

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue sleeveless top and white pants, sitting on a blue cushion. She is smiling warmly. Two young boys are hugging her from behind. The boy on the left has dark skin and short hair, wearing a grey t-shirt. The boy on the right has light skin and dark hair, also wearing a grey t-shirt. They are all sitting on a blue cushion against a light-colored wall.

# GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL

2016 - 2017  
ANNUAL REPORT

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We are defined by a commitment to our students,  
and inspired by their determination.

Each of them is remarkable.

Learning and growing in a secure and nurturing environment,  
they develop the skills necessary to overcome challenges.  
They learn from us, but we also learn from them.

Listening and observing, encouraging and teaching,  
we work closely with their families to instill self-confidence  
and build a strong foundation for lifelong independence.  
We view their future with unwavering optimism.

---

**WE ARE THE GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL.  
UNCOVERING THE SPECIALNESS IN EVERY CHILD™**



[www.gillenbrewer.com](http://www.gillenbrewer.com)

Dear Gillen Brewer Community,

We are pleased to share with you our 2016-2017 Annual Report of donors. In the 2016-2017 year, we raised \$1.95M to support our school. We are dependent on the generous gifts of the Gillen Brewer community in order to operate our program, and are fortunate to receive support from current parents and caregivers, staff, alumni parents, grandparents, trustees, friends, and organizations. Thank you to everyone who supported us last year. The success of Gillen Brewer is due to strong leadership by the Board of Trustees, Head of School, staff, and the partnerships we have with our families.



As we look to the future, we also reflect on our history. In 1992, the Gillen Brewer School opened its doors to serve preschool children with special needs. Over the course of 25 years, Gillen Brewer has grown to serving 88 preschool and school-age students ages 2.8-10 years old. Gillen Brewer has been proud to offer a year-round, comprehensive academic and therapeutic program that has impacted thousands of lives.

While we celebrate our 25th anniversary, we also chart our course for the 2017-2018 year and beyond. We continue to meet the goals set forth in our strategic plan while optimistically looking toward a future of growth and sustainability. We thank you for being our partners and supporting us generously as we continue uncovering the specialness in every child.

Sincerely,

Donna Kennedy  
Head of School

Kathryn Tyree  
Board Chair and Alumni Parent



*“From the beginning, the mission of The Gillen Brewer School was simple—to make a difference in the lives of children. Our dream was to build a school that would be an educational haven for parents and families. Our success in fulfilling this dream has surpassed all expectations. As we celebrate our twenty-fifth anniversary, our thriving community continues to embody the founding mission, while uncovering the specialness in every child.”*



LAURA BILICIC  
Co-Founder, The Gillen Brewer School

## OUR HISTORY



The Gillen Brewer School was founded in 1992 by Laura Bilicic and Laurie Dubos as a school for children with significant learning challenges.

The Gillen Brewer School is celebrating 25 years! The school was founded in 1992 by Laura Bilicic and Laurie Dubos as a school for children with significant learning challenges. As special education teachers, they saw the overwhelming need for a school in New York City where families with children who have significant special needs would be welcomed, educated, and supported. The founders believed that a knowledgeable and informed family was invaluable to each child's overall education. To underscore the importance of family, the school was named after the founders' grandmothers, Mattie Gillen and Virginia Brewer. The school opened in 1992 with one student and added classes until it reached 48 students from Pre-K through second grade. Forty-eight students were housed in what had once been the servants' quarters of a stately mansion on Park Avenue. In August 2005, the school moved to its current location at 410 East 92nd Street. The school currently has 88 students.



“The school is helping our son realize the fullest and richest versions of his own self; this realization of inner potential can be achieved only by a community that demonstrates remarkable patience, extra support and scaffolding, and a deep appreciation for each child’s individual strengths and weaknesses.”

