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**June 17, 2025**   **Ald. Marina Dimitrijevic**

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**The Bridge Project cash payments to Milwaukee mothers reports success one year in**

*Cash payments to Milwaukee moms improved mental health, housing stability, food security, ability to pay debt and increased access to childcare*

One year after the first payments were provided to Milwaukee mothers through [The Bridge Project](https://zilberfamilyfoundation.org/portfolio-items/the-bridge-project-milwaukee/), results show overall improvements in the health and well-being of the participants and their families. The program, which provides direct, unconditional cash assistance to 122 Milwaukee mothers, has led to measurable gains in mental health, increased access to child care, improved housing stability, greater food security and a stronger ability to pay down debt.

Following the program’s promise to Milwaukee mothers and their babies, the Common Council – led by **Alderwoman Marina Dimitrijevic** – approved $350,000 in October 2024 to expand The Bridge Project in Milwaukee. This investment, along with a private anonymous donation, extended the length of support for enrolled mothers from two years to three, and expanded the cohort from 100 to 122 moms, positioning the program’s participants for long-term success.

“The research is clear: mothers in need, need cash. Milwaukee took the lead with this investment, which helped leverage additional philanthropic support to uplift mothers and families,” said Alderwoman Dimitrijevic. “Cash payments help prevent poor outcomes by addressing root causes like income and housing instability. By continuing to invest in Milwaukee’s mothers, we can improve the city’s health outcomes.”

When first payments were disbursed in June 2024, mothers in The Bridge Project had an average income of $7,647.  ​Within six months of enrollment, half of participants were able to increase their savings in addition to achieving other milestones such as paying rent and bills on time, being able to afford baby items and childcare more easily, and maintaining or increasing their credit score, among others.

 “One year in, the impact is undeniable – direct cash assistance is working for our Milwaukee mothers,” said Lianna Bishop, executive director of the Zilber Family Foundation. “By trusting mothers and providing support without conditions, The Bridge Project has empowered families to make decisions that improve their lives. This approach is driving greater stability, reducing stress, and opening the door to long-term opportunity.”

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**The Bridge Project/ADD ONE**

On Wednesday, June 18, the Common Council’s Finance and Personnel Committee will take up a communication file from the Zilber Family Foundation providing a holistic update on the impact of The Bridge Project. The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. in Room 301-B on the third floor of City Hall, 200 E. Wells St. The meeting will be streamed live on the City Channel (channel 25 on Spectrum Cable and channel 99 on AT&T U-Verse in the City of Milwaukee) and via streaming video on the city website at city.milwaukee.gov/Channel25. The full file can be viewed [here](https://milwaukee.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7431254&GUID=556FBB34-E5E3-4787-B047-4869CC4E5A87&Options=&Search=).

To learn more about The Bridge Project, visit the [The Bridge Project website](https://bridgeproject.org/). To learn more about the Bridge Project in Milwaukee, visit the [Zilber Family Foundation website](https://zilberfamilyfoundation.org/portfolio-items/the-bridge-project-milwaukee/).

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