



# Children's Defense Fund–Ohio

A strong, effective, independent voice for *all* children

## Honoring Children



Journae'  
Morris

Ebi  
Reyes Leiva

Darrius  
McLean

Emily  
Wilcox

Linda  
Ransom

### Inspirational Young Leaders: Our 2016 Beat the Odds® Scholarship Award Winners

Children's Defense Fund-Ohio is pleased to announce our five 2016 *Beat the Odds* Scholarship recipients. **Ebi Reyes Leiva** (Dayton, Stivers School for the Arts), **Darrius McLean** (Columbus, Walnut Ridge High School), **Journae' Morris** (Cleveland, Garfield Heights High School), **Linda Ransom** (Columbus, Eastmoor Academy) and **Emily Wilcox** (Ironton, Dawson Bryant High School) have demonstrated academic excellence, community leadership and desire to continue their education in the face of incredible adversity.

**On May 19<sup>th</sup> at the Westin Columbus**, CDF-OH invites you to celebrate these extraordinary young people and be inspired by their stories. Please support the [Beat the Odds scholarship program](#) and [Reserve Your Seats Today!](#)

### Young Children Hungry in Ohio

In January, CDF-OH released [Early Childhood Hunger Imperative](#), the first in a two-part series on hunger among Ohio's babies, toddlers, and preschoolers. Can you imagine your 6-year-old digging through the trash at school to find food for his 3-year-old sister? That is exactly what we discovered in researching this report, and unfortunately there are numerous children across Ohio just like them.



Please read and share this important new report and demand that community leaders at all levels do something about it. Here are a few of the key findings from the brief. Food insecurity in young children increases the odds of negative health outcomes:

- Nearly two times more likely to be in "fair or poor health;"
- Two times as likely to have behavioral problems;
- Nearly two times more likely to be at risk for developmental delays;
- Three times more likely to have stomach aches; and
- Two and a half times more likely to have headaches.

Once they reach kindergarten they are more likely to be behind in social skills and reading performance. Renuka Mayadev, our Executive Director says, "While the school-age food supports of

free and reduced price breakfast and lunch are critically important, waiting until hungry children are in school is too late.”

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### **CDF-OH Invited to White House Rural Council Convening in Washington D.C.**

At the beginning of this year, the Administration announced new efforts to combat child poverty in rural America. Because 31 percent of our children in Ohio live in rural and Appalachian Ohio, CDF-Ohio is focused on finding solutions to the challenges our children outside of cities face. CDF-Ohio was invited to a meeting of the White House Rural Council in Washington, D.C on February 22 and 23. The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, presided over the meeting, which also featured four bi-partisan governors and U.S. Secretary of Education, John King, Jr.



*From R to L: Renuka Mayadev, Executive Director, CDF-OH with Sarah Bobrow-Williams, Shirley Sherrod, and Oleta Garrett Fitzgerald of the CDF-Southern Regional Office.*

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### **Common Sense Truancy and School Discipline Legislation**

In our ongoing efforts to keep children in school, CDF-OH has continued working to implement common sense reforms on truancy and school discipline. In February, we testified in support of House Bill 410 before the Ohio House Education Committee, which is expected to approve the bill soon. One of the most exciting pieces of the bill is that schools would no longer be permitted to suspend or expel students for truancy. The Ohio Senate is still working on a similar bill, and its introduction is now expected in April.

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### **A Bi-Partisan Effort for Mothers and Babies**

The heroin crisis in Ohio has [captured headlines across the country](#). But the crisis' effect has been most breathtaking in the disturbing number of babies being born addicted to drugs in our state. In February, this crisis led Ohio House Republican and Democratic lawmakers to come together and overwhelmingly pass House Bill 325. The Bill encourages drug-addicted pregnant women to seek treatment to encourage the goal of stable mothers and unified families. Look for more on this issue and others in our upcoming report on [Ohio's Appalachian Children](#) to be released in early May.

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### **Children's Defense Fund-Ohio in the News**

#### [Letter to the Editor: End Seclusion of Students](#)

February 17, 2016, *The Columbus Dispatch*

#### [Report: Ohio's Youngest Not Getting Needed Nutrition](#)

February 1, 2016, *Public News Service – Ohio*

#### [Hungry Children in Rich America](#)

January 29, 2016, *The Huffington Post*

#### [Study: Too Many Ohio Babies are Hungry](#)

January 28, 2016, *Cincinnati Enquirer*

#### [Bill Seeks To Overhaul How Ohio Schools Deal With Truant Students](#)

January 7, 2016, *WOSU*

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