



# Rivendell READER

W I N T E R 2 0 2 5 / 2 0 2 6 • V O L . 2 9



## Dear Friends,

**30** years and counting! Rivendell School is celebrating 30 years since its founding by Rosalie Woodside, a model for all those years in its mission to promote the very best inclusive early childhood education for each child and family. The breadth of our programs speaks volumes about what Rosalie understood this undertaking meant and requires to sustain today. In 2006 she found a forever home for Rivendell in Gowanus, Brooklyn, an under-the-radar neighborhood of low-rise homes, small businesses, artist spaces and light manufacturing companies. Certainly not the trendy neighborhood it is today, the move was, in retrospect, intuitive. Now long a neighborhood fixture, Rivendell programs and services flow from our headquarters at 277 Third Avenue and our administrative satellite space around the corner at the popular co-working space at 540 President Street.

There are many pathways to Rivendell. Has a child benefited from a well-rounded evaluation process that helped match services to strengths and needs? Was a Rivendell special education itinerant teacher part of the team that supported a child's progress at school? Did a family find community at Rivendell Preschool where they met and became friends with other families as their children, typically developing and those with special needs, learned together in an inclusive classroom? Has a teacher found a place for themselves at Rivendell, reflecting their recognition that child centered collaboration enhances outcomes for all? Were you inspired to become a Friend of





## Notes From Core - What's In A Name?

ROSALIE WOODSIDE  
Rivendell School Founder  
CORE Program Co-Coordinator

**F**or better or worse, Autism/ASD has been a topic of considerable attention, wild speculation as to its etiology and much controversy in recent months. Discussions in the public arena have generated much heat, hurt and, sometimes, a little light on the subject. Since Rivendell School's CORE Program was established to serve children with ASD, we thought it might be useful to give a little context to the conversation.

The word AUTISM, from the Greek words autos(self) and ism(condition) was used by the Austrian American psychiatrist Leo Kanner to describe a group of 11 children in a study he published in 1943. Kanner defined "early infantile autism" as a specific neurodevelopmental condition and his pioneering work has influenced much of the current research that informs our current understanding of this disorder.

In 1944, an Austrian born psychiatrist named Hans Asperger used the same term, "autism", in a study he published in German, to characterize a group of children who demonstrated impaired social interaction and rigid, repetitive behavior and pursuits. At the time, a World War was being waged that left both men unaware of each other's articles. Asperger's work remained virtually unknown until 1991, when it was first translated into English. Since then, the incidence of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has risen dramatically and led to wide speculation about the possible causes of this neurodivergence. Some factors which may influence this incidence increase include a broadening of the diagnostic criteria for ASD, heightened awareness among parents and pediatricians, earlier screening and greater access to services.

In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association published its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM V). Included was a definition that combined autism and Asperger's Syndrome into one classification, Autism

Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This diagnosis requires:

- Persistent deficits in social, emotional reciprocity
- Deficits in non-verbal communication
- Deficits in maintaining and understanding relationships
- Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests or activities

A 2022 revision to the definition calls for all criteria to be met to establish a diagnosis of ASD.

Current research suggests that ASD is a complex, neurodevelopmental condition and challenges the belief that it is a single disorder with a fixed cause. Some investigators are identifying different subtypes that exhibit distinct genetic profiles that might manifest themselves differently in children diagnosed with ASD in early childhood than those in later life. As the quest to identify subtypes of the condition continues, it's clear that much has been learned since Kanner wrote that article in 1943. The ASD umbrella has gotten bigger, and the research seeks to refine the diagnosis. What remains frustrating to most parents and service providers is that, despite so many years of research we have yet to find a cure for what we've struggled so hard to define as a disorder.

**What we have accomplished is to create an effective early intervention system that has made a profound impact on the children with ASD and their families. Rivendell's CORE Program is a proud contributor to that system.**

CORE, an acronym standing for Corrective Object Relationship Education, targets Rivendell's approach to inclusive education in a way that specifically addresses the DSM V's diagnosis of ASD. We help our students to learn at school by developing their ability to establish the relationships necessary to understand what school is about. All CORE students struggle to establish and maintain relationships. We believe that, by forming a positive understanding of

teachers and their roles, CORE children can begin to comprehend classroom experiences. When experiences are meaningful and are shared, social understanding takes place.

