

Jin-A Child Care Center celebrates 30 years of serving NJ children and families

Manoj Jacob
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Jin-A Child Care Center is celebrating 30 years of serving the children and families of New Jersey. The center was incorporated as a nonprofit agency in December 1987 and opened its doors for the first day of classes on January 20, 1988. For three decades, the property at 77 Jay Street in Clifton has served as a home away from home for thousands of children.

Jin-A was founded by Mrs. Mamiko Rattley, an educator with experience in early-childhood development. Mrs. Rattley had a vision for a high quality, multicultural and multi-religious child care center for the wider Clifton community. Since then, the center has grown to include children, parents, and staff beyond the City of Clifton.

Mrs. Rattley named the center Jin-A, based off a Chinese character. “Jin” means advance and “A” means child. So, Jin-A means ‘advance the child.’ The center’s name serves as a daily reminