



# Brooklyn Kindergarten Society

2014 Annual Report





**“Our quality early childhood program offers a win-win opportunity for program participants, their parents, and society as a whole. We are incredibly grateful to our staff, volunteers and donors whose support makes it all possible.”**  
*-Judy Keefer, Board President*

Dear Friends of Brooklyn Kindergarten Society,

As Brooklyn Kindergarten Society approaches its 125th anniversary year, we can look back proudly on the many thousands of lives we have changed positively over the course of our history. As we consider the coming years, we are hopeful that city and state political forces continue to focus on expanding the number of children in preschool programs but insist that quality remain the top priority.

Two major developments are beginning to take shape at BKS. We have received approval to open a new prekindergarten center in the Weeksville Gardens complex in Crown Heights, enabling us to expand our capacity for educating four-year olds by more than a third.

We have also begun moving forward with our family child care provider pilot. Designed to assist home-based providers to upgrade their early education programs through coaching and targeting financial support, this initiative will ultimately impact as many as a hundred additional young children in the next year. If it becomes as successful as we plan, this pilot could represent a new major direction for BKS programs.

Multiple studies dating back more than forty years have shown that huge differences in the course of children’s lives can be tracked to the quality of the programs they were in during the first five years of life. A high-quality program has been shown to double high school graduation rates, dramatically decrease teen pregnancies, reduce by half the number of children who are classified as “special needs,” and increase the likelihood of college graduation by nearly four to one.

Two-thirds of the children who arrive in our centers test below their age group norms and are at-risk, but by the time they head off to kindergarten, more than 90% of them are functioning at or above age group norms. These are the children who will do well in their school years and go on to live happy and productive lives. It’s why we do what we do.

One highlight of 2014 was the announcement that BKS was being awarded the Robin Hood Foundation Heroes award. We need to express our gratitude to the board of directors and all the employees, volunteers, foundations and individual donors who have supported the high-quality educational program at BKS for so many years. You should take great pride in this achievement and in BKS’ ongoing record of success.

Sincerely,

Judy Keefer  
Board President

James Matison  
Executive Director



## MISSION

Brooklyn Kindergarten Society provides high-quality early childhood education and family support services for children from low-income communities, ensuring that children develop the social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills they need to succeed.

## HISTORY

BKS was founded in 1891 with major funding from oil magnate Charles Pratt, and with leadership and support from one of the pioneer women’s clubs in the country, the Brooklyn Woman’s Club.

Over the next 122 years -- through major wars, multiple recessions and depressions, a tripling of the borough’s population, and changing perceptions of the need for early childhood education – BKS remained steadfast in its mission.

The lives of tens of thousands of children in neighborhoods throughout Brooklyn have been changed for the better because of the vision of the initial founders and the tireless support and dedication of countless volunteers and staff. While the neighborhoods and families that BKS serves have shifted with the evolution of Brooklyn itself, the goal of providing children from low-income families with the crucial support essential for a successful start in school and life has remained unchanged.

Today BKS is thriving with five top-quality, nationally recognized preschools serving the communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights and Brownsville – three of Brooklyn’s poorest neighborhoods. BKS is poised in the coming years to expand its capacity and expand its reach into the low-income neighborhoods in Brooklyn.



In November 2014 Brooklyn Kindergarten Society was named one of three 2014 Heroes by the Robin Hood Foundation. Robin Hood Board Member, civil rights activist and founder of the Children’s Defense Fund, Marian Wright Edelman, presented BKS with the award and a \$50,000 check for their tireless work to improve the lives of many of Brooklyn’s most vulnerable children through its high-quality early education program.

*BKS Executive Director James Matison, Marian Wright Edelman, and former BKS student Davida David.*





Children who graduate from BKS are ready for kindergarten and beyond. More than 90% of BKS graduates test on par or better than their peers as evidenced by the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.



BKS served 377 children (ages 2 to 5) in 21 separate classrooms located in five preschools housed in New York City Housing projects. Almost all of our children come from families of the working poor – 90% earn less than \$20,499 a year -- and a growing concentration come from first generation immigrant parents. With poverty and a lack of English speaking proficiency at home, BKS toddlers and preschoolers face severe risks for low academic performance and school failure. BKS strives to stop the cycle of poverty where it does the most damage—in early childhood. The earliest years of life are the most critical in determining a child’s future. A growing body of research shows that childhood poverty can cause lasting changes in the brain unless quality intervention efforts begin early.