In Rivendell's preschool classrooms children learn to balance the pursuit of their own interests while considering those of others to develop a social community conducive to learning for all. Making sense of this dynamic environment is challenging for CORE students. They see what other children and teachers are doing and can make use of classroom materials, but they struggle to understand the ongoing relationships that form the basis of life at school. At CORE, we teach those ongoing relationships in a way that means the most to each child by getting to know and be known by them. We combine our knowledge of current research in ASD with effective educational practice to achieve the goal of meaningful and mutual understanding in our teacher-child relationships. While we work hard to deepen our understanding of this complex condition we are certain of one thing: who we are as people defines us far more successfully than the labels that are attached to us.

## Finding the Right School for Our Family

FABIO WEINBERG CROCCO AND VIRGINIA CUEVA

Rivendell Preschool Parents

**A**fter visiting many schools in the summer of 2023, we still hadn't found one that felt right for our first child, Nina, who was then 18 months old, and her brother, Tommy, who was on the way. On a hot, sunny day, we walked into a bright building in Gowanus and were greeted by friendly, welcoming staff. The school stood out immediately: every classroom reflected true diversity. We knew we'd found it. Rivendell would be our children's school.

We're originally from Argentina and Brazil and moved to the U.S. as adults, so we don't speak English at home. As first-time parents, we worried because Nina spoke only Spanish and Portuguese when she started Classroom 1. Nina's teachers and Katy, the school's director, had come up with a plan. Before Nina's first day, they asked for the words she used at home, wrote them down, and began using them in class. Our daughter quickly felt understood, and her classmates picked up her words too. That small, thoughtful step helped her find her footing in a new environment.

Nina is now in Classroom 3, where she enjoys choosing the work she wants to focus on each day. She has made close friends, and it's a joy to watch her personality bloom in Rivendell's inclusive environment.

Our son, Tommy, has just begun his Rivendell journey in Classroom 1. We worried about his first days and possible separation challenges, but Katy and Tommy's teachers guided us calmly, offered clear steps to prepare, and helped us pass that confidence to him. The transition was gentle; drop-offs improved quickly, and he's enjoying every minute. At pick-up time, he is visibly happy and serene.

At Rivendell, we've found a warm community that genuinely embraces many forms of diversity. We are happy that we will be part of Rivendell for many years to come.





## Bridging the Gap

STACEY BROSSIA

Director of Special Education and Evaluation Services

**W**hile working full-time as a head guide at Battery Park Montessori, I encountered a student whose experience profoundly influenced my dedication to educational administration and SEIT coordination. The challenges this student faced—frequent hospitalizations, inadequate services, and inconsistent educational access—made clear the urgent need for better coordination between special needs services and school staff.

New York City has long faced a significant shortage of special education service providers, directly affecting thousands of students with disabilities who depend on mandated supports for their educational and developmental needs. Key aspects of this issue include high demand, limited supply, service gaps, and the resulting challenges for families. Families often struggle to advocate for the necessary services and seek private providers—or managing gaps in their child’s support themselves.

Although the Department of Education and advocacy groups have made various efforts to address the shortage—including recruitment incentives and streamlined certification—the need remains urgent. Closing this provider gap is crucial to ensure that every student with disabilities in NYC has access to the education and services they need and deserve. This realization has shaped my role as Rivendell’s Director of Special Education and Evaluation Services, where I oversee the 4410 SEIT and Evaluation programs. My dedication to supporting students with disabilities has found a clear and meaningful expression in my work, as I manage efforts to ensure students receive the services they need to promote both their safety and academic development.

My dual perspective—as an administrator and as a parent of a child with an IEP—has reinforced the importance of collaborative, comprehensive support for students with diverse needs. I am especially grateful to play a meaningful role in the CPSE process, from the initial evaluation through to providing SEIT services. It is incredibly rewarding to know that I am helping to bridge service gaps the best I can and actively contribute to solutions for families and students. While a significant shortage of services persists, through my work at Rivendell, I am proud to be part of the process, striving to improve access and coordination for students with special needs.

