



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 5/13/18:**

**Child Center to Host Annual Gala, Honor Chef and Restaurateur Lidia Bastianich  
Fundraising Event Will Feature Performances by Broadway Talent and Students**

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**NEW YORK, NY –**

On **May 14, 2018**, at The Lighthouse at Chelsea Piers, The Child Center of NY will host its annual fundraising gala, “Finding Your Voice: A 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration,” honoring internationally-renowned Italian chef, Emmy Award-winning television host of Lidia’s Kitchen, restaurateur, author, and Queens resident Lidia Bastianich.

In March, Bastianich visited with culinary students and faculty at August Martin High School in Jamaica, Queens, to collaborate on a bruschetta appetizer that will be served at the gala. In December, the successful businesswoman and philanthropist also read to 3- and 4-year-olds at The Child Center’s Ficalora Head Start in Woodside.

“My single greatest wish is for every child to find his or her own voice – whether it be through cooking, or drawing pictures, or writing, or whatever it is – it honestly doesn’t matter – just that each child finds it and has success and happiness in life,” said Bastianich. “I’m proud to be associated with The Child Center of NY, an organization that has worked for 65 years to help children – and families – find their voices, whatever they may be.”

Sunny Hostin of ABC’s *The View* will serve as emcee. Throughout the evening, guests will enjoy performances by Broadway and film stars Jessica and Santino Fontana, students of Child Center afterschool programs, and a Tony Award-winning special guest.

“Our annual gala raises funds to expand our work so that we can, every year, increase the number of children and families we serve. We are thrilled to have so many good friends and partners with us tomorrow to help mark our milestone anniversary with their incredible talent as performers and their generosity as supporters,” said Child Center CEO Traci Donnelly. “I am personally so proud we are honoring Lidia Bastianich, who is truly an inspiration.”

***The Lighthouse is located at Pier 61, Chelsea Piers, 23rd Street and West Side Highway. The May 14 gala program will begin at 7:30 pm, with the first student performance, and conclude following a final star performance at 9:15 p.m. To be added to the press list for this exciting evening, or for more information on “Finding Your Voice,” the annual gala, or The Child Center of NY in general -- or to request photos, please call or email Eugénie Bisulco at the above contact information.***

**About The Child Center of NY:** Our 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 nearly 30,000 children from birth through young adulthood at almost 70 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/>.

