

SPEAKING OUT!



SUMMIT
SPEECH
SCHOOL
AT THE FM KIRBY CENTER

Founded in 1967 to serve New Jersey's children who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families

SUMMER 2023

Congratulations to the Class of 2023!

On June 15th, 7 Preschoolers were honored in a graduation ceremony at the School. Families and teachers gathered in-person to celebrate this milestone. Executive Director, Mary Baumont, Board Chair, William Bori and Board Vice Chair, Christine Preston distributed the diplomas to the Class of 2023.



Emma



Marc



Gerson



Stephanie

Not pictured **Nirvi, Jared, and Ruya**

Speaking Out!

Summer 2023

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In Memoriam

Thomas D. Sayles, Jr.
Walter V. Shipley

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Ray Dorso, MSW
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Pediatric Audiologist

Heather Freeman, M.A.
Itinerant Mainstream Support
Coordinator

Nancy V. Schumann, CCC-SLP
LSL Cert. AVT
Parent Infant Coordinator

Laurie Smith, MS CCC-SLP
Preschool Coordinator

Our sincere appreciation to Paul Lavenhar of PL Communications for his generous donation of design and production of the school's newsletter.

Speaking Out is a publication of the Development Office. Every effort for accuracy has been made. We apologize for any errors or omissions.

Editor: Ellen Tepper
etepper@summitspeech.org
www.summitspeech.org

New Executive Director

Ray Dorso has worked in public education for 27 years. Ray began his career as a School Social Worker and then supervised Child Study Teams and Alternative Education programs. For the past 14 years he has been a Director of Special Services. In this capacity, he has initiated the development of a variety of evidenced based programs. He has created programs for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Intellectual Disabilities, Transition programs and Alternative Education programs. Ray has also developed comprehensive K-12 reading intervention programs based on the science of reading. Ray has extensive experience in preschool education and is trained in two state approved curricula. He wrote the preschool grant that enabled Egg Harbor Township School District to receive 2.8 million dollars in funding.



His mindset for each initiative is to ensure that all students have what they need to maximize their potential. Ray is committed to ensuring that all children and families receiving services through Summit Speech School have access to exceptional programming. Ray is excited to join the talented staff at Summit Speech School and to be a part of a team that sets the standard for Listening and Spoken Language.

Personally, Ray has been married to his wife Kathy, a third grade teacher, for 24 years. His daughter, Brianna, is 23 years old and is beginning a career in Music Therapy. His son, Shayne, is 20 and will be a junior studying Computer Science.

Thank You For Your Leadership



The Board bids farewell to Summit Speech School's retiring Executive Director, Mary Baumont, and expresses its deepest gratitude. Mary's extensive and varied experience in deaf education and, most recently, her leadership roles as the Coordinator of the School's largest program, the Itinerant Mainstream Support Program and eventual move to Executive Director, demonstrate her dedication and competence in the field. The Board thanks Mary for her leadership in Listening and Spoken Language (LSL). She has continued to bring the School to the next level in 21st century deaf education, ensuring best practices in LSL for her staff, students and families. Professional development remained a key focus throughout her tenure, building a robust staff to lead New Jersey's deaf and hard of hearing community. Ever focused on family empowerment and education, the School's families remained engaged even throughout the difficult period of remote education. Under her leadership, the School's Parent Infant Program has continued to find new ways of reaching out to families, especially Spanish speaking families. She has continually recognized the importance of harnessing technology to positively affect all aspects of education. From a business perspective, Mary has also focused on reinforcing the school's sustainability with a launch of the School's Endowment Campaign, "Listen. Speak. Succeed." To date, the School has raised an additional \$2M to ensure its programs will flourish far into the future.

Over the last year, Mary, along the School's Board, staff and key stakeholders, developed a road map to ensure a healthy and seamless transition to our new Executive Director, as well as a successful and stable future in serving all of our students, from infancy through high school. We wish Mary well on her retirement as she joins her husband, François on their next chapter and continued success and memory making with their daughters, Lucy and Monique.

Tips For Parents From Shelly Ozdamar, AUD, CCC-A

Making sure your child wears his/her hearing device all waking hours is very important. Here is why:

He/she needs to have consistent input of sound which helps the brain develop. This is very important birth-3 years. Brain pathways may not develop normally when the input is inconsistent.

