

ACDS “Black & White” Annual Dinner Dance Gala

Most Successful Fundraiser to Date

“Live Ask” Gives Children a Voice



*Photo (L-R): Frank Finkel (Honoree), David Finkel (Honoree), Michael M. Smith (ACDS Executive Director)
Photo courtesy of Michael Shekian Photography*

Plainview, NY, December 11, 2013 – ACDS held an elegant “Black & White” Gala on Saturday, November 9th at 7pm at the illustrious Garden City Hotel on Long Island’s North Shore. The organization’s friends, family and supporters enjoyed a cocktail hour and gourmet dinner and danced to the evening’s entertainment - the popular Hank Lane Orchestra led by Steve Delisi.

The gala was ACDS’s most successful event to date and raised over \$250,000 for their programs and services. The annual affair is not only pivotal for financial support; it also showcases exactly how ACDS positively impacts lives. For nearly 50 years, the organization has been dedicated to providing lifetime resources for individuals with Down syndrome, autism and other developmental disabilities and their families.

The gala honored guests Frank Finkel, CEO of Davis & Warshaw, and his son and company President, David Finkel. Davis & Warshaw is metro New York’s premier kitchen and bath supplier. In addition to their vast professional achievements, both men are Long Island natives, family men and avid philanthropists. The Finkels have been generous supporters of ACDS.

They are also active supporters of other organizations that are aligned with ACDS's mission, including the Down Syndrome Research and Treatment Foundation.

Another highlight of the evening was a very successful "Live Ask." This auction generated funds that will enable ACDS to establish a speech evaluation lab for preschoolers throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties who are nonverbal and require assistive technology to communicate. ACDS's School Principal, Cecilia Barry, addressed the crowd of 300 attendees and more than 35 people joined in and made donations to give these children a voice.

Principal Barry commented, "In addition to having significant communicative disorders, these non-verbal children can manifest genetic or developmental delays or are diagnosed on the Autistic Spectrum. These conditions are often combined with motoric limitations."

Barry continued, "The money raised from the "Live Ask" will enable ACDS to acquire cutting-edge technology that will be used to evaluate a child's communication skills and match them with an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device. AAC devices provide children and their loved ones with the ability to connect and communicate in a way that was never before thought possible."

The staff at ACDS is excited to utilize the speech lab and help more children than ever before. For more information about ACDS's programs and services, please call ACDS Development Associate, Laurie Schaefer at 516-933-4700 x124.

About ACDS

ACDS, located in Plainview, NY is dedicated to providing lifetime resources of exceptional quality, innovation and inclusion for individuals with Down syndrome, autism and other developmental disabilities and their families. ACDS has been providing programs and services in and around Long Island since 1966. ACDS currently serves over 1000 children and adults, providing services that include Early Intervention and preschool special education programs, respite and recreation programs for children, teens and adults, adult Medicaid service coordination and eight supervised group homes in Nassau County. For more information, please visit acds.org or call 516-933-4700.

###