

GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL



2019 - 2020
ANNUAL REPORT



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www.gillenbrewer.com

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™



Dear Gillen Brewer Community,

We are pleased to share with you our 2019-2020 Annual Report of donors, recognizing all giving between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we raised \$1,495,459 to support our school.



Every gift counts, and every donor matters. Your steadfast giving allows us to sustain our program, and we are fortunate to receive gifts from current and alumni families, staff, grandparents, trustees, friends, and organizations. Thank you to everyone who gave to Gillen Brewer last year. The success of the School is due to strong leadership by the Board of Trustees, Head of School, staff, and the partnerships we have with our families.

Despite Gillen Brewer's robust community, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed challenges for our School and necessitated cancelling our 2020 Benefit Gala, resulting in a significant loss of fundraising income. We are so grateful to each of you who allowed us to keep your Benefit contributions as tax-deductible gifts and to those who gave to the Annual Fund despite these trying times. We continue to need and ask for your generosity as we embark on the 2020-2021 school year and meet new challenges. Gifts to Gillen Brewer will directly fund our key priorities: enhanced health and safety measures, updates to technology, and supporting our staff. We thank you for partnering with us and continuing to support us generously as we *uncover the specialness in every child*.

Sincerely,

Donna Kennedy
Head of School

Kathryn Tyree
Board Chair and
Alumni Parent

“From our earliest imaginings of who we would be, we were determined to be a school not just for children, but for their families. Gillen Brewer is a place where parents tell their stories and know they are understood. Our community is a testament to the power of family, and there is both comfort and strength in knowing you are not alone.”

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.

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, but expanding to serve more families and to create an ideal environment for our learners has always been a priority. Gillen Brewer added classes until it reached 48 students from preschool through second grade who were housed in a rented church space on Park Avenue. In August 2005, the school moved to its current location at 410 East 92nd Street, where we went from five to ten classes and doubled our staff.

“I had to send this email to express my true thankfulness for all of your patience and kindness extended to my son and I...thank you for not giving up on him and showing him that he is somebody in this world of learning.”



BOARD OF TRUSTEES, BOARD OF ADVISORS, ADMINISTRATION

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kathryn Tyree, *Chair*
Henry B. Schacht, *Chairman Emeritus*
In Seon Hwang, *Treasurer*
Laura Bilicic
Randy Goldstein
Lawrence W. Leighton
Neal Meltzer
Beth Saunders
Angela Howard Stone
John L. Vogelstein

BOARD OF ADVISORS

Frank D'Amelio
Mark Hickson
Patricia Russo
Richard Segal
Paul Tagliabue

“What a gift,
I can finally
be with
my child
fully present.”

ADMINISTRATION

Donna Kennedy, *Head of School*
Peyton Arnold, *Supervising School Nurse*
Jessica Casey, *Development Assistant*
Paul Dentrone, *Director of Technology and
Facility Management*
Susan Finkelstein,
Admissions/Exmissions Officer
Monica Fishman, *Program Director*
Braque Hershberger,
Assistant Head of School
Michael Hewson, *Chief Operating Officer*
Katie Hort, *Counsel*
Dr. Cathy Kaufman Iger,
*Director of The Family Program and
Admissions/Exmissions Officer*
Cherise Jones, *Accounting Manager*
Marissa Levy, *School Nurse*
Kara Marks, *Program Director*
Joline Robles, *Assistant to the Head of School*
Ida Sacconi, *Receptionist and
Administrative Assistant*
Julian Parham Santana, *Director of
Admissions, Marketing, and Outreach*
Sharon Slate, *Controller/CFO*
Caitlin Terry, *Director of Development
and Advancement*
Timothy Toal, *Human Resources Director*

STAFF*

HEAD TEACHERS

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Ashley Dallas
Linda Delaney
Alex Felice
Carly Furino
Sarah Manfredi
Emmy Mlawer
Megan Roop
Sabrina Samaroo

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Alexandra Falzetti
Laura Koch
Nicole Overton
Courtney Pusey

