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MUSEUM CO-FOUNDER NAMED GREAT FRIEND TO KIDS RECIPIENT

Roni Kohen-Lemle to be Honored on September 22

September 12, 2022—Long Island Children’s Museum co-founder **Roni Kohen-Lemle** has been named the recipient of the *Great Friend to Kids Award* presented by Long Island Children’s Museum. The award, spotlighting the contributions of community champions who enhance the lives of children, will be presented during the Museum’s Cupcakes & Cocktails fundraiser on September 22.

Roni Kohen-Lemle was one of a small group of Long Island educators, artists and businesspeople who started the discussions that led to the opening of the Children’s Museum demonstration site in 1993. She believed that presenting the performing arts at LICM was solidly within its mission. She applied for and received LICM’s first theater grant in 1994 for a season of multi-cultural performances, which were presented in a studio room where visitors sat on the floor, interacting closely with performers.

Roni brought musicians, puppeteers, storytellers, dancers, circus performers and magicians to that room; creating opportunities for many children to have their first theater experience.

As plans began for a permanent home for the Children’s Museum, a dedicated performance space was a requirement. In the 20 years since its opening, the Museum’s theater has welcomed nearly 250,000 audience members to enjoy national and internationally recognized companies, witness world premieres, see GRAMMY winners and experience the magic of live performances.

“No one fits the bill as a ‘Great Friend to Kids’ better than Roni Kohen-Lemle,” says LICM President Suzanne LeBlanc. “She has dedicated her time and talents to providing children with spaces that nurture their interests, ignite their curiosity and create opportunities for them to build connections with members of the community. It is fitting that she receives this award in a year when we celebrate 20 years of the Museum’s theatre.”

Roni Kohen-Lemle is a current member of the LICM Board of Trustees having recently stepped down as Board Chair of the Children’s Museum. She remains passionate about the

LICM Theater and the role of the performing arts in the lives of young children and eagerly awaits the opportunity to bring her granddaughter to her first theater experience at LICM.

Established in 1991 by the Association of Children's Museums, the *Great Friend to Kids Award* has been presented nationally to The Junior League, former First Lady Barbara Bush, Temple Grandin Ph.D. (autism advocate), and Fred Rogers ("Mister Rogers), among others. Long Island Children's Museum introduced the award on the local level in 2020.

Cupcakes & Cocktails is the Museum's main fundraising event annually. Funds raised enable LICM to foster the growth of our next generation of artists, scientists, educators, entrepreneurs and citizens. The 2022 event is co-chaired by **Scott Rechler**, President & CEO of RXR and **Scott Burman**, Principal, Engel Burman and President, EB Construction. In addition to the Great Friend to Kids Award, LICM will recognize **Michael and Alexandra Marino** as its 2022 Community Leadership Award recipients.

About the Long Island Children's Museum

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. The 40,000 square-foot museum welcomes nearly 275,000 children and annually. 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.

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 its 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 also 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.

Photo – [Roni Kohen-Lemle – 2022 Recipient, LICM Great Friend to Kids Award](#)

