

## YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE ON #GIVINGTUESDAY

Thanks to you, we raised nearly **\$54,000** on Giving Tuesday with more donors and donations than ever before. The funds are for **child care scholarships**, but your generosity really buys possibility and peace of mind for 10 families.

Special thanks to the Kreitman Family Charitable Trust, a Donor Advised Fund of The U.S. Charitable Gift Trust, for their leadership gift; TD Bank for sponsoring our annual social media challenge; and to our Board of Directors for matching donations.

### UPDATE: The Fight for Child Care Funding in 2018

Child care funding, including the \$1 million added last year, is included in the budget proposed by County Executive Rob Astorino – that's the **good news**. Parents receiving a child care subsidy are still paying too much for their "share" however, and there's no apparent plan to increase reimbursements to child care/after school programs that contract with DSS – that's the **bad news**. We first called for an increase in reimbursement rates in 2014. We saw then that reimbursement rates were well below actual costs, and also less than what Westchester is permitted to pay by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the source of most of the child care subsidy funding. That gap has only grown larger. The quality in child care/after school programs begins and ends with the staff. In our recent survey we found the average Westchester child care wage to be \$18.50 an hour, only slightly more than the \$16.15 manicurists earn on average in the U.S. So the Council's principal budget ask this year is to raise DSS subsidy reimbursement rates to give a boost to the professionals educating and caring for our youngest learners.

**Want to add your voice to our advocacy efforts?**  
Email Kathy Halas at [kathyh@cccwny.org](mailto:kathyh@cccwny.org).

### Raising Our Voices



*Advocacy Committee, L to R: Jamie Hamlin, Juliana Leshi, Michelle Guena, Sandra Arasim, Jason Thomas, Jury Martinez. Not pictured: Janelle Rodriguez and Kathy Halas*

Our advocacy for child care and after school funding is most effective when parents speak up directly about their needs. To encourage more parents to get involved, we've taken our advocacy show on the road, visiting 21 child care/after school providers and helping parents make calls on the spot. The reception has been terrific and we look forward to meeting more parents as we continue our **"Advocacy on the Go"** visits. To support this new effort, a Council Advocacy Committee came together under the leadership of Sandi Arasim. Committee members Michelle Guena, Juliana Leshi, Jury Martinez, Jamie Russell, Kathy Halas, Janelle Rodriguez and Jason Thomas, along with other Council staff and Board members, made the advocacy visits all over the county.

#### THANK YOU to these participating programs:

The Country Childrens Center (3 Locations)  
Early Einstein Learning Center  
Easterseals Project Explore  
Greyston Early Learning Center  
Happy Corner Child Care  
Happy Tots Child Care  
Harrison Children's Center  
Learning Garden Child Care Center  
Little Angels Child Development  
Mt. Kisco Child Care Center  
New Rochelle Day Nursery  
Ossining Children's Center (3 Locations)  
St. Ann's Peas & Karrots Pre-School and Child Care  
Wiggles & Giggles Day Care  
YCOP of Mt. Vernon  
Young Wonders  
YWCA of White Plains

*At the first County Budget hearing in November, Greyston Early Learning Center Director Carol Robinson and Assistant Director Eric Watkins accompanied concerned parents who spoke about the progress their children have made while at the center (shown here with CCCW Executive Director Kathy Halas).*



## Congratulations, Kathy Halas!

Kathy with Sonia Marshall-Brown, Executive Director of **It Takes A Village To Educate A Child**, at the “Dancing With Our Stars” Gala where Kathy was honored.

*Photo by Jen Parente*



Child Care Council Executive Director Kathy Halas was recognized as one of **New York Nonprofit Media's 50** most prominent and accomplished nonprofit leaders “who continue to make a positive impact on New York through their achievements, leadership abilities, philanthropic efforts, and dedication to the betterment of the state.”



## Promoting Leadership

For the second year in a row, we've awarded a scholarship for a member of the child care community to participate in Leadership Westchester (LW).

**Carmelina Myers**, Director of Educational Programs at The Country Childrens Center in Katonah, is the recipient of the Council's 2017 Cathryn A. Riley Leadership Fund Scholarship and has been accepted into the LW Class of 2018. This past June, we celebrated the graduation of our first recipient, Susan Zucker, Director of the Virginia Marx Children's Center.

“We agreed Leadership Westchester could prepare our early care and education leaders for more visible

and significant public roles, and offer us a way to share the impact of our critical work with emerging leaders from all over the county,” said Kathy Halas.



*Jennifer Gruenberg, Kathy Halas, scholarship recipient Susan Zucker and LW facilitator David Severance at the LW graduation.*

*Carmelina Myers, 2017 scholarship recipient.*



## Save the Dates

Annual Awards Breakfast: **May 18, 2018**

50th Anniversary Celebration: **October 18, 2018**



## Dining for Dollars

Thank you to everyone who came to **Sam's of Gedney Way** to dine for a cause, to owners Peter and Karen Herrero for hosting, and to Andrew Castellano of Westchester Talk Radio for helping us spread the word about the Council and our Early Opportunity Scholarship Fund. ▼

## Supporting Child Care Quality ▲

We hosted our annual Infant Toddler Conference, “**Celebrating Infants and Toddlers with Respect,**” and had a huge turnout of child care professionals who left feeling inspired and eager to apply what they learned.