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Hilary Colon
Mary Flieger
Jennifer Lee

ASSOCIATE TEACHERS

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Nora Cebollero
Olivia Cohn
Michelle Diamond
Ashley Garcia
Brooke Heisner
Kassandra Juarez
Zana Milovanovic
Ava Rubin
Seth Stonis
Hanna Usdan

SCIENCE, ART & MUSIC

Ashley Cavadas-Fonseca
Robert Kennedy
Lindsay Pelingier

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Holly Thomas, *Head of Department*
Jane Enright, *Pathologist*
Simone Katz, *Pathologist*
Daria Morganstern, *Pathologist*
Sydney Ziffer, *Pathologist*

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT

Shannie Easterby, *Head of Department*
Brittany Blacker, *Therapist*
Abigail Browne, *Therapist*
Sarah Leventhal, *Therapist*
Eileen Rabe, *Therapist*

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Dr. Audrey Halpern, *Head of Department*
Dr. Sara Diamond, *Psychologist*
Dr. Carli Koch, *Psychologist*
Missy Westfall, *Psychologist*

*As of September 10, 2020

THE GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL FAMILY PROGRAM

Led by Dr. Cathy Kaufman Iger, The Gillen Brewer Family Program saw greater reach in its second year.

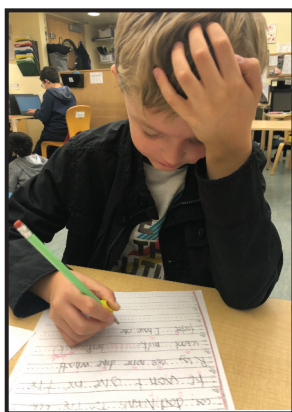
In addition to ongoing parent support groups, sibling workshops, and Grandparents' Day workshops, The Family Program began the 2019-2020 year with two parent workshops during summer 2019:



The Family Program offered:

- Katie Hort, our in-house counsel, presented on *The Legal Process for Seeking Reimbursement*. For the first time, along with parents being physically present, we allowed parents to participate via zoom conference if they were unable to attend in person.
- Dr. Audrey Halpern, Head of the Psychology Department, and Shannie Easterby, Head of the Occupational Therapy Department, presented on *Zones of Regulation: What it is and How it is Used at GBS*.

Gillen Brewer's partnership with Child Mind Institute again included three workshops that were open to GBS families and the community at large:



- Stephanie Lee, PsyD presented the workshop *Sleep, Feeding and Toileting; Developmental Norms and Challenges*.
- Matthew Pagirsky, PsyD presented the workshop *Executive Functioning: What it is and How it Impacts Functioning and Learning*.
- Adam Zamora, PsyD presented the workshop *Working Memory: What it is and How it Impacts Functioning and Learning*.

As part of our efforts to offer families comprehensive resources and support, The Family Program also hosted parent workshops such as:

- Sarah Birnbaum, of New York Special Needs Support, presented the *Turning 5 workshop Kindergarten: The Great Beyond and the workshop Life After EI – What's Next?*
- Susan Resnick, of Susan Resnick Consulting, presented an overview of our math program, *Math in Focus*, an authentic Singapore math curriculum that highlights problem solving as the focus of mathematical learning.
- Stuart Flaum, of Comprehensive Special Needs Planning, presented about the financial and legal issues facing the families of children with special needs.
- Members of the Psychology and the Speech-Language Pathology Departments presented *Creating Routines and Preparing for Special Events: How to Use Visuals and Social Stories at Home*.

Following the death of George Floyd and the ensuing discussions about racism across America, The Family Program developed a comprehensive set of resources, books, and articles designed to guide families in having meaningful conversations with children at all developmental levels about these issues. To adapt to the evolving needs of families during the COVID-19 pandemic, The Family Program began offering multiple parent support groups at different times to accommodate parent needs and schedules, in order to provide as much support as possible during the unprecedented navigation of remote learning in the midst of this pandemic.

