



BROOKLYN
KINDERGARTEN
SOCIETY

BKS Matters
BKS is Where Brooklyn Kids Succeed

ISSUE
Winter/Spring
2018

You make these successes possible

For more than 125 years, BKS has provided Brooklyn's most vulnerable children with an evidence-based, nurturing educational environment where children learn, play, and thrive! Year after year, more than 90% of BKS kids move on to kindergarten testing at or above their age group norms even though more than two thirds of them came to us below that level. These are a few highlights from our centers since the start of the school year.

In September, the **Tompkins Children's Center** kids in the "Peach Cobbler" 4s classroom began an exciting new year. This year, they'll learn to identify letters, names, and numbers; expand their vocabulary; and explore new materials and books. They read *Whistle for Willie*, Ezra Jack Keats' sequel to *A Snowy Day* wherein Peter practices and works hard to learn how to whistle for his dog Willie.



In November, children and teachers across BKS centers prepared for Thanksgiving. The **Brevoort Children's Center** 3s classroom enjoyed a special pre-Thanksgiving meal together. At **Sumner Children's Center**, they created a video where children explained why they were thankful. Recognizing that "thankful" might be a difficult concept, teachers asked the children what made them happy. Responses from the kids included: "when my mommy hugs me" ... "when my brother makes me feel better" ... "when my sister gives me a hug" ... "when my friends come to my house" and "I like broccoli and bread and rice."

In December, the **Cleveland Children's Center** had a visit from Santa. Children had a chance to get to know their families better by sharing something special they do as a family. Parents volunteered in the classroom and brought in pictures of family



activities like drinking hot chocolate, playing their favorite family game, decorating for the holidays, or going on a family trip. This project is just one way that BKS works to build a strong relationship between the family and school.

This school year, our early language learners benefitted from having at least one Spanish-speaking teacher in every class. Parents attended our new GED and ESL classes where BKS provided child care and food to make it easier for families to participate.



The **Weeksville Gardens Community Center** hosted such programs and events as Zumba, line dancing, African drumming, Poetry Café, financial literacy and entrepreneurship, empowerment workshops for girls and young women, book exchange, Brooklyn Daddy Iron Chef, and Girls Who Code.

Current and planned community center programming includes: health and wellness, arts and culture, financial literacy, STEM, "mommy and me," aftercare, and senior services. Together, these programs form a holistic, intergenerational safe haven offering empowerment, mentorship, and learning in the BKS tradition of quality education and care for vulnerable Brooklyn communities.

Thank you for making this life-changing work possible!

Learning About Portraits



The 4s class at BKS's **Nat Azarov Children's Center** learned that pictures of people are called portraits, then made portraits using fabric, beads, and other materials. Teaching artist **Louise Diedrich** led the project, which brings language, motor skills, and play together to explore multiple intelligences in the classroom. That's just one of the unique enrichment activities children experience at BKS.

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You Can Leave a Legacy

For many, the idea of making a planned gift can be intimidating. It doesn't have to be.

"It was relatively simple," said **Harry Shulman**, BKS board president. Harry discussed estate planning with his family and decided to include BKS in his plans by naming BKS the beneficiary of a life insurance policy he purchased for that purpose. "I'm committed to the future of BKS, and it's an easy way to make a large gift after I'm gone."

You have options when including Brooklyn Kindergarten Society in your planned giving. Including BKS in your will or bequest is one of the simplest ways. You also can name BKS a beneficiary of your life insurance plan, retirement plan, or trust. When naming beneficiaries, you can choose to gift all or a percentage of your plan, will, or trust. Your attorney or accountant can help you make choices that meet the needs of your family and support the causes you hold dear.

It's your legacy. Include BKS in your planned giving today to build a brighter tomorrow for Brooklyn children. Learn more at bksny.org/legacy.



Pictured: BKS board president Harry Shulman (center) with wife Mary Haskins (right) and daughter Sarah (left)



BKS at a glance



BKS Preschools	NYC DOE Preschools
✓ Children develop language, social and thinking skills	✓ Children develop language, social and thinking skills
✓ Operate year round	✓ Operate September to June
✓ Extended day of 10 hrs	✓ Full day of 6 hrs and 20 mins
✓ Priority admission for low-income families	✓ Admission priorities vary by school
✓ Private outdoor playground	✓ Playspaces vary by school
✓ Enrichment includes horseback riding, yoga, chess, music, dance & more	
✓ Family services works with each family	
✓ Parents welcome anytime	
✓ Bilingual teachers in every classroom	
✓ 3 teachers in every classroom	
✓ Community resources such as dental & medical screenings	



Yuletide Ball Supports Early Education



Brooklynites gathered for drinks, dessert, and dancing at the 97th Yuletide Ball on Dec. 9th. The annual Yuletide Ball fundraising event provides significant funds for BKS educational programs, enrichment activities, and family support services. The unique format, where volunteers host dinner parties in homes and restaurants before the Ball, allows almost all ticket sales revenue to be passed on directly to BKS programs.

