



SUMMER 2019

ABBOTT HOUSE

Matters

The Healing Power of Gardening, Growing and Community Taking Care of Yourself and Others

Interacting with nature — just viewing trees, taking a walk or visiting garden-like settings such as a park or forest— can have dramatic therapeutic results in improving your state of mind, your blood pressure, your heart rate and your stress hormone levels. Over time, interacting with nature can lead to a longer life.

Studies show the great benefits nature offers for people facing challenging personal circumstances beyond their control that negatively affect physical and emotional health, including those suffering post-traumatic stress.

But taking care of a plant or a garden with guidance from a Horticultural Therapist goes a step further.

The process of watching something grow and thrive builds confidence, and instills a sense of personal

success. Working together, tending gardens and growing food, in particular, yield remarkable benefits. These include improvements in self-esteem, teamwork, social interaction, planning, problem solving and coping skills. Benefits also include a reduction in mental stress, fear and anger as well as a passion for gardening and community that may continue throughout life.

So be sure to include plenty of nature in your life! We want you to feel great!

Thanks to some very special people, the healing power of gardening, growing and community has come to Abbott House to help fulfill our mission of building lasting foundations for those we support.

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How Do You Build a Playground?

INGREDIENTS:

- ✓ You start with a vision to make the lives of traumatized children better!
- ✓ Add fabulous donors to make sure we have the funds to remove the old, rotted playground and prep the site.
- ✓ Mix a lot of cement and shovel an unbelievable amount of mulch.
- ✓ Get the wonderful folks at Morgan Stanley to pay for the playground and bring 125 employees to build day!
- ✓ Mix in another 125 awesome folks from the community to lend us tools, donate food and supplies and join

Morgan Stanley employees to sweat a lot in 90 degree weather, and:

- ✓ Add KaBOOM!
- ✓ After two months of planning with KaBOOM! and prepping the site, in six hours you create an inspirational and safe place for kids to play and heal!

We cannot express enough how grateful we are to everyone who was involved in big and small ways to help the playground become a reality. We could not have done it without you. Photos: Robert Tardio

To view more photos of the playground build visit our website



New Board Chair and Members Announcement



We are delighted to announce the election of Walter G. Montgomery, Ph.D., as the new Chairperson of the Abbott House Board of Directors. Walter, who became a Director here last year, was co-founder and CEO of Robinson Lerer & Montgomery (RLM), a New York strategic communications consulting firm established in the 1980s. Previously he was Senior Vice-President of Global Communications at American Express Company. After merging RLM with the London-based communications group Finsbury, he served the combined company as Global CEO for three years before retiring from full-time consulting.

In crisis management, corporate campaigns, litigation, regulatory matters, financial communications, thought leadership and internal communications, Walter has worked with over 200 organizations – corporations, entrepreneurial businesses, philanthropies and educational institutions. He has been on six not-for-profit boards, including ours, and is an independent director of two businesses. In addition, he has served the Village of Irvington on the Board of Education, Planning Board and Board of Trustees.

“For over half a century Abbott House has been helping children and adults meet severe life challenges and go on to lead meaningful lives,” Montgomery said. “Our extraordinary staff and leadership have made this organization a model of how to

work with people of widely varying backgrounds, including hundreds of immigrant children, all of whom face traumas that most of us cannot imagine.”

“Every Abbott House Board member, past and present, has given essential, selfless and inspiring support to this mission. Among them is my predecessor, Greg Mooney, a 26-year Director who, together with our other superb Directors, has for the past seven years in particular led us over difficult obstacles, putting Abbott House on a very hopeful path into the decades ahead. Greg has agreed to continue as a member of our Board, and his long-time close collaborator Scott Richter, another person of remarkable dedication to our cause, will remain as Vice-Chairperson. For the presence of both I am grateful indeed,” Montgomery added.

“In speaking of our Board I must also cite Joe Pastore, our beloved past Chair whose death this year saddened many people, including all who knew of his unique service to Abbott House. We miss him dearly and will honor him at our gala in the fall.”

Montgomery concluded: “I am truly privileged to be part of Abbott House and will strive to live up to the legacy that others have created here, while knowing that their contributions to the people we serve will always set the highest standards of accomplishment.”