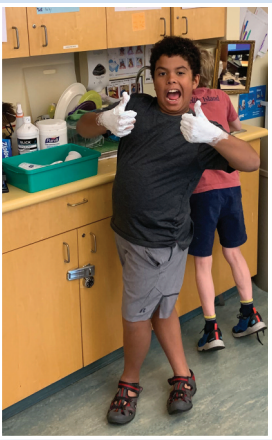
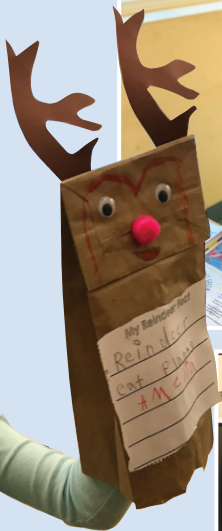
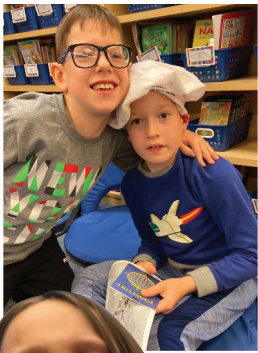
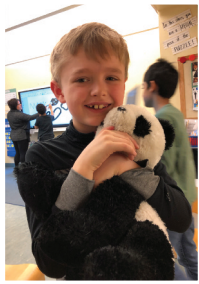


THE GILLEN BREWER COMMUNITY

Gillen Brewer’s unwavering commitment to each family is a cornerstone of our program. The School’s philosophy is founded on the belief that changing the life of a child can only be achieved through meeting the needs of the family as well.

Gillen Brewer’s goal for parents is that they develop an understanding of their child and acquire the information and strategies to be their child’s

strongest and most supportive advocate. As both mentor and partner to parents, the school strives to provide a network of resources and to develop a collaborative relationship which fosters awareness and sensitivity and enhances the progress of each individual child.



FOR INFORMATION ON
VOLUNTEERING, PLEASE CONTACT
THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE AT
development@gillenbrewer.com

THE GILLEN BREWER PARENTS' ASSOCIATION (PA)

Led by co-chairs Wendy Katz-Rapp and Melissa Michelini, the Gillen Brewer PA organized several community-wide events during the 2019-2020 school year.

On a beautiful day in October, the community gathered together at the Catbird Playground in Carl Schurz Park to celebrate **Fall Family Fun Day**.



Next, Gillen Brewer students enthusiastically welcomed their guests to the school on **Grandparents' and Special Friends' Day** in November.

Kicking off the new year, in January the PA hosted a wine and cheese reception before The Family Program workshop: *Everything Parents Need To Know About Executive Functioning* presented by the Child Mind Institute.



On **VIP Day** in February, students engaged in a wide range of activities in their classrooms from cooking to scavenger hunts. On **Winter Family Fun Day**, the entire community joined together at the school on a Sunday in February and partook in some indoor winter fun! Throughout the year, while we were together in the school building, the PA expressed their support of the GBS staff by organizing staff lunches and snacks to fill the staff lounge.



Once we transitioned to the At-Home Learning Program, the PA began organizing community-wide events to help the families feel connected online, like virtual PA Meetings and even a virtual Parent Cocktail Party! The PA collected gifts from families to support the **Staff Gift Fund** and disbursed gift cards to all staff members at the end of the year in June. We rely on volunteer support for all of these wonderful events and initiatives, and are so grateful for the GBS PA!

GILLEN BREWER FIELD TRIPS

Gillen Brewer students embarked on a variety of field trips both in our neighborhood and beyond. Some of the many field trip destinations our students visited included: CNN, Costco, Little Italy, The Music School, Real Brave Audio Studios, Children's Museum of Manhattan, Jewish Museum, Ample Hills Creamery, Roosevelt Island, and Canstruction.

