



## COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

October 2023

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The theme of this month's newsletter is Wonders' efforts to grow and nurture the professional development of our educators and staff - one of this year's organizational goals. And while we ensure that our staff have an array of training experiences, the core of our work is the connected relationships our educators develop with the children in our care. These caring relationships enable Wonders educators to expand children's learning while they tune into children's moods, worries, and questions. The children in our care represent a wide age range and, as such, we know they will have varying degrees of exposure and knowledge of the tragedy and horror of the war in Israel and Gaza. The adults in their lives must serve as a safe and supportive resource, which is difficult to do when you may be grappling with your own emotions. [This NPR article provides some helpful resources on how to talk to children about the war.](#)

We center children in our work and in doing so, we are teaching children to recognize and know the humanity in each of us and in themselves. It is this focus that keeps us intentional in the present moment and hopeful for the future.

Sincerely,

Joanne Hurt  
Executive Director

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### Wonders Board of Directors 2023-2024

As a nonprofit, Wonders is governed by a board of directors, whose members bring diverse perspectives and expertise, offering strategic guidance, decision-making, and oversight to the organization. Their collective

commitment to Wonders' mission exemplifies the theme of "All Together Now." We are grateful to this group of dedicated community leaders!

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Advancement Committee

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Vice Chair, Finance Committee

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## Grow Your Own Initiative

### Hands-On Learning at Wonders

#### Launching the Early Learning Coaching Program



Wonders Early Learning + Extended Day believes that workforce professional development is essential to creating meaningful classroom connections between Wonders educators, children, their families, and colleagues. An essential component of the Wonders Grow Your Own Initiative is hands-on coaching and learning. This fall, Jacky Howell will launch this new program at our two early learning programs. Jacky is a former early learning educator, trainer, and author. We are excited that she will be joining the early learning leadership team in supporting our new and experienced classroom teachers.

#### Curriculum Development and Implementation



The Curriculum & Instruction Specialist is a critical position in our Early Learning programs. The Curriculum & Instruction Specialist oversees learning in all ECE classrooms and provides support, leadership and guidance to Program Directors, Assistant Directors and Teachers. Liza Pringle brings current research and years of experience in her work with our Early Learning teachers. Liza provides resources to teachers and families to support children's learning at home and at school. Working with the Early Learning leadership team, Liza oversees the implementation of the MSDE-approved early learning curriculum and NAEYC accreditation requirements.

[Wonders' Curriculum Corner was designed to provide additional resources to Wonders families, through quick-read articles that support continued learning at home.](#)



The Extended Day Instruction Specialist and Workforce Development Trainer is responsible for leading all efforts in creating, implementing, and managing initiatives that enhance the Extended Day school year program. These include the Extended Day Mentor Program, workshops and training, and the implementation of Second Step, the SEL curriculum. Gerald Bolden provides our Extended Day Extended Day teams with the resources and tools needed to enhance our play-based extended day programs.

[Click here to learn more about Second Step and to access free, specially curated resources and activities for families.](#)

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## Wonders Professional Development Consortium (PDC) News

Growing Skills and Knowledge

### Wonders Professional Development Day

On October 9, Wonders held a dedicated professional development day for our Early Learning educators and Extended Day educators in our DCPS programs. Topics included behavior and classroom management, led by Amy Eagan from Child Development Consultants, and building classroom community and resources for resilience, led by Jacky Howell.



## **Excel Beyond the Bell Out-of-School Time Conference**

Funded by a grant from Montgomery County Collaboration Council, the Wonders PDC will be conducting two full day conferences for the instructors in the county's Excel Beyond the Bell program. Wonders' PDC trainers will deliver training on behavior management, youth development, and planning and curriculum.

## **Working with Local Child Care Providers**

Wonders PDC offers training to regional child care providers and this week, we were contracted to conduct team building training for the administrative team at Georgetown Hill Early School. Wonders' PDC workshops and training sessions are accessible to local providers and educators and can be tailored to align with specific provider requirements and goals.

[To learn more about our Professional Development Consortium, visit our website.](#)

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## **Hispanic Heritage Month**

### Highlights from our Book Club

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, our early learning classrooms have expanded their libraries to include the books **'Green Is A Chile Pepper'** by Roseanne Thong and **'Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match'** by Monica Brown. Including Spanish and other home languages in our classrooms supports self-esteem and helps children learn more about each other, their teachers, and their communities by celebrating diversity. The Diverse Wonders Equity Educators Book Club (DWEEB) is managed by Wonders' EELI Specialist.

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## **Wonders Spotlight**

### Recognizing Educators and Community Members

#### **10-Year Milestone**

Roselyn Honnick



Please join us in congratulating **Roselyn Honnick** for reaching her **10-year milestone at Wonders!** Roselyn enjoys building connections with the children at Wonders and playing an integral role in their educational and developmental journey. In her 10 years at Wonders, Roselyn has enjoyed continuous opportunities for professional development in her role as an educator. She has gained valuable insights from her colleagues and is looking forward to this year's professional development and team-building activities. Those who have gotten to know Roselyn would agree that she is creative, loving, and passionate about her work!

### **First Fridays**

Thank you, Kristen!



Thank you, Kristen Darling, for joining our Dolphins classroom as a special guest reader for First Fridays. Your presence was truly appreciated!

Kristen Darling is a Research Scientist at [Childtrends](#) and serves as President of the Wonders Board of Directors. **For more information about First Fridays and to sign up, [please contact Jordanne Otero.](#)**



Do you know someone at Wonders who deserves positive recognition? Give a shout out to anyone you feel has done something great at Wonders! [Click here to submit your shout-out!](#)

### **All Together Now!**

2023 Giving Campaign

This giving season, we hope you will make Wonders a priority in your philanthropic giving. It will take extra effort and investment from all of us to sustain and strengthen the work that we do at Wonders. [All Together Now!](#)



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## Wonders Knowledge-Sharing

### Resources and Articles

- **New York Times Opinion Article, "[The Hope at the Bottom of the 'Child Care Cliff,' an Opinion Article by Jessica Grose](#),"** by Jessica Grose.
- Anila Fikri, Wonders Recruitment Specialist, was quoted in the following **NBC News Article, "[Why the end of federal child care funding matters — whether or not you have young kids,](#)"** by Eric Ortiz.

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## Community Events

### Save the Date!

#### **Chevy Chase Festival**

October 15, 2023

On Sunday, October 15, join the Town of Chevy Chase for their inaugural Fall Festival! Family-friendly games and activities. [Click here to view the flier.](#)

#### **Wonders Family Day of Service**

January 13, 2024

On Saturday, January 13, join Wonders' staff and families for a day of service at A Wider Circle. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### Wonders Book Fair

February 25, 2024

On Saturday, February 25, the Politics and Prose Bookstore will be donating 20% of all in-store purchases (purchased with an event flier) back to Wonders.

### Wonderspolooza!

May 5, 2024

Wonderspolooza is a fun-filled community event offering a variety of carnival games, bounce houses, music, food and more. This event is open to all Wonders families, friends, and community members.

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Join us with a contribution today!

Teaching children through play and a nurturing and diverse community.

[Make a donation today to ensure access to quality care and education.](#)

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