

Dear Alumni, Parents, and Friends of Calvin Hill,

I invite you to join me in supporting the Annual Fund of Calvin Hill Day Care Center and the Kitty Lustman-Findling Kindergarten. I also invite you to reflect on your own relationship with Calvin Hill as I share my heartfelt gratitude for this school and what it means to me.

I think we can all agree that the teachers and staff at Calvin Hill are *extraordinary*. The teachers across all three classrooms nurture every child individually and collectively. They guide ideas and passions, cultivating the impressionable and creative minds of our children in beautiful ways. With the flexibility to shift and mold curricula in response to the interests of each student and to those of the group, the teachers introduce children to caterpillars undergoing metamorphosis, yoga, music, bike parts used for art making, and the list goes on. I'm dazzled by the ways our children learn from their teachers and from one another.

I'd like to share something *beyond* this that makes Calvin Hill *exceptional*. Since starting in the Threes Classroom, our son has worn a patka, a square piece of cloth worn by Sikh boys, which covers their uncut hair. Our *expectation* when he started at Calvin Hill was that we might get a call if his patka came off and maybe *one* of the teachers at the school would know how to assist him. That would be satisfying to us, but remember, Calvin Hill's teachers are *extraordinary*.

As you may know, during the summer program, they start the day outside with water play and they change before having lunch. This past summer, our son's patka would get soaked *every* day, so I started to send a fresh patka with his clothes. At the end of a day, I would ask him who tied his fresh patka, and it was remarkable how many *different* teachers he would name.

What really made my heart swell (and brought tears to my eyes) one afternoon was when the *newest* teacher came up to me when I picked him up. She was *so excited* to tell me that she had tied his patka for the first time and she apologized, saying that it was "a little wonky". I recall taking time that day to reflect on how fortunate we were to be members of the Calvin Hill family. His patka wasn't wonky at all – it was tied with *love and care*. I know that bringing up our little turbaned Sikh boy won't always be easy, but experiences like this one give me *hope* – Calvin Hill and the *people*, including his wonderful peers, have given him a solid foundation that will allow him to flourish in the years to come.

When I was asked to join the Calvin Hill board this year, I was honored to give back to this program that has given so much to our family. At my first meeting, I was struck by the warm welcome I received and the care that is taken to ensure that Calvin Hill's core values and educational experiences are carried on for generations to come. Calvin Hill depends on your ongoing support to fulfill its ambitious mission to provide high-quality, affordable education to children and families in the Yale and New Haven communities. Thank you for your generosity and for continuing to believe in Calvin Hill Day Care Center.

With gratitude,

Surjit K. Chandhoke  
Member, Calvin Hill Board of Directors  
Calvin Hill Parent, 2022-present