The BKS program has a profound and tangible effect on the at-risk children it serves. While two-thirds of children entering BKS centers exhibit signs of developmental and language delays, more than 90% complete the BKS program on par with their peers in literacy and math.

The BKS program is strategically designed to provide academic and social enrichment that are rooted in best practices and are the hallmarks of high-quality preschools everywhere. Professional teachers, developmentally appropriate curricula, strong parental involvement, and links to the public schools the children will later attend, are essential to making a true difference. In fact, longitudinal studies show that early childhood programs that combine high-quality childcare with a strong family support component continue to make a difference in the lives of participants 20 and 30 years later.

**Sumner and Tompkins Children’s Centers are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Less than 10% of all preschools throughout the country have earned this accreditation and it involves an evaluation on over 160 separate criteria. We are in the process of applying for accreditation at our other three centers.**







## THE BKS PROGRAM IS DRIVEN BY FOUR KEY PRINCIPLES:

**1.** Children are exposed to intellectually stimulating environments so they learn the skills they need to succeed. BKS teachers understand how young children learn and develop. They see their role as facilitating the growth of each child in math, literacy, science and social and emotional development. BKS utilizes a research-based curriculum (the Creative Curriculum) with emphasis on language and literacy, using a multidisciplinary and individualized approach. Classrooms are well equipped with appropriate materials and supplies, making them inviting places for children to engage in active learning.

**Evidence of Success.** BKS is recognized as one of the top seven school readiness programs in New York City. We utilize the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) to assess the quality of teacher-child interactions and score high in all three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. BKS is pleased to report that our mean scores are far higher than averages in other large-scale studies of early childhood programs.

**2.** Special emphasis is placed on accelerating children's language, literacy and cognitive skills to allow BKS children to be on equal footing with children raised with more advantages. One of the greatest tools we can give students for success, both in school and in life, is a large rich vocabulary. In fact, vocabulary size correlates positively with greater reading comprehension and general academic success.

**Evidence of Success.** 100% of BKS four-year olds meet or exceed age expectations in Literacy and 97% met or exceeded expectations in Math. Children in BKS programs have caught up and are on par, or better, than their peer groups as evidenced by the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.

**3.** Family stability is supported. By itself, early education is not enough. To succeed children need the support of economically secure and physically and mentally healthy parents, which is why BKS has a family services team to provide support systems and make referrals to community resources. The BKS Family Services Team supports parents by developing trust and rapport with families and building and sustaining relationships with community resources to provide referrals based on the specific needs of the families in each center.

**Evidence of Success.** This year, BKS engaged 458 parents with one-on-one counseling and offered more than 120 workshops. Workshops conducted during this program year include: Achievement Gap, Child Development, Parenting Skills, Positive Discipline, Family Routines, Health Management (Child Safety/ Well Baby Care, Men's Health, Women's Health , Dental Health, Breast Cancer Awareness, HIV/AIDs Education and Reproductive Health) WIC, Literacy, Domestic Violence, Transitions, Mental Health, Reducing Screen time, Asthma. We have streamlined the role of nutrition and mental health consultants in our program, so that they are reviewing all family records as they relate to their functions, providing written reports, meeting with staff to give feedback and training, and meeting with families to make a plan of action.

**When low-income parents have been involved in their children's preschool program, students at age 19 are:**

- **40% MORE** likely to graduate from high school
- **35% MORE** likely to be employed
- **55% LESS** likely to be on welfare
- **40% LESS** likely to have been arrested