## The Beginnings in Classroom One

ALI MILAZZO (she/her)

Class One Co-Teacher

**T**he beginning of each school year sparks a range of emotions for students, families, and teachers. Children often experience a mix of anticipation, excitement, and apprehension, feelings that coalesce and blend together. Through the fusion of these feelings, I’ve witnessed Rivendell’s profound and unwavering readiness to embrace this key transition with immense care and the deepest empathy.

For the youngest students just joining Classroom One, the beginning of the school year holds unique significance, as it is typically a child's very first experience in school. In early September, home visits over Zoom and classroom visits with caregivers' presence lay the foundation for children before transitioning into the classroom safely and independently, with teachers and new peers at their side. My co-teachers and I work together intuitively to follow the pace of the children during these transitions and communicate closely with parents and caregivers as our students become more comfortable with the rhythm of school life.

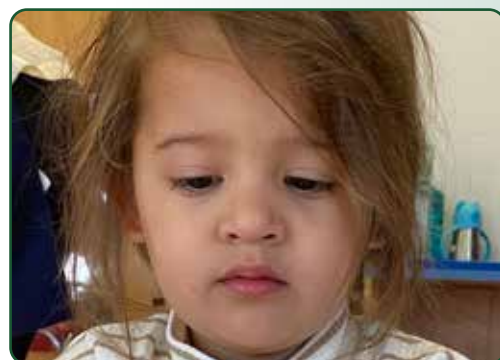
As families enter the lobby each morning, close collaboration and support between teachers, administrators, and caregivers help bridge the gap between home and school life each morning. Though initially there can be tears and feelings of uncertainty, a mutual trust between child, teacher, and caregiver begins to blossom and allows each child to ascend up in the enchanting elevator, and journey across the threshold into this new chapter - Classroom One.

As the elevator slides open on the third floor, friends travel down the hallway with backpacks and water bottles, independently or with a teacher's guiding hand, towards their classroom. As teachers open the door, friends are welcomed into a beautifully thoughtful space reflecting every child's place in the classroom. There, they discover each of their names on cubbies and chairs, a cozy corner adorned with familiar photos of families and caregivers, and an array of thoughtfully selected books and age-appropriate works placed attentively around the classroom. With patience and time, Rivendell Class One friends slowly begin to move through their new classroom with curiosity, comfort, and increasing autonomy.

Class One friends gradually begin to internalize the routines of life at school. They start to sit at the morning meeting, converse about the weather, and discuss the plans of the day. They learn to select a play-based work during work time and to transition to the table for snack time. Class One friends learn to care for our plants and class snail and enjoy song and dance time on the rug. They carry their chairs to form a circle and listen to a book together before beginning the journey from the classroom up the stairs to the roof.

There is much for these young minds to discover and absorb at school each day. To begin comprehending sharing and taking turns, to advocate for themselves and for others, and to learn to delight in working together and begin developing empathy for themselves and each other. A teacher's comforting song, sung one day to soothe a child missing their caregivers, is later echoed by another child who might be found singing the same verse to soothe and comfort a baby doll. A child learns the mantras "my turn, your turn next," and "teachers help," as well as singing songs about waiting for our turn and expressing our feelings.

Having spent four joyous years teaching in Class Four, I now realize how foundational Class One is for a child's successful transition into the beginning of school life. I am deeply grateful to join the Class One team alongside Tashua and Grace, who have warmly embraced me as their new co-teacher. They extend the same gentle kindness to every student who walks through the doors of Rivendell. Class One is a nurturing, creative, and magical learning space, and I appreciate becoming a part of the dedicated educators and young minds bringing it to life.





## Growing Connections Grows

JESSE HURLEY (they/them)

Growing Connections Teacher

**T**his fall I've taken the helm of the Growing Connections program here at Rivendell School! With the help and guidance of the previous instructor, Brigitte Yohe, we have worked together to honor the traditions and curriculum of this beautiful program and to add new, unique touches, such as works for the classrooms and weekly visits to each classroom for snail and plant care, that have deepened the program.