Much of language is “caught” in a child’s environment and not necessarily taught. Your child’s listening bubble is smaller than children with normal hearing. Even with hearing devices, his/her hearing is not restored to normal, therefore it is crucial he/she use their hearing devices all waking hours. This will optimize your child’s chances of “catching” spoken language that occurs around him/her. This is necessary for growth in his/her understanding and use of verbal language.

It is also very important to listen to your child’s hearing devices every morning to make sure they are working, and there is no distortion. If you are unsure how to do this, ask his/her audiologist.

Parents need support and speaking to other parents who are going through what they are going through can be a tremendous help. The following are different Facebook Groups one can join to obtain useful information as well as support while raising their child with hearing loss:

- *Parents of Children with Hearing Loss-NJ*
- *Parents of Hearing Impaired Children*
- *Parents of Children with Cochlear Implants*
- *Parents of Teens with Cochlear Implants*
- *Cochlear Implant Parts Swap USA/CAN- (people sell at much lower cost or give away parts and accessories for different cochlear implants)*

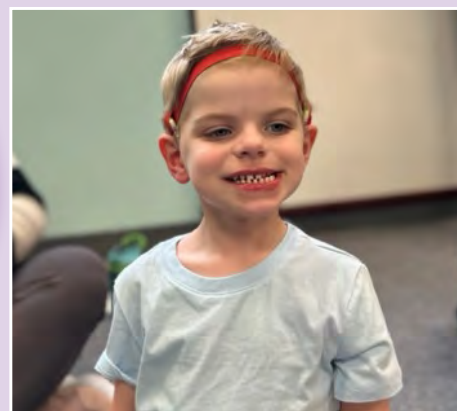
Thank you to everyone who came out to join us for Summit Speech School’s Family Fun Day held on Saturday, May 20, 2023. It was wonderful to see so many alumni and current families.



Jordan B. from the Parent Infant Program and his Dad were all smiles



Itinerant Mainstream Support students Manny and Noah enjoying the “Amazing Race”



Preschooler Jack B.



Preschooler Donald B. had a wonderful time at the face painting station

33rd Annual Spring Benefit

Summit Speech School's much loved Annual Spring Benefit luncheon was held on Tuesday April 25, 2023, at Canoe Brook Country Club. The afternoon was filled with joy and support for Summit Speech School.

This year, the event honored two Summit Speech School staff members; Mary Baumont and Elfie Eisman. Mary has positively impacted the lives of Summit Speech School students in many roles at the School, most notably as Executive Director (see page 2). Elfie has been part of the Parent Infant team of professionals since 1985. Their tireless dedication on behalf of the children of Summit Speech School will be deeply missed.

Our family speakers were alumna, Carly Skibinski and her mom Renee. Renee played a pivotal role in helping Carly learn to speak and advocate for herself in her early years. In addition, Renee served as Vice Chair on the Board of Trustees and she was also on the Spring Benefit Committee and chaired the event in 2003. Carly graduated early from Western New England University with a major in pre-medicine and then decided to enter the field of nursing. Carly then graduated from Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg, NJ. Today, Carly is a nurse at Hunterdon Medical Center in New Jersey. Carly credits her successes with the foundational support from SSS.



Family Speakers Renee and Carly Skibinski

The keynote speaker was Stacy Lilien, President of *LoveShackFancy*. With nearly twenty years in the retail industry, she's spent time learning the ins and outs and seeing firsthand how this space has evolved. She began her journey at Syracuse University where she graduated with a degree in Fashion Merchandising in 2003 and today serves as President of *LoveShackFancy*.

The event netted over \$100,000 thanks to our generous sponsors, the Spring Benefit Committee volunteers, family speakers, and all of the attendees and auction participants.

Thank you!