PARENT



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES, BOARD OF ADVISORS, ADMINISTRATION

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kathryn George Tyree, *Chair*  
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Laura Bilicic, *Secretary*  
Neal Meltzer  
Beth Saunders  
James Shipp  
Angela Howard Stone

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Richard Segal  
Paul Tagliabue  
John L. Vogelstein

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Donna Kennedy, *Head of School*  
Dr. Cathy Kaufman Iger, *Assistant Head of School and  
Head of Psychology Department*  
Joe Surak, *Director of Admissions*  
Caitlin Terry, *Director of Development and Advancement*  
Sharon Slate, *Controller/CFO*  
Kara Marks, *Director of Early Childhood Program*  
Monica Fishman, *Director of Elementary Program*  
Paul Dentrone, *IT and Systems Coordinator*  
Cherise Jones, *Accounting Manager*  
Stacey Marye, *School Nurse*  
Krista Jacobsen, *Development Associate*  
Joline Robles, *Administrative Assistant and  
Assistant to Head of School*  
Ida Sacconi, *Receptionist and Administrative Assistant*

“We feel fortunate every day about the education and love our daughter gets from her teachers and the amazing staff.”

PARENT

## STAFF\*

### EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

Kara Marks, *Director*  
Abigail Burch, *Head Teacher*  
Alex Felice, *Head Teacher*  
Carly Furino, *Head Teacher*  
Jeanne De Jesus, *Head Teacher*  
Sabrina Samaroo, *Head Teacher*  
Aimee Buszka, *Assistant Teacher*  
Hilary Colon, *Assistant Teacher*  
Samuel Circh, *Assistant Teacher*  
Ashley Dallas, *Assistant Teacher*  
Jennifer Lee, *Assistant Teacher*  
Katie Moray, *Assistant Teacher*  
Katherine Sumantri, *Assistant Teacher*  
Carly Tobin, *Assistant Teacher*

### ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

Monica Fishman, *Director*  
Samantha Antonacchio, *Head Teacher*  
Linda Delaney, *Head Teacher*  
Emmy Mlawer, *Head Teacher*  
Brienne Pantalone, *Head Teacher*  
Michelle Snyder, *Head Teacher*  
Mary Flieger, *Assistant Teacher*  
Erin Fox, *Assistant Teacher*  
Marissa Goldstein, *Assistant Teacher*  
Dylan Kapit, *Assistant Teacher*  
Mandi Mamanna, *Assistant Teacher*  
Alexa McKeon, *Assistant Teacher*  
Rasheeda Norris, *Assistant Teacher*  
Rebecca Skolnick, *Assistant Teacher*  
Dori Stern, *Assistant Teacher*  
Claire Swinney, *Assistant Teacher*

### ART, MUSIC, AND SCIENCE

Kate Gugliotta, *Art Teacher*  
Braque Hershberger, *Science Teacher*  
Robert Kennedy, *Music Teacher*

### SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Holly Thomas, *Head of Department*  
Jane Enright, *Pathologist*  
Jennifer Hogan, *Pathologist*  
Elizabeth Lee, *Pathologist*  
Daria Morganstern, *Pathologist*

### OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT

Shannie Easterby, *Head of Department*  
Brittany Blacker, *Therapist*  
Sarah Leventhal, *Therapist*  
Katie Hanauer, *Therapist*

### PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

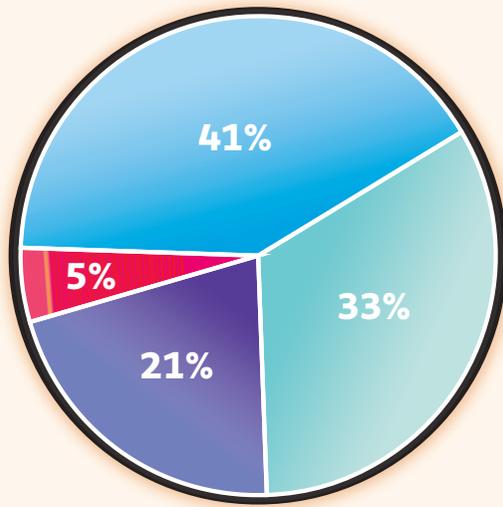
Dr. Cathy Kaufman Iger, *Head of Department*  
Dr. Audrey Halpern, *Psychologist*  
Dr. Benjamin Klein, *Psychologist*  
Dr. Carli Koch, *Psychologist*  
Dr. Middy Whelley, *Psychologist*

