

# Giving & Getting Involved

## *at Friends Academy*



A guide to  
making the most  
of your partnership  
with FA.



# Welcome to Friends Academy

We believe that a *strong and engaged community* is the foundation of an exceptional educational experience. We invite all parents, guardians, and families to take an active role in our school life. Your involvement enriches our community and enhances the educational journey for all our students.

By taking advantage of the many opportunities to get involved, you can ensure that your time at Friends Academy is a positive and fulfilling experience for the entire family. This guide offers to help you foster *lifelong friendships and meaningful connections*.





## How Do I Get Involved?

*The Friends Academy experience is rooted in a deeply ingrained sense of community, one of our Quaker testimonies.*

### PARENT COUNCIL

We are a community that celebrates the diverse gifts and talents of each member, encouraging students to *aim high, explore new possibilities, and push beyond their comfort zones*. This journey of growth is supported by a strong network that fosters resilience, allowing students to embrace challenges and learn from their experiences. Within this atmosphere of trust and respect, students form lifelong friendships and fully explore their potential.

Our sense of community extends beyond students to include parents and caregivers. The Parent Council plays a vital role in strengthening these ties by *fostering close relationships* among families, faculty, administration, and trustees. As a parent of a current student, you are automatically a member of the Parent Council, which encourages active participation and values every voice.

# VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are integral to everything we do, and we welcome *your active participation to help our community thrive*. If you have a passion to share, a skill to offer, or simply want to lend a hand, there are countless ways to get involved. Whether your contribution is occasional or ongoing, big or small, every effort is valued and appreciated. We are grateful to our parents for sharing their time and talents with our community.

*Here is a list of just some of the Parent Council Committees with volunteer opportunities:*

## FUNDRAISING

EC-Grade 6 Book Fair

## WELCOME/CARING COMMITTEE

DEIJ Parent Community

Faculty Appreciation

Sunshine Committee

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Galentine's Day

Sandwich Making

## FUN FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

Book Club

Campus Beautification

Holiday Lunch

Plant Sale

## FUN FOR STUDENTS

Lower School Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Lower School Hot Chocolate

Lower School Movie Afternoon

Middle School Game Night

Bake Sale

Junior Prom

Senior Events

Spring Sports BBQ

## FALL FAIR

Fall Fair Activities

Fall Fair Food

Fall Fair Rides

Fall Fair Supplies

Fall Fair Volunteer Coordinator

Friday Night BBQ & Bonfire

## **Advancement Office Volunteering:**

### FUNDRAISING

Auction Committee

Annual Fund Committee

## **Admissions Office Volunteering**

Family-to-Family Program

## FAMILY-TO-FAMILY PROGRAM

Join Admissions in welcoming a new family to Friends Academy next summer. By serving as their host, you can provide a new family with the information and support they need to make a smooth transition to their new school community

For more information email Kim Jennings '88,  
Associate Director of Admissions, [kim\\_jennings@fa.org](mailto:kim_jennings@fa.org)



## AUCTION COMMITTEE

There are many sub-committees including décor, silent auction, procurement, and journal, or assist the night of the event.

## ANNUAL FUND COMMITTEE

This dynamic committee assists our Advancement Office with fundraising efforts, outreach, and events.

Email [diane\\_biolsi@fa.org](mailto:diane_biolsi@fa.org) for more information, if interested.

## 2025-26 EVENTS

*Attend and support various school events throughout the year, including sports games, performances, and cultural celebrations.*

Parent Council Book Club

Parent Council Lower School Movie Afternoon

Parent Council Plant Sale & Campus Decorating

Annual Fund Committee Kickoff

Under the Lights Games

Girls Varsity Soccer

Boys Varsity Soccer

New Parent Reception

Family Night Rides, BBQ, and Bonfire

Fall Fair & Homecoming

Family Community Service Sandwich Making

Auction Kickoff

Parent Council Lower School Hot Chocolate

Senior Parent Luncheon

Giving Tuesday

Champions for Charity at Americana Manhasset

Parent Council Festive with Friends Lunch & Shopping Event

Parent Council Book Club

Parent Council Lower School Hot Chocolate

Parent Council Galentine's Day Event & Drive

Parent Council Bake Sale

Parent Council Book Club

Middle School Game Night

Spring Varsity Sports Day & BBQ

Auction at Pine Hollow Country Club

Parent Council Book Fair

Faculty Appreciation Week

Parent Council General Meeting

Lower School Grandparents & Special Friends Day

# Philanthropy

Like many independent schools, Friends Academy depends on the generosity of parents and alumni to sustain our fundraising initiatives. We encourage you to support both the Annual Fund and the Auction.



