



DR. JOAN BUCHANAN HILL HONOREE BIO

2023 Each Moment Matters Luncheon Honoree

As the Head of School at The Lamplighter School for over 13 years, Joan Buchanan Hill has become a prominent figure in the field of experiential learning. The Lamplighter School, renowned for its engaging and hands-on educational opportunities, caters to students from pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. Through activities such as planting vegetables, caring for chickens, exploring computer coding and even running small businesses, students at the school are empowered to take ownership of their learning journey. Joan firmly believes in igniting a child's joy for learning as the foundation for lifelong curiosity.

Prior to her career in education, Joan worked in marketing and management, but she found these fields unfulfilling of her personal passions. Motivated by a desire to establish authentic connections and create positive change, she transitioned to a career in education. Joining The Lamplighter School as Head of School in 2012, Joan has found deep fulfillment in building lifelong relationships with her students and their families. One of her favorite ways to connect with her students is by reading to them in The Lamplighter School's distinctive amphitheater-style classrooms.

Joan's vision is to provide her students with not only opportunities for learning, but also avenues for personal growth. She firmly believes in equipping each child with problem-solving skills to ensure they feel capable and empowered from a young age. One such opportunity is the longstanding chicken-and-egg business, which has been operating at the school for more than 50 years. Beginning in third grade, students engage in comprehensive research on different chicken breeds, actively participating in the decision-making process for purchasing the most productive egg-laying chickens. During the fall season, students take full responsibility for setting up and managing the entire business, including caring for the chickens, purchasing feed, as well as handling the collection, packaging and sale of eggs. As shareholders in the business, students invest their own money and make decisions on profit distribution at the end of the year. Some students choose to personally retain their profits, while others reinvest them in donations or personal interests. These activities not only impart a solid understanding of business practices but also reinforce the importance of philanthropy.

Joan attributes her accomplishments in her current role to the unwavering support of the school's faculty, staff and board of trustees. She is grateful for the invaluable contributions of those who believe in her and her work. Joan actively serves on several nonprofit boards, where her compassionate leadership style is highly regarded. She remains dedicated to nurturing the potential and promise within everyone she serves.