\*As of 8/1/2017

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2016 - 2017

Thanks to the partnership with our generous donors, the Gillen Brewer School is a leader in special education, providing students with learning experiences that transform each and every one of their lives.

### FUNDRAISING REVENUE



■ Annual Fund	\$792,269.00	41%
■ Annual Benefit	\$650,635.00	33%
■ Autism Speaks Benefit	\$417,292.00	21%
■ Special Funds & Grants	\$93,479.00	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,953,675.00</b>	

**\$1.95M RAISED**

## SUPPORTING GILLEN BREWER: A CRITICAL NEED

We depend on charitable contributions to fund the essential and exceptional programs that make Gillen Brewer such a unique place for children living with special needs. Our enhanced, comprehensive program is so essential for our students and makes Gillen Brewer so different from other schools.

Your gift to Gillen Brewer allows us to continue to provide initiatives, including:

- Student and Family Therapy
- Art, Science, and Music Classes
- Health and Fitness Programs at Asphalt Green
- State-of-the-Art Facilities and Technology
- Pet Partnerships and Art Farm
- Unique Integrated Therapeutic and Academic Program
- Competitive Salaries for Our Talented Faculty and Staff



Visit [www.gillenbrewer.com](http://www.gillenbrewer.com) for more information on our program.



## 2016-2017 HIGHLIGHTS

### THE NYSAIS SPECIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The entire Gillen Brewer staff attended the NYSAIS (New York State Association of Independent Schools) Special Education Conference, for which Donna Kennedy was a member of the founding planning committee. Several staff members presented workshops for attendees, including:

Kate Gugliotta presented "The Ladybugs and Puffins' Hair Salon: A Gathering Place for Learning and Self Expression."

Holly Thomas, Daria Morganstern, and Carly Furino presented "Integration of Speech-Language Therapy in the Preschool Classroom."

Shannie Easterby presented "Sensory Strategies for the Classroom."

Ben Klein, Cathy Kaufman Iger, and Kara Marks presented "Breaking Down Challenges to the Core: A Skills-Based Approach to Overcoming Student Challenges."

### THE PARENT LENDING LIBRARY

Thanks to a generous gift from Stuart Flaum, an expert in the financial and legal issues facing parents of children with special needs, Gillen Brewer launched a Lending Library that is free to all GBS parents. There is a comprehensive list of available books that can be sent directly home, and we also encourage families to suggest other books they'd like the Lending Library to offer.



### THE PUMPKINS' CULTURAL CELEBRATION

After working on a unit about the many different cultures and neighborhoods New York City is home to, the Pumpkins were excited to share all that they learned during their class cultural celebration. The Pumpkins were able to share their culture books, their artifacts, and a song with so many friends and families. The Pumpkins and their families enjoyed a wide variety of cultural foods, such as Irish soda bread, Sho Pau, antipasto platters and cannolis, empanadas, and corn bread.

## The theme for the 2016-2017 school year was Things that float.

### SOUNDS IN MOTION

Sounds in Motion (SIM) was developed by Fran Santore, a speech-language pathologist, who created the program to improve articulation, phonological awareness, and early literacy skills in students in NYC private and public schools. GBS' own Holly Thomas, the Head of our Speech-Language Pathology Department, first brought SIM to Gillen Brewer over ten years ago where she piloted the program in one of our early childhood classrooms. Holly made modifications to the program for teaching special education students; the listening activities and movements associated with the program have been very useful in developing articulation and early literacy skills in our students. SIM is an important component of Gillen Brewer's early childhood curriculum and has successfully supported the students in identifying sounds in words and learning to blend those sounds to develop decoding skills. When she is not at Gillen Brewer, Holly presents at conferences and trains teachers, therapists, and learning specialists to use SIM in classrooms and therapy sessions across the country.