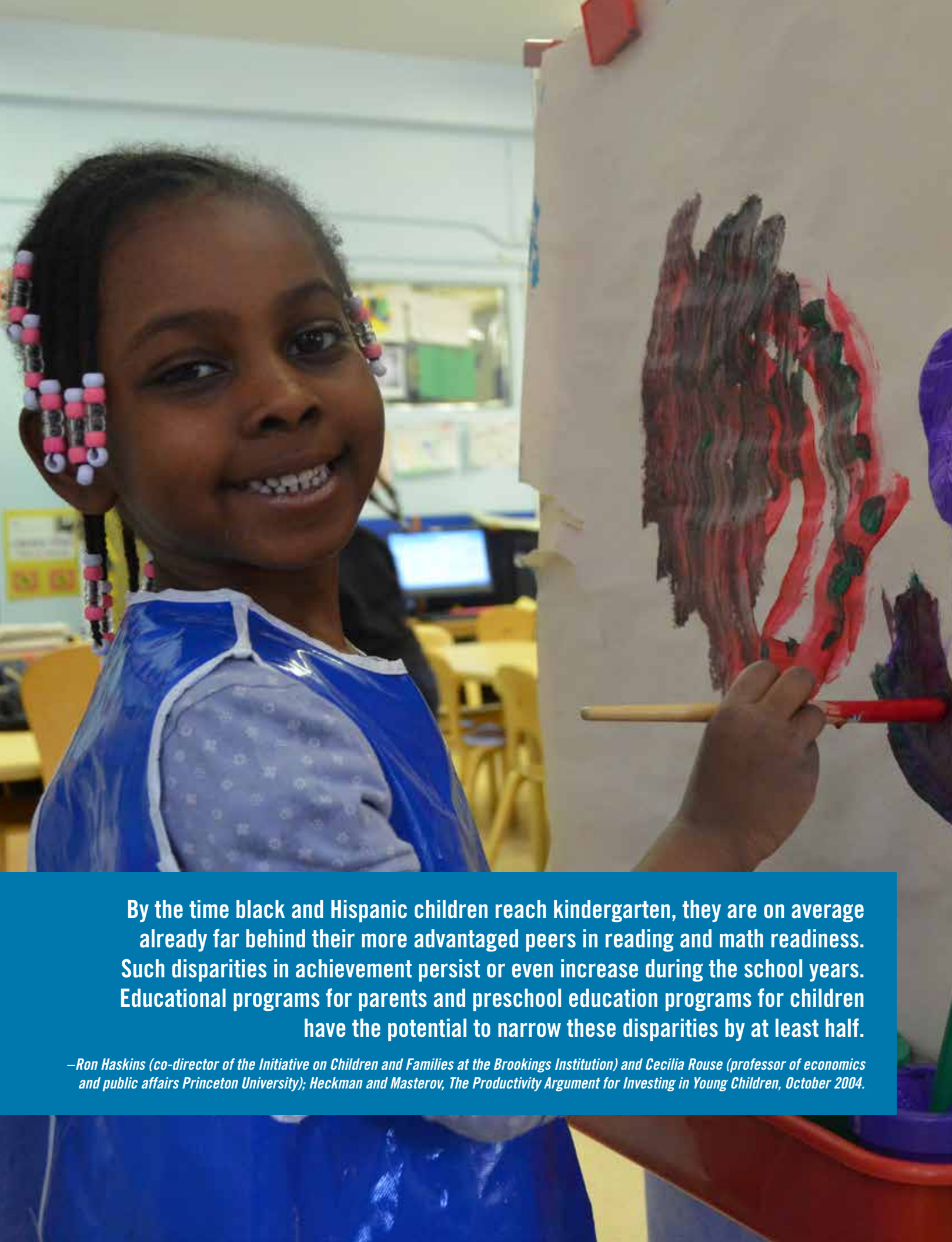
**Sources:** *The Abecedarian Project, High/Scope Perry Preschool Project & Chicago Parent-Child Centers*



**4.** Families are proactive and engaged. Family members are critical partners and fully involved in all aspects of the BKS program, including parent meetings, classroom participation, training sessions, parent-teacher conferences, weekly communication with other families, and informal gatherings. Special emphasis is placed on literacy to encourage parents to read with their children. BKS families obviously want their children to succeed. Therefore, BKS ensures that parents can take advantage of services and programs by providing them with information about opportunities and choices that are available for their children.

**Evidence of Success.** As part of the transition to kindergarten, BKS ensures that children have up-to-date knowledge of the opportunities for BKS graduates. Family services staff meet one-on-one with parents to ensure the children take advantage of the full range of educational options. This year BKS parents have been proactive and engaged in applying to charter and public schools well beyond their local elementary school which may not be the best fit for their child. By actively engaging in the charter school process parents are empowered to realize they have an important voice in their children's education.