Expanding Leadership at Abbott House

We are pleased to welcome seven new members to our 20-member Board of Directors. New board members include Miguel John Constable, Marianne Oros, Julie Peskoe, Sarah Schmidt, Brad A. Smith, Judith Stern Rosen, and Lisa V. Taitt-Stevenson.



“We are thrilled to welcome this talented group of community leaders to our Board,” said Walter Montgomery.



Top left to right: Miguel John Constable, Marianne Oros, Julie Peskoe, Sarah Schmidt Bottom left to right: Brad A. Smith, Judith Stern Rosen, Lisa V. Taitt-Stevenson



Abbott House cordially invites you to Loving Arms Awards Dinner

HELPING OTHERS LOVE THEMSELVES, NO MATTER WHERE

Tuesday, October 29, 2019 | 6:00pm – 10:00pm | The CV Rich Mansion,

Cocktails | Dinner | Auction | Raffle | Wine Pull | Ken Salaz, MC

Honoring

Dignity of Family Life Award Sasha Joseph Neulinger

At just four years old, Sasha became a victim of child sexual abuse. While he endured abuse from three separate family members over a four year period, he found the strength to break through the threats of his abusers, and spent the next nine years of his life testifying against all three of them, transforming from victim to survivor.

Sasha founded *Voice For The Kids* to facilitate a bridge between the experience of abused children and the adults who can do something to help them. Traveling the nation both as a speaker and as a filmmaker, Sasha's work educates while providing hope and inspiration to survivors of sexual abuse and the

organizations that are doing everything they can to help.

In response to his experience, Sasha developed and directed *REWIND*, an autobiographical documentary following his journey to confront, unpack and understand the multi-generational child sexual abuse that haunted him and his family. *REWIND* had its world premiere at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival and received rave reviews.



Friend of Abbott House Award Desmond Lyons

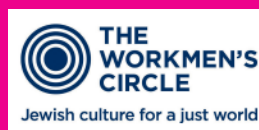
Desmond Lyons is a successful lawyer and business leader with over 20 years of experience including senior roles on corporate boards, business networks, legal associations and as an elected judge. He is also an active supporter of the Inner City Scholarship Fund, serving on the Lawyer's Committee.

Abbott House knows Des from his outstanding work as our corporate attorney and for his dedication in helping the Irvington community learn more about our mission. This past June, along with his wife and five children, Des helped to build a new playground at Abbott House.



The Dave Wade Heart of Gold Award Ann Toback and The Workmen's Circle

The Workmen's Circle is a Jewish social justice organization that for almost 120 years has created meaningful Jewish cultural programs, Yiddish language instruction, and multigenerational education – while working on the frontlines to champion progressive causes. They remain true to the vision of our immigrant activist founders, advancing critical causes, such as immigration rights and fair wages, by joining and amplifying the voices of like-minded groups and people in need. Their dynamic, diverse, and inclusive community of activists and thinkers is joined by a common vision: to build “a better and more beautiful world for all.”





you to attend er | 2019

ERE THEY COME FROM!

on, 305 Ridgeway, White Plains, NY
, Master of Astonishment

Dr. Joseph M. Pastore, Jr. Difference-Maker Award Mira Zaslow

The world lost Joseph M. Pastore, Jr. this year. Joe was a long-time member of the Abbott House Board of Directors, a former chairman of the Board and chair of the Strategic Planning committee. He was always there for board members and staff with kind words with lots of emoji's, and that gentle yet powerful wisdom. An educator at heart, Joe found inspiration and hope in the younger generation's will to continue the fight for social justice.

In Joe's memory, we honor his legacy by creating the Dr. Joseph M. Pastore, Jr. Difference-Maker Award to recognize a student who has volunteered at Abbott House and made a profound and lasting impact in the lives of those we support.

Abbott House is proud to present this award to Mira Zaslow, a student at the Hackley School, for her dedication to the children at Abbott House. Mira volunteers at our Tuesday evening Art Program, where she works with the children in our TRC program on fun art projects, but her passion for working with and welcoming immigrant children goes even farther than that. She collects Spanish books with the hope of creating several reading areas for the children so they can have a quiet, dedicated space to read books in their native language and feel a sense of peace.



Back to School Drive

When families in financial hardship face tough decisions, such as whether to keep the lights on or feed their children, things like school supplies often fall to the back of the line.

If preparation is the key to success, think of what a difference having the correct classroom tools can make. A child who begins school with the right notebooks, crayons, pencils, folders and other supplies is free to focus more on learning and less on worrying about how to get their homework done and keep up with their peers.

This is where you come in. YOU can make the difference in the lives of so many students this year!

We have lots of backpacks to fill! As a reminder, **we can only accept new, unopened items.**

Drop-offs will be accepted from 9:30am - 4:30pm at our Irvington Office (100 North Broadway, Irvington, NY 10533). Please inform the receptionist you are dropping off school supplies and place them in the marked box in the lobby.

Let us remember: "One book, one pen, one child and one teacher can change the world." – Malala Yousafzai

HERE IS OUR WISHLIST OF SUPPLIES!

- Heavy Duty Pencil Sharpeners
- Marble Composition Notebooks (please no spiral notebooks)
- Glue Sticks
- #2 Pencils
- Red, Black and Blue Pens
- Colored Pencils
- Washable Markers
- Picture / Word Bingo Games
- Picture Sequencing Board Games
- Memory Match Board Games
- Scotch Tape for tape dispensers
- Modeling Clay
- Pencil Erasers
- Rulers
- Kleenex Tissues
- Construction Paper (various colors)
- Random House Spanish/English Dictionaries
- Merriam Webster Spanish/English Dictionaries
- Teacher Attendance Books
- Coloring Books
- 13 Month Academic Desk Calendars
- Bilingual books on Math, Money, Time and Spelling
- Beginner Reading Books (English)
- Hand Sanitizer
- Backpacks (all sizes, grades and genders)

Healing Power of Gardening continued from page 1

Nathan Tovar, a senior from Dobbs Ferry High School wanted to do something for Abbott House for his Eagle Scout project. As we walked around the Irvington campus, he noticed two planter boxes that a group of Morgan Stanley Volunteers built for us last year, and he asked if we wanted more. His timing could not have been more perfect.

All year the children in our TRC program have been taking part in Something Good in the World's Earth School-to-Farm program, learning about the origins of food, health and nutrition, and sustainable living practices.

Thanks to Something Good in the World, the children have been going on educational field trips to local farms like Kitchawan, Hemlock Hill, Faraway Farm Alpacas and Glynwood to get hands-on experience about how plants and food grow, and to learn about the relationship between farm animals and sustainable agriculture. The children made maple syrup and butter from scratch, gathered fresh eggs, watched baby animals being born, learned about composting and even planted and cared for seeds in small pots that they took back to their rooms and placed on their window sills. The children were so excited to see their seeds begin to mature into baby plants! It wasn't long before conversations turned toward planting a garden right here at Abbott House for the children that would serve as an extension of the classroom curriculum.

When Nathan asked us if we wanted more planter boxes, Barbara Sarbin, the Director of Education at Something Good in the World, agreed to come up with a plan to use them.

At the end of May, Nathan and his team of volunteers installed the boxes and filled them with organic soil. Barbara worked with the children to plant their seedlings and other plants and herbs, which led to a lot of happy, proud smiles! Nathan also created signs to

identify what was growing in each box (corn, squash, climbing beans, tomatoes, peppers, jalapenos, cucumbers, onions and cilantro). Yum! It was important to Nathan that the kids were able to grow and care for food that was familiar to them from their native countries in South America.

Mission accomplished!

Artist Robyn Ellenbogen, worked with the children to paint handprints, hearts and other whimsical shapes on the plant beds. This tiny garden is slowly evolving into a magical space that continues to foster creativity and instill a sense of peace.

Thanks to the many helping hands who have played a role in bringing the healing power of gardening to the children!



Top: Artist and Volunteer Robyn Ellenbogen. Bottom: Nathan and fellow Eagle Scouts installing plant beds



100 North Broadway, Irvington NY 10533
abbotthouse.net | 914.591.7300



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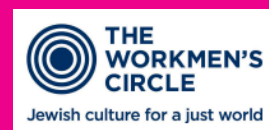
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