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*LBDN West Branch with new John & Helen Apostle Foundation Center lettering.*

### **Celebrating the John & Helen Apostle Foundation \$1 Million Donation & Expansion**

June 28, 2023, Long Beach Day Nursery (LBDN) held their Annual Meeting and celebrated a \$1 million donation from the John and Helen Apostle Foundation which allows LBDN to further provide high quality early care and education for young children of working parents. The \$1 million donation, gifted over six years, funds teachers' salaries and enables LBDN to expand services for young children.

"We are grateful for the generous donation from the John and Helen Apostle Foundation," said Long Beach Day Nursery Executive Director Jennifer Allen. "The funding has a significant impact in LBDN's ability to provide much needed increases to teacher wages and continue providing high quality early care and education. From social to emotional and educational skills, early childhood teachers have a critical role in the development of young children. With more funding for teacher salaries, we can expand the number of children we serve." *(continued pg 3)*

## Message from the Board Chair

Summer greetings to all Long Beach Day Nursery supporters, staff, leaders, and members of our charitable community!

LBDN continues to demonstrate its resilience and commitment to providing high quality early care and education to young children of working parents with multiple programs that nurture students' emotional, intellectual, and physical well-being. I would like to personally thank everyone who clearly saw the critical paths to take, no matter how difficult, and willed us into a continuously thriving version of ourselves.

Working on the Strategic Plan with LBDN's management, staff, and board members gave me one of my most memorable experiences at LBDN. The safe space that was created enabled trust and authentic sharing which became fertile ground for consensus building. Our unified voice identified the following initiatives for the next several years:

- Exemplary program for staff, families, and community
- Technological empowerment
- Enhanced advocacy and community connections
- Comprehensive team member support
- Creative, inspiring, and safe spaces for all
- Diversity, equality, inclusion integrated into the culture of the organization
- Diverse, sustainable funding and resources

Prominent over the entrance to the West Branch building, you will notice new signage recognizing the John and Helen Apostle Foundation's gracious and significant donation of \$1 million. Our expansion of the West Branch is ongoing and we recently installed a modular toddler building. You can watch the video of this very exciting event here: [bit.ly/lbdnmodinstall](https://bit.ly/lbdnmodinstall). Maintenance and upgrades continue at both of our branches.

We are delighted to welcome new Board members who bring complementary experience and expertise, judicious leadership, and new connections to our present Board of Directors.

We are financially strong and fiscally proactive. We are grateful for the deep relationships we have with the foundations and donors who support us. Our community spirit and our reputation are widespread, well-received and untarnished even after all these years. Thank you to all of you who support the Nursery. Thank you to my fellow board members and our honorary board members for your committed hearts and time spent serving LBDN. LBDN's future is bright because of you.

During the 2023-24 fiscal year, as was true in the past, we have much to do. We will be guided by the Strategic Plan. We will deepen our alliances with our supporters and fellow non-profit organizations and extend our reach into the business community as we build on the shoulders of those who preceded us.

Thank you for joining us on LBDN's journey to improve the lives of children and for lending a hand when needed. Thank you also for being a beacon of hope.

*Nelinia Varenas*

**Nelinia Varenas**  
Board Chair 2023-24



# Annual Meeting

(continued from cover pg 1)

LBDN's Annual Meeting evening event, attended by LBDN Board of Directors, Honorary Board Members, the Executive Team, and Jim Sullos from the John and Helen Apostle Foundation celebrated serving Long Beach children and their families for over 110 years with the unveiling of new signage commemorating the newly named John and Helen Apostle Foundation Center and highlighting a new toddler building recently installed onsite at the historic West Branch campus.

## “Expanding vital services for our local children continues to be a top priority.”

The COVID-19 pandemic only increased existing gaps in opportunity, with potentially long-term impacts on young children. These generous funds will help Long Beach Day Nursery recruit and retain our important teaching staff as we work to offset the social and emotional effects of trauma in the community and help ensure that vulnerable children have a high quality education and a safe place to learn and grow throughout the year," added Long Beach Day Nursery Executive Director Jennifer Allen.

"One of the major objectives of the Apostle Foundation is to support children's education in Long Beach. The programs at the Long Beach Day Nursery are vital to the early education of young children. The trustees are pleased to provide the funding to enhance their multiple programs", said Jim Sullos, trustee, speaking for the other trustees, which includes Jay Swigart and Northern Trust.

LBDN is committed to supporting the needs of young children and families from all socio-economic backgrounds. A good start in the formative years of childhood provides children with a lasting foundation for success throughout their lives. LBDN's NAEYC accredited centers provide a low teacher-child ratio, high quality classrooms and one of the only integrated early intervention programs in LA County. LBDN also provides: science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) curriculum; early literacy; art and music; a healthy connections and nutrition program; and so much more. LBDN also provides scholarships that help support families and provide more children with greater access to a quality start to their education.



Cheers from the crowd at the Annual Meeting



22-23 Board President Nancy Hays



LBDN Honorary Board Members in attendance



Current LBDN Board Members



# Tea for Tots



LBDN supporters & children enjoying story time



The LBDN team after a successful Tea for Tots!

Thank you to all supporters & our amazing LBDN team for making Tea for Tots a HUGE success!

A record breaking \$22,000+ was raised towards our important work!