"As a mom of three young boys, I connected with BKS and the work they do to support and educate preschool-aged children and their families. The Yuletide Ball is such an important fundraising event, I'm thrilled to be a part of it," said **Paula Dunbar**, 97th Yuletide Committee Co-Chair.

Thank you to the many individuals and companies who supported the 97th Yuletide Ball. Thank you to all of our pre-Ball dinner hosts, as well as their families, for allowing us to defray the cost of the Ball with their hospitality and generosity. We also wish especially to thank our co-chairs, **Paula Dunbar** and **Lindsay McCann**, whose passion and hard work contributed so much to this year's success. Thank you as well to **TD Bank** and **Brennan Real Estate** for their generous underwriting support; GOLD SPONSOR: Hayden Dunbar Fine Art; SILVER SPONSORS: Compass, Amin Wasserman Murphy Team • Douglas & London • Stribling, Ria Browne • Sugar in the Raw; PREMIUM JOURNAL ADVERTISERS: Marissa Alperin Studio • Techworks Consulting, Inc.



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Pictured: Lindsay McCann and Paula Dunbar,
97th Yuletide Committee co-chairs

This year's ball is Dec. 8th. Interested in hosting a dinner party? Please contact Tania Kleckner at tkleckner@bksny.org.

Thank you, Team BKS Marathoners!

BKS was proud to be a 2017 TCS New York City Marathon Charity Partner. On Nov. 5th, Team BKS runners **Philip Dempsey, Meredith Flynn, Shannon Murphy, Dante Pilkington, Matthew Pilkington**, and **Giuseppe Santarelli** covered 26.2 miles through all five boroughs, starting at the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge; running through the crowds of Bay Ridge, Fort Greene, and South Williamsburg in Brooklyn; Long Island City in Queens; into the Bronx; and to the finish line in Central Park. Together, they raised over \$24,000 for early childhood education. Thank you!

Dante Pilkington joined his father **Matthew Pilkington** to support BKS in the 2017 marathon. Dante is wearing the official 2017 TCS New York City Marathon shirt while Matthew is wearing the Team BKS shirt. The Team BKS shirt shows a runner crossing the finish line and was painted by a four-year-old girl from our Brevoort Children's Center!

BKS will participate in the 2018 TCS New York City Marathon on Nov. 4th. To join Team BKS, please contact Tania Kleckner at tkleckner@bksny.org.



Pictured: Matthew Pilkington and Dante Pilkington, father and son Team BKS runners

Partner Spotlight: Birthday Buds

This fall, BKS began a partnership with **Birthday Buds**, a wonderful nonprofit organization that teaches children the value of giving. Donor families with kids are matched with BKS kids who share similar birthdays. Once a match is made, Birthday Buds communicates with BKS families to find out what the child would like for his or her birthday. This information is shared with the donor family who sends the gift on the child's wish list plus other needed items like socks, underwear, clothing essentials, or school supplies.

BKS families may pick up the gifts at their local BKS center, which is a great way to stay in touch with families even after their children leave BKS. Not only can enrolled BKS kids participate but their siblings ages 3 to 12 are included as well. The Birthday

Buds donor families will continue to provide birthday items every year until the child's 12th birthday! To learn more about Birthday Buds or to become a donor family, please visit birthdaybud.org.





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57 Willoughby St., 4th Fl.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
www.bksny.org
info@bksny.org

Bringing Data to Life



BKS long has used data analysis to strengthen our early education programs. **Anusha Subramanyam, PhD**, the BKS Director of Education and Research, is expanding these efforts through the Continuous Quality Improvement program. CQI

uses data in real time and on an ongoing basis to analyze progress at our early childhood centers and make changes as needed to improve outcomes for children, teachers, and classrooms.

Anusha gathers, analyzes, and presents data to teachers in a manner that allows them to use the data right away. This allows BKS to make necessary changes to instruction and classroom strategies—and maintain a high quality program. For example, Anusha creates regular reports for each classroom that show if individual students are falling behind and in which skill areas. Teachers then focus on the students who need additional support in those academic and social-emotional development areas. At the classroom level, she measures the quality of teacher-student interactions and uses the data to design workshops and coaching strategies for the teachers. “The purpose of CQI is to bring data to life,” says Anusha.

BKS CENTERS

Nat Azarow Children’s Center
Seth Low Houses in Brownsville

Brevoort Children’s Center
Bedford-Stuyvesant

Cleaveland Children’s Center
Albany Houses in Crown Heights

Sumner Children’s Center
Bedford-Stuyvesant

Tompkins Children’s Center
Bedford-Stuyvesant

Weeksville Gardens Community Center
Crown Heights

**BKS children’s centers are
enrolling ages 2 to 4.
Learn more at bksny.org/apply.**