Friends are excited to come into our magical back garden, where they have been harvesting vegetables that were planted during the summer. They have seen and tasted fresh produce such as carrots, kale, basil, cherry tomatoes, and peppers. Through harvesting they have been learning to be gentle with the plants and to take what they need, a little at a time.

Visiting the classrooms weekly to take care of the snails and plants has been a great addition to the program, as this allows extra time for students to build connections with the creatures they care for and to help their plants thrive. During these visits we have focused on treating the snails gently and listening when they 'bubble,' because when a snail bubbles it's telling us to stop touching it and to put it back in its habitat. Learning to listen to our friends and the creatures around us when they say 'no' or 'stop' has been an important lesson this fall as we build empathy and understanding for each other.

Classes have been learning what plants need to grow and how we can help by giving them water, sunlight, soil, and kind words. Speaking kindly to plants helps them flourish, just as kind words and gentle treatment help children to learn and grow. We have also been caring for and tidying the garden as leaves fall by composting them. Friends have been taking turns adding to and spinning our school compost bins with leftover uncooked food from their classes to make soil for the spring.

As the weather gets colder, we will continue to watch as our plants and flowers change, mirroring the changes and growth of the children throughout the year. We will soon go on leaf walks to observe the beautiful changes in their colors, and children will learn the important concepts of alive and not alive as winter approaches.

During the winter friends will observe and explore change through experiments such as making mud, melting snow, and watching as plants die and trees go to sleep. We will continue to take care of our classroom snails and the greenhouse plants while noting the difference between the warm greenhouse and the cold outdoors. In spring we will explore the waking of nature, planting seeds and sprouting new life, and seeing how the garden and the children have transformed throughout the seasons. It's so exciting to be the new leader of the Rivendell's Growing Connections Program, and we look forward to the year of growth to come.

WE CELEBRATE AND SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT BY PROVIDING A BROAD RANGE OF PRESCHOOL, EVALUATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS. YOUR SUPPORT ENABLES OUR MISSION TO PROVIDE THE VERY BEST INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN.

## The Learning Curve

NANCY MAURO

Rivendell Preschool Parent

**O**ur daughter, Sasha, was diagnosed with autism just before she turned three. I spent those first few months berating myself for not “catching it earlier,” for assuming that both her language delay and relative disinterest in other children were just her own little quirks, soon to be remedied by preschool.

There’s a phenomenon that happens when you get this diagnosis. In a matter of hours, you go from having a sweet and evolving kid to having a child suffering from a life-altering disorder. In retrospect, the signs were glaringly obvious: how Sasha could name dozens of objects but not tell us if she was hungry, how she’d study a doll’s face and features instead of pretending to feed it, rock it or tuck it into bed.

My husband and I entered an undeclared a state of emergency. We made spreadsheets of doctors, speech therapists, ABA providers and insurance contacts. Naturally, when we enrolled Sasha at Rivendell, we thought of it as the crucial step in this urgent campaign. We knew of the school’s nurturing and intimate reputation, and that it offered the possibility of CORE, special education for ASD kids in an integrated classroom.

What the beginning of Sasha’s CORE program at Rivendell really did was mark the end of our state of emergency.

Her team was spearheaded by two special education itinerant teachers (SEITs). They quickly became our daily touchpoints at school. They put relationship-building at the center of her school experience and showed us it was an amplified version of what we did at home. At the beginning, our SEITs’ goals might have been simple things, like teaching Sasha to respond to her name. Today it might look like sustaining a two-way exchange with another child.

Sasha’s Individualized Education Plan allowed Rivendell to further round out her team with gifted speech therapists, occupational therapists and physical therapists — and that’s in addition to the classroom teachers, artists and musicians who bring enrichment every day. As the team formed, our fervor to ‘fix’ what was wrong began to de-escalate. The clear goals, the daily contact, and the team dynamics showed us we had an entire group of professionals committed to growing this child.