Holly Thomas

### THE LILY PADS' BUNNIES

In March, the Lily Pads visited The Art Farm, where they learned about different kinds of bunnies and other winter animals. Then, their classroom bunnies arrived from a farm in Pennsylvania. The farmer introduced the mama bunny, Jolie, and her five babies. The farmer also showed the class how to take care of the bunnies by cleaning their cage, feeding them, and making sure they had enough water. The Lily Pads took responsibility for their bunny jobs, which included: the noise monitor, the sweeper, the water helper, the hay helper, the cage cleaner, the photographer, the feeder, and the reader. Throughout the week in science, Braque and the Lily Pads measured and weighed the bunnies to observe their growth. The class created an obstacle course to help the bunnies get some exercise and worked together to name each bunny. At the end of the unit, family members visited the class to meet the bunnies.



## 2016-2017 HIGHLIGHTS

### THE OTTER PROPHET

In January, the Otters class published their class newspaper, "The Otter Prophet!" Since October, the class had been studying the history of newspapers and the components that make up a typical newspaper. They quickly got to work, choosing topics of interest and deciding how they would gather information. Students conducted interviews, distributed surveys, and searched the internet to gather information. Then, they worked tirelessly constructing lead sentences, writing details, copying quotes, and editing paragraphs. In the end, Mary, their Editor-in-Chief, collected their articles, formatted them into a newspaper template, and added some pictures to make it pop. The project culminated in an official launch celebration. Students had the opportunity to answer questions about their articles posed by school administrators, therapists, and peers.



### URBAN GLASS

Thanks to a Target Field Trip Grant awarded to our art teacher, Kate, the Otters took a special field trip to Urban Glass in Brooklyn. Students viewed a glass-blowing demonstration and then participated in a kilnforming workshop. Kilnforming refers to the spectrum of techniques that use the heat of the kiln to transform and shape glass, among them slumping, fusing, and kiln casting. Overall, the trip was an exciting opportunity to explore a public art and art-making space in our city, while providing meaningful experiences and practical opportunities for learning how to engage in new artistic processes.

*“Thank you so much! I am so honored to be approached to be more involved and for this next year, yes, consider me on board. I’m so happy to always help in ANY way.”*

PARENT

## THE AUTISM SPEAKS BENEFIT: THE GAME CHANGERS GALA



Paul Tagliabue, Michael Morris, Angela Geiger, Tyler Mathisen, Bob Wright, Roger Goodall, Donna Kennedy, Roy Harvey, and Henry Schacht

On June 13, Gillen Brewer participated in The Game Changers Gala, an evening benefiting Autism Speaks and GBS. The event raised \$417,292 for the school. The Game Changers Gala took place at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, with three tables of GBS community members in attendance. Hosted by Tyler Mathisen, the event was co-chaired by Mel Karmazin, National Football League, and Gillen Brewer Chairman Emeritus Henry Schacht. Michael Morris and Roy Harvey of Alcoa Corporation were the honorees, and Gillen Brewer Advisory Board member Paul Tagliabue received the Lifetime Achievement Award, along with Autism Speaks co-founder Bob Wright. They shared stories of the 11-year partnership that began with Bob and the late Suzanne Wright, Henry Schacht, and Paul Tagliabue.



Anthony Ianni

The guest speaker of the evening was Anthony Ianni, the first known athlete with autism to play Big 10 basketball. Anthony shared his story of overcoming obstacles and facing challenges in order to live his dreams.

Throughout the 11-year partnership, Paul Tagliabue and Henry Schacht have helped to raise over \$6,000,000 for Gillen Brewer. We salute their hard work and dedication to the success of the Autism Speaks Benefit and the valuable support it has provided Gillen Brewer.



