Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities Hosts 2019 Annual Gala at Indian Harbor Yacht Club

Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities celebrated its community of parents and supporters of children with learning disabilities and ADHD at its annual benefit at the Indian Harbor Yacht Club in Greenwich, CT on April 26.

NORWALK, Conn. (PRWEB) May 24, 2019 -- On Friday, April 26, Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities (SKLD) hosted its annual gala at the Indian Harbor Yacht Club in Greenwich, CT, entitled “Make Waves.” The evening celebrated the winners of the annual Fred J. Epstein Youth Achievement Awards, as well as honoring Dr. Benjamin N. Powers, Headmaster of The Southport School in Southport, CT with the organization’s Community Service Award. Dick Ferguson, retired broadcasting executive, served as master of ceremonies. The event raised more than $95,000 to support SKLD’s education and outreach programs.

During the awards ceremony, Greenwich Time columnist Claire Haft shared her experience with SKLD as a parent of a child with learning disabilities. “When I learned that my son had a learning disability, I was terrified, I was in denial, I was angry, and I was overwhelmed.” Ms. Haft said that SKLD helped her "not lose sight of my extraordinary child.”

Benjamin N. Powers, recipient of the 2018 Community Service Award, is an educator, researcher, and thought-leader, and has served as Headmaster of The Southport School, a leading day school for students with dyslexia and ADHD in Southport, CT, since 2012. Dr. Powers is an affiliated research scientist at Haskins Laboratories in New Haven and at the Grenoble Ecole de Management in Grenoble, France. He is co-author of “Great Expectations: A Current Perspective on Education, Disability, and Society,” a chapter in the forthcoming book All About Language: Science, Theory, and Practice (Brookes Publishing, 2019). Powers holds a Doctorate in Business Administration from Grenoble Ecole de Management, an Executive MBA from Rochester Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor of Arts from La Salle University. A Certified Dyslexia Practitioner, he is an associate member of the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators, serves on a number of advisory boards, and is an honorary board member of Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities.

Powers told the audience that in the fight for equitable access to education for children with learning disabilities, “the heavy lifting is done by our kids” and we must acknowledge how hard they work. He commended SKLD, because “nobody can do this work alone. We are stronger as a community when we work together.”

Seven students were presented with the Fred J. Epstein Youth Achievement Awards, recognizing young people with learning disabilities and ADHD for remarkable accomplishments. The awards are named for the late Dr. Epstein, who credited his learning disabilities for fueling his professional success, and became an inspiration for children with LD and their families. Several members of the Epstein family were in attendance at the event. The honorees, who came from around the country, demonstrate what young people with learning disabilities can achieve through dedication, talent, initiative and the support of their families and teachers.

Following a spirited cocktail hour and wine auction, over 140 guests enjoyed a live auction. Dave Sylvestro, school psychologist at The Southport School, rallied those in attendance to bid on items including special access to the Broadway musical Hamilton, a cocktail cruise, and tickets to the exclusive Delta Skybox at Yankee Stadium. The money raised will be used to continue the non-profit organization’s efforts to educate and
support parents of children with learning disabilities and ADHD.

The Summit Sponsor for the Gala was the Southfield Center for Development in Darien and Wilton, CT – a family-centered, interdisciplinary practice dedicated to providing comprehensive evaluation and care with an integrated solution to the needs of children and adolescents. Additional sponsors include The Canell Group at J.P. Morgan Securities, Fusion Academy of Greenwich and Fairfield, Lindamood-Bell Learning Center in Darien, CT, and The Southport School.

About Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities, Inc.
Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering the parents of children with learning disabilities (LD) and attention deficit disorders (ADHD) via its educational programs, award-winning website and blog, and free e-newsletter. The organization also educates the public about these children’s gifts and talents. Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy, Anne Ford, and The Southport School Headmaster Dr. Benjamin N. Powers are Honorary Board Members. Henry Winkler, Golden Globe award-winning actor, director, and author, serves as the organization’s Honorary Chairman. For more information, visit http://www.SmartKidswithLD.org.
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