



Golestan Education 2017-2018 Annual Report

"There is nothing more I would want for my child in a school than what Golestan has provided for her. She has been in the school since age 2, and now at almost 6 I can say that she is truly a Golestan child. The incredible environment of the school is reflected in her compassion, curiosity, resilience, and self-confidence. We are a Golestan family. The school has become a home for us, supported us, allowed us to be just what we are as individuals and as a unit, and appreciated us for it. I have so much gratitude."

-Naseem Badieh (Summer's mother - Kindergarten)



Letter from the Executive Director

THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE!

What a year!

We signed a twenty year lease, kicked off a \$3 million capital campaign, nearly completed the first phase of a full makeover to a tired old school, launched an elementary school, and moved our entire organization to a beautiful new campus nearly ten times the size of our fifth street property!

Our new school is so beautiful - so different - that we're already getting calls and emails from new collaborators wanting to visit. The more people see it, the more people will stop expecting schools to look and feel like sterile or overstimulating institutions.

Schools can be beautiful. Schools should be beautiful. They should also be thoughtfully designed with the child's entire experience in mind. Because it really does make a difference.

But like any book, schools shouldn't be judged by their covers. At the core of a good school are kind and dedicated teachers that implement thoughtful child-centric programming. One day, these types of schools will be accessible to every child. That's why we're ramping up our Colab work this year to support more communities and expanding the impact of our work far and wide.

This year, we also became an International Baccalaureate candidate school. Somehow, with all that's been going on, we managed to work with 12 new groups through our Colab. And in our first month at the new campus, we have already welcomed several Colab visitors. We're preparing ourselves for a very busy year with the potential to reach dozens of new communities serving thousands of children worldwide.

We've proven to you that we are true to our word. When we say we're going to do something, we do it. And thanks to a team of dedicated individuals, from our staff, to the Board, to parent volunteers, we do it well.

Fasten your seatbelts! We're about to go on quite a ride and we can't do it without you.

Thank you for your trust, generosity, and evangelism.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you!

Yalda Modabber



Executive Director





*"Golestan is an organization like no other. It's deeply personalized for each and every child and yet impacts thousands of children around the globe by inspiring and training other educators. Somehow Golestan manages to make each person that enters feel apart of a warm and loving family, whether you're from Kensington or Kenya."
-Leila Makarechi (Maziar's mother - PreK, and Board member)*



© Page Green

*"True happiness comes from the joy of deeds well done, the zest of creating things new."
-Antoine de Saint-Exupery*



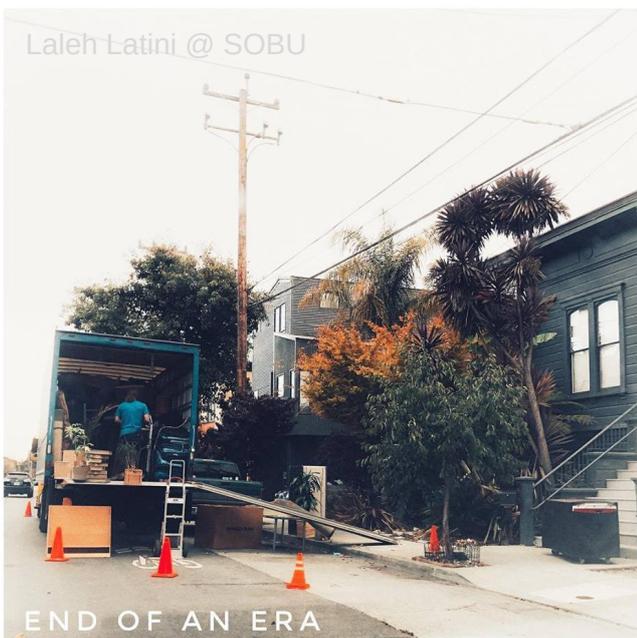
“Play is the highest form of research.”
— *Albert Einstein*

Golestan Education

Golestan was founded in 2007 as the first daily Persian language immersion preschool and after school program in the US. Today, we are an International Baccalaureate Candidate elementary school with four inclusive language tracks. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Golestan has evolved to become a collaborative resource for educators in all languages around the world.

In 2016, Golestan was the first preschool to be nominated and selected as an Ashoka Changemaker school: it is a privilege we do not take lightly.

We create learning spaces that nurture children to be kind, compassionate, courageous, and confident. We instill in children a sense of place and purpose in our rapidly changing, multi-cultural world so that they may be a force of positive change in the future.



This fall, we moved Golestan out of our beloved old Victorian home and into our beautiful new campus. With giddy excitement, our teachers and staff set up their new classes and welcomed our students into their expansive, light-filled indoor-outdoor classrooms. The tradition of immersing our students in love, beauty, and language continues.

"Watching Golestan's new campus come to life in just a few short months and now seeing so many joyful and engaged kids experiencing the unique vision of the school has been remarkable.

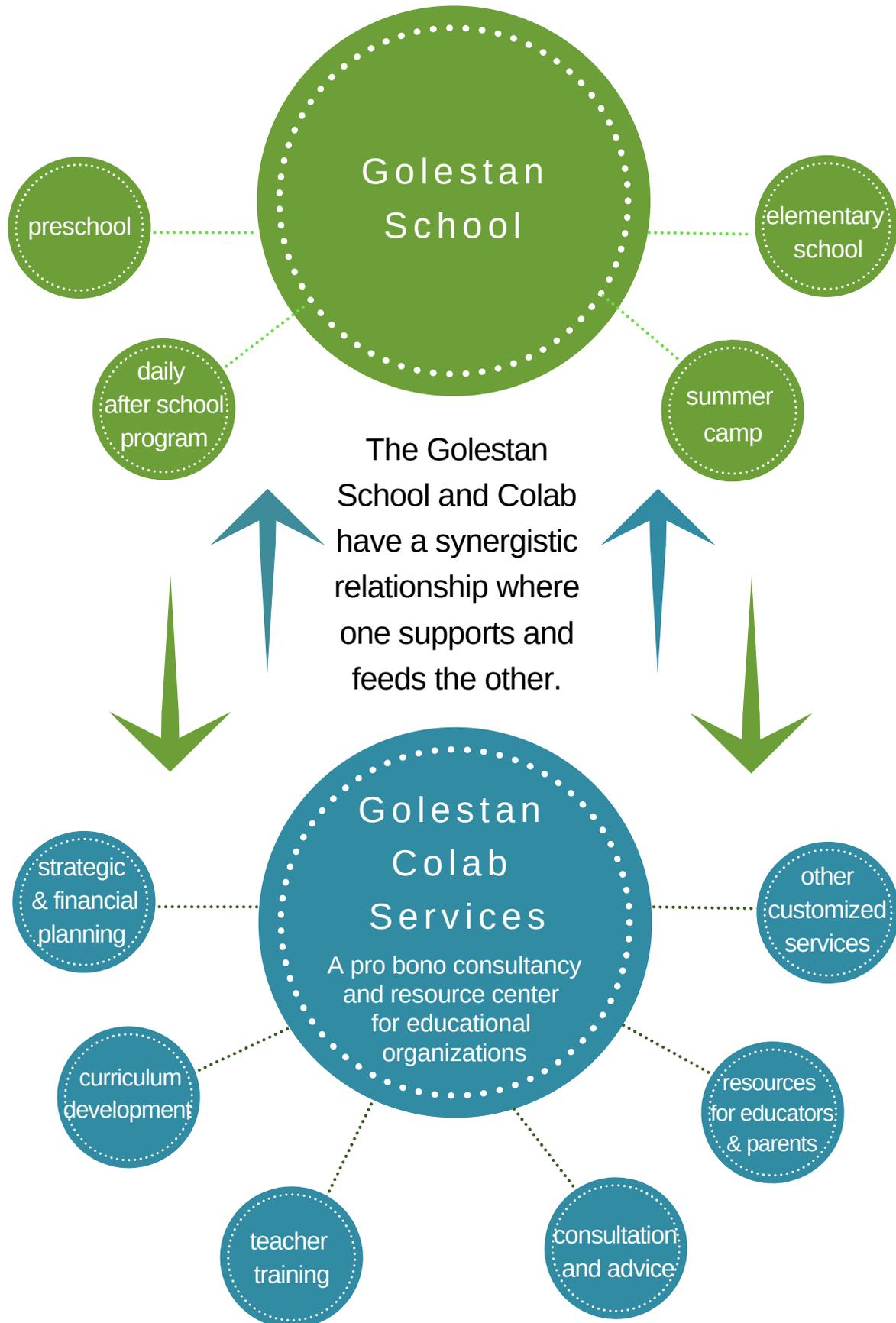
-Amir Kia (Nile's father - PreK, and Board Chair)

"Synergy is what happens when one plus one equals ten..." - Stephen Covey



Organization Overview

Golestan Education is comprised of two entities within one non-profit organization:





*“Happiness, not in another place but this place...
not for another hour, but this hour.”*

— Walt Whitman

OUR NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!

Golestan is the only elementary school that we know of that immerses its students in Arabic, English, Hebrew, *and* Persian.

The students follow International Baccalaureate standards, in addition to national standards, in a completely integrated hands-on learning environment. They spend hours outside, each week, with dynamic classroom walls that blur the lines between nature and the indoors.



As an Ashoka Changemaker school, we take our responsibility for raising kind, engaged, and empowered children very seriously. Our teachers are given the creative freedom they crave to take their work to a whole other level, and their passion is palpable.

A beautiful classroom, kind and passionate teachers, a diverse community of families, a plethora of interesting materials, and the freedom to explore and push the boundaries on one's own learning within a safe and nurturing environment. What more could one want?

We celebrate the heritages and cultures of each community within a secular context, while continuing to build a strong academic foundation in each child. A place where the individual child and the collective community of children are equally valued. This is a microcosm of the global society we envision for a peaceful future.

To learn more about our elementary school, please email primary@golestankids.com

Capital Campaign



In June 2018, we officially broke ground on a \$3 million construction project to update a traditional Catholic school. With an incredible team of dedicated professionals, we were able to move into the new campus just four months later! From removing several tons of blacktop, to building five new bathrooms, to converting a classroom into a commercial kitchen and dining room, not an inch of the main story of the building was left untouched.

Thanks to the generosity of hundreds of people, we are halfway to raising the funds we need to cover the cost of this incredible transformation!