**By the time black and Hispanic children reach kindergarten, they are on average already far behind their more advantaged peers in reading and math readiness. Such disparities in achievement persist or even increase during the school years. Educational programs for parents and preschool education programs for children have the potential to narrow these disparities by at least half.**

*—Ron Haskins (co-director of the Initiative on Children and Families at the Brookings Institution) and Cecilia Rouse (professor of economics and public affairs Princeton University); Heckman and Masterov, The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children, October 2004.*



### Case Study No. 1

“Kylie” had a very difficult time transitioning into the classroom. She was prone to tantrums, screaming, throwing objects, and putting just about everything she could into her mouth. We noticed that her mother seemed very frustrated and often lost her temper with Kylie. Since our main concern was Kylie, we began making adjustments for her in the room. We assigned a student teacher to “shadow” her during most of choice time to better support transitions and manage social situations. We started each morning talking about our feelings as a class, and encouraged Kylie to use more language to describe how she was feeling when she was upset. In the meantime, the teacher regularly reached out to Kylie’s mom highlighting her successes and giving suggestions for home.

After an evaluation, Kylie began receiving services including a Special Education Itinerant Teacher and Occupational Therapy. Kylie began to thrive – she participated more in lessons and stories; she controlled her strong emotions in an age-appropriate way. Her mother thanked us many times and told us she saw similar changes at home.

**Root Cause - Strategic Impact Research declared BKS as one of the top seven school readiness programs in New York City, after examining more than 1,700 programs in the city.**

### Case Study No. 2

When 3 year old “Adam” first came into our class his favorite, and only, word was “NO” which he would scream while throwing himself on the floor. Adam was having difficulty following directions, was unable to express himself and had extreme difficulty with transitions. After a few short weeks, the teaching team met to strategize on how to help Adam. The Center Director, teacher and family worker met with Adam’s mother and discussed his tantrums and language delays. Adam’s mother agreed to have him evaluated. The teaching team worked with the mother on strategies for both home and in the classroom. We began giving him visual cues like the clock and arrows to help with understanding what was coming next. Adam began receiving services including both a Special Educational Itinerant Teacher and a speech therapist. Adam quickly started to develop language. Transitioning became smoother and his tantrums decreased. Adam is doing great!

*\*\* Names have been changed to protect privacy.*



# YULETIDE BALL 2014

Since the first-ever Yuletide Ball in 1920, our event has been a symbol of the spirit of the holiday season, combining good cheer with doing good. Over the course of the past 94 years, the Ball has evolved as our beloved borough has, growing in size and popularity while maintaining a community spirit. Our pre-Ball dinners, graciously hosted by Yuletide Committee Members and friends of Yuletide, continues to drive the success of the Ball by keeping expenses down and maximizing the amount of money raised to support our programs.

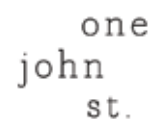
Our sincerest thanks to co-chairs, Amerika Williamson and Amelia Wilson and the Yuletide Committee and Friends of Yuletide for a truly remarkable 94th Yuletide Ball. Yuletide 2014 was another banner year – record number of dinner parties, record attendance at the Casino and a record number of tickets sold. This year's Ball was the most photographed thanks to one of our lead underwriters, One John St.

Not only did One John St help underwrite the cost of the Ball through their sponsorship, but they also underwrote the cost of sending photographers to over 29 dinner parties to document the pre-Ball dinners. We are so grateful for the support from our lead sponsors – One John St., Sweet 'n Low and TD Bank as well as many community businesses and organizations.



Photo by Brooklyn Daily Eagle

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Each year individuals and community partners contribute to BKS through in-kind goods and discounted services and by supporting our programs and special events as well as volunteering their time and talents. Without their generous support, BKS would have to spend its limited operating funds to cover many of these expenses. BKS is proud to recognize these generous donors and volunteers who have contributed time, materials, and services to help offset costs associated with running the Yuletide Ball and providing critical supports to our families. BKS wouldn't be here without their support!

## Yuletide Hosts 2014

Our deepest appreciation and thanks to the following Yuletide Committee Members and Friends of Yuletide for hosting a dinner before the Ball.

