Summit Speech School – Five Decades and Counting

Summit Speech School opened its doors in 1967, in response to a nationwide rubella outbreak that caused more than 20,000 babies to be born with hearing loss between 1962 and 1965. May Gold, who had worked with the deaf through The Junior League in Atlanta, had recently moved to Summit and realized that the area lacked a school for deaf children to learn to speak. She placed an ad in the newspaper looking for parent interest, and the response was huge. With the help of the Junior League of Summit, Ms. Gold found a qualified Teacher of the Deaf, and approached Overlook Hospital to provide them with a pre-school space— the now famous “little blue house.” The staff was overworked, but deeply devoted.

Now Summit Speech School occupies its own 68,000-square-foot building with the latest in technology and a staff of highly-trained professionals. Through all those years, as technology has advanced, as the School branched out to serve infants and parents, and created its Itinerant Mainstream Support program for children in pre-school to high school, we’ve kept the Summit Speech School’s mission – and our commitment – constant: to teach our children to listen and talk, so they can succeed in mainstream schools and become active participants in the hearing and speaking world. More than 3,500 children have been served through our programs, with life-changing impact on them and their families.

Having just passed the 50-year milestone, we celebrate past achievements, and rededicate ourselves to continue our mission and ensure that future generations of children receive the tools they need to reach their highest potential.
Speaking Out!  
Winter 2018

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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.

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Let’s Have Some Fun! Our Preschool kids work hard every day, but they also like to relax and have a good time!

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Creating Welcoming Environments – Inside and Out

In spring 2017, the Cestone and Thompson law firm gifted Summit Speech School office furniture, which we gratefully deployed throughout the school building. Summit Speech School Director Pam Paskowitz also reserved some of the new furniture for a Teacher’s Lounge, a place she had envisioned for a long time, a place teachers could meet and work in a comfortable environment. Then, as it so happened, last summer, Janice and Jeff Mang, Summit Speech School parents and benefactors, called to ask what projects they could fund as a memorial to Jeff’s late father, Warren Mang. Warren Mang had a lifelong enthusiasm for gardening, and the Mang family thought it would be a fitting tribute to re-landscape the front of the school. All in, the Mangs agreed to fund both the entrance beautification and the movers and electricians needed to set up the new Teacher’s Room.

Heartfelt thanks to Cestone and Thompson and Janice and Jeff Mang for these two new welcoming environments!

Military Vet Gives and Gives again—Vet’s Flag Flies at Summit Speech School

U.S. Army reservist and school parent Sergeant Luke Romaniecki noticed that Summit Speech School’s flag was caught around the flag pole and tattered. He asked if the school wanted to fly “his” flag—a flag presented to him in honor of his service in Iraq for the U.S. Army. Now proudly flies high atop the SSS building.

Romaniecki’s daughter, Thia, participates in the Parent Infant Program, “Sound Beginnings”.

“In was really moved by this gift to the school from Luke and Laura Romaniecki. It is a symbol of our country and also a sign of appreciation for how we have served their little girl,” said Pam Paskowitz, SSS’s Executive Director.

In mid-January, as preschool students watched, workers from the Borough of New Providence Department of Public Works removed the twisted old flag and replaced it with Romaniecki’s new flag. Former New Providence Mayor John Thoms, who is also the Chairman of the Board of the Summit Speech School, said the municipality was pleased to be able to donate their time and the use of their truck.

Theia wears one hearing aid and one cochlear implant. Her father, Luke, was present at the implant activation event by Skype from Kuwait last August, when Thia was 14 months old.

Thia’s Mom Laura was at NYU Langone’s Cochlear Implant Center holding Thia on her lap while the event was recorded on video for national news.

“In the half year since receiving her cochlear implant, Thia has been able to enjoy listening to herself speak, and clearly has decided she loves to sing!”

We welcome our new Development Director Jerry Volk, who started in January. Volk has vast experience in the health related nonprofit world. Also, joining in recent months are three Development Associates, Nancy Tagle, Christine Mang, and Kathy Abbott, seen in the photo left to right. They are hard at work on the Spring Benefit, grant writing and working with the Board to expand our donor relations.

Development Department is all New!

Flies at Summit Speech School
Neil’s 16th Annual Charity Golf Event

The 16th Annual Neil’s Charity Golf Event will tee off at scenic Royce Brook Golf Club in Hillsborough, NJ on Wednesday May 9, 2018. Organized by our longtime friend Neil Kleinwaks, this fantastic event features a round of golf, continental breakfast, and a buffet lunch with cocktails, as well as exciting contests and prizes. And of course – all the proceeds will benefit the children at Summit Speech School. So gather your golf buddies and come on out for a fabulous day of fun. For more information, contact the Development Office at 908-508-0495 or ntagle@summitspeech.org.

