



Westmont is proud to be a partner school with Preschool Advantage and equally proud to be able to give back to the community it serves. Below is a recent press release describing the partnership between The Westmont Montessori School and Preschool Advantage.



### **Westmont Montessori School Receives Golden Acorn Award**

*Mendham, New Jersey – December 20, 2016.* Preschool Advantage presented its Golden Acorn Award for exemplary quality in preschool education to The Westmont Montessori School in Mendham. The award was presented to Colette Cross, Head of School. Preschool Advantage congratulates Colette and her staff on providing exceptional early childhood education.

In 2013, Preschool Advantage was looking to add the Mendham area to the communities it serves and was very pleased to find The Westmont Montessori School. The Preschool Advantage School Committee visited Westmont and was very impressed with the quality preschool education at the school. Preschool Advantage approves partner schools based on five points of quality in preschool education: teacher and child interaction, curriculum, family involvement, staff qualifications and professional development, and management of the school. In 2016, the Committee defined the five points of quality with the Golden Acorn Award.

The Preschool Advantage School Committee is comprised of numerous current and former preschool directors and teachers who care deeply about early childhood education. Members volunteer to visit the Preschool Advantage partner schools on a three-year cycle to ensure quality is maintained. A checklist has been developed using National Association of the Education of Young Children guidelines, the Grow NJ Kids program and the considerable experience of the Preschool Advantage committee.

The partnership between Preschool Advantage and The Westmont Montessori provides access to a high quality preschool education for families who could not otherwise afford preschool for their children. “While there are federally funded programs to cover the cost of preschool for families living below the poverty line, working families making over that level have limited options” said Molly Dunn, Executive Director for Preschool Advantage. “There are thousands of families in New Jersey who cannot access a quality education for their child. We are committed to addressing this need one child at a time.” Families demonstrating commitment to education and financial need can complete the application for the 2017/2018 school year found at [www.preschooladvantage.org](http://www.preschooladvantage.org).

Preschool Advantage is a non-profit organization with the vision that all children should have access to high quality early education. Preschool Advantage partners with 18 schools in 13 local towns to fund preschool for children whose families cannot afford it. Together with its donors, supporters, volunteers, and community partners, Preschool Advantage seeks to provide opportunities for a lifetime of learning that will create a better world for its students, their families, and the community. To apply for funding for preschool tuition or learn more about Preschool Advantage, please visit our website at [www.preschooladvantage.org](http://www.preschooladvantage.org).

*Pictured from left to right:* Denise Lanza, Preschool Advantage Board of Trustees, presents the Golden Acorn Award for excellence in preschool education to Colette Cross, Head of School, The Westmont Montessori School, with Janet McMillan of Mendham, Preschool Advantage School Committee member.