- 116 supporters in attendance
- LBDN was awarded a Proclamation from Long Beach City Mayor Rex Richardson's Office to honor our historic 110th anniversary.



## Thank you to our Sponsors!

### Platinum Sponsors

Tamara Achauer & Terry Hodel

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Architects McDonald, Soutar & Paz, Inc  
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*Please note all donors who have wished to remain publicly anonymous for their donation are excluded from this list.*





### **Into the Spotlight: Gaby Acosta, Board Member**



Born in Guatemala, Gaby and her family migrated to the City of Long Beach, which has been her permanent home for over 30 years now. Gaby is proud to share that she is a product of LBUSD, LBCC and CSULB higher education school systems where she earned a double Bachelors in Family Consumer Sciences: Family Life Education and Child Development as well as her Masters in Education with a focus in Early Child Development. She has worked in the field of Early Childhood Education for over 25 years. Gaby is currently the Early Childhood Program Specialist with the Department of Health and Human Services in Long Beach. She is delighted to join LBDN's journey in continuing to support and uplift all children and families in our lovely LBC.



### **Into the Spotlight: Jennifer Brooks-Mason, Board Member**



Jennifer Brooks-Mason is the Vice President of Digital Strategy at SCAN Health Plan, a Medicare Advantage plan headquartered in Long Beach. She has held various roles within the Information Technology domain throughout her healthcare career and has strong expertise in project management, process improvements, and technology implementations. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts from The George Washington University and is currently in the MBA program at University of Wisconsin. LBDN is near and dear to Jennifer's heart, both of her daughters attended the East Branch. It is because of the excellent care, accommodating hours and amazing staff at the LBDN that Jennifer was able to advance in her career while having young children.



### **Into the Spotlight: Paul Buss, Board Member**



Paul H. Buss is a Relationship Manager at Farmers & Merchants Bank of Long Beach – East Long Beach Office. Paul has worked in commercial banking and lending since 1997. Paul and his wife Laura have lived in Long Beach since 2001 and their children, Kurt and Sarah, attend Millikan High school. He has a BA from University of San Diego and an MBA from Cal State Long Beach. He loves what LBDN provides for the community, believes education is the foundation for success and saw both of his children blossom when they had great experiences with early education. The relationship that has existed between F&M and LBDN is important to his office.



### **Into the Spotlight: Lori Craig, Board Member**



Lori Craig is an Administrative Analyst for the City of Long Beach, in the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department. She manages a variety of contracts for the Department, including leases and agreements with partners to use or do business on City property. Lori obtained both her Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism and Master of Communication Management degree from USC. Lori believes by ensuring young children have access to high quality early education, we can help enable them to reach their full potential. As a working mother and former LBDN parent, she is aware of how dedicated the LBDN staff and leadership are, and how much of a comfort it was to know that her children were being cared for in a safe and stimulating place of learning. Being able to rely on LBDN in full confidence, she was able to grow in her career. Now as an LBDN Board Member, she looks forward to helping LBDN continue to provide that support to working parents for generations to come.

## DEIB Successes

Our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (DEIB) Committee is made up of a mix of teachers, administrators and board members with the goal of creating a more inclusive and equitable environment at LBDN! Actively embracing and nurturing DEIB was identified as one of LBDN's key Strategic Directions, and the committee has been hard at work. As a result, the DEIB Committee has implemented inclusive activities for parent engagement. See our DEIB successes below:

### Recent DEIB Successes

- Muffins with a Special Person at East
  - *(Previously Muffins with Mom)*
- Donuts with Grown Ups at West
  - *(Previously Father's Day Breakfast)*
- Graduation posters showcasing family diversity
- Equity based materials ordered for each classroom



## East Branch Renovations

Thanks to funding through our state contracts and private fundraising efforts we are completing the following exciting renovations at our East Branch!

- New Air Conditioning Units
- New Branded LBDN Signs
- Two New Infant Kitchens
- New Countertops & Sinks in Toddler 1 & Preschool 1 & 2
- Updated Plumbing
- New Woodchips on the Playground
- Tree Trimming



## Strategic Plan Update



As we bring our fiscal year 22 – 23 to a close we are proud and grateful for the multitude of accomplishments we have seen this year. It's our 110th anniversary and what a year it has been! It takes a village to courageously impact the brilliant young students we have in our classrooms. The West Branch achieved its NAEYC re-accreditation, we've hosted interns, hired new team members, increased wages, completed successful financial and food audits, upgraded technology and strengthened local partnerships just to name a few accomplishments. We wake up each day with new families on our waitlist and children who need a solid foundation and a high-quality start to their young lives. We still have many teacher spots to fill and are working towards as many additional support and wage options to recruit and retain more staff. This next year we'll also be strengthening and formalizing our internship program as a pipeline for teacher hiring. We're still looking for funding sources for our expansion plans, particularly that of bringing infant care to the West Branch. And, we're just beginning the road to fully and actively embracing and nurturing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. We look forward to continuing this journey with you as we continue to provide high quality, early care and education to young children of working parents.

**Jennifer Allen**  
Executive Director



## Board of Directors 2023-24

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1548 Chestnut Avenue  
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# NURSERY NEWS

JULY 2023

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SINCE 1912 - FOR THE FAMILIES, FRIENDS & STAFF OF LBDN