Before

After

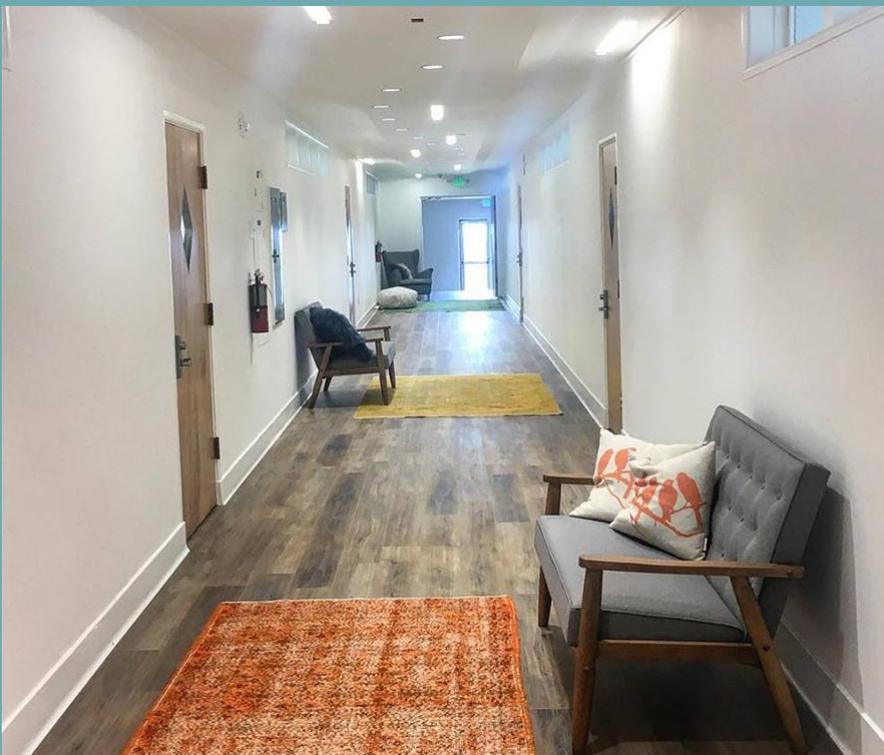
Capital Campaign



Our goal for the next fiscal year is to raise the funds we need to keep our 5th street Victorian property as a source of income that feeds an endowment for scholarships, with a focus on refugee families.

We will also continue to expand our Colab work to help other schools see that they too can transform their tired old schools into idyllic learning spaces.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our donors.



Before

After

Capital Campaign

A HUGE thank you to the following businesses for their generosity and dedication:

- Ali Afrasiabi, REI Buildup
- Heath Ceramics
- MWS Consulting
- Oliver & Co Construction
- SOBU Oakland
- Stromberg Architecture



Capital Campaign

*There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.*



© Mike Strasser

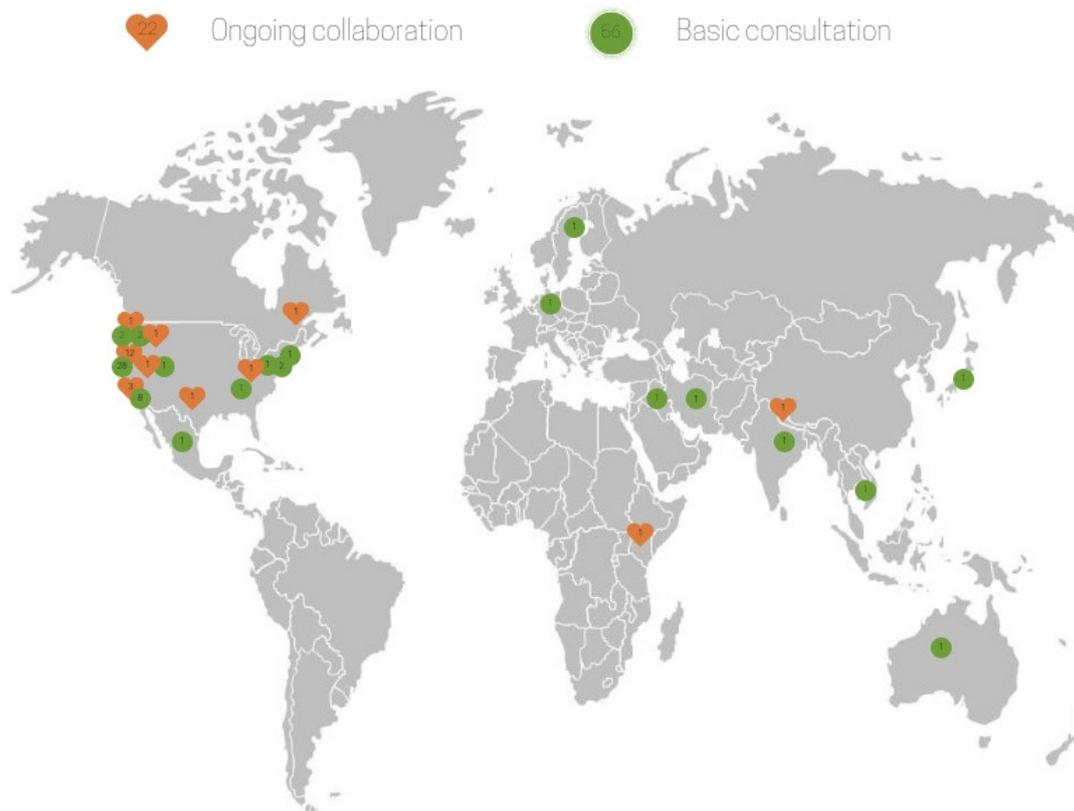
*But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.*

-Edgar Guest

What is the Colab?

We believe every child should have a Golestan experience. For this reason, we developed the Colab as a pro bono resource and consultancy for parents and educators across the globe. This has given us the opportunity to expand our reach exponentially into communities beyond our socioeconomic and geographic borders. From a basic consultation that shifts the perception of how children should be educated, to hands on partnerships that result in dramatic metamorphoses.

Colab across the Globe



SuMa After-School launched in Fall 2014, in large part due to the support and mentorship of the Golestan Colab. The progressive, hands-on curriculum, provided by Golestan, was entirely new to Nepal, which traditionally relies on rote memorization. Seeing the positive impact on the 100+ students of the after-school program, we launched the SuMa Teacher Training program in Spring 2018 to bring this alternative education approach to as many students as possible. This year alone, 3,800 students throughout Nepal will be introduced to new styles of learning based on the Golestan curriculum. With this level of impact, we hope to expand our teacher training program to reach even more students in the years to come.