33rd Annual Spring Benefit Committee (top row left to right: Marla Kearney, Samantha Barbieri, Andrea Braff, Maggie Reilly middle row left to right: Kathy Plump, AJ Dansky, bottom row left to right: Kristen Lisacchi, Elise Garfinkel, Miranda Meyers, Kathy Mangano)



Keynote Speaker, Stacy Lilien, President of LoveShackFancy

Summit Speech School's 33rd Annual Spring Benefit

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Pampered Chef - Maggie Reilly

Kay & Brian Preston



Board Vice Chair, Christine Preston with Spring Benefit Committee member Maggie Reilly and friends



Former Spring Benefit Committee Chair, Michele Hedley and friends



Staff Member and Spring Benefit Committee member, Kathy Mangano and friends



Alumna and Spring Benefit Committee member, AJ Dansky, served as the event's Master of Ceremonies



Nancy Schumann, Parent Infant Program Coordinator



Co-Honoree and former Executive Director, Mary Baumont with Board Chair, William Bori



Co-Honorees Mary Baumont and Elfie Eisman with current and former Summit Speech School staff

SAVE THE DATE



3rd Annual Golf Outing

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Maplewood Country Club

\$350 per Golfer (or \$1,325 for Foursome):

11:30am Registration & Lunch
1:00pm Shotgun Start (18-hole scramble)
5:30pm Cocktail Hour
6:30pm Buffet Dinner & Award Ceremony

\$150 for Cocktail Hour & Dinner Only

Opportunities to win prizes in our Silent Auction and Grand Raffle

Sponsorships also available!



Register at:

SSSGolf.GiveSmart.com



Varun Venkiteswaran, SSS class of 2015, will be starting 7th grade this September at CrossRoads South Middle School in South Brunswick. During the 2022-2023 school year, Varun's class art work was on display at the district school art gallery and was selected to be in the district school calendar for the 2023-2024 school year. In addition, Varun partnered with his friend for the Science Fair and won the award for "Best Original Award Topic." Their entry was entitled, "Measure correlation of echo on sound quality for Hearing Impaired and Regular Hearing."



Varun in 2015 and today

Will Cromarty graduated from Georgetown University with a dual degree in government and history (with honors). Will is currently a manager of health policy at the Biotechnology Innovation Organization, the world's largest biotechnology trade association, based in Washington, DC.



Will Cromarty

Itinerant Mainstream Support Program

High School Graduates in the Spotlight...



Sabrina is graduating from Metuchen HS and will be attending the University of Delaware in the Fall where she will be majoring in Marketing with a minor in Musical Theater.

Garett is graduating from Johanthan Dayton HS in Springfield and will be attending Rowan University in the Fall. Garett is the recipient of the 2023 Union County Administrators of Special Education Award for the town of Springfield.



Garett today and as a child



Sabrina

Arul (*not pictured*) is graduating from JFK HS in Woodbridge and will be attending Rutgers University in the Fall as part of the STEM program.

Franklin (*not pictured*) is graduating from Woodbridge HS. He will be taking a gap year to further explore his passions and to work with his father.

Tributes Received: 2/1/2023 thru 6/30/2023. Gifts to our Tribute Fund are a thoughtful way to recognize an anniversary, remember a friend, associate, or relative while providing needed support for the children we serve. An acknowledgment is sent to the person or the family of the individual recognized. Your name and the purpose of the gift will be known, but not the amount of the gift. Your gift is tax deductible.
Note: Minimum tribute donation is \$25.00.

IN HONOR OF . . .

Giuliana Barbieri

Maria & Gary Hayner
Ozelle & Stuart Lesser

Mary Baumont &

Elfie Eisman
Ellen P. Ivey Bates
Dexter Garfinkel

Alice Rosenberg
Grace Gleba &

Her Achievements
Mary & Gerald Gleba

Helping school children to speak effectively

Margaret & Ralph Miano

Ryder Kaplan's Bar Mitzvah

Beth Kramer

Nick Kearney & Family

Kimberly Derr

Delia Preston

Alix & Ezra Jennings
Barry & Suzanne Nelsen
Christine & Michael
Preston
The Yousey Family

Tommy Raho

Christienne & Brogan
O'Connor

Stephanie Shaeffer

Trevisan's Birthday

Kim & Francis Wentworth

The SSS Teachers and Staff

Susan Mendillo
& Paul Schumacher

John Tompkins & JT's

Confections
Christine Loomis

Seamus, Emer & Tierney Vesey

Ann & Francis Lawlor

Kim Weinstock & Her Return to Teaching at SSS

The Wolfert Family

Maxx Wortman & Joining Jr. National Honor Society

Lois & Richard Wortman
Maxx Wortman
Deborah & Michael
Balesterri

IN MEMORY OF . . .