This past year and a half at Rivendell is proving to be not only a transformative experience for our child, but for my husband and myself. We’ve learned that progress can be quiet, that the brain is elastic, that parenting isn’t about constant correction but steady partnership.

Almost every evening, Sasha takes out a stack of laminated photos of herself and her classmates. She has a ritual where she names all the friends, teachers and therapists. We ask questions and she gives us snippets of conversations she’s had, fledgling anecdotes. Then she gives the photos a kiss and tucks them into bed.





## Rivendell School's Root System

JESSICA TAYLOR

Receptionist/Administrative Assistant

**L**ike the deep roots of a towering oak, Rivendell School's foundation is supported by the tireless work and dedication not only of our wonderful teachers and SEITs, but of a cohort of administrators as well. As the front door to school swings open, Rivendell friends know that just inside to the left in a cozy office, a small team of grownups - Katy, Jessica, and So - inhabit the Preschool office. This year marks Katy Hill's 11th year as Rivendell's Executive Director, and each morning she warmly welcomes families into school as they arrive. Katy's office door is adorned with loving notes and colorful drawings, many messages from the hundreds of children who have passed through our doors. So Lee is our new Preschool Administrator and Admissions Coordinator, yet she is far from new to Rivendell. So spent many years as a Rivendell parent and beloved substitute teacher. In an upstairs office nestled between classrooms, Stacey Brossia, our Director of Special Education and Evaluation Programs, coordinates the Rivendell SEIT program, oversees our evaluation services, attends CPSE meetings for children we evaluate, and spends time in the field observing at the many other schools where Rivendell SEITs are found.

Several years ago, we had the opportunity to create an administrative office around the corner in a bright and beautiful coworking space on President Street. There, three staff members integral to Rivendell's daily operations, work together to maintain everything from accounting and billing, to scheduling CPSE evaluations for children living across New York City. Mark Bianchi is our vigilant Internal Accountant, Cindy Asher, our Special Education Administrator, collects and organizes the required paperwork that documents diligent hours of service provision, and Andrea Mapp coordinates our Committee on Preschool Special Education Evaluation program. All of Rivendell School's administrators meet regularly to discuss, review, and consider the numerous innerworkings keeping our agency afloat. Each day, we collaborate with related service providers and the Rivendell evaluation team, to ensure every child who steps into our school is given the opportunity to receive as much support as needed.

As for me, this is my 12th year at the front desk. Prior to this role I was a substitute teacher and taught summer school at Rivendell as well. My daughter Olivia, now 22, grew up often coming along with me to work, where she spent countless hours curled up beneath my desk reading and coloring. My own work has evolved to include assisting families in navigating the CPSE intake process in addition to my clerical work, and best of all, seeing the lovely faces of preschool children and their parents and caregivers every day.

The Rivendell tree, with boughs outstretched and leaves unfurling, with teachers and administrators devoted to our mission, stands tall amidst the elements, and continues reaching toward the sun.

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
RIVENDELL SCHOOL STAFF AND TEACHERS

## Rivendell, Néé The Children's House

AMELIA ROBINSON

Rivendell School Parent, The Children's House of Park Slope Alum

*\*The Children's House of Park Slope became part of Rivendell School in 1998. First called the The Children's House at Rivendell School, it became known simply as Rivendell Preschool in 2005.*

I graduated from The Children's House in 1988. Now it's called Rivendell but not much has changed other than the name and location (ok...and maybe the new jungle gym on the rooftop, which replaced the little wooden splintery one nestled in the brownstone on 7th Street just above 6th Avenue). When I walked in on the first day I dropped my daughter Stella off this year and saw the neatly arranged shelves and wooden crayon holders, the hum of children at play, and the soft rhythm of teachers guiding small hands - it all came rushing back.

I remember independence - proudly peeling carrots all by myself at the little table; togetherness - our class pet snake slipping out from a circle of palms and disappearing into the backyard; imagination - the cozy book nook where I found comfort in the pages of storybooks, and wonder - the weaving loom that introduced me to the quiet magic of making something from nothing.



