



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 6, 2017

Media contact:

Aprille Russell, Director of Development

Email: arussell@bksny.org

Brownstone Brooklyn Celebrates Yuletide Ball

Supports Brooklyn Kindergarten Society Early Childhood Education

BROOKLYN, NY — Brooklynites gather for drinks, dessert, and dancing at the 97th annual Yuletide Ball on Saturday, December 9, 10pm at the Heights Casino on Montague Street. Yuletide raises critical funds for Brooklyn Kindergarten Society (BKS), a nationally-recognized provider of early childhood education for children from low-income families.

In its earliest days, Yuletide was a debutante ball for well-to-do Brooklyn Heights families. Today, Yuletide has evolved into a one-of-a-kind black-tie event. Forty-six pre-ball dinner parties will be hosted by over 100 volunteers in homes and restaurants before guests are escorted to the Heights Casino. This unusual format allows almost all ticket sales revenue to be passed on directly to funding BKS's mission and programs.

Since 1891, Brooklyn Kindergarten Society has educated the young children in Brooklyn's lowest-income neighborhoods. BKS preschools are located in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, and Brownsville public housing, and serve 400 children and their families annually. At BKS, children receive a high-quality early education, engaging classrooms, enriching experiences, and critical family services. This quality of care and education is transformative: two-thirds of the children entering BKS test "at-risk" for developmental delays, but 90% complete BKS on par with or better than their peers across socio-economic groups.

The City relies heavily on organizations like BKS to make wider access to preschool possible—approximately 60% of Universal PreKindergarten classes are held at private and community-based organizations like BKS. Although BKS receives government funding, that funding falls short of meeting the needs for high-quality early education. Private funding from foundations, corporations, and individuals closes the funding gap.

"As a mom of three young boys, I connected with BKS and the work they do to support and educate preschool-aged children and their families. BKS has served the most vulnerable children in our Brooklyn community for over 125 years, and we must ensure that continues. The Yuletide Ball is such an important fundraising event, I'm thrilled to be a part of it," said Paula Dunbar, Yuletide Committee Co-Chair.

About Brooklyn Kindergarten Society

For more than 125 years, Brooklyn Kindergarten Society has worked to ensure children from low-income families receive a quality education that cultivates the skills they need to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. BKS children receive full-day, year-round educational classes with evidence-based curricula and unique enrichment programs. These enrichment activities are a BKS hallmark and include chess, gardening, the visual and performing arts, horseback riding, soccer, yoga, and field trips. BKS family services staff provide counseling, referral services, and workshops to continue needed support beyond the classroom.

BKS is recognized by Root Cause's Social Impact Research Report on School Readiness as one of the top seven school readiness programs in New York City. BKS received the Robin Hood Foundation 2014 Hero Award, given annually in recognition of nonprofits providing transformative services for low-income New Yorkers.

Learn more about Brooklyn Kindergarten Society at www.bksny.org