Paul Tagliabue and Henry Schacht

## THE 2017 GILLEN BREWER ANNUAL BENEFIT: “SAIL THE WORLD”

Thank you to everyone who joined us at the 25th Anniversary Benefit, *Sail the World*, held April 5th at the Lighthouse at Chelsea Piers. The event was a record-breaking success, raising over \$650,000. Co-founder Laura Bilicic shared her memories of Gillen Brewer benefit events dating back to the 1990s, and Board Chair Kathryn George Tyree shared the strategic vision of the school's future. Alumnus Michael Rock spoke, sharing his beginning at Gillen Brewer and how the foundation he formed in preschool carried him all the way through his graduation cum laude from Brandeis University, with a major in history and a minor in Chinese. Current and former parents, staff, friends, alumni parents, and trustees all gathered to celebrate Gillen Brewer's anniversary and our commitment to uncovering the specialness in every child.



Laura Bilicic and Kathryn George Tyree



CELEBRATING  
**25**  
YEARS

OVER  
**\$650,000**  
RAISED  
to strengthen  
our program



The GBS Board of Trustees with Donna Kennedy

The GBS Benefit is our largest fundraising event of the year and a wonderful celebration of our school. It provides an opportunity for staff, parents, trustees, and friends to gather, socialize, and support Gillen Brewer. The Benefit is essential to our ability to carry out our mission, and raises critically-needed funds for our program. Ticket purchases and gifts to the Benefit do not count as participation in the Annual Fund, as these two endeavors are entirely separate. The Benefit goal is \$500,000 per year, and these funds can be put towards the operating budget or can be used for a restricted purpose, depending on the areas of greatest need. Thank you to the following list of donors for giving to the 2017 Benefit.

Anonymous  
Lane Addonizio  
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Carol and Mark Jaffe  
Spela Sterle and Jordan Jan  
Donna and Robert Kennedy  
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Suzanne Knaster  
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Maria and Michael Lanzarone  
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Meredith and David Lee  
Karen Chase and Lawrence Leighton  
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Norma and Donald Levine  
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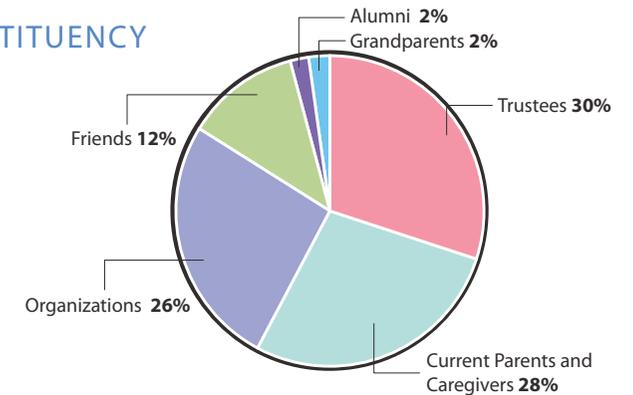
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Tiffany and Jeron Zerillo  
Katharine and Martin Ziga

## GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL 2016-2017

The Annual Fund runs from July 1- June 30, every year. The Annual Fund is the only unrestricted fund providing critical support for the daily operations of our program. Our goal is 100% participation among current families, and in the 2016-2017 year, we reached 97%. Participation is critical as many external funding sources such as foundations look at the level of family participation in determining the school's eligibility for grants.

## GIVING BY CONSTITUENCY



# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

The Annual Fund supports our operating budget and every aspect of our year-round academic and therapeutic program. Thank you to the following list of donors for giving to the 2016-2017 Annual Fund.

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Jenni Ackerman  
George Adams  
Helyn Goldenberg and Michael Alper  
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TO THE GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL 2016-2017

“Words aren’t sufficient for how much it has meant to our son and to us for him to be taught, and nurtured by amazing teachers and therapists in a place that totally gets him.”



