

THE BIG LEAP

ANNUAL BENEFIT



Fountain Blue Banquets and Conference Center

Saturday, May 2, 2026, 6:00-10:00

2300 Mannheim Road

Des Plaines, Illinois

What is the Big Leap? The Big Leap is Brickton Montessori School's Annual Benefit fundraiser. In addition to the Annual Fund, it is the only other concentrated financial effort to raise funds for the school's current programs and future growth. It is an adult only evening filled with dinner, music, and silent and live auction fun! Of course, it is also an opportunity for the Brickton community to connect with other families.

Who goes to the Big Leap? Parents, staff, friends, family, and anyone else who wants to participate in this once-a-year event. If someone in your family or friend circle is invested in the future of Brickton Montessori School and Montessori education, please extend an invitation.

What can I do to support the Big Leap?

1) *Come to the event and participate*—that's the most fun way to support The Big Leap! Invite your friends and family to participate, too. If you can't attend in person, don't despair - make a cash donation to the event, contribute to the staff ticket fund (our goal is to not have faculty/staff pay for their own ticket), or designate a proxy to bid for you at the event. You'll feel like you were there!

2) *Help procure bottles of wine and gift certificates for the Wine & Dine grab bags.* These Wine & Dine grab bags will be available the night of the event. Your donation of bottles of wine or gift certificates enters you into the raffle for 1 FREE ticket to The Big Leap. For every bottle of wine valued at \$10 donated, you will receive 1 raffle ticket. For every gift certificate valued at \$50 or more, you will receive 2 raffle tickets!

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3) Assist in procurement for our online auction. The ask letter and form are on our [WEBSITE](#). Our online auction has items that are available only online. Stop by the office for suggestions of items we are actively sourcing.

Once the online auction is up and running, invite your friends and family to start bidding! The Big Leap Annual Benefit online auction opens on Tuesday, April 21st at 3:00 pm and closes on Friday, May 1st at 9:00 pm. Your procurement of an item enters you into the raffle for 1 FREE ticket to The Big Leap. For every item procured you will receive 1 raffle tickets.

4) Assist with the solicitation of sponsors for the event. To support that work, the sponsorship letter and forms are attached to this email and can also be found on our [WEBSITE](#). Your solicitation of a sponsor enters you into the raffle for 1 FREE ticket to The Big Leap. For every sponsorship you will receive 5 raffle tickets.

Aren't auction items very expensive? Our Silent and Live Auctions will feature a wide variety of items large and small. Most items are quite affordable. The most frenzied bidding tends to involve our students' Classroom Art Projects: spectacular, one-of-a-kind items created by our students, most of which close for between \$300 and \$1,000.

Is seating assigned? No. The room is set-up buffet style, with tables scattered throughout the room. All the better to mingle and peruse the Classroom Art Projects without being stuck in one spot all night. You can, however, reserve a VIP table for you and your guests. Details will come with the invitation.

But what do I wear? Whatever puts you in a party mood! You'll see ladies in cocktail dresses and gentlemen in tuxedo jackets and everything in between but please no jeans! Look at it as an opportunity to show everyone how nicely you can clean up when you're not dealing with the drama of drop-off.

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What's the (rough) schedule?

6:00 pm – Cocktail Hour

7:00 pm – Dinner

7:45 pm - First live auction items hit the block

8:30 pm - Dessert

8:30 pm – Heads or Tails

8:30 pm - Final live auction items; Golden Ticket Drawing

9:00 pm – One More Thing

10:00 pm – The Big Leap 2026 comes to a close

May I bring friends and family who don't have children at Brickton?

Absolutely! As the saying goes "the more, the merrier." Families have brought grandparents, aunts/uncles and neighbors.

So, can I bring the children? Not tonight! They get to have fun all the time. The event is about them, but the evening is for adults only. Adult alumni are always welcome though!

Sounds great...how do I sign up? Invitations will be mailed soon! Submit your RSVP early to receive the early bird discount price.



SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, May 2, 2025, 6:00 pm – 10:00 pm