



PRESCHOOL ADVANTAGE

Funding early education for local children

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Preschool Advantage Annual Gala Funds Tuition for 45 Children

MORRISTOWN, NJ, November 5, 2024 – Preschool Advantage, a Morristown-based non-profit organization, held its 2024 annual Turning Leaves benefit at Brooklake Country Club in Florham Park on October 16th. The evening, led by emcee, Pat Tully, was an amazing testament to the life changing benefits of preschool. Proceeds from the evening will fund preschool tuition for 45 local students next year.

In addition to being the organization's largest annual fundraiser, Turning Leaves is also an opportunity to honor those individuals and organizations who have made transformative contributions to Preschool Advantage. This year's community honorees were Drs. Mital and David Cohen of Basking Ridge. Committed to transforming possibility into opportunity, this couple hosted a holiday party, with proceeds benefitting Preschool Advantage. Their passion, their creativity, and their desire to help others repeated the very same mission of founders, Jill Lasser and Stuart Lasser. Mital Patel-Cohen shared, "My parents always believed education was the most valuable possession one could gift to others. It is a message that has stayed with me, and I have always wanted to do more to help foster equitable distribution."

Preschool Advantage also gave special recognition to a long-time partner school, The Presbyterian Church Nursery School in Morristown. Sharing her thoughts about the importance of early education, PCNS Director, Jeanne Mueller, said, "Education is one of those things that requires strong partnerships to be impactful, meaningful, and successful."

Serving as guest emcee, Pat Tully, enthusiastically inspired and challenged the attendees in support of this important cause. The event raised over \$265,000 to fund tuition for children in our community. Sponsors included Carol & Ray Hawkins, Elizabeth & Chris Cox, LaBar Golf Renovations, and other community-minded benefactors. Preschool Advantage Program and Administrative Assistant, Wendy Anell, attended the evening as both guest speaker and employee of the organization. Sharing her own journey in securing high-quality preschool

education for her two children, she expressed her gratitude to attendees and supporters, "From my family and the other Preschool Advantage families who benefit from this tuition assistance, I say 'Thank you.' Thank you for choosing to make a difference in the lives of children right here in your own community. Thank you for believing in a mission that changes life trajectories, a mission that has ripple effects on families, a mission that opens the doors of preschool and unlock the possibilities beyond."

Dr Bette Simmons, Vice President of the Board at Preschool Advantage affectionately shared that "Turning Leaves 2024 was a truly memorable event as over 200 people showed their appreciation of and support for our goal of making a quality preschool education experience possible for more children. The event was wonderfully organized, the messages from one of our preschool partners, from two amazing donors, and from our own Wendy Anell embodied the reasons we do what we do, and the energy of giving in support of our work that was inspired by Pat Tully definitely resulted in an absolutely phenomenal event. We will be able to continue making a meaningful difference in the lives of families and their children with the promise of quality early education thanks to this impactful event."

About Preschool Advantage:

Preschool Advantage funds preschool tuition for three- and four-year-old children at 28 high-quality partner preschools in Morris and Somerset Counties. Its mission is to give children a fair chance to succeed in life by opening the doors of preschool and unlocking the possibilities beyond.

The organization is supported by individual donors, and by grants from private foundations and businesses. Since its inception in 1995, Preschool Advantage has funded preschool tuition for more than 1,600 local children. To learn more about Preschool Advantage, call (973) 532- 2501 or visit www.preschooladvantage.org.

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