ALUMNI PARENT



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## GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL 2016-2017

“We so appreciate all that Gillen Brewer has done and continues to do to help our granddaughter achieve her full potential.”

*an*

GRANDPARENT

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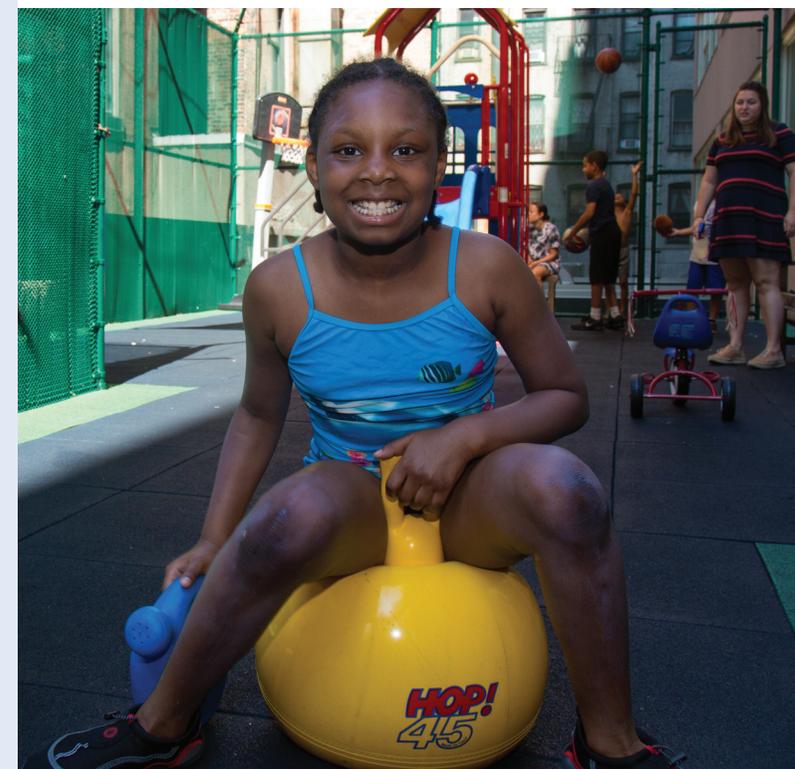
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*The Gillen Brewer School 2016-2017 Annual Report acknowledges all gifts received between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy.*

“It’s such an amazing school—the staff are so committed and creative, and the community is so welcoming and engaging. We feel so fortunate to have been a part of the Gillen Brewer community, and we’re very sad to be leaving. That being said, we know the school has prepared him for the move and next steps.”

ALUMNI PARENT



## GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL 2016-2017

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Broadway Birthday Bashes  
Brooklyn Learning Center  
Brownington Foundation  
Century 21 Real Estate, LLC  
The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation  
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Deutsche Bank Americas Matching Gifts Program  
ExxonMobil Foundation  
The Frances & Benjamin Benenson Foundation  
Goldman, Sachs & Co. Matching Gift Program  
Happy Baby Foundation  
Health Effects Institute  
Hunt Alternatives Fund  
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Lurie Family Foundation  
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Target Field Trip Grants Program  
UBS Matching Gift Program  
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### **The Danny Fiddle Arts Enrichment Fund**

This fund was established to create community-based opportunities for Gillen Brewer students to participate in arts-related programs and curriculum that will enhance their studies and participation in community life.