Most of all, I remember the teachers - warm, patient, and full of love that seemed endless. I can still picture the crystal necklace I adored on my teacher Aileen's chest as her gentle voice guided us through fluffy, colorful clouds during rest time. Over the years, I've run into my teachers in the neighborhood and giving them a hug feels like falling back into that same embrace of safety and care. Their guidance and support has never left me.

When I first brought Stella to Rivendell's Classroom 4, she reached for the Montessori works - the round wooden sizing pegs and bright primary-colored cylinders - and I could taste an instant wave of nostalgia. It was as if time folded in on itself. The quilt my mother made, replicating my classmates' artwork in fabric, still hangs at school, too! A reassuring bridge between generations.

Now I get to watch Stella thrive in the same environment that shaped me. She plays, learns, and builds friendships with the same sense of wonder I once had. Seeing her surrounded by love and curiosity is my greatest joy. Rivendell, née The Children's House, continues to be a sanctuary for children that nurtures a lifelong, loving, and curious relationship with the world around them. A true gift to the community that we are truly honored to be a part of!



# Friends of Rivendell School July 2024 - June 2025

## **\$30,000 to \$49,999**

The Nora Roberts Foundation

## **\$2,500 to \$29,999**

Thomas Tone

Newman's Own Foundation Fund

Frank Sica

Jyothi & Neerav Vyas

Justin Chan & Sarah Toy

Elizabeth Ott

Liz & John Libre

John Lutzius & Allison Cohen

Luisa De Gaetano & David Lucca

Brian Sica

Fidelity Charitable matching for Fabio Weinberg Crocco

Stefanie Hue

Yuan Gao

Vivian Chang & George Konaris

Jules Neuringer

The Moody's Foundation matching for Luisa De Gaetano

Lori & Carl Sussman

## **\$1,000 to \$2,499**

Kelly Prince

Mandy & James Wynn

Virginia Cueva & Fabio Weinberg Crocco

Liz Frenzt

Katy Hill

Natasha Rotella

David Bruhowski & Kristine Cangcuesta Family Fund

Elizabeth House

Rick Baer

Shelly Wolf Scott & Powell Scott

Stephanie Moreno

David Bruhowski

Emily Meyers & Lauren Baer

Quest Financial Services

Nina Etnier

George Hawkins

Julia Kang

Jenny Solomon

Eileen Ahasic-Bierig

Eliza & Craig Anderson

The Rivendell Board of Trustees

Jane Sloan

Bklyn Larder

Coleen McMahan

Cristy & Jackson Phillips

Cate Summers

Ann & Robert Winters

Anonymous

## **\$500 to \$999**

Zev Tendler

Eva & Milton Braslow Foundation for

Ethan Federman

Chris Rotella

Charlene Kellogg

Elisa Lundy

Lillian Yang

Robert Cox

Darnell & Eric Newsum

Megan Quellhorst

Jonathan & Polly Mukai-Heidt

Kathryn Appling

Julia Hirsch

Philip Cohen

Therese Bernbach

Gabriel Bowler

Kate Delacorte

Michael Federman

Sybil Hannah

Yaryna Hritzkiw

Mary Dixie Carter & Stephen Kempf

Patrick Oh & Haejung Kang

Morgan Stanley matching for

Patrick Oh

Andrew Park

Proscky & Rosenfeld LLP, CPA's

Kate & Kabir Singh

Law Offices of Regina Skyer

## **\$250 to \$499**

Carolyn Hsu & Derek Djeu

Leigh Grimner

Catherine Vaughan

Logan Hirsch

Theresa Salvanti

Lissy Vomacka

Rosalie V. Woodside

Ran Zheng

Patricia Benson

Beth Archer & Alex Dolgonos

Charlotte Buck

Josh Greenman

Carol Kolins

Elsa Butler & Andrew Bogart

Valerie Chin

Elizabeth Amory

Weikhai Ang

Heidi Baumann

Virginia Cueva

Pat & Randy Krumm

Dr. William & Lynn Meyers in Honor of

Beatrice Meyers-Baer

Lisa & Jonathan Sack

Linda & Jerry Schick

Sally Stutz

## **\$100 to \$249**

Lisa Tsang

Amy Lu & Charles Greer

Karen Li

Heather Brookshire

Susan Strebel

Catherine Bennett

Soyeon Kim

Julia Tung & Tongwei Liu

Gale Kaufman & Michael van Biema

