



Dear Council Friends,

We don't think anyone could have predicted how much our lives would change in 2020. In spite of all the challenges we faced, it was incredibly rewarding to see you all pull together - for each other and for the countless children whose lives are changed because of your deep commitment and support for Save the Children. In a year without any in person events, and yet a year when Save the Children needed support more than ever before, you were able to raise **almost \$80,000** to support our work, especially our work right here in the U.S. You continue to amaze and inspire all of us, and we are so lucky to consider you our partners for children.

We hope you enjoy this trip down memory lane, with highlights of your experiences and achievements during a year like no other.

### 2020 for the Fairfield County Leadership Council – A Year in Review

In hindsight, what wonderful good fortune that many of you were able to visit Save the Children's programs in **Mississippi in January**, before our world turned upside down. We hope you enjoyed meeting Yolanda and her team, and witnessing first-hand their skill, experience, in-depth familiarity with and knowledge of their community, and most of all their passion and dedication. It was wonderful for you to also meet the children and families whose lives have been touched thanks to your generous support.



When COVID-19 hit our shores in March, we had to get creative about ways to stay connected. And so we began our regular zoom meetings. We gathered more often than ever before, treasuring our time to share questions, fears and concerns about what we were all going through, offering suggestions about ways to cope, and experiencing together how our priorities in life were put into focus. Our **President and CEO, Janti Soeripto** was herself in the same boat, homebound in a brand new town with school-aged children, and she welcomed the chance to join us on a **zoom in April**. She was able to share with us a global perspective on this crisis, which was like nothing we had seen in our 100 year-history. She shared with us how we were firing on all cylinders to protect children around the globe, and that we'd need all the help we can get,



and I know she was grateful for the personal connection and sense of community that she felt with all of you.

The annual **Advocacy Summit**, usually held on Capitol Hill, morphed into a 4-week virtual experience of dynamic sessions and exciting speakers. These sessions featured a fireside chat with Mark Shriver and Chef José Andrés, to a discussion on protecting a generation from COVID-19 globally, to child care in a crisis and to how to advocate for kids from home. It was great to see many of you in attendance, and members of the Youth Council too!



The month of **May** marked your hugely successful **Webinar on Save the Children's COVID-19 Relief Response in the U.S.** The virtual webinar format was new for all of us, but you embraced the challenge. Mark Shriver was thrilled for the chance to share an overview on how Save the Children was responding to the COVID-19 crisis in rural America. Shane Garver and Yolanda Minor gave us an inside view on what life was like now in Mississippi. But the most impactful moments were when you joined

the show, speaking about your own experiences visiting Mississippi, and about what Save the Children means to you. Thanks to your impact, as well as your generous matching gifts, the webinar attracted 84 attendees and raised **\$40,000 for our friends in Mississippi!**

As quarantine conditions eased, we enjoyed some great events in **June**. Barbara Kleban was so kind to dedicate the month of June to Save the Children at her lovely **Vintage Garden** boutique. And **Joan Panagos** welcomed us all at her lovely home to end our “school year.” Her poolside reception was a great chance for us to see each other – and welcome our new members – after months of zoom meetings.





**Save the Children®**



The highlight of the fall was Save the Children's **November** virtual gala, **Kid Strong Together** – a successful celebration of the girls and boys we serve! It was a joyous and inspiring family gathering from start to finish, and we were thrilled to celebrate your support as members of our **Benefit Committee**.

We closed out the year with holiday season shopping events in **December**. An in-store and online shopping day at Mitchell's was a great first event with a potentially important new partner, and a consolation to the fashion show that we had to postpone earlier in the spring. Anne and Simonne also hosted successful shopping days at JMcLaughlin shops in Southport and Ridgefield. These in store events raised funds to support our work and helped to spread the word of who Save the Children is and all the amazing things we do for children.



At year-end we also celebrated the end of an era, with our dedicated and inspiring founder and leader Bernie Park officially passing on the baton of council leadership to Co-Presidents Simonne Hewett and Joan Panagos. Of course Bernie will stay quite involved with us and has accepted the role of Committee Chair for the Youth Council. Many thanks also go to Kristana Esslinger and Barbara Kleban who have taken on the roles of Committee Chairs for Events and Advocacy, respectively.

Your friends at Save the Children extend our heartfelt thanks for your amazing partnership, and for being by our side when children needed us the most. We look forward to a better year ahead, with lots of fun events and togetherness, all for the great cause of kids!

**Happy 2021!!!**