## THE ANNUAL FUND

The Annual Fund is a vital source of financial support for Friends Academy. It bridges the gap between tuition and the actual cost of providing a top-tier education. Contributions to the Annual Fund directly influence every aspect of school life, from academic programs and faculty development to arts, athletics, and technology. The Annual Fund provides an educational experience that goes beyond textbooks and classrooms, empowering our young learners to become compassionate, knowledgeable, and responsible global citizens.

### *Why Participate?*

**Impact:** Your donation directly enhances the educational experience for all students.

**Community:** High participation rates demonstrate the strength and commitment of our community.



**THE FRIENDS ACADEMY ANNUAL FUND ENRICHES AND  
INSPIRES EVERY CORNER OF OUR COMMUNITY.  
EACH CONTRIBUTION BENEFITS EVERY LEARNER EACH DAY.**

# Ways to Give

**ONLINE** Please visit: [www.fa.org/give](http://www.fa.org/give)

**PLEDGE** Make an early financial commitment and pay by June 30, 2026.

**CHECK, OR MONEY ORDER** Mail a check or money order payable to Friends Academy.

**CREDIT CARD** All major credit cards are accepted by phone, online, or in person.

**GIFTS OF STOCK** If you wish to make a gift of stock, you or your broker may contact Joan Bruen at 516-393-4251.

**GRANTS** You can designate Friends as a recipient of a grant from a family foundation or donor-advised gift fund.

**RECURRING MONTHLY GIFT OPTION** Many donors find that a monthly debit is a convenient way to donate to the Annual Fund, spreading the gift over several months. Make your gift with a recurring credit or debit card payment or electronic fund transfer.

**MATCHING GIFTS** Your gift will have an even greater impact if your company matches it. Inquire about your company's matching gift program by visiting: [www.fa.org/matchinggifts](http://www.fa.org/matchinggifts).

**PLANNED GIVING** One-way members of our community help provide for the future is through planned giving. Contact **Laurie Hindley**, Director of External Affairs, for additional information at 516-393-4269 or [laurie\\_hindley@fa.org](mailto:laurie_hindley@fa.org)

For additional information, please contact **Diane Biolsi**, Director of the Annual Fund & Special Events 516-629-4859 or [diane\\_biolsi@fa.org](mailto:diane_biolsi@fa.org)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## *Why doesn't Friends raise tuition to cover the actual cost of educating a student?*

At Friends, we believe in maintaining a diverse and inclusive community, which means ensuring that our school is accessible to families from various backgrounds. Raising tuition significantly above the level of other area private schools could deter qualified students from applying, affecting the richness and diversity of our student body. Friends actively seeks additional revenue through donations and other sources to uphold this commitment and keep tuition competitive. This approach allows us to maintain a reasonable tuition structure while providing a high-quality education for all students.

## *How much should I give?*

We hope that you make Friends Academy your highest philanthropic priority each year. Annual Fund gifts range from \$1 to \$100,000. Although leadership gifts are important to Friends Academy's financial sustainability, every gift matters. What is important is that everyone participates!

## *When should I give?*

In the beginning of the school year, you will receive communications requesting your support of the Annual Fund. We encourage you to make your tax-deductible gift or a pledge by December 31, 2025.

## *Can I pledge now and make my gift later?*

Early pledge commitments are welcomed and encouraged. Making your commitment early saves Friends Academy money and resources. Once you pledge, you will receive an acknowledgment and pledge payment reminders. You have until June 30, 2026 to make your final payment.

## *Is my gift tax deductible?*

Friends Academy is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code. Gifts to the school are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

# The Annual Auction

## *What is the Auction?*

The Auction is one of Friends Academy's most anticipated events of the year. It's a fun and festive evening that raises significant funds to support school programs and the scholarship fund. The auction features exciting items, from unique experiences and vacations to artwork and exclusive events.

