



bright promises
FOUNDATION

2026 Awards

Thursday, September 24

5:00–8:00 pm

Wildman BT, Chicago

brightpromises.org/2026-Awards

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Your donation is tax-deductible! Bright Promises is a 501c3 public foundation and 100% of every dollar you give goes directly to in-school and afterschool programs for 10,000+ children, youth, and their families.

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The honorees were identified through a competitive nomination process and chosen to receive this distinction by the 2026 Awards Selection Committee.

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2026 AWARDS HONOREES



Community Impact Award

Sonia Wang

Executive Director, New Community Outreach

Sonia Mi-Sun Wang is Executive Director of New Community Outreach, a Chicago-based nonprofit dedicated to the healing, reconciliation, and flourishing of Bronzeville's youth and community through restorative justice. Since assuming leadership in 2020, she has expanded the organization's youth programs, strengthened school and community partnerships, and helped deepen pathways for youth leadership, mentoring, and long-term engagement.

A lifelong educator and restorative justice practitioner, Sonia has spent her career supporting young people, families, and educators across Chicago. Known for her collaborative leadership, authentic relationship-building, and unwavering commitment to community, she continues to create spaces where young people can thrive and communities can heal and grow together.

2026 AWARDS HONOREES



Champion for
Children Award

Jacinda Bulie &
Jaquanda Sulater

*Co-Founders and Co-Executive Directors,
Kuumba Lynx*

Jacinda Bullie is a Chicago-based artist, poet, and co-founder of Kuumba Lynx, an arts-based youth development organization that uses Hip Hop pedagogy, creative expression, and cultural identity to inspire and empower young people. As Co-Executive Director, she helps lead an organization that serves more than 1,000 youth annually across Chicago through programs in poetry, theater, visual arts, music, and performance.

A respected artist and creative facilitator, Jacinda's work blends healing-centered practice with social justice and community engagement. Through her leadership, she has helped build nationally recognized spaces where young people can explore their voices, celebrate their identities, and imagine new possibilities for themselves and their communities.

Jaquanda Saulter is a poet, performer, educator, and co-founder of Kuumba Lynx. Drawing on more than two decades of experience in youth development, arts education, and community leadership, she uses Hip Hop culture and creative expression as powerful tools for learning, healing, and social transformation.

As Co-Executive Director of Kuumba Lynx, Jaquanda has helped establish a nationally recognized model for arts-based youth development that centers youth voice, cultural identity, and leadership. Her work as an artist, curator, and educator has inspired generations of young people to harness their creativity, tell their stories, and become changemakers in their communities.

2026 AWARDS HONOREES



Elevating Youth Voices Award

Isis Bazaldua

*Youth Organizing Director,
Alliance of the Southeast*

Isis Bazaldua is Youth Organizing Director at Alliance of the Southeast, where they empower young people across Chicago's Southeast Side to advocate for themselves and shape the future of their communities. A lifelong Southeast Side resident, Isis develops youth-led campaigns, leadership programs, and civic engagement initiatives that equip young people with the tools to organize, lead, and create change.

Beyond their work at ASE, Isis co-founded Bridges//Puentes Justice Collective, a grassroots initiative focused on community care, art activism, and youth engagement. Their leadership has advanced environmental justice, LGBTQ+ advocacy, and neighborhood-based organizing, helping ensure young people are recognized not only as participants in change, but as leaders, storytellers, and visionaries.



FOR CREATING THE
SPARK THAT
EMPOWERS CHILDREN
TO REACH THEIR FULL
PROMISE AND POTENTIAL

— ◆ —
**CONGRATULATIONS
2026 AWARD WINNERS**

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD:

SONIA MI-SUN WANG

CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN AWARD:

JACQUANDA MICHELLE SAULTER

CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN AWARD:

JACINDA BULLIE

ELEVATING YOUTH VOICES AWARD:

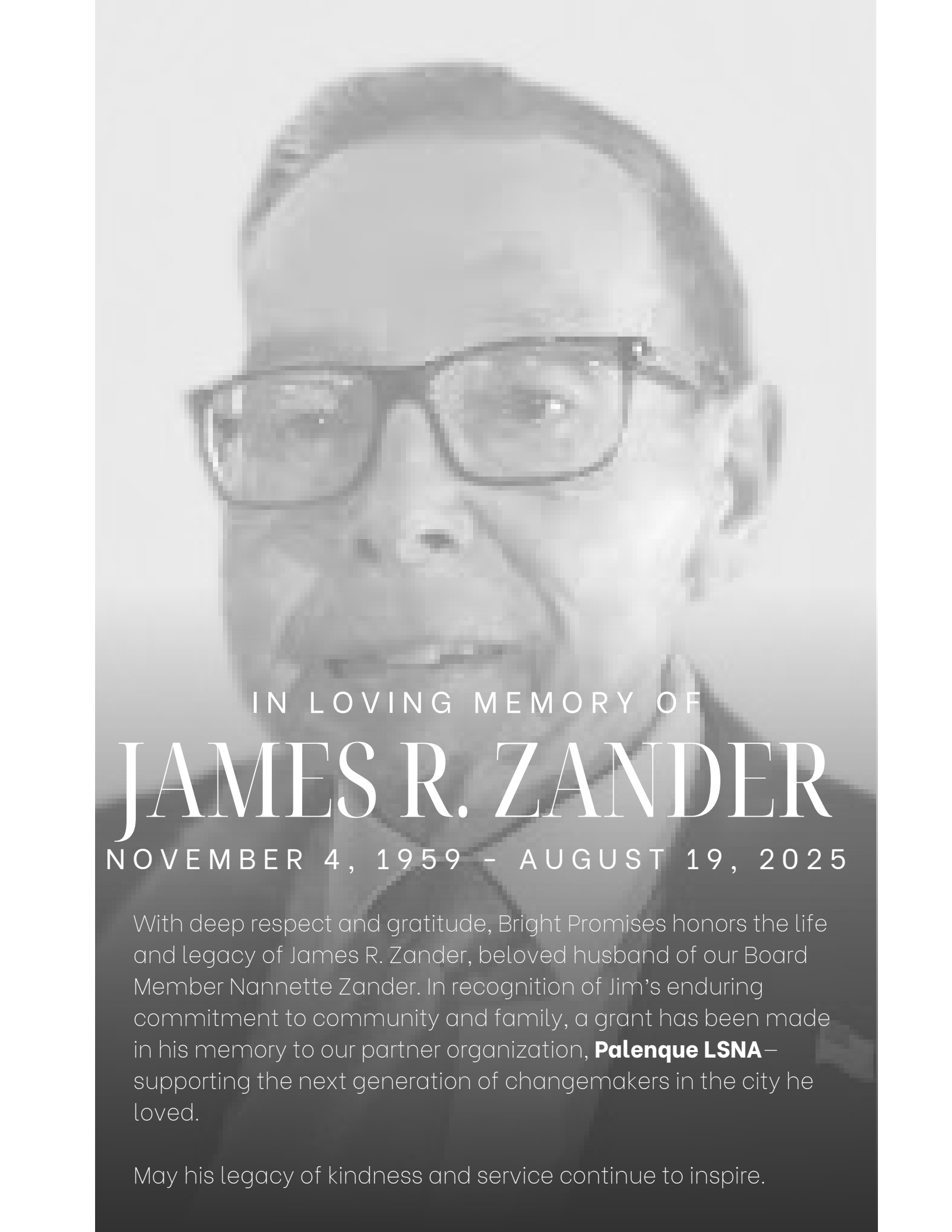
ISIS BAZALDUA

ELEVATING YOUTH VOICES AWARD:

ISIS BAZALDUA



**TOGETHER
WE
NOURISH
POTENTIAL**



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

JAMES R. ZANDER

NOVEMBER 4, 1959 – AUGUST 19, 2025

With deep respect and gratitude, Bright Promises honors the life and legacy of James R. Zander, beloved husband of our Board Member Nannette Zander. In recognition of Jim's enduring commitment to community and family, a grant has been made in his memory to our partner organization, **Palenque LSNA** – supporting the next generation of changemakers in the city he loved.

May his legacy of kindness and service continue to inspire.

Invested in our community

William Blair is proud to support Bright Promises Foundation. By helping to identify, fund, and share solutions to underrecognized needs of children and youth most adversely impacted by inequity, Bright Promises Foundation is an inspiration to us all.

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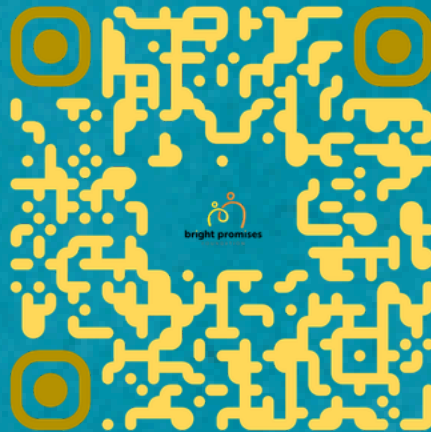




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HAS EMPOWERED CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND
FAMILIES TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL..**

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