- Jehan .Seirafi, Executive Director, Sunsar Maya

Colab Resources and Languages

The following resources, and many others, are available online on our Colab Portal.

1 The Guide to Positive Discipline & Class Management

{Practical techniques for positive discipline and class management}

2 The Golestan Curriculum & Integrated Lesson Plan Packet

{A comprehensive year-long curriculum and monthly lesson plans for ages two to 14}

3 School Environments: a guide to creating grounding spaces

{Create learning spaces and classrooms that are peaceful, calming, and beautiful}

4 The Colab Guide to Teaching

{A practical guide on how to work with kids, maintain a language immersion environment, set up projects, manage a classroom & everything else in between}

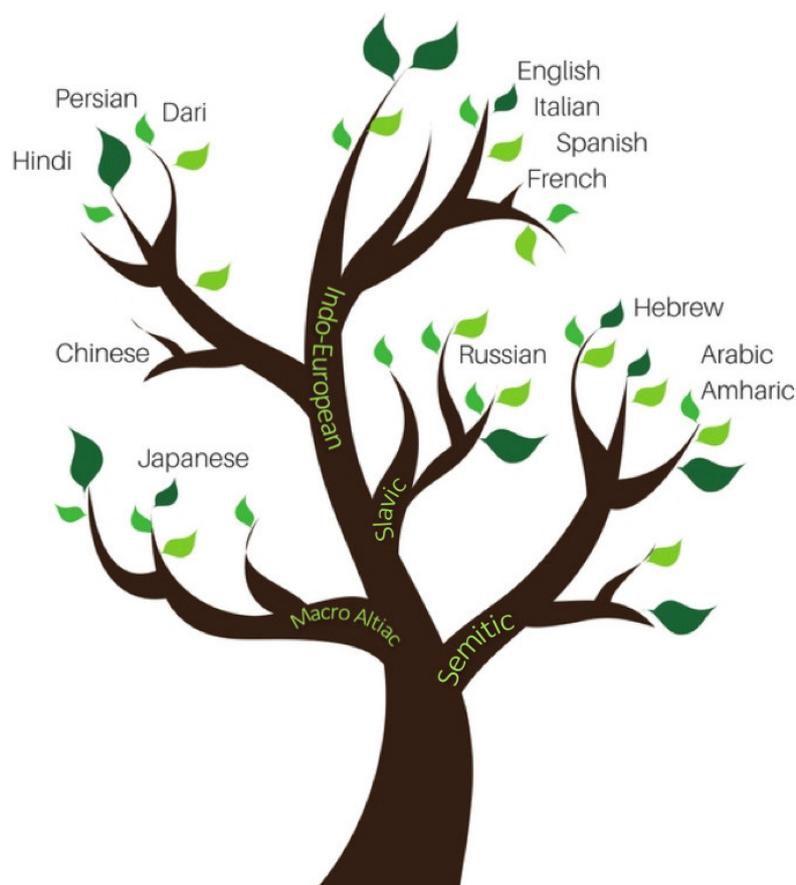
5 Natural Playscapes for Children

{Creative ideas to transform your outdoor spaces into green, interactive dynamic playscapes}

6 Golestan Stories Audiobook

{A lovely collection of stories and fables narrated in Persian, with the common theme of kindness and compassion.}

The Colab has worked with programs in the following heritage languages:



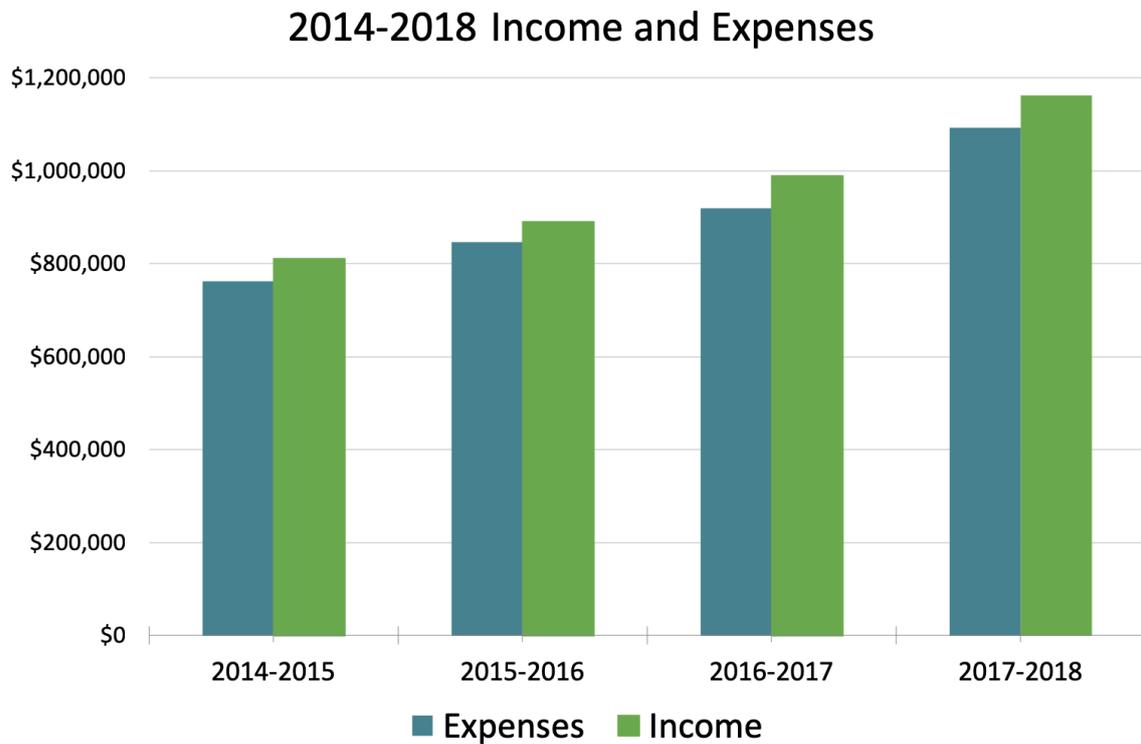


"I don't have enough great things to say about Golestan and we aren't even parents yet. Golestan's instructional philosophy is multifaceted, covering all aspects of enriching young minds to explore, achieve, and be part of a global community. Through its Colab and scholarship program, they extend their reach to children of different backgrounds, socioeconomic levels, and geographic location.."

-Galorah Keshavarz (Advisory Board)

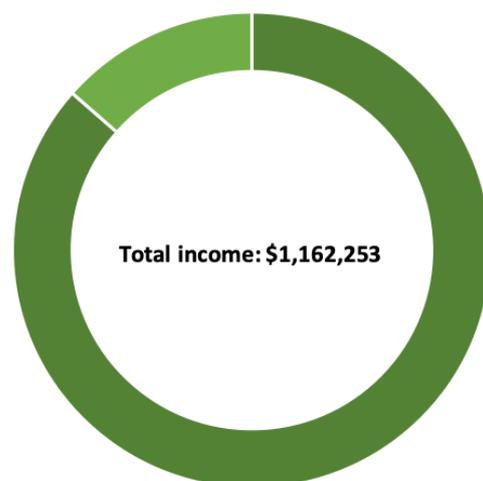
Financial Overview: Income

Golestan has shown steady and healthy average growth of 9% each year.



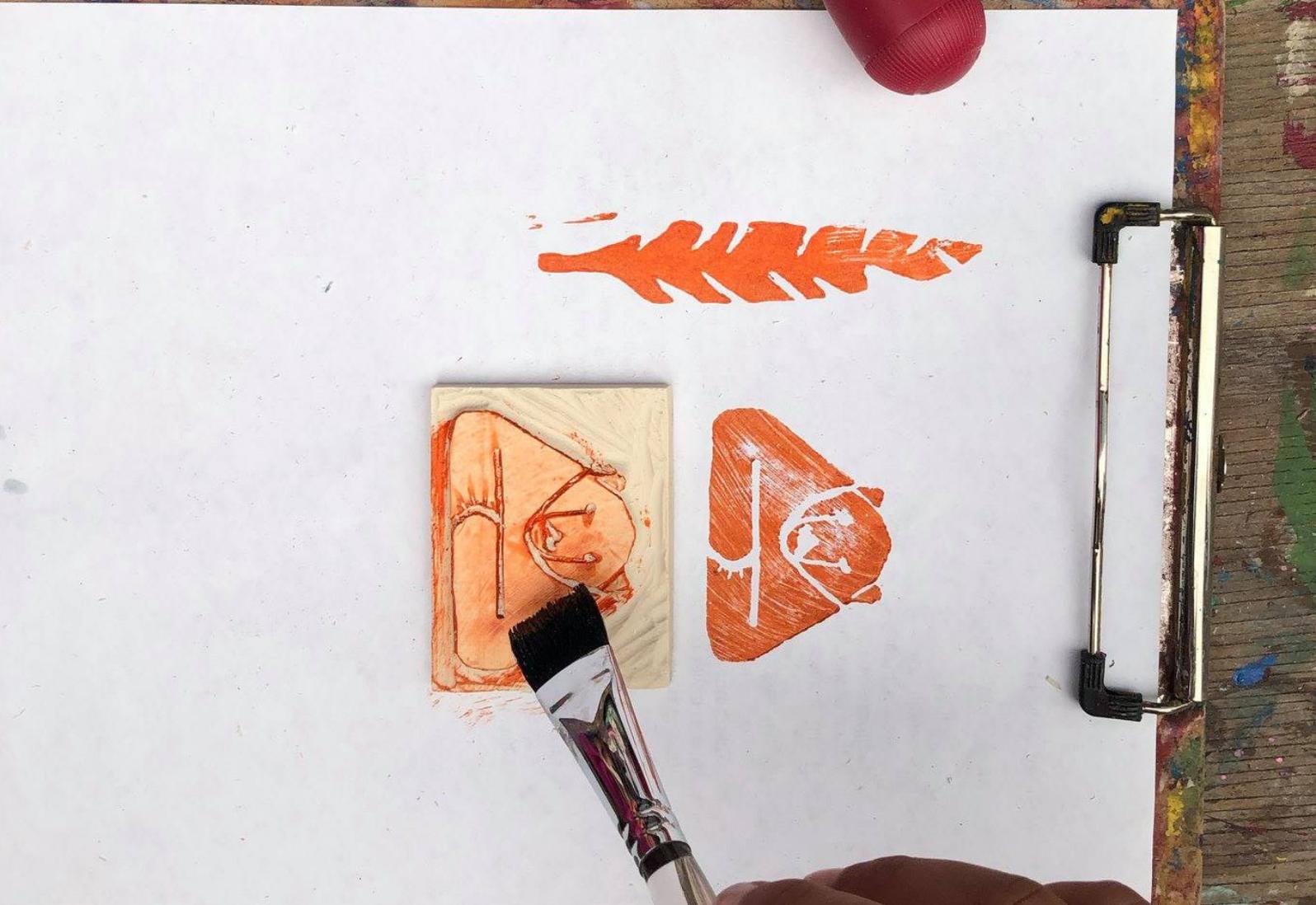
Tuition accounts for ~90% of the organization's income.