**Join us on Friday, April 24, 2026!**

## *How does the Auction differ from the Annual Fund?*

While the dollars raised go to the operating budget for both initiatives, the Auction allows families to use their personal resources to support Friends. Many families participate through their businesses or the businesses they support with sponsorships, journal ads, and donations to the live and silent auction.





### *How Can I Get Involved?*

- **Donate Items:** Contribute unique auction items, such as vacation homes, event tickets, or personal services.
- **Sponsor the Event:** Become an event sponsor to gain visibility for your business while supporting the school.
- **Attend the Auction:** Join us for a night of bidding, socializing, and celebrating our community on Friday, April 24, 2026.
- **Volunteer:** Join one of the many committees including décor, silent auction, procurement, and journal, or assist the night of the event. Contact **Diane Biolsi**, Director of Annual Fund & Special Events at [diane\\_biolsi](mailto:diane_biolsi) for more information.

### *Why Participate?*

- **Support:** Funds raised directly benefit Friends Academy programs and students.
- **Community:** The auction brings together parents, faculty, and friends for an enjoyable evening.
- **Engagement:** Your involvement helps create memorable experiences and opportunities for our students.

# Friends Academy Advancement Office

Laurie Hindley

*Director of External Affairs; laurie\_hindley@fa.org*

Diane Biolsi

*Director of Annual Fund & Special Events; diane\_biolsi@fa.org*

Jodie Sperico

*Director of Alumni Relations; jodie\_sperico@fa.org*

Joan Bruen

*Advancement Associate; joan\_bruen@fa.org*

Marilyn Del Rosso

*Advancement Administrative Assistant; marilyn\_delrosso@fa.org*

## 2025-26 Parent Council

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

Cathy Dorego

*President*

Danielle Valenti Smith '93

*Vice President*

Sue Mandel

*Secretary*

Meera Mehta Gobindram

*Treasurer*

Faiza Rashid

*Assistant Treasurer*

### LOWER SCHOOL

Emily Silverstein '05

*Vice President*

Franki Doshi

*Asst. Vice President*

Amy Younai

*Secretary*

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

Liting Chen

*Vice President*

Kara Kelly

*Asst. Vice President*

Adina Eigen

*Secretary*

### UPPER SCHOOL

Carol Marcel

*Vice President*

Jennifer Ross

*Asst. Vice President*

Alexis Barr Kurita

*Secretary*

# Parent Council 2025-26

## Class Representatives

### LOWER SCHOOL

**Play Group:** Julia Burt & Caroline Mendel

**Pre-K:** Olivia Hertrick & Kristin Schneider

**Kindergarten:** Stephanie Yohe

**Grade 1:** Lauren Bisaccio & Alisa Rudolph

**Grade 2:** Maria Karageorgiou & Jackee Missick

**Grade 3:** Janet Chiang & Fara Satin

**Grade 4:** Karen Keats & Qiqi Li

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Grade 5:** Danielle Chalson & Marlene Sotelo-Dynega

**Grade 6:** Ebony Barrett, Catherine McCrain, and Alicia Tsibiridis

**Grade 7:** Lauren Chiang '01 & Carolyn Mott

**Grade 8:** Christine Cohen & Nancy Kwon

### UPPER SCHOOL

**Grade 9:** Trina Coviello & Anna DeNatale

**Grade 10:** Karen Lipp-Ostrick & Adelina Popp

**Grade 11:** Jennifer Biondo, Jackie Nathel, and Jill Panagiotakos

**Grade 12:** Kimberly Bohner & Bettina Saad

# Thank You!

Your involvement and support are essential to the success of Friends Academy. Together, we create a vibrant, inclusive, and dynamic community where everyone benefits.

## Stay Connected!



Visit the Parent Portal frequently for the latest news, updates, and volunteer opportunities



Follow Friends Academy on social media to stay engaged



Check your email inbox on Sunday and Wednesday for weekly newsletters and important announcements

## Who to Contact

For more information on getting involved please contact:

**CATHY DOREGO, P '28, '30**

*Parent Council President; [pcpresident@fa.org](mailto:pcpresident@fa.org)*

**DIANE BIOLSI**

*Director of Annual Fund & Special Event; [diane\\_biolsi@fa.org](mailto:diane_biolsi@fa.org)*

**LAURIE HINDLEY P '31, '34**

*Director of External Affairs; [laurie\\_hindley@fa.org](mailto:laurie_hindley@fa.org)*



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