



# PRESCHOOL ADVANTAGE

## NEWSLETTER

Funding early education for local children

### INCREASING OUR IMPACT WITH A LONGER SCHOOL DAY

Until now, Preschool Advantage has funded half-day preschool tuition for three- and four-year-old children whose families cannot afford the high cost. In 2022, over 40% of new applicants to our program indicated that they would enroll their children in full-day preschool if this were an option. Many factors have led to this growing demand including parents' desire to prepare their children for a successful transition to full-day kindergarten, their urgent financial need to work outside the home, and the widely accepted wisdom from educational experts and parents alike that when it comes to high-quality early education; more of a good thing truly is more!

While we are not making a program-wide switch to full-day funding, we are aware that a steadily growing portion of our students would benefit from a longer school day. Preschool Advantage has launched a pilot program funding full-day preschool (up to seven hours) for 12 four-year-olds who are in their second year of funding with us, and the Board has committed to expanding the pilot to cover up to 25 children in the 2023-2024 school year.

Through recent conversations with parents and school directors, we have already begun to evaluate the impact of full-day funding on students in the pilot program. Some parents have described how much their children's English has improved thanks to the extra hours spent among peers and teachers. Others have told us they have new or increased opportunities for paid work now that their children can spend more time at school. While each family is having a unique experience in the program, all agreed with the mom who simply said, "the extra funding from Preschool Advantage has been a blessing."

Over the next several months we will continue to gather data and use our findings to evaluate the benefits of full-day funding as well as the long-term sustainability of this funding model. We already know one thing for sure: the children in our program will only be three- and four-years-old once. Every investment we can make in their development now will help them become the best version of their unique and wonderful selves. And so we say, "forward!"

### WELCOME, DEANNA!

Meet Deanna McBoyle, PA's new part-time bookkeeper. Deanna is a certified public accountant who comes to us after a 16-year career in finance with PwC and IBM. In addition to keeping our financial records in great shape, Deanna will also be lending her talents and enthusiasm at Preschool Advantage events. We are thrilled to welcome Deanna to the team!



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Like many Preschool Advantage volunteers, Nancy Hults-Rubin first heard about the organization through a friend. She appreciates the profound impact preschool education has on young learners and vividly recalls watching her own sons, Christopher and Tyler, blossom during their years at Joyful Noise Nursery School in Morris Plains, one of our longtime partner preschools. Nancy has contributed to our work in so many ways during the past two years. She is a member of both the Communications & Outreach and Golf Committees and has twice chaired the Décor Committee for our annual benefit, Turning Leaves.

Whether Nancy is out in the community spreading the word about Preschool Advantage or creating beautiful spaces for our events, you will find her with a bright smile and an enthusiastic willingness to do more. **“Volunteering for Preschool Advantage is a joyful experience. You are welcome at any level of commitment from the smallest to the greatest. Your gift of time is always met with a sincere ‘Thank you’ from the board and staff.”** Thank you, Nancy, for your grace, good humor, and your willingness to lend a hand!



*Nancy attending Morristown Festival on the Green, 2021*



*Nancy's inspired vision for a child-themed centerpiece at Turning Leaves, 2022*

## ANNUAL PRESCHOOL DIRECTORS' LUNCHEON



*From left to right Ray Hawkins, Gail Reuther, Judy Pierce, Nancy Bangiola, Lauren Diemar, and Jill Lasser*

On December 1st, Preschool Advantage volunteers and staff joined directors from our 27 partner preschools at Union Hill Church Preschool in Denville for the Directors' Luncheon, a tradition we sorely missed during the Covid years. The event provided a wonderful opportunity for directors to have meaningful discussions with us and each other about the challenges and successes posed by Covid, staff shortages, public preschool expansion, innovations in curriculum, parent engagement and many other important topics.

Preschool Advantage Executive Director, Nancy Bangiola, brought the group up to speed about the details of PA's full-day pilot program. Gail Reuther, Preschool Advantage trustee and executive director of Mt. Olive Child Care & Learning Center, shared her perspective on the challenges she has seen in her own school since the pandemic. As always, Gail brought her sense of humor and her "rose colored glasses" to remind us that while challenges are inevitable, the opportunity to be a part of a young child's growth is truly a special honor.

We are thankful to Jill Head and her staff at Union Hill Church Preschool for their hospitality, to our Preschool Advantage School Committee for organizing the event, and to all our partners in attendance whose input is so valuable to our work.



