



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 5/2/17:

**Child Center to Host Annual Gala, Honor Legendary Composer Alan Menken
*Fundraising Event Will Feature Performances by Menken, Broadway Talent, and Students***

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NEW YORK, NY –

On **May 9, 2017**, at The Lighthouse at Chelsea Piers, The Child Center of NY will host its annual fundraising gala, this year honoring legendary composer Alan Menken. Menken's works include many of the most well-known songs from Disney classics such as *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *Aladdin*.

Grammy, Oscar, and Tony award-winning Menken is set to perform during the evening, as are two groups of clients from The Child Center's afterschool programs, one of which was mid-production on its own Disney musical when Menken confirmed his gala attendance. The talented students will perform "Be Our Guest" from their own *"Beauty and the Beast, Jr."* Broadway stars Jessica and Santino Fontana will also perform during the evening.

"All of us can name at least a few Alan Menken songs, which speak to us in a universal language, across economic, cultural, or religious barriers," said **CEO Traci Donnelly**. "At The Child Center of NY, we work very hard to break down those barriers and level the playing field so that all children have an equal chance to compete and succeed. We are thrilled to honor Alan at our annual gala -- and especially to witness him performing! Personally, I couldn't be more excited to see him in the same room with some of the young people we serve. His direct inspiration means the world to them."

Alan Menken said, "I am delighted to be welcomed into The Child Center of NY "family," and honored to receive their award. As someone who has made a career of writing songs to entertain people and give children some joy, I take great pride in this recognition. The memory and spirit of Walt Disney is alive in the students learning these classic productions, and in the work you all do every day to give them the tools and opportunities to do so."

The Lighthouse is located at Pier 61, Chelsea Piers, 23rd Street and West Side Highway. The May 9 gala program will begin at 7:00 pm, with the first student performance, and conclude following Alan Menken's 8:41 award acceptance and culminating performance. To be added to the press list for this exciting evening, please call or email Eugénie Bisulco at the above contact information.

About The Child Center of NY: The Child Center of NY's mission is to strengthen children and families with skills, opportunities, and emotional support to build healthy, successful lives. Founded in 1953, it is a multiservice organization that annually reaches more than 26,000 children from birth through young adulthood at more than 60 school and community locations. The Child Center works in five main program areas: early childhood education; behavioral health; prevention and family support; health homes and integrated care; and youth development. The Child Center is based primarily in Queens but also serves children and families in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan. To learn more, please visit <http://childcenterny.org/>.

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