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Photo by Alicia Adamson

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\*Indicates member of the Yuletide Committee





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 Stephanie and Bob Scarperi  
 Margaret and Andrew Schilling  
 Vicky and Jay Schippers  
 Leslie and Andrew Schultz  
 Pam and Steven Schwadron  
 Denise and Robert Schwed  
 Clara and Aaron Sedlak  
 Emily and Rob Shamlan  
 Robin Shanus and Stephen Merkel  
 Lori and Jeffrey Shapiro  
 Jean and Devin Sharkey  
 Carla Shen and Christopher Schott  
 Sandra Sherlock-White  
 Colleen and Mahmoud Siddig  
 Jess Siegler and Sarah Condon  
 Jennifer Sinclair and David Schiff  
 Samantha Skey and Gregory Dillon  
 Paul Skinner and Sarah Tobin  
 Erin and Patrick Sloane  
 Lauren and David Smetana  
 Zaharo Sofianou and Thomas Plant  
 Laurie and Jonathon Soler  
 Richard and Mimi Somerby  
 Susan Sommer and Stephen Warnke  
 Dora Somosi and Marc Weinhouse  
 Sotheby's International Realty  
 Cristina Soto and Scott Sargeant  
 Heather and Chris Spadaccini  
 Tara and Matthew Sparks  
 Kersten Stannard and Jeff Panzo  
 Mary Stanton  
 Deborah and Jamie Stewart  
 Franklin Stone and David Wenk  
 Alexandra and Patrick Sweeney  
 Stephanie and Chris Taendler  
 Anne and Joseph Taranto  
 Karen and David Tayeh  
 Alex Taylor  
 Diana and Nelson Tebbe  
 Elizabeth and Alastair Tedford  
 Lara Temple and Alan Winchester  
 Trez Thomas  
 Anna and Justin Toumey  
 Meredith Townsend and Charles Homet  
 Anne and Mark Townsend  
 Laura Trevelyan and James Goldston  
 Andrea Turner Moffitt and Steven Moffitt  
 Chris Vecchione and Mark Petrinovic  
 Liza Velazquez and Timothy Milford  
 Anna Verdi and John W. Macintosh  
 Lisa Vetro and Parkins Burger  
 Kira Von Eichel and Jonathan Butler  
 Catherine and Jonathan Wachtel

Nadia and Christian Wallace  
 Michael and Heather Wanderer  
 Sue and Robert Wasko  
 Jamie Webb  
 Alicia Webb Scott and Michael Scott  
 Kathy and Bill Weigel  
 Erica and James Weinberger  
 Rhonda Weiner and Marc Zelanko  
 WeWork  
 Louise Whittet and Andy Scruton  
 Barbara and Timothy Wilding  
 April and Conway Williamson  
 Amelia and James Wilson  
 Vicki and Andrew Wittenstein  
 Jennifer and Josh Witz  
 Anne and Ted Wolff  
 Catherine and Peter Woll  
 Edward Wollman and Jane Herrick  
 Julie Yoo  
 Peter Yost  
 Tracy and Cory Zemba  
 Barbara and Michael Zimmerman  
 Amy and Marc Zwerdling

**\$250 +**  
 Kenneth and Diana Adams  
 Andy Albeck  
 Clinton Alford  
 Robert Ancona  
 Danielle and Benjamin Atkins  
 Diane and Mark Baker  
 Catherine Barber and Jonathan Whitticom  
 Alexander Barrow and Brooke Steichen Barrow  
 Edith Lillie Bartley  
 Michelle Becker and Chris Turnure  
 Pamela J. Bell  
 Robyn and Nick Bellamy  
 Elise Bernhardt  
 Brett and Paige Bilins  
 Blanc and Rouge Wines and Spirits  
 Bindu and Michael Blatchley  
 Lorraine Bonaventura and Mark Shilen  
 Dayna and Randy Brandoff  
 Louis Canady  
 Penelope Christophorou and Gregory Pitaro  
 Genevieve Christy  
 City Chemist  
 Jean and John Clement  
 Rebekah Coleman and Ian Rusten  
 Coleman Cleaners  
 Joshua Coughlin  
 Timothy Crowley and Tony Gibson  
 Cynthia and Richard Cummings  
 dig  
 Anthony D'Avella  
 Ann-Marie and Oliver Egan  
 Rhonda Epstein  
 EyeDrop Optique  
 Chelsea and Andrew Fabrizio  
 Alexis Fermanis  
 Sophie and Andrew Ferrer  
 Anne Greenberger and Phil Silverman  
 David Griffin  
 Katie and Joseph Haddock  
 Jane Hamburger  
 Katherine and Phil Humphreys

