



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

June 2025

It is difficult to believe that the 2025-2026 school year is coming to a close. There are many treasured end of year traditions that give us a moment to celebrate, reflect, and look forward. Family events at all of the Extended Day program celebrated with some friendly and spirited kids vs adults games. Across all programs, annual staff evaluations are underway and along with reflecting on the year, the rich discussions result in meaningful goals designed to support the ongoing professional development of each staff member. Families have provided us with informative feedback using our annual parent survey. This information is used to craft next year's organizational goals.

Wonders educators have been honored and celebrated once again with our annual Teacher Appreciation Bonus Fund. Generously funded by donations, the Teacher Appreciation Bonus is a powerful reminder of how much this community values our educators who teach, support, guide, and care for Wonders children.

This past Monday, the Wonders Board of Directors held its final meeting of the year. The Wonders Board is not as visible as the program staff, but they are no less important to making all of what we do work and work well. The final meeting includes an opportunity for me to thank the Board for their strategic leadership and guidance. This year we recognized Sarah Schaffer DeRoo, who is rolling off the Board after her 3 year term. Wonders is very fortunate to have a Board of Directors whose members generously volunteer their talent, expertise, time and leadership.

Although Early Learning and Summer Camp will be in full swing this summer, this is our final community newsletter of the 2024-2025 program year. The community newsletter will begin again at the start of the new school year. We wish you all a wonderful summer!

Joanne Hurt
Executive Director

June Updates
Highlights & News

Message from our President of Wonders Board of Directors



Greetings Wonders families and staff,

As my two-year term as President of Wonders Board of Directors concludes this summer, I'd like to share two thoughts. **First, thank you...** for your trust and partnership in creating the Wonders community, making this program a very special place for children to grow and learn, as well as fostering a supportive and enriching environment for staff to serve and thrive. **Second, I'm excited to share that – as part of the Wonders 50th Anniversary celebration coming up in 2026 – the Board will be rolling out an updated strategic plan.** The plan will feature a refreshed mission and vision statement as well as refined goals that build on successes Wonders has achieved over the last decade-plus of high-quality programming. We are very much hoping that you will provide your perspectives on these important ideas (mission, vision, and goals) and you'll be hearing from members of our Strategy & Innovation Task Force in the fall. **Your input matters!**

Please keep your eyes/ears open for an invitation to participate in a survey and/or focus group so you can help us shape the future direction of Wonders. And while my term as President on the board is concluding, I'll remain on the Board for two more years and I look forward to hearing from and celebrating with you during the 2025-26 school year! Cheers!

Kristen Darling

Kristen Darling
President Wonders Board of Directors

Thank You to this year's Board Members

- Anne Blakely Patterson
- Colin Jones
- Courtney Cason
- Farrell Rodd
- Franca Brilliant

- Ivy Landro
- Kristen Darling

- Jenn Gordon
- Jennifer Dill
- Jennifer Serenyi
- Joanne Hurt
- Kara Stein
- Kristin Pfeiffer

- Manish Singla
- Michelle Groman
- Richard Callaghan
- Dr. Sarah Schaffer DeRoo
- Shana Bartley
- Shinta Hernandez
- Simon Han

During its final meeting of the year, the Board of Directors voted on its slate of new candidates for the Board and the Committee of Officers. We are pleased to welcome:

- **Mindy Chong** (Associate Director, Parent Encouragement Program)
- **Ellie Goldman** (Peace Teacher, Lafayette Elementary School and Wonders alum)
- **Jackie Reisner** (Senior Manager Talent Management, Northrop Grumman)
- **Shannon Ryan** (Development Director, Capitol Hill Day School)
- **Charmaine Weston** (Chair, English & Reading Department, Montgomery College)
- **Jamie Fragale** (Director of Communications, Maryland Department of Labor, Family and Medical Leave Insurance Division)

Wonders Board of Directors 2025-2026 Committee of Officers

- **Shana Bartley**, President
- **Colin Jones**, Vice President
- **Kristin Pfeiffer**, Treasurer
- **Kristen Darling**, Secretary

End of the Year Events

Our Extended Day programs concluded the school year with end-of-year celebrations. These events included kickball games, water play days, and field day events. Each celebration provided a great opportunity for students, parents and teachers to come together one last time before the summer break. We are very grateful for such a wonderful school year and amazing families. Thank you all, and have a terrific summer!



Thank You for Supporting our Teacher Appreciation Bonus Fund



We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed to this year's Teacher Appreciation Bonus Fund. Your generosity and support have made a meaningful impact, allowing us to directly recognize and reward the

incredible *educators* who dedicate themselves to our children every day. Thanks to you, Wonders educators received end of year bonuses to thank them for another year of learning and caring.

First Friday Reader



Bringing our community to life through inspiring guest readers, this program fosters meaningful connections and strengthens the special bond between Wonders and the families we serve.

Dr. Jane West, author, life long education advocate, and friend of Wonders. Bringing her teaching skills, she engaged the children with a chant of “I think I can, I think I can, I think I can” as she read the classic *The Little Engine That Could*.



2025 Corporate Highlights!





We would like to thank our current corporate donors for their generous contributions to our Corporate Giving campaign. **NFP Meltzer, Ntiva, 20Degrees, Sandy Spring Bank, and Green Key Resources** are helping us to create flourishing educational programs for our students and continue doing the great work that we do for our community.

[To learn more about our corporate sponsors and partnership opportunities, please take a look at our website here!](#)



Community Events

Summer Camp Kicks Off Next Week!

We're excited to kick off our Wonders Summer Camp next week! With full enrollment, we're looking forward to a season filled with fun, learning, and unforgettable memories. Here's to a fantastic summer ahead!





Donate to Wonders

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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