Linda Walder and Dan Cotto  
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### **Mariana S. Leighton Fund**

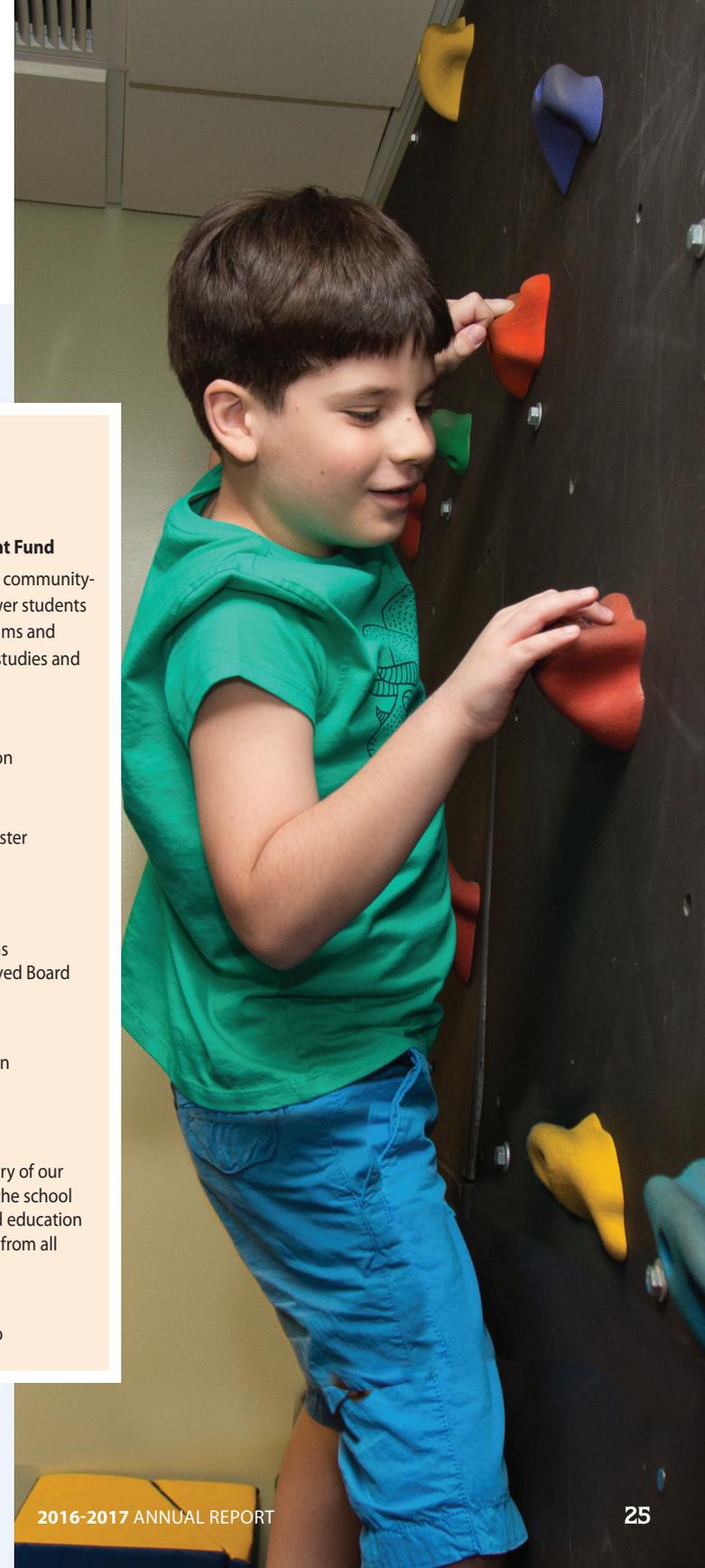
This fund supporting the library was established in memory of our beloved Board member, colleague, and mentor.

Alan and Katherine Stroock Fund  
Karen Chase and Lawrence Leighton  
Bettina Patterson

### **Smiling Bauti Fund**

This fund was established in memory of our beloved student Bauti Uro to help the school continue to provide a well-rounded education to a diverse community of learners from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