The \$140,000 gap is filled by our Annual Fund which is supported by donors both locally and internationally.



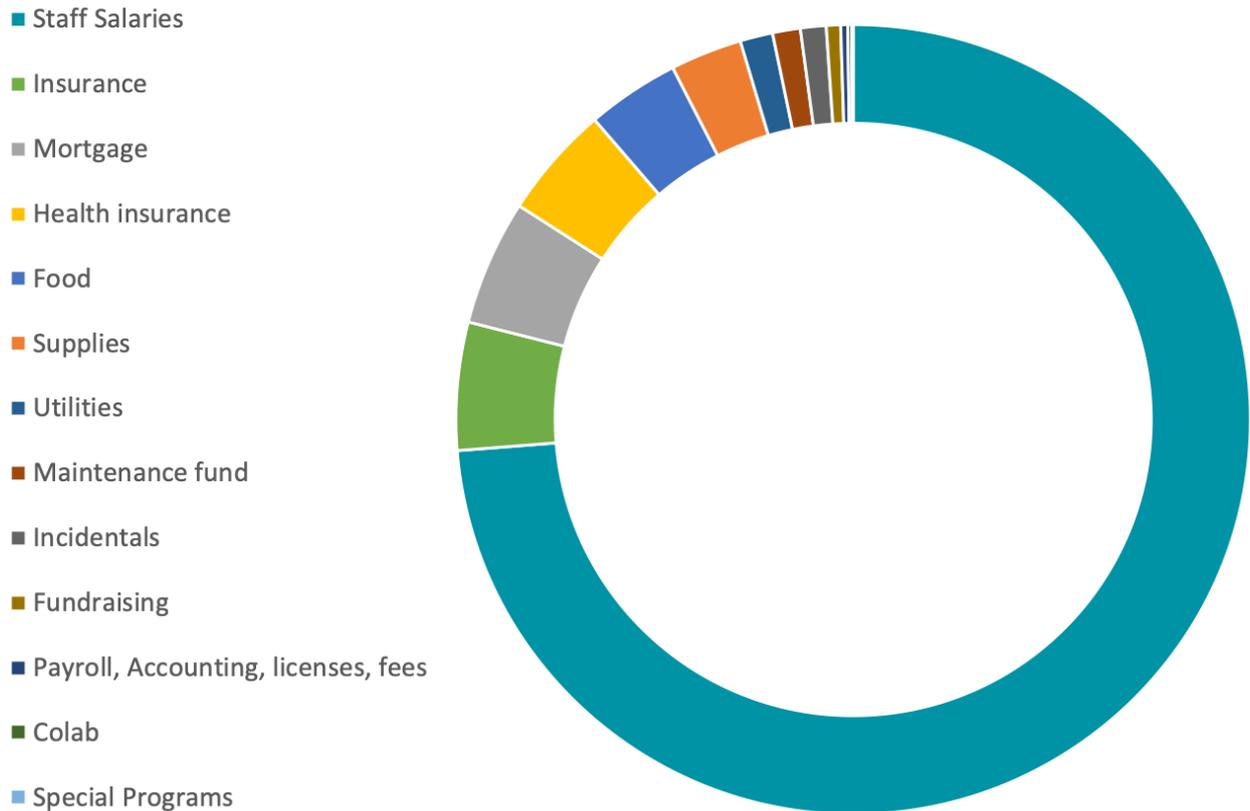
2017-2018 Income

■ Program income ■ Fundraising



Financial Overview: Expenses

2017-2018 Expenses



Golestan runs a lean operation with rich programming that has deep impact. Only six percent of our budget is spent on operations, and our administrative team plays an integral role in all of the organization's programming.



● PROGRAMS | 92%

● OPERATIONS | 6%

● DEVELOPMENT | 2%

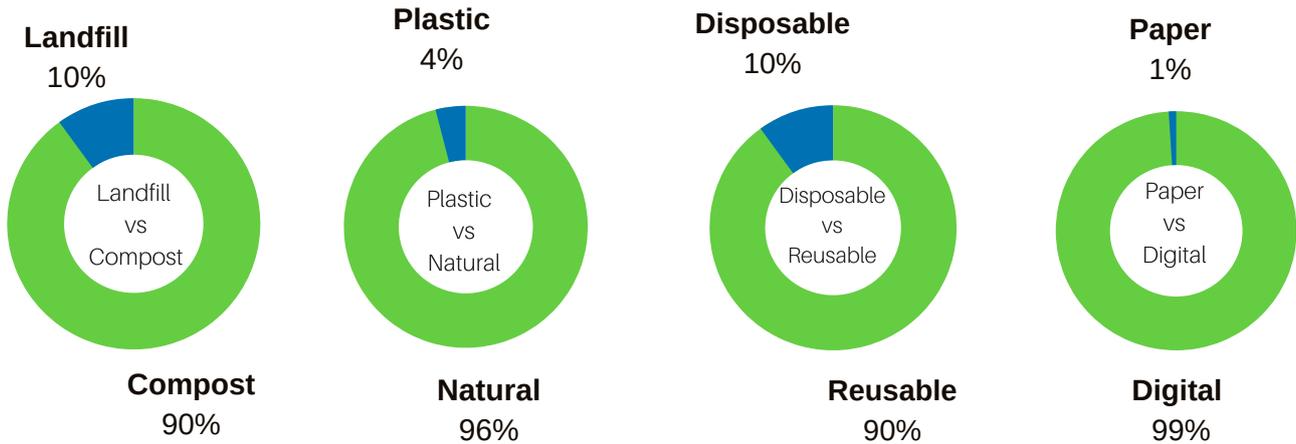
"We are deeply grateful to be part of the incredibly beautiful Golestan community with its wealth of ethnic diversity, language immersion, kindness, inspiring project based learning, and expansive global awareness. Not to mention the incredible attention to detail and beautification that is infused into everything from the presentation of artwork, to the classrooms, to the family meals. When we drop our daughter off at school I know she will be in a place where her mind, heart, body, and spirit are being nourished completely."

-Laura Benghal (Zeina's mother - Kindergarten)



Environmental Stewardship

Our curriculum is designed to help children learn from early on that they are the stewards of our planet. They learn to make choices that reflect their responsibilities as such citizens. Every detail in our program supports these values and teaches our students the big picture. They learn that each one of us plays an important role in respecting and protecting our planet and its inhabitants.



Our compost waste is approximately 10 times greater than our landfill waste.

Almost all the toys and teaching materials are made of natural or recycled materials.

We only use reusable paper cups, plates, and utensils. Instead of paper towels we use cotton towels.

Virtually all of our communications with families and our greater community are digital.

"All is connected... no one thing can change by itself." -Paul Hawken



Meet Our People



Golestan Staff & Volunteers

Aaron (Admin)

Azam (Afterschool Persian literacy teacher)

Azar (Ranging Kamaan & Substitute)

Brook (Kinder teacher: English)

Collin (Operations Manager)

Elham (Bolbol teacher)

Hanif (Summer camp & Cooking teacher)

Julia (Chef)

Mahsa (Parvaneh teacher)

Mamak (After School teacher)

Maria (Facilities)

Maryam (Associate Director & Colab Manager)

Michka (Bolbol teacher)

Mojgan (Volunteer)

Nastaran (Rangin Kamaan teacher)

Natalia (Substitute chef)

Nazanin (Volunteer)

Nessa (Kinder teacher English & Persian)

Nitzan (Kinder PE teacher: Hebrew)

Parinaz (Joojeh teacher)

Peggy (Bookkeeping)

Peyman (Summer camp soccer coach)

Roonak (Afterschool & Substitute)

Saeideh (Substitute)

Sahar (Parvaneh teacher)

Sandra (Manager of Facilities)

Scott (CPA)

Shuka (Social media volunteer)

Sonbol (IB Coordinator & Office Manager)

Tannaz (Joojeh teacher)

Yalda (Executive Director)

Yasi (After school & Kinder teacher: Persian)

Zeina (Kinder Outdoor Ed teacher: Arabic)

Meet Our People

Golestan Board of Directors

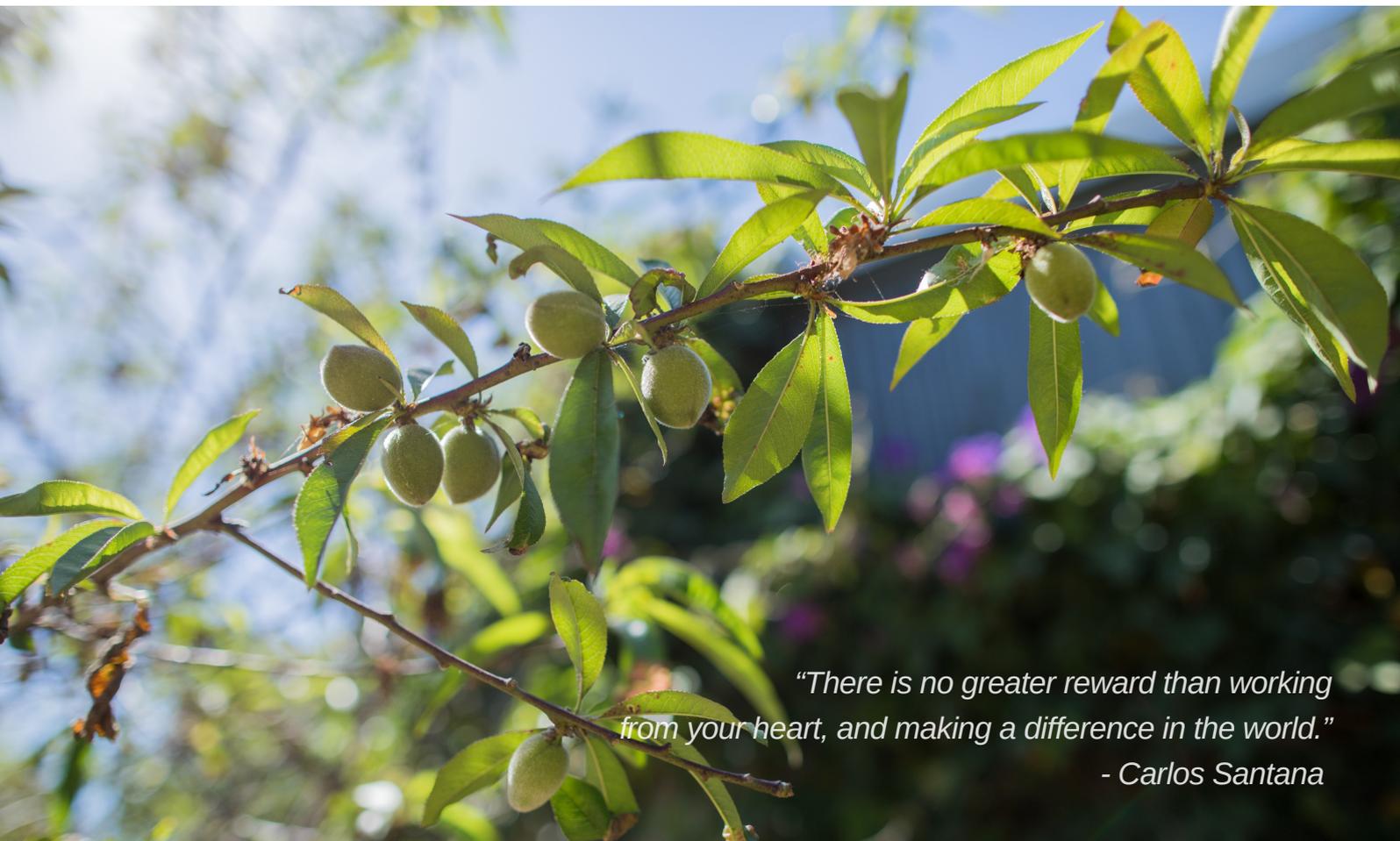
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Hadi Taheri, Treasurer
Josh Oliver, Director
Katherine Whitney, Secretary
Leila Makarechi, Director
Neda Nobari, Director
Yalda Modabber, Executive Director

Golestan Advisory Board

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Galorah Keshavarz
Krista Berringer
Laurie Capitelli
Matthew Stromberg

Golestan Community Association (GCA)

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Borna Jabbarpour
Eija Ramos (Communications Chair)
Ellie Han
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Farigol Bineshpour
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Leila Makarechi
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Maryam Shishineh
Minoo Akbarian
Naseem Badiey
Pegah Afkary
Shiva Niazi
Tiffany Charles (Chair)
Yasi Nouri Massih (Golestan Co-founder)
Zahra Mahloudji



*"There is no greater reward than working
from your heart, and making a difference in the world."*

- Carlos Santana

Thank you!

A very special thanks to our donors
this year for your generosity and
support which made it possible for
our wildest dreams to come true!

5th Street Machine Arts, Afgham Ebrahimi, Afra Pourdard, Afsoon Vaziri, Aldo Arcieri, Alexandra Singer & Ali Niknejad, Ali Assadian, Ali Ghodsi, Alicia Graham, Alimorad Movassaghi, Aline & Amir Kia, Althea Bovell, Amy Glaze & Ramin Hedayatpour, Ann & Ahmad Moghaddas, Annenberg Foundation - Explore.org, Anonymous, Arezoo Fakouri & Doug Yokoyama, ARTogether, Assad Ghassemzadeh, Azadeh Rad & Jonathan Silvio, Azar Zavvar & Josh Oliver, Babak Poushanchi, Babak Sheikh, Babak Yazdani, Bahar Kids, Baleen & Shabnam Shemirani, Banava-Pugh LLC (Sandra Banava & Josh Pugh), Behrouz Tahbaz, Bita Daryabari, Boostan Kids, Brett Norberry, Caitlin Patterson & Rich Price, Camille & Rishi Desai, Candice Sarnevesht, Carla Delangre (Selina Naturally), Caroline Moriarity, Catherine Arnold, Charity Drive, Ciara Cox & Margaret Louisa Wu, Cyrus Massoumi, Dalia & Hossein Fateh, Dariush Mirfendereski, David Weitzman, David Yadegar, Debra & Reza Abbaszadeh, Diane Lee Henderson & Sid Stokes, Dorsa Barzin & Eduardo Caversazi, Dr Mohammad & Zarrin Taheri, Elham Aboutalebi Anaraki, Ellie & Eddie Han, Ellie & Mike Shirazi Strasser, Ellie Kamarjian, Eric & Patricia Stromberg, Erinn & Payam Nahid, Fabiola de Leon, Fakhri & Ali Banava, Farideh Sedighi, Farigol Bineshpour & Navid Mehranpour, Farnia Fathian & Reza Kalantari, Frances Hellman & Warren, Frog Hollow Farm, Gap Company, Ghazaleh Afshar & Tom Attar, Goldman Sachs & Co., Good Eggs Inc., Gretchen Stromberg, Hassan Amin, Hoda Assadian, Janice Stokes, Jd Kuchinski, Jehan Seirafi, Jen Kerns & Caesar Djavaherian, Jenny Wong & Mark Schlosberg, John Kuchinski, Judy & Kava Massih, Karim Malek, Katherine Whitney & Farhad Farzaneh, Krista Bessinger, Kristin Anne Stromberg, Ladan Sobhani & Mark Kipfer, Ladan Zarrabi & John Goodarz, Laila Shamszadeh & Gabriel Berent, Laleh & Alessandro Latini, Laleh Tamhidi, Lanesplitter Pizza, Laura Stokes, Laura Weitzman & Hamza Benghal, Laurel Leichter & Michael Wilson, Lauren Giordano, Layla Sabourian (Chef Koochooloo Inc), Leila Makarechi & Farhad Sadaghiani, Leily Moazami, Leily Vassigh & Nick Montana, Lina & Ali Nazar, Lynda & Darrell Wilson, Mahsa Shoghi, Mamak Khonsari, Mani Farhadi, Manochehr Pouransari, Margi Stromberg, Margi Young, Michael Cecconi & Fin Cecconi, Marianne McCune, Marjan Orellana, Marlies Haegg Lund & Farrokh Modabber, Marsh & McLennan Companies, Maryam & Kartik Garg, Maryam Ghasemzadeh, Maryam Mehrjui, Maryam Shishineh & Ali Mortazavi, Maz Jobrani & Pretha Mani, MWS Consulting, Megan & Erik Stromberg,

Thank you!

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Donations can be sent to:

Golestan
320 San Carlos Avenue,
El Cerrito CA 94530

Or online with a credit card at GolestanKids.com/expansion



GOLESTAN

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