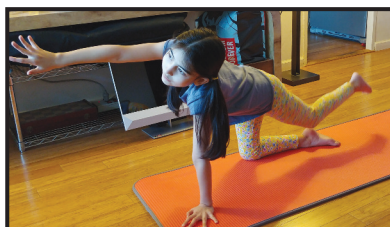


GILLEN BREWER'S AT-HOME LEARNING PROGRAM



After carefully monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic in consultation with the Department of Health, Gillen Brewer made the decision to close beginning March 13th, 2020 and to launch the Gillen Brewer At-Home Learning Program. The Gillen Brewer School remains a family-oriented, multidisciplinary academic and therapeutic program designed to meet the diverse needs of children with language-based and non-verbal learning disabilities. The At-Home Learning Program (AHLP) provides developmentally-appropriate and accessible remote instruction so that our students continue to receive their special education programs and related services.

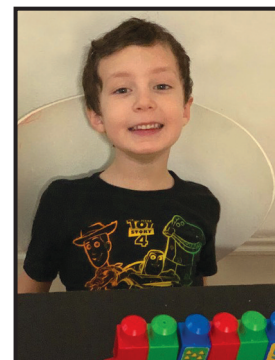
Our At-Home Learning Program is designed to offer access and support to our students so that they will continue to make meaningful academic gains while offering needed flexibility for families. At the forefront of our program is the understanding that each family and home environment is unique and each child learns differently. Every student has a highly individualized program based on their needs, and all programs include real time remote conferencing and thoughtfully selected online resources.



Gillen Brewer also offers daily Morning Meetings with full classroom teams to engage students in at-home learning, and face-to-face therapy sessions. To further support their child's therapeutic needs, we provide families with ideas for supplemental activities and exercises by integrating them into the At-Home Learning Program. This is in addition to all of our regularly scheduled "specials" such as science, music, and art. Thanks to Gillen Brewer teacher Ashley Dallas, we conducted our annual egg-to-chick study via livestream! Follow [@gillenbrewer](#) on Instagram to see at-home learning in action.

In addition to synchronous and asynchronous learning and therapy, we reimagined our beloved end-of-year events into the virtual formats. The Upper School and Alumni Dance Party, the Alumni Panel, Transition Jitters for the parents of aging out and moving-on students, and the Achievement Ceremony were all conducted online. Admissions Open Houses also moved to the virtual platform, and

in July 2020 we were so excited to welcome our newest families to Gillen Brewer.



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 with special needs and their families. Our enhanced, comprehensive program is so essential for our students and distinguishes Gillen Brewer from other schools. Your gift to Gillen Brewer allows us to continue to provide initiatives, including:

- Our Family Program
- Our Unique Integrated Therapeutic and Academic Program
- Counseling
- Social Groups
- Art, Science, and Music Classes
- Sports and Fitness Programs at Asphalt Green
- State-of-the-Art Facilities and Technology
- Pet Partnerships and The Art Farm
- Competitive Salaries for Our Talented Staff
- Rockin' Readers Program
- Exposure to the Wonderful Resources New York City Has to Offer



Visit www.gillenbrewer.com for more information on our program.

THE 2020 GILLEN BREWER ANNUAL BENEFIT: “Oh, the Places We’ll Go”

Throughout the 2019-2020 year, it was wonderful seeing all of the ways our classes explored the theme, *From Here to There*. To continue celebrating not just how far we’ve come, but the exciting possibilities in our future, the 2020 Benefit was planned with the theme *Oh, the Places We’ll Go!* Although we had to cancel the event due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were grateful that we were still able to share two very inspiring elements that are normally shown during the Benefit: the video and the journal.



We are so thankful to our Benefit Co-Chairs Jessica Bressler and Anna Serviansky, the Parents’ Association Co-Chairs Wendy Katz-Rapp and Melissa Michelini, the Benefit Committee and the entire Parents’ Association for their tireless work.

We also thank everyone who supported the Benefit by purchasing tickets, tables, and making contributions. The Gillen Brewer Benefit is typically our largest fundraising event of the year, and accounts for approximately 50% of the fundraising goal for the operating budget. We rely on these funds to run our multidisciplinary twelve-month program and the impact of the reduced benefit revenues is material. Therefore, we are especially grateful to everyone who allowed us to use the total price of their ticket or Benefit contribution as a fully tax-deductible donation to Gillen Brewer’s operating budget.

THE 2019-2020 GILLEN BREWER ANNUAL FUND

The Annual Fund runs from July 1 - June 30 of every year. The Annual Fund is the only unrestricted fund providing critical support for the daily operations of our program, and we rely on generous support from current families, alumni families, grandparents, trustees, friends, corporations, and foundations.

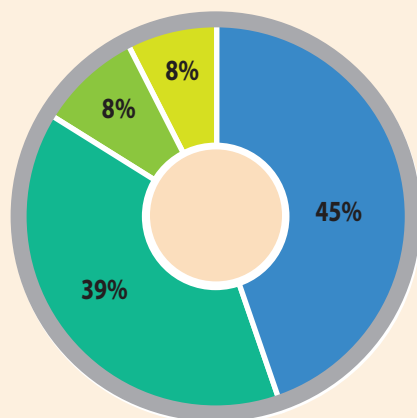
Our goal is 100% participation among current families, and participation is critical as many external funding sources such as foundations look at the level of family participation in determining the school’s eligibility for grants. We are so grateful to every donor who supported our operating budget with a gift to the Annual Fund in the 2019-2020 year.

Thank you!

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2019 - 2020

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	\$669,883.35	45%
Capital Campaign	\$587,191.33	39%
Special Funds & Grants	\$126,494.86	8%
Annual Benefit	\$111,890.00	8%
Total	\$1,495,459.54	

In January of 2019, Gillen Brewer began the early stages of raising Capital Campaign funds to support our plans to expand our program. The generosity of the donors who have supported the Capital Campaign is sincerely appreciated.

TOTAL GIVING DONATIONS TO THE GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL 2019-2020

THANK YOU: GENEROUS DONORS

TOTAL GIVING BREAKDOWN

\$50,000 - \$250,000

AYCO
Anna Flett and Brandon Haley
Jane and In Seon Hwang
Moriah Fund
Nancy and Henry Schacht
Veronica and Jim Shipp
Angela Howard Stone and Matthew Stone
Chandler and Paul Tagliabue
Kathryn and Bill Tyree
Barbara and John Vogelstein

\$25,000-\$49,999

Raneet and Joseph Barr
Laura and George Bilicic
Cathy Kaufman Iger and Mark Iger
Rui Dong and Carl Johnson
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\$10,000-\$24,999

Janet Brown and Michael Brewer
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Riley Family Foundation
Marilyn and James Simons
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\$5,000-\$9,999

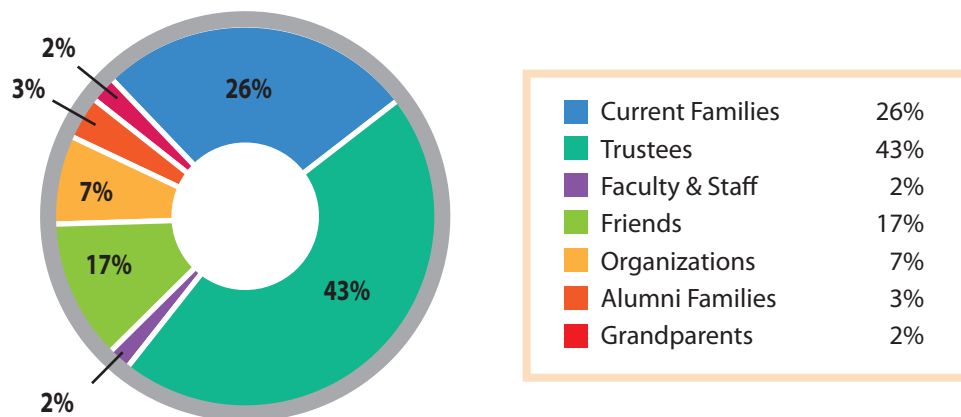
Harriet and Alan Dresher
Health Effects Institute
Erin O'Rourke
Alexis and Drew Sussberg
Mariela Lazaro de Uro and Juan Uro
Jihun and Bo Yi

\$1,000-\$4,999

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Phyllis Heilborn
Jessica and Rick Held
Milt Sleeter and Joel Herman
Kira Manusis and Alexander Kaplin
Leslie Kaulk
Donna and Robert Kennedy

Continued on page 23

GIVING BY CONSTITUENCY



Continued from page 20

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 Archith Mahadevan
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\$1-\$999

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 Paula and Tim Cavanaugh
 Adriana Munera-Checho and Faust Checho
 Talida and Timothy Chen
 Hisu Chang and Peter Chiu
 Guy Collier
 Hilary Colon

Continued on page 24

GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL 2019-2020

THANK YOU: GENEROUS DONORS

Continued from page 23

Keily Concepcion	Derek Iger
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LaTasha Ellis	Maureen Kane and Tim Kearns
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Meghan and Julian Gutierrez	Pauline Messina
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Heather Zanoni and Braque Hershberger	Annie and Michael Mileto
Barbara Holt	Joan and Bahman Namdar
Toby and Marshall Horn	Hitha Palepu and Sri Narasimhan
Franca Gioia and Robert Horton	Lisa Lieberman and Bill Nelson
Janet and Thomas Hutchinson	Network for Good
Monica Fishman and David Iankelevich	Yoshiko Paden

THANK YOU: GENEROUS DONORS

Continued from page 21

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 Adalia and Decklan Richardson
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 Melissa and Andrew Rosenberg
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 Irina and Leon Shaulov
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 Jodi Goldman and Richard Siegmeister
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 Mariame M'Baye and Khalifa Sow
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 UBS Matching Gift
 United Way of Greater Portland
 Pamela Usdan
 Sabrina and Omar Vaishnavi
 Carol and Anthony Vestuto
 Jerry Vestuto
 Trustee for Boeing
 May Lam and Michael Wong
 Fernanda Rossi and Gary Waugh
 Elizabeth and George Zobitz

“The live sessions, whether
 group and especially 1:1,
 have been so great and
 have increased engagement
 and independence
 in learning.”



The Gillen Brewer School 2019-2020 Annual Report acknowledges all gifts received between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy.

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: <https://www.gillenbrewer.com/giving/donate-online> 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's Human Resources Department 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.

BEQUESTS

Naming Gillen Brewer School in your will ensures that your support will continue to be impactful for years to come. Establishing a lasting legacy helps support current students, program expansion and creates the opportunity for future generations of children to reach their full potential through the GBS experience.

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
Jessica Casey, Development 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

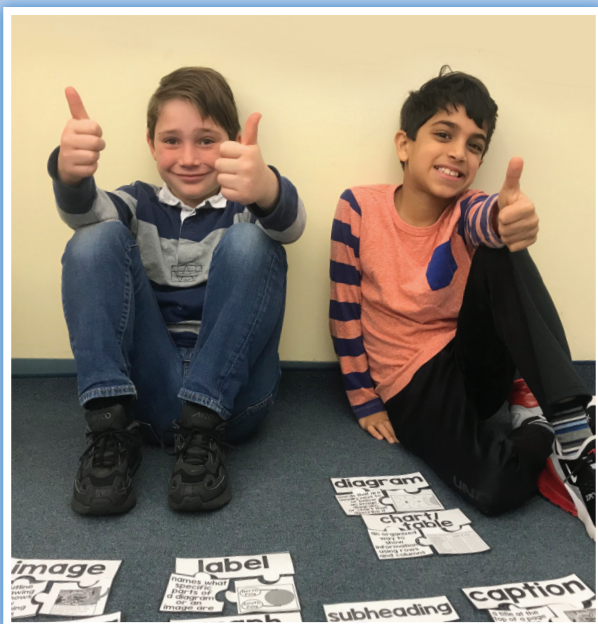
Providing developmentally appropriate educational opportunities and challenges for our students

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.**

The Gillen Brewer School Annual Report acknowledges all contributions received between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. Every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy.



GILLEN BREWER SCHOOL

410 East 92nd Street
New York, NY 10128
(212) 831-3667
www.gillenbrewer.com