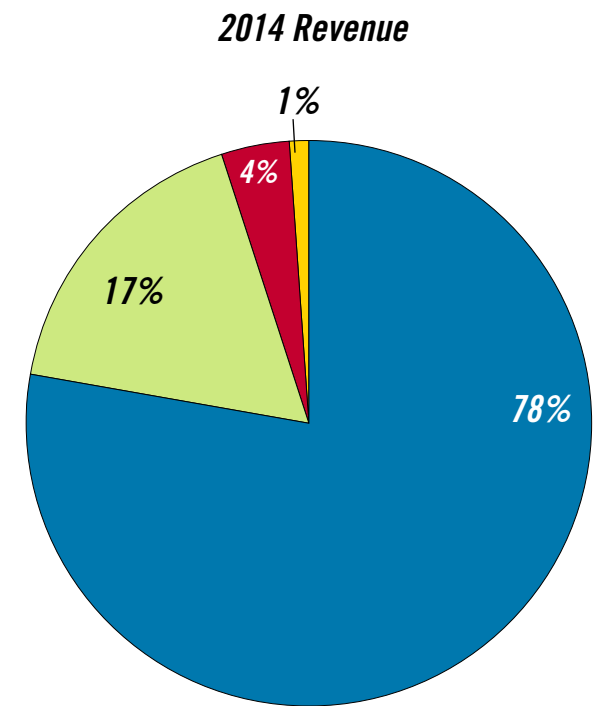
Pam Hutto and Kenneth Hochman  
 Yolanda Johnson-Vogelzang  
 Larken Kade  
 Felicia Kang and Thomas Rosenthal  
 Pam Kiernan  
 Tara Kinney  
 Susan and Frederick Kneip  
 Sarah Koch and Sloan Seymour  
 Jayme Koszyn and Thomas O'Handley  
 Carolyn Kramer and Alex Shapiro  
 Elizabeth and John LaBombard  
 Lauren Lambert  
 Emily Levin  
 Lucy and Jamie Lewin  
 Kelli and Perry Licata  
 Janet Liles and Andre Georges  
 Adrienne Lindemann and Steven Marks  
 Pam and Joseph McCarthy  
 Chirlane McCray and The Hon. Bill DeBlasio  
 Michael Towne Wines  
 Cate and Jake Mills  
 Daniel Mirman  
 Monvoir Calligraphy & Fine Art  
 Movers not Shakers  
 Erin Murray  
 Nightingale 9  
 Enrico Palazzo  
 Park Slope Copy  
 Matthew Pilkington and Miranda Magagnini  
 Stephanie Pinto  
 Jane Platt and Thomas Radley Johnson  
 Mark Procopio  
 ProHealth  
 Rosanne Pugliese and William Dudine III  
 Meredith Quick and Peter Barber  
 Sid Ray and Philip Kearns  
 Wendy Reitmeier and Tom Bettridge  
 Ilise and Josh Reznick  
 Maxwell Smith & Katherine Rodgers-Smith  
 Elena and Steve Rosenblum  
 Mary Ellen Ross and Vern Bergelin  
 Julie and David Ross  
 Jim and Eliza Rossman  
 Martha and Robert Rubin  
 Liz Scheines and Ronald Elton  
 Allison and Jonathan Schippers  
 Nancy Schuh  
 Terri Seligman and George Hagan  
 Sheila Buchholtz Scharfman Fund  
 Smart Sign  
 Karen Snow and Timothy Bunnell  
 Howard Spector  
 Henry Stanton  
 Alexa and Marc Suskin  
 Joanna Swomley and Sanford Litvack  
 Tango  
 Colleen Tierney and William Solmo  
 Waste Management  
 Waterfront Wines  
 Rebecca Welsh and Matthew Harrigan  
 Susan Werbe and Robert Hermann  
 West Elm  
 Heather White  
 Timothy Wyant  
 Eleanora Yaggy