*Gail Reuther, director of Mt Olive Child Care & Learning Center*

## THE NEXT GENERATION



*From left to right Ryann, Teagan, and Addison, daughters of Communications, Outreach and Events Manager, Colleen Carey*

Preschool Advantage relies on a wonderful network of dedicated volunteers to serve on committees, help with events, and reach our goal of funding tuition for 100 children each year. Not only is their passion inspiring, but it also seems to be hereditary! Children of trustees, volunteers, and staff made significant contributions this year, assisting us with outreach, helping with office tasks, and sharing their very own talents, just like their parents.



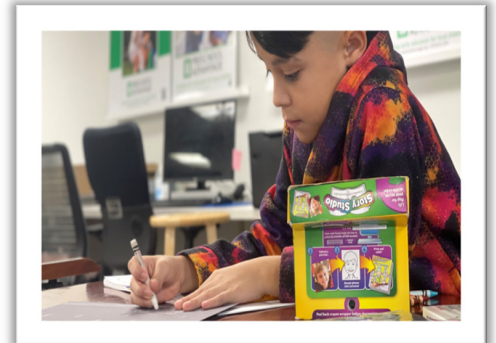
*Original artwork created by Jaycob, featured at our Turning Leaves benefit*



*Oliver, son of Leslie Senke, Child Committee co-chair*



*Molly, daughter of Trustee, Carolyn Simpson*



*Jaycob, son of Administration and Program Assistant, Wendy Anell*

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

For the second consecutive year, Preschool Advantage attended Table of Hope's Thanksgiving Food Distribution at County College of Morris. This amazing outreach event provided holiday meals with all the trimmings to over 600 local families. Preschool Advantage is grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such wonderful community partners.



*Colleen Carey with Dawn Marie Graham-King from Table of Hope*

## PRESCHOOL ADVANTAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Ray Hawkins**  
President

**Matt Mirett**  
Vice President

**Bette Simmons**  
Vice President

**Kyle Colwell**  
Treasurer

**Gail Reuther**  
Secretary

**Lauren Diemar**  
St. John on the Mountain  
Nursery School

**Denise Lanza**  
Morris County Park Commission

**Joshua Mackoff**  
Real Estate Appraiser

**Ginger Michaels**  
Licensed Clinical  
Social Worker

**Judith Pierce**  
Kindergarten Teacher (retired)

**Maria Vinci Savettiere**  
Deirdre's House

**Andrew Schneider**  
The Masters School

**Carolyn Simpson**  
Community Volunteer

**Pam Sullivan**  
Good Grief

**FOUNDERS**  
Jill Lasser  
Stuart Lasser

**STAFF**  
**Nancy M. Bangiola, Esq.**  
Executive Director

**Jessie Lubow**  
Director of Development

**Colleen Carey**  
Manager of Communications,  
Outreach & Events

**Wendy Anell**  
Administrative & Program  
Assistant

## A DECADE OF SERVICE

Adrienne Kirby concluded ten years of board service in December. Kirby began her volunteer work with Preschool Advantage (then known as Project Acorn) in 2008, drawn to its mission to serve an overlooked segment of the population, children in need of a quality preschool education. "Helping families afford preschool is truly making an investment in our community" says Kirby. During December's board meeting, fellow trustee Lauren Diemar described Kirby's passion and dedication to the organization as contagious. "Her enthusiasm has attracted so many wonderful volunteers and donors to Preschool Advantage – people who have provided us with a wide range of perspectives and talents." What a true community builder!

Getting to know the families we serve is especially meaningful to Kirby. She is inspired by parents' commitment to providing high-quality education for their children despite the obstacles they face. While Kirby's time on the board has come to an end, we are grateful that this is not "farewell." She will continue to share her insights and talents as a volunteer on the Child Placement Committee.



*Adrienne Kirby and Nancy Bangiola receive a holiday wreath donated by the Garden Club of Morristown*

**We are grateful to the donors and volunteers who make our work possible.  
We could not do it without you!**



### BEAUTIFUL NEW VENUE!

*27th Annual Golf Invitational*  
*Monday, June 26, 2023*  
*Hamilton Farm Golf Club*

Join us for a day of camaraderie and friendly competition on the storied Highlands Course at Hamilton Farm Golf Club, situated on an elegant and historic Gladstone, NJ estate.

**For sponsorship opportunities**

**Call 973-532-2501**

*Turning Leaves*

**SAVE the DATE**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18,  
2023**

**6:00 PM**

**BROOKLAKE COUNTRY CLUB**



**PRESCHOOL  
ADVANTAGE**

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