Lisa Edwards-Nazario  
Mariela Lazaro de Uro and Juan Uro



# THE GILLEN BREWER COMMUNITY

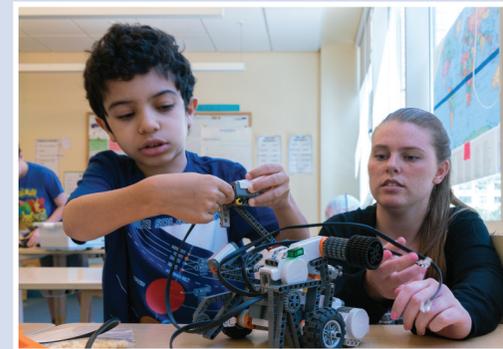
A hallmark of the Gillen Brewer School is the breadth and depth of the school's Family Program, which includes parents as partners, resources, and advocates. Our Family Program provides opportunities to work side-by-side with staff — individually and in groups — around issues relevant to each family's needs. During various events throughout the year, families are given opportunities to become a part of our community of learners.

The Parents' Association is a cornerstone of the Gillen Brewer School community. The Parents' Association is composed of all Gillen Brewer parents and caregivers, and its role is two-fold: to foster a sense of community among Gillen Brewer families and to raise money for the school. Throughout the year, parent volunteers help to run friend-raising and fundraising events that bring people together.

We rely on parent volunteers in order to provide beloved community-building events such as Winter Family Fun Day, and we ask that every parent give as much as time as they are able. Volunteer opportunities abound for those with as little as one hour per month and as much as every day available to contribute.

Parent volunteers are also actively involved in the critical fundraising efforts that take place at the school. The Parents' Association Fundraising Committee is dedicated towards assisting the school in broadening and deepening its sources of support.

Gillen Brewer is lucky to have a hardworking, engaged group of parent volunteers helping to make the school the best place it can possibly be. We gratefully thank our Parents' Association for their dedication and talent, this year and every year.



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ON VOLUNTEERING,  
PLEASE CONTACT THE  
DEVELOPMENT OFFICE.

## WAYS TO MAKE A GIFT

### GIFTS OF CASH

Personal checks and credit card payments are two of the most popular ways to make a gift to Gillen Brewer. Checks should be made payable to Gillen Brewer School and mailed to:

**Gillen Brewer School**  
410 East 92nd Street  
New York, New York 10128

To pay by credit card, please visit:

**www.gillenbrewer.com or**  
**contact development@gillenbrewer.com**

### MATCHING GIFTS

Many companies match their employees' charitable contributions. For example, if you donate \$5,000 to Gillen Brewer School, your employer may be willing to match your generosity — and you'll be credited with a \$10,000 gift. Some companies will double and even triple contributions made by employees and their spouses to nonprofit organizations. You can obtain information and the necessary forms from your employer and forward these to Gillen Brewer with your gift.

### GIFTS OF SECURITIES

Gifts of appreciated stock provide an opportunity to benefit the school with significant tax advantages for you. Since the cost of the stock is lower than the actual gift amount, you can avoid paying a capital gains tax on the stock's increase in value. You can also claim an income tax deduction for the full market value of the stock at the time of contribution. For instructions on transferring securities, contact the development office.

The Gillen Brewer School Annual Report acknowledges all contributions received between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy.

### MEET THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

You are welcome to contact the development team at any time to ask questions or discuss your giving. We can be reached at **development@gillenbrewer.com**.

Caitlin Terry, Director of Development and Advancement  
Krista Jacobsen, Development Associate  
Joline Robles, Administrative Assistant



## OUR MISSION

The Gillen Brewer School's mission is to educate and support our students to become confident, independent and engaged learners.

We do this by...

Partnering with our families

Providing a nurturing and supportive environment where children feel accepted and where learning is fun

Encouraging our students to advocate for themselves while being respectful and responsible members of the community

Engaging our students in a comprehensive 12-month academic curriculum which incorporates the Common Core New York State Standards, while addressing the individual learning needs of each child

Providing developmentally appropriate educational opportunities and challenges for our students

Integrating speech and language, occupational therapy and counseling services into our educational program

Cultivating educators who value a team approach and an ongoing commitment to learning

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE,  
ONE CHILD AND FAMILY AT A TIME.**



# GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL

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