to know the love of God, to know their purpose and identity, and to grow as young leaders in their homes, schools, churches and communities.

Each of GRIP’s initiatives, programs and resources, has been strategically created as a means to this end: to focus on the building up of Life-on-Life relationships. A highlight from this past year was that the amount of Life-on-Life hours spent outside of GRIP’s programs continues to outweigh those spent inside the programs. This indicates an ever-increasing depth of relationship being built between the mentors and students that leads to holistic development.

For more information about each of these programs, please visit www.gripyouth.com/programs.

All metrics are for the program year ending July 31, 2017.
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

**Increased salary & related expenses due to moving to a group health insurance plan in 2014-15**

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<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</th>
<th>Equity</th>
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<td>2015-16</td>
<td>$1,318,296</td>
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<td>2016-17</td>
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**Total Expenses**

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<th>2014-15</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
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<tr>
<td>Salaries &amp; related **</td>
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<td>Contract services</td>
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<td>Materials &amp; supplies</td>
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<tr>
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**Expenses**

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<th>2015-16</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Fundraising events</td>
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<td>Insurance, staff development, &amp; donation processing</td>
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<td>Programming - materials, equipment, &amp; travel</td>
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**Liabilities**

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*Figures are reported in dollars for fiscal years ending June 30, 2015.*
“Ronica is one of my best friends. She supports me by taking her time to be there for me.”
- Markiya

“Markiya is more than the face she brings to SLAM. She desires relationship, and she’s such a beautiful person inside and out.”
- Ronica, Mentor
GROWING PARTNERSHIPS

GIVE

Monthly donors have been absolutely vital for GRIP to execute our ongoing initiatives and to plan future strategic projects. Partner with us as a monthly donor to fuel our continued growth. Your monthly donation is critical to help us break the fatherless cycle through Christ-centered, Life-on-Life relationships.

Please give your gift today and help us continue to change lives.

Online: gripyouth.com/give

Mail: GRIP Outreach For Youth, P.O. Box 10310, Chicago, IL 60610

OUR STAFF

DAVE BRECHEISEN .............................................. Program Director
JOSH BURNS .................................................. Marketing Communications Manager
ROCK CORREA .................................................. SLA Coordinator
BRAND DYE .................................................. Community Relations & Legacy Conference Director
MELISSA FEDER .................................................. Youth Leadership Coordinator
SCOTT FEDER .................................................. Executive Director
ANNIE GIVET .................................................. Administration Coordinator
LORRIE HAUSER .............................................. Stafflights Papers Manager
ANDREW LOPEZ ............................................. Stafflights Publications Manager
JAY FLABBEY .................................................. Youth Leadership Coordinator
DEAN FICK .................................................. Development Director
JAYE FOLEY .................................................. GRIP The School Coordinator
DARRIN FLETCHER .......................................... Finance Manager
JON FLETCHER .............................................. GRIP The School Program Director
RUSSELL FORD .............................................. Development Director
SHELBY FORD .................................................. Executive Director
MICHAEL Flood ............................................. Development Manager
CHRISTINE TETER ........................................... Streetlights Coordinator
KARLA THOMAS ............................................. Male Mentorship Coordinator

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PRAY

Prayer is one of the pillars of GRIP’s ministry. Thank you for praying for us! If you would like to receive weekly prayer requests via email, please sign up at gripyouth.com/pray

VOLUNTEER

You can use your skills, abilities, and talents to serve at GRIP. We have a variety of volunteer needs, including:

- Adult mentors
- Administrative support
- Web developers
- Sound technicians
- Video/photography and editing
- Graphic design
- Grantwriting
- Business and defense attorneys

Visit gripyouth.com/volunteer for a complete list of opportunities and to sign up.

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