Rachel Tenney

Timothy Lee

Aileen Thurber

Anna Poe-Kest

Jeanne Alter in memory of John Woodside

Alison Baer

Sarah Bevington & Fred Folmer

Jenny Burns

Tracy & Francois Cabanis

Martha Restrepo & Guillermo Cadena

Liza El-Salahi Arnold

Robert Fenster

Kara Friedman

Patricia Gaffney

Nan Gold

Zailoon & Newton Jagdeo

Marin Levy

Chris Lin

Megan Mahle

Deanna Carlisle Moss

Richard Schloss, Kathleen Edwards & Violet Schloss

Erika Schultz

## **Up to \$99**

Amy Stevens

Dale & Robert Truding in Honor of Beatrice Meyer-Baer

Lincoln Restler

Janelle Reid

Elizabeth Adkisson

Leslie Bradford

Haley Gottlieb

Katie Crile & Aaron Mason

Madeline Orton-Ballen

Lois & Barry Ostrow

Nicolette Sorensen

Brigitte Yohe

Ellen France

Janet Weeks

Margaret Haskett

Julie Wood & Alissa Ginsberg

Lindsay Butler

Judith B. Demeno

Aimee Silverman

## **With Thanks**

We thank BKLYN Larder, Federman Steifman, LLC, Shelly Wolf Scott and Mandy Wynn for their generous in-kind contributions to Rivendell School



## Rivendell School

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michael Federman, Co-President  
Julian Rampelmann, Co-President  
Yabome Casper, Secretary  
Luisa De Gaetano, Treasurer

Kathryn Appling  
Brian De Pasquale  
Darnell Newsum  
Mandy Wynn

### ADVISORY BOARD

Justin Chan  
Vivian Chang

### EX OFFICIO

Katy Hill,  
Executive Director

Stacey Ann Brossia,  
Director of Special  
Education and Evaluations

## WE REMEMBER

*Johnny Carrillo,  
Rivendell's first and for so many  
years our building superintendent,  
died of congestive heart failure  
on November 7, 2025.*

*He was deeply invested in  
his work and Rivendell.  
Those who knew him  
will not forget his spirit.*



## Become a Friend of Rivendell

Your contributions to Rivendell School  
can be made by check or PayPal  
([rivendellnyc.org/donate](http://rivendellnyc.org/donate)).  
All contributions are fully tax deductible.



## Dear Friends

Continued from page 1

Rivendell when you learned about its impact?

No matter the path, those who find their way here have something significant in common. Rivendell supporters are part of the historic and ongoing movement that started many years ago when parents and educators demanded educational rights for all children, no matter their age or learning needs. But today's threats to those rights, and to the concept of diversity itself, are staggering. While underfunding has been the obstacle of the last decade, Rivendell's very mission is threatened by efforts to dismantle the Federal Department of Education and thus weaken accountability for the protections provided under the 1975 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

These are challenges that can't be ignored and will not distract us from our mission. We recognize and celebrate the unique perspectives and characteristics that every person brings to the table to share and will always believe fervently that diversity, and the opportunity to learn to get along with a wide variety of people, has lasting benefits for everyone.

Join us to celebrate Rivendell's 30th anniversary with conviction by supporting its programs and services. Your contributions are needed now more than ever.

Very best wishes,

Katy Hill

[katy.hill@rivendellnyc.org](mailto:katy.hill@rivendellnyc.org)



VISIT OUR WEB SITE  
[www.rivendellnyc.org](http://www.rivendellnyc.org)

WELCOME TO  
**Rivendell School**  
A FOCUS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD  
277 Third Avenue • Brooklyn, NY 11215



WE CELEBRATE AND SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT  
BY PROVIDING A BROAD RANGE OF PRESCHOOL, EVALUATION  
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.