Herbert Buehler

The Friedel Sisters
Lori Gaudin

George Cromarty

Paola Belardo
Rebecca Mandell
Nancy V. Schumann

May Gold

Ruthven Farber
Hugh Emmett Mulligan, Jr.
Irene & Ed Langley
Patricia & Vincent Nascone

Grace Calcerano Rowe

Nora DePalma
Rev. Dr. Bruce D. Williams
Patricia Williams

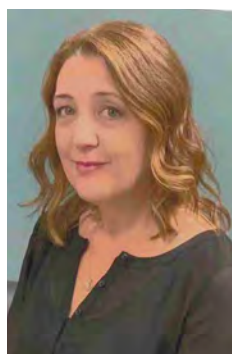
Welcome New Board Members

Rasmeet Chahil is an associate attorney at the law firm *Lowenstein Sandler* in Roseland, New Jersey. Rasmeet represents clients in high-stakes commercial litigation, as well as internal investigations and white collar criminal defense matters. Strongly committed to pro bono work, Rasmeet has obtained asylum for a father/son pair separated at the border and secured multiple final restraining orders for domestic violence victims through the firm's partnerships with *Kids in Need of Defense* and *Partners for Women and Justice*.



In addition, Rasmeet is involved in the local South Asian community: she has served on the board of the South Asian Bar Association of New Jersey and is currently a member of its Judicial and Prosecutorial Appointments Committee. Rasmeet obtained her law degree from the University of Michigan Law School and her undergraduate degree from Michigan State University.

Tracy Dansky is a commercial real estate professional who currently works as a bookkeeping consultant to several small companies. She lives in Livingston with her husband and has three grown kids. Her oldest daughter, AJ, is a Summit Speech School graduate.



New Preschool Coordinator

Summit Speech School has appointed a new coordinator for the Preschool, Laurie Smith, MS CCC-SLP. Laurie has over twenty years of experience as a speech and language pathologist both at Summit Speech School and in her private practice. Laurie received her master's in communication disorders at Emerson College in Boston, MA. She has worked with a variety of students, but her focus during her career has been with deaf and hard of hearing children. She has been the lead Speech Pathologist at Summit Speech School for the last several years and has helped previous administrators with the running of the Preschool.



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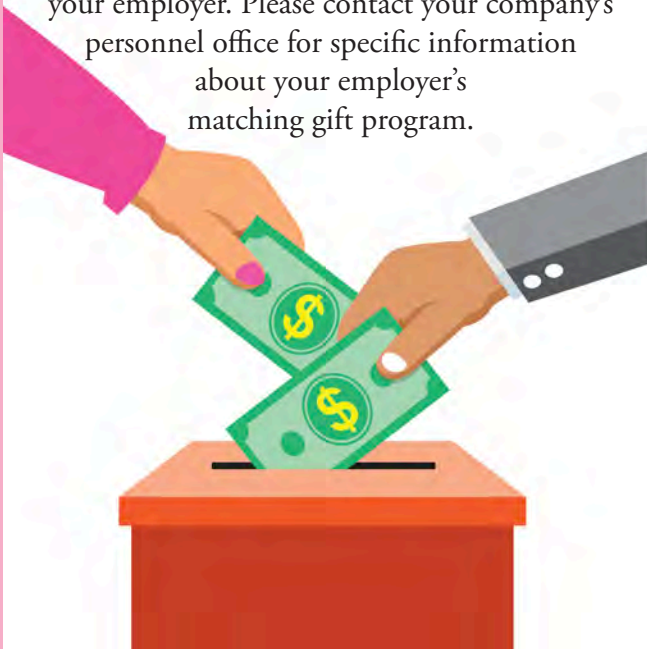
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Increase the Impact of Your Gift to Summit Speech School

Your gift to Summit Speech School could be doubled or even tripled with a matching gift from your employer. Please contact your company's personnel office for specific information about your employer's matching gift program.



Mark Your Calendar

Thursday, September 21, 2023
3rd Annual Golf Outing

Sunday, October 8, 2023
New Jersey Walk4Hearing

Wednesday, November 1, 2023
Listening Expo 2023

Tuesday, April 9, 2024
34th Annual Spring Benefit