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Year Ended June 30, 2014

**REVENUES AND SUPPORT**

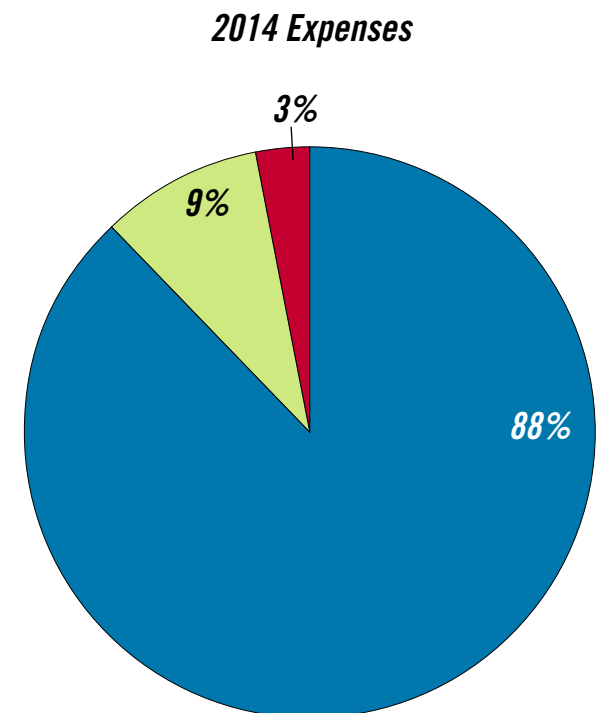
<i>Government Grants</i>	4,819,612
<i>Foundations &amp; Individuals</i>	1,083,328
<i>Parent Fees and Tuition</i>	213,791
<i>Interest and Dividends</i>	47,006
<i>In-Kind Contributions</i>	74,983
<b>Total Revenues &amp; Support</b>	<b>6,238,720</b>



**EXPENSES**

**Program Expenses**

<i>Personnel Costs</i>	3,892,765
<i>Classroom Items</i>	489,944
<i>Food &amp; Kitchen Supplies</i>	194,371
<i>Occupancy</i>	204,172
<i>IT, Office &amp; Telephone</i>	74,383
<i>Professional Fees</i>	36,987
<i>In-Kind Volunteer Services</i>	74,983
<i>Child &amp; Parent Activities</i>	41,367
<i>Training &amp; Development</i>	64,199
<i>Miscellaneous Expenses</i>	9,932
<i>Program Expenses</i>	5,083,103
<i>Management and General Expenses</i>	548,925
<i>Fundraising Expenses</i>	161,605
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>5,793,633</b>



**Assets and Liabilities**

**Net Assets**

<i>Unrestricted</i>	3,220,358
<i>Temporarily Restricted</i>	227,650
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>3,448,008</b>
<i>Total Liabilities</i>	284,549
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>3,732,557</b>

\*\*Includes unrealized gains and losses





**In economic terms, high-quality preschool has returned up to \$17 on every \$1 invested.**

*—Perry Preschool Longitudinal Study*

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*Judy Keefer, President*

*Fran Bernstein, Treasurer*

*William Fulbrecht, Secretary*

*Maud Andrew*

*Vincent Baker*

*Christine Benson*

*Genevieve Christy*

*Mary Crowley*

*Cynthia Cummings*

*Michelle Defossett*

*Melinda Karp*

*Sheila Kennedy*

*Gloria Lanza-Bajo*

*Hope Lesane*

*Katherine “Drew” McGhee*

*Harry Shulman*

*Jeanne Silkworth*

*Mary Stanton*

*Rebecca Yaggy*

*Bill Yates*

*James Matison, Executive Director*

## **HONORARY BOARD**

*Jane Hamburger*

*Janet Offensend*

*Dino Veronese*

## **EXECUTIVE STAFF**

*James Matison, Executive Director*

*Michele Newman, Vice-President Finance & Development*

*Amber Cartwright, Director of Curriculum & Instruction*

*Gwen McEvilly, Director of Family Child Care Partnership*

*Marcia Forbes, Director of Family Services*

*Kishor Belani, Controller*

*Yolanda Camacho, Senior Bookkeeper*

*Jeanette Croskey, Nat Azarow Director*

*Delores Mims, Edwards L. Cleaveland Director*

*Angalie Dasai, Sumner Director*

*Huguette Lareche, Brevoort Director*

*Marcia Thompson, Tompkins Director*

## **BKS CENTER LOCATIONS**

***Nat Azarow Children’s Center – Brownsville***

***Brevoort Children’s Center – Bedford-Stuyvesant***

***Edwards L. Cleaveland Children’s Center – Crown Heights***

***Sumner Children’s Center – Bedford-Stuyvesant***

***Tompkins Children’s Center – Bedford-Stuyvesant***

## **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

***57 Willoughby Street, 4th Floor***

***Brooklyn, NY 11201***

***718.623.9803***

***www.bksny.org***

***Follow us on Facebook and Twitter @bksny***

