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The STEM Alliance Hosts *A Taste of Co-Op* in Support of Co-Op Summer Enrichment

Mamaroneck, NY – As soon as guests entered the party space at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Mamaroneck, it was clear that this was no ordinary fundraiser. Colorful tablecloths were topped with decorative flags and smiling stuffed tigers in camp t-shirts, while oversized award ribbons ringed the room. Over 100 enthusiastic community members got into the camp spirit enjoying dinner at tables with evocative names like *Color Wars*, *Field Trips*, *Aquatics*, and *Math Cave*.

A Taste of Co-Op, hosted by [The STEM Alliance](#), was both a fundraiser and a friendraiser for [Co-Op Summer Enrichment](#), Mamaroneck's only subsidized summer program for low-income children. The evening captured the essence and impact of Co-Op Summer Enrichment, which was recently awarded the *Excellence in Summer Learning Award* from [New York Life Foundation](#) and the [National Summer Learning Association](#). This national honor recognizes high-quality programs that promote social well-being and accelerate academic growth. The *Taste of Co-Op* event featured home-cooked Latin American dishes generously provided by Co-Op families as their own contribution to this community program.

The free event featured a presentation filled with diverse voices: past and current Co-Op counselors, educators, and campers. Their interactive presentation – including participation from the audience – engaged the crowd and matched the event's unique ambiance which evoked an awards show. The program's mascot, Chance the Tiger, made a surprise visit to close the evening.

Co-Op Summer Enrichment, a Mamaroneck School District program led by The STEM Alliance, is an essential summer program that provides five weeks of both academic and recreational experiences for 300+ students from all Mamaroneck District Schools, including employing local teens and college students. The program predominantly serves families with financial need, offering them access to quality learning opportunities and summer activities. This is particularly crucial in combating the phenomenon known as "Summer Slide," wherein children experience a decline in academic skills and knowledge during the summer break.

One of the people featured during the presentation was Kelly Tapia, Bilingual Universal Banker at M&T Bank, who was not only on the event committee but is a former Co-Op camper herself. Ms. Tapia spoke passionately about Co-Op saying, "I know first hand how impactful Co-Op is. I learned to swim at Co-Op when I was a child and now I participate as a volunteer supporting their reading room. The program really does blend summer learning with summer fun."

Thanks to the unwavering support of attendees and donors, the event raised substantial funds, bringing the Co-Op Summer Enrichment program closer to its overall fundraising goal of \$220,000. With \$42,000

raised at the event, a fundraising gap of \$24,000 still remains. Margaret Käufer, President of The STEM Alliance, expressed her gratitude, stating, "We were thrilled to have so many community members and local officials come out to support our award-winning program and look forward to another memorable summer."

Although Co-Op receives generous support from the Mamaroneck School District, the Town of Mamaroneck, and the Village of Mamaroneck, additional funding is necessary to provide students with a high-quality, enriching summer experience.

To learn more about ways to help Co-Op Summer Enrichment, visit: <https://coopsummer.org/donate.html>.

About The STEM Alliance:

The STEM Alliance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing K-12 STEM education and enrichment initiatives to benefit students, parents and educators in our schools and community. Their stated mission is to bridge systemic gaps to provide equal access to critical science, technology, engineering and math learning resources with the goal of empowering communities, inspiring innovation and creating opportunity for all. Summer 2022 will be the sixth year of Co-Op leadership by The STEM Alliance.

For more info: www.theSTEMAlliance.org

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Photo Caption 1: STEM Alliance President Margaret Käufer presenting on the importance of summer learning for all.

Photo Caption 2: Minnie Ianuzzi, a member of the STEM Alliance board, and her daughter posing next to the Co-Op award ribbons.

