



## The Siena School Hosts 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration

*Siena honors the Weinfeld Education Group along with local key supporters*

**Silver Spring, Maryland, October 4, 2018-** The Siena School held its annual Siena Celebration on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 at the Silver Spring Civic Center in Maryland. Each year, the Siena community comes together to celebrate school achievements and to recognize important contributions to both Siena and the wider field of dyslexia education.

Annually, one individual or organization is awarded The Siena Cypress Leadership Award for significant and lasting contributions to the education of children and young adults with learning differences. Siena awarded this year's Cypress Leadership Award to the Weinfeld Education Group, who have assisted thousands of families in the Special Education process and school locating services. They have authored numerous articles and 10 books including *Take Control of Dyslexia & Other Reading Difficulties*, and *Smart Kids with Learning Difficulties, Second Edition* (both which featured The Siena School). They are also hosting the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Diamonds in the Rough Conference in April of 2019, which educates Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. parents and professionals about the needs of students with special needs and introduces them to the myriad of outstanding special needs providers in this area.

Erik Heyer, founder of The Siena School, presented the Weinfeld Education Group with the Cypress Leadership Award. Heyer said that, "Rich Weinfeld is one of the top experts locally and nationally on students who learn differently. He is a tireless and tenacious advocate for quality educational programs for all students." Heyer shared that Weinfeld was one of the first persons he met with to determine what type of school was needed in the area. "Rich was supremely optimistic. He was an absolute cheerleader."



Rich Weinfeld accepted the Cypress Leadership Award on behalf of the Weinfeld Educational Group. Addressing the crowd, Weinfeld stressed he shares the award with associate director Jennifer Engel Fisher and WEG's extended team of advocates, and recalled with fondness those early meetings to conceptualize "a school for smart kids that learn differently." In closing, Weinfeld said, "WEG's mission is to have each child reach their unique potential, and we cannot achieve that mission without outstanding schools. Siena does things the right way. "It's never about filling seats or getting enough kids in, but getting the right kids in who they can really help."

Key supporters Ellen O'Neill, Dan Griffin, and Henry Allen were also honored for their contributions to The Siena School. O'Neill, a former Siena parent and Executive Director of the Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center, provides professional development opportunities tailor-made to Siena's faculty and mission; she also serves on the board of The Siena School Scholarship Fund. Griffin, a former Siena parent and DMV area psychologist, has been a great supporter and consultant for Siena for many years. Allen, Pulitzer Prize winner for Criticism of Photography in the year 2000 and writer at The Washington Post, visits Siena each year to talk with students about writing and poetry.

### **About The Siena School**

The Siena School in Silver Spring, Maryland serves bright, college-bound students with language-based learning differences, such as dyslexia. Siena's staff and board of advisors include distinguished national, state and local education leaders and professionals. The school was established in 2006 and serves students in grades 4 – 12. Siena's program is designed for students with mild to moderate learning needs who are experiencing a discrepancy between their academic achievement and intellectual abilities in one or more areas such as reading, writing, oral expression or math. Siena delivers an individualized educational program featuring small class sizes, research-based instructional methodologies, a highly trained staff and an educational environment specifically designed to meet the unique needs of our students, with a specific emphasis on the arts. For further information, The Siena School can be contacted at (301) 244-3600 or on the web at [www.thesienaschool.org](http://www.thesienaschool.org).

### **About the Weinfeld Education Group**

Weinfeld Education Group's mission is to have children reach their unique potential. They have assisted thousands of families in the Special Education process and school locating services. The Weinfeld Education Group believes that when a positive collaboration exists between the parent and the school, amazing outcomes can occur for the child. Their team of experts includes professionals in the area of Special Education as well as Behavior Intervention Specialists and Parent Support Specialists. WEG team members have authored 10 books including *Taking Control of Dyslexia & Other Reading Difficulties* and *Smart Kids with Learning Difficulties, Second Edition* both which featured The Siena School. WEG has published numerous articles and participated on the *Special Needs Connection* podcast, hosted by the Maryland Financial Advocates. For more information about WEG, call (301) 681-6233 or visit their website at [www.weinfeldeducationgroup.com](http://www.weinfeldeducationgroup.com).