



Contact: Maureen P. Mangan

Direct Line: 1-516-224-5828

LONG ISLAND CHILDREN'S MUSEUM'S FUNDRAISER SUPPORTS THE SERIOUS BUSINESS OF PLAY

Since its opening in 1993, Long Island Children's Museum has put its "play-based learning" principles to work to support millions of families and schools in the region. The Children's Museum will be celebrating this 30-year legacy at its annual *Cupcakes & Cocktails* fundraiser on Thursday, October 12 from 7-11 p.m.

The annual fundraiser will kick off the Museum's 30th anniversary celebration as it presents Visionary Leadership Awards to **Robert Catell** and **Scott Rechler** who have played key roles in the Museum's growth and development. Also, the Children's Museum recognizes **Nassau County** for the power of public/private partnerships that established LICM's permanent home on Museum Row.

"As we started planning for Cupcakes & Cocktails 2023 and the Museum's 30th birthday, we wanted to shine a spotlight on two of the individuals who have stepped in and supported the Museum at pivotal stages of its development," noted LICM President Erika Floreska. "I can think of no better examples of Visionary Leaders than Bob Catell and Scott Rechler."

In recognizing the public/private partnership that exists between Nassau County and Long Island Children's, Floreska pointed to the long-standing relationship between the two organizations. "The public/private partnership has involved bipartisan support across multiple administrations," Floreska explained. "County Executives and Nassau County legislators have been extremely supportive of the Museum for the resources it provides to residents and for its appeal as a major tourism attraction."

Commented [EF1]: Great!

Robert Catell began his career with Brooklyn Union Gas in 1958; rising through the ranks to the position of Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of KeySpan Corporation and KeySpan Energy Delivery (the former Brooklyn Union Gas). It was in this position that he and the Children’s Museum crossed paths. LICM opened in 1993 in a 5,400-square-foot former office space provided rent free by LILCO and then Keyspan. As Chairman and CEO of KeySpan, Bob Catell was a generous “landlord” who recognized the Museum as a valuable educational resource for the region’s families and schools. The Museum’s growing popularity quickly demonstrated its value to the community and the need for more space to serve them.

Keyspan supported LICM’s capital campaign to establish a permanent home on the area designated by Nassau County as Museum Row. Following National Grid’s acquisition of KeySpan Corporation, Mr. Catell became Chairman of National Grid, U.S., and Deputy Chairman of National Grid plc. National Grid’s commitment to the Children’s Museum has been constant; providing over \$1,000,000 over the Museum’s lifetime. National Grid is the Lead Funder of the Museum’s Westbury STEM Partnership, serving over 11,000 students and providing more than 8,000 hours of professional development to teachers in the Westbury School District since 2009. Additionally, they are the sole funder of the Museum’s STEM Explorers/Powered by Green Teens initiative, an educational model that combines meaningful community service by teenagers with an in-depth level of instruction with museum educators to produce learning experiences for everyone in our community. National Grid’s partnership with the Museum and its long-term investment in these programs has made a transformative impact on the Westbury school population, the students involved in Green Teens and the visitors they inspire.

Catell’s service on numerous boards highlights his life-long focus on educational enrichment and community. He currently serves as Chairman of the Board of the Advanced Energy Research and Technology Center (AERTC) at Stony Brook University, the National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium and Chair Emeritus of the Cristo Rey Brooklyn High School. He serves on the Board of numerous not for profit organizations: Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership, Department of

Commented [EF2]: WE don't have any record of Keyspan giving us \$. It's all under National Grid, so we should transition here, and move it all to National Grid., i.e. Keyspan, which was acquired by National Grid, ...supported...

Commented [EF3]: Let's combine this into one paragraph referencing all the \$ giving. Since the capital campaign credit is for in kind donation of the space, it can be confusing to split out.

Commented [EF4]: Want to add one sentence that recognizing the long-term investment and philanthropy by National Grid that has...

Education-Diocese of Rockville Centre, Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, Futures in Education Endowment Fund, and St. Francis Hospital Foundation.

As the father of five and grandfather of 14, he knows the excitement and engagement the Museum provides to families first-hand. "The Museum is a special piece of Long Island and I'm proud to have played a part in its development."

Scott Rechler, Chief Executive Officer and Chair of RXR, has been a stalwart supporter of Long Island Children's Museum. His involvement with the Museum has spanned an impressive time range – from **BC** (before children) to **GP** (grandparent). He has been an active member of the LICM Board of Trustees since 1992; serving as Board Co-Chair from 2007-2015. His company provided pro bono construction oversight and design services for the Museum's initial location, spearheaded the Museum's \$17 million Capital Campaign to establish its 40,000-square-foot permanent home and provided design support for its current location. He has served, along with his wife Debby, as a perennial chair of the Museum's annual fundraising event, Cupcakes & Cocktails, which Debby Rechler named and shaped; allowing guests to understand and experience the fun and engagement that happens at the Museum on a daily basis.

RXR manages over 30 million square feet of commercial properties with a gross asset value of \$21.2 billion. RXR also has a multi-family residential portfolio of 8,000 units under operation or development, an over \$4 billion new terminal under construction at JFK International Airport, and an expanding national portfolio and development pipeline in Phoenix, Denver, Raleigh, and Tampa.

Since its founding, RXR has raised over \$10 billion of private equity through a series of funds and separate account vehicles and built an over 500-person, fully integrated team of professionals with expertise in operations, construction and development, investment management, and more.

Rechler has held numerous leadership positions at various levels of government, including a member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, the Board of Commissioners as Vice Chair for the Port Authority of New York and New

Jersey (2011-2016). He later served on the Board of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) from 2017 to 2019. Additionally, he served as the Chair of the Regional Plan Association (RPA), a not-for-profit organization focused on the quality of life and the economic competitiveness of the NY Tri-State metropolitan area.

In addition to his service on the Children's Museum Board, he serves as trustee and Vice Chair of the National September 11 Memorial and Museum at the World Trade Center, a member of the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) and the national organization, the Real Estate Roundtable (RER), Chair of The Feinstein Institute for Medical Research and a member of the Board of Trustees at Northwell Health, the Hospital for Special Surgery and a member of the NYU Real Estate Institute Advisory Committee, and the Board of the Drum Major Institute.

Rechler sees his involvement with LICM as pivotal. "I was 25 when I started working with the Long Island Children's Museum; it was my first taste of philanthropy and my first taste of being involved and trying to build something that builds a better community."

Cupcakes & Cocktails 2023 will also see the Museum recognize the public/private partnership that has enabled it to put down permanent roots in the community; becoming Nassau County's "most visited Museum" -- serving more than 300,000 visitors annually.

As the concept of a "Museum Row" for Nassau County was being developed, then County Executive Tom Gulotta reached out to the Children's Museum, which was searching for a large, permanent home; having outgrown its initial location. An agreement was reached – the County would turn over one of the abandoned airplane hangars on Mitchel Field and develop the site and the Museum undertook a \$17 million dollar capital campaign to transform the hangar into a 40,000-square-foot state of the art facility complete with interactive exhibits and a 145-seat theater, offering dynamic performances year-round. Every administration since has championed the partnership as a "win" for Nassau County residents.

Cupcakes & Cocktails stands out from other fundraisers on the social calendar. Far from the typical black-tie, sit-down dinner, LICM's fundraiser provides all the elements the Museum is known for... hands-on activities, fun and games, and live performances ... just elevated for the "big kids" in attendance to support the "serious business of play." Area business leaders, community partners, and educators will be on hand to celebrate the evening's theme: "30 and Still Growing."

The Museum has set a goal of \$850,000 from the night, which enables LICM to foster the growth of our next generation of artists, scientists, educators, entrepreneurs and citizens.

About the Long Island Children's Museum (www.licm.org)

The mission of Long Island Children's Museum is to connect all our communities' children, and those who care for them, to a life of wonder, imagination and exploration. At LICM, children discover their passions and their relationship to the world we share. Long Island Children's Museum serves more than 300,000 individuals annually at the Museum and through community outreach efforts. The private, not-for-profit institution chartered by the New York State Board of Regents, offers museum-based educational programs and cultural experiences, as well as an extensive community outreach program offered in schools, libraries and youth centers across Long Island. Additionally, the Children's Museum operates the historic Nunley's Carousel in association with Nassau County, one of three intact Stein & Goldstein carousels still in existence.

LICM is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), recognized as the field's gold standard for museum excellence and signifies a museum's quality, credibility and deep commitment to mission and community. Less than 3% of the nation's more than 30,000 museums have earned this recognition. LICM is currently the only children's museum in NY State, and just one of 16 nationwide, to achieve accreditation. The Museum is the recipient of the 2012 National Medal for Museum & Library Service, the highest honor conferred on museums for extraordinary civic, educational, economic, environmental, and social contributions. |

Commented [EF5]: Do we want to add in our new recognition - Charity Navigator 4 star, 94%, and Platinum through Candid/Guidestar?