Many thanks to Neil and all the players for their continued friendship for our children!

A Tip of the Hat to Those Who Make a Difference

Dancin’ the Night Away! On Saturday, November 4th, our Board of Trustees hosted an amazing evening of music and fun at Fairmount Country Club in Chatham. The Little Big Band, led by Billy Joel’s saxophonist Mark Rivera, kept a crowd of nearly 250 people dancing and applauding, and helped raise more than $160,000 to support our services for deaf and hard of hearing children. We appreciate the tremendous efforts of Event Chair Cindi Galicher and her colleagues on the Board for pulling together this fabulous event!

Shout Out to Community Realtors!

Thanks go out to the Sue Adler Team/Keller Williams Realty of Short Hills for the $3,000 award through the agency’s 2017 100th Home Sale Charity Program. This is the second year in a row that Summit Speech School has benefited from this wonderful example of community outreach. Our teachers and staff – and of course our children and their families – are so grateful to Sue and her teammates for their friendship!

With a Little Help from Our Friends – Summit Speech School depends on the generosity of our many donors to help us continue our services for deaf and hard of hearing children – and so we depend on the kindness and enthusiasm of our neighbors at C.R. Bard in New Providence. Every September a group of Bard employees gather to help us prepare to mail out our Annual Fund Fall Appeal. This year they processed more than 3,500 envelopes in less than two hours. Kudos to all of them for their outstanding spirit of volunteerism!

A Walk in the Park for a Great Cause – Sunday, October 15 was the annual NJ Walk4Hearing, a 5K event that raises awareness – and badly-needed money – on behalf of those impacted by hearing loss. The Summit Speech School team was out in force – teachers and staff, students and alumni, families and friends, all came to show their support. Several other teams were also there walking on behalf of Summit Speech School. Thanks to all who were willing to wear out a bit of shoe leather on behalf of our kids!

SSS Board member John Tompkins and his wife Sharron hit the green with Leslie and Mike Minsch.

376 PEOPLE ATTEND FAMILY FUN NIGHT!

We had another spectacular Family Fun Night on February 23rd here at Summit Speech School. It featured food, fun, raffles, and entertainment featuring the Family Fun Night regular, Andy the Clown. Kids of all ages enjoyed crafts and activities, our exciting gift basket auction, and reunion with former classmates and teachers.

28th ANNUAL SPRING BENEFIT

SAVE THE DATE

SUMMIT SPEECH SCHOOL’S 28TH ANNUAL SPRING BENEFIT LUNCHEON

DOORS OPEN 10AM
TUESDAY 24 APRIL 2018

HONORING THE SUE ADLER TEAM

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT NANCY TAGLE 908.508.0495 ntagle@summitspeech.org

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Quintin Arinzech and Emer Vesey, both age 12, ran into each other while participating in the Clarke Mainstream Summer Program this year in Northampton, MA. They discovered that they had both been buddies as babies in the Parent/Infant Program together at Summit Speech School.

They both loved the camp and have reconnected.

Olivia Clark, a 15-year-old graduate of our Preschool, is now a freshman in high school. In middle school, she was Student Council President, partook in cross country, track, and winterguard, volunteered as a clown at several local nursing homes, and delivered the Valdicottoran speech at her 8th grade graduation.

Now in high school, she is on student council again, is active in Colorguard, the Robotics team, and the Fencing team as well as being an enthusiastic artist and photographer. She and her family thank Summit Speech School for the wonderful start she got here.

In June Grace Gleba graduated with honors from Warren Hills High School in Washington, NJ. Grace is now in the Schreyer Honors College at Penn State University. The recipient of many scholarships, she is majoring in Communications Sciences and Disorders with a goal to complete a doctorate in Audiology so she can help change the way people hear the world.

Grace is proud to say that she is one of more than 3,000 children who graduated from Summit Speech School and credits SSS for her success in school and life. She also thanks Former Teacher of the Deaf Laura Joseph for the support she provided during her high school years.

Aidan Zagarola and Tierney Vesey, both 11 years old, were classmates in our Parent/Infant Program. They reunited on the baseball field last summer playing for their respective towns – Aidan for Cranford and Tierney for Springfield. They both agree it was a great game.
This Won’t Hurt A Bit!

Giving to Summit Speech School is easy, quick, and it brings about life-changing benefits for our children and their families!

The generosity of our friends and supporters enables us to provide state-of-the-art technology and teachers who are experts in their field and deeply committed to our children’s success.

Our overriding goal is to help all children reach their highest potential in mainstream schools, so they can become full participants in the hearing and speaking world.

Helping our children become independent, productive adults is good for society, good for our students, and and good for your heart!

Thank You!

Please join our cause. You can use the attached envelope or make a secure online gift at www.summitspeech.org/supportus. Questions? Call 908-508-0495 or email development@summitspeech.org.