



CHILD CARE RESOURCES OF ROCKLAND, INC

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CHILD CARE RESOURCES OF ROCKLAND, INC. ANNOUNCES THE 28TH ANNUAL CHILDREN'S CHAMPIONS AWARDS CELEBRATION AND DINNER

April is the “Month of the Young Child,” and in celebration, Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc. (CCRR) proudly recognizes those who have demonstrated a commitment to improving the lives of young children, annually bestowing its Children’s Champions Awards. This year’s celebration will take place Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at the Nyack Seaport, 21 Burd St, Nyack, NY 10960. Ceremony will begin at 5:45 p.m.; Dinner and Dancing commences at 7:00 p.m. Our 2020 recipients are:

- ❖ **PHYLLIS HELBRAUN AWARD:** *Gail Golden, Volunteer, Rockland Immigration Coalition*
- ❖ **IT TAKES A COMMUNITY AWARD:** *Patricia Soriano Guzman, IBCLC, PMH-C, BSBA, Montefiore Nyack Hospital Prenatal Center*
- ❖ **THE DYNAMIC GROUP AWARD:** *Peace Through Play Nursery School Staff*
- ❖ **CHAMPION IN THE TRENCHES AWARD:** *Denise Forsberg, Owner, Time In Child Care*
- ❖ **ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD:** *Noelia O’Leary, Owner, Nelly’s Nest*

CCRR’s Children’s Champions Celebration is a time to honor the awardees and to acknowledge all those working in the early childhood education field.

“In recognizing the dedication and the accomplishments of our partners and providers, we acknowledge their impact on our children, their families, and their future,” said CCRR Executive Director Vicki Caramante. “The dedicated professionals being honored this year have and will continue to mold, shape and impact the lives of generations of children, providing them with a strong foundation of love, nurturing, and learning.”

For 46 years, CCRR has been the bridge between parents, child care providers, community leaders, and policymakers. The agency gives free child care referrals to parents, provides support, training, and professional development to child care providers, and advocates for equitable access to affordable, quality child care. Investing in high-quality programs improves outcomes for children and families, and a high-quality child care program requires properly trained professionals who are paid appropriate salaries. We work with a multitude of dedicated child care providers, like Rookie of the Year awardee Noelia O’Leary. Noelia understands her important role and is currently enrolled in a Child Development Associate program so that she can best meet the developmental, emotional, and educational needs of the children in her care.

Additional information about the recipients is provided on the next page.

2020 Children's Champions Awardees

Phyllis Helbraun Award*: Gail Golden, Volunteer, Rockland Immigration Coalition In 1999, while working at Volunteer Counseling Services (VCS), Gail co-founded the Rockland Immigration Coalition (RIC) to assist immigrants. Gail understood the size of this task and brought a collaborative model to life. Meeting monthly at lunchtime, the coalition pools members' knowledge of various agencies and organizations to improve the lives of immigrant families in areas such as education, health, and legal services. Gail also developed the Families in Need of Support counseling program for students at Spring Valley HS, a program supporting 15 youth annually (roughly 30 to 40 percent of whom have been immigrants). Areas addressed include sexual and/or migration trauma, domestic violence, suicide, homelessness, and financial instability. Gail continued to lead RIC and its many initiatives for 20 years, relinquishing her leadership position in 2019. In addition, as Clinical Director of VCS for over 40 years, Gail was heavily involved in many projects and treatment programs involving children.

It Takes a Community Award: Patricia Soriano Guzman, IBCLC, PMH-C, BSBA, Montefiore Nyack Prenatal Center Patti has supported breastfeeding mothers as a volunteer La Leche League Group Leader for many years (2013-2019). She also volunteered at the Prenatal Center (PNC) and, upon becoming an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC), joined the staff in 2017. Additionally, as lead planner and facilitator of the New Moms Circle Support Group, Patti has developed NMC meetings into its existing format. She has used this gathering of new mothers and mothers-to-be as an opportunity to promote the Nyack Basics by featuring talented early childhood experts to share valuable parenting skills inspired by the Five Basics Principles. Most recently, Patti became a Certified Perinatal Mental Health Professional to further support new families during a time of significant life transitions.

Dynamic Group Award: Peace Through Play Nursery School Staff (Holly Landi, Holly Brooks, Sarah Omer, Anna Retusch, Jessica Dauksza, Arie Kandel, and Hannah Suggs) This cohesive team of teachers is caring, creative, and truly embodies the philosophy of Peace Education. Each teacher takes the time to help bring concepts of love and understanding to the children. This year, they introduced new concepts around acceptance and conflict resolution. They work professionally and respectfully with each other, the children, and the children's families. They understand the importance of maintaining a well-run educational environment, adhering to all regulations and health and safety protocols. This team goes above and beyond; they are constantly on the move, making sure the children are engaged in fun activities, are safe, and most important, learning through play.

Champion in the Trenches: Denise Forsberg, Owner: Time In Child Care, Inc. Denise exemplifies commitment, perseverance and dedication. Twelve years ago, when she decided to venture into her own business as a child care provider, she gratefully accepted the guidance provided by CCRR staff. With all that is entailed in owning and operating this business, Denise's ability to always make the children her top priority is a testament to her exceptional work ethic and love of teaching. Availing herself of a variety of professional development opportunities (coupled with three Masters in Education) has played a pivotal role in assisting Denise in providing young children with a solid foundation for educational excellence. Denise's ability to understand the needs of each child and how to foster their growth is paramount.

Rookie of the Year Award: Noelia O'Leary, Owner: Nelly's Nest Noelia is an innovative thinker, always striving to further her knowledge and improve the quality of her child care program. She is deeply committed to the field of early childhood and to making a positive impact on the lives of the children in her care. Noelia remains current on the latest child development research and has been observed by several CCRR staff as having a strong working knowledge of early childhood development. Noelia is a CACFP provider, MAT trained, and currently enrolled in the Child Development Associate program. Her program recently received the NYS Breastfeeding Friendly designation.

* Phyllis Helbraun, a lifelong champion of issues affecting women, children, and families, founded the *Day Care and Child Development Council of Rockland* in 1974. The agency's name was changed to *Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc.* in 1997.