Ossining Children's Center



Letters from Our Leadership



NOVEMBER 2015





Dear Friends.

We introduce this booklet with a few words of sincere thanksgiving.

Over the years, the Ossining Children's Center has enjoyed an amazing level of support from its friends: donors, volunteers, advocates, community organizations, houses of worship, public officials, parents and staff.

As we celebrate our 120th anniversary, the Board of Directors wishes to take this opportunity to celebrate a special category of supporter: those individuals who contribute year after year after year. These Sustaining Donors provide the crucial bedrock of support that helps stabilize the Center's annual finances and sustains our operations.

When experts in early childhood education, youth programs, nonprofit management, philanthropy or child care visit the Center, they are always impressed at the breadth and depth of the support that the Center receives from the community. The loyalty of our Sustaining Donors stands out as particularly remarkable.

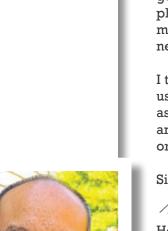
WE CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH!

Sincerely yours,

Joan McGinty **Co-President**

John Chow **Co-President**











Dear Friends.

Ossining Children's Center has had much to celebrate in its 120-year history, and we have been doing just that during much of this anniversary year. Although it's great to celebrate our history, we also need to be looking to the future – a future that will be challenging for the nonprofit sector, in general, and the childcare community, in particular.

The Ossining Children's Center has pioneered higher standards in child care – both by setting an example ourselves, and by advocating for higher standards at the state and national levels. We have been very successful in this advocacy.

Research that reaffirms the efficacy of high quality early child care has received unprecedented coverage in the media. Yet, at the same time, government funding for our work continues to dwindle and, as a result, philanthropic support has become even more essential to our ability to maintain the high quality program that our children and their families need and deserve.

I take this opportunity to thank those donors who have so loyally helped us sustain Ossining Children's Center during the 30 years I have served as its Executive Director. I hope you will continue to do so and that you and other emerging supporters and advocates will sustain this wonderful organization in the years and decades ahead.

Sincerely yours,



Ossining Children's Center

OCC ranks among the top child care centers in New York State, with a Four Star "QUALITY STARS NY" child care and improvement rating.

It all started 120 years ago. The Ossining Children's Center was founded by the women's association of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in 1895, as the "Christ Child Day Nursery and Bethany Home." At that time, Ossining had a number of widowed immigrant women who wanted to work to support their families, but there was no such thing as "day care." Visionary women created one of the first day care centers in the country. From the outset, under the direction of an educationcredentialed headmistress, the care provided was educational rather than custodial in nature. Since its founding, the Center has emphasized the education of the whole child: emotional, social, physical, and intellectual being.

When the Center first opened, care was offered for free. Nobody came. Inquiries revealed that poor working women did not want a handout.



When the Board charged a small fee, the center quickly filled. Still today, everyone pays something for their child care.

In 1906, the center became independent of St. Paul's Church and was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization, governed

by a board of 15 women. Over time, as women of every economic status joined the workforce, Ossining Children's Center's enrollment began to reflect the socio-economic diversity of the town. During World War II, for example, many Ossining women joined the war effort, working jobs vacated by men serving in the military. The government instituted a universal child care program at that time to make it feasible for mothers to join the workforce, so the Center was re-named "Ossining Children's Center" to qualify for government funding. In fact, the Center's mission had always been non-sectarian.

In the 1960s, the Center became involved in advocacy for working families. The Center's Executive Director at the time, Sally Ziegler,

led the formation of a Westchester Countywide day care directors' association, now the Child Care Council of Westchester, strong advocates for public policy supporting child care. Since Sally Ziegler's time, the Center has played a leadership role in advocacy for children and working parents.



Currently, OCC also provides two sections of the Ossining Schools' Pre-Kindergarten program in OCC's home-like setting. The OCC Pre-K classes mirror the public school curriculum, are taught by certified teachers, and meet the New York State Common Core Standards.

In Memoriam: John P. Curran



The Ossining Children's Center said good-bye in August to one of its most generous champions. John Curran and his wife, Connie, were immersed in community service, both locally and in New York City. They established the John P. and Constance A. Curran

Foundation to support many charitable causes. John is sorely missed by the Ossining -Briarcliff community.

1. Barbara Cochran (*Since 1998*), "Why do I support the Ossining Children's Center? It's a no-brainer! It's children, it's education and it's local."

2. Stacey Winnick Pushkin (*Since 2005*), "I have run a toy drive for OCC for 10 years. My gift is the pure joy on the face of every child."

3. Peter and Mary Gallagher (*Since 1993*), "We believe that the excellent early childhood care OCC provides is essential to the healthy growth and development of children."

4. Carolyn Black and Arthur Hightower (*Since 2000*), "OCC is one of the best places for children to learn and grow. If our grandchildren lived in the area, they would be at OCC!"

5. Joan and Keith Austin (*Since 1977*), "We are impressed with the educational program. The children are prepared to succeed in school, and OCC helps parents who may not earn enough now to afford full tuition, but are working hard to make a better life for their families."

A FEW OF OCC'S SUSTAINING DONORS



The Children's Center's Sustaining Supporters

OSSINING CHILDREN'S CENTER is extremely grateful to those loyal donors whose gifts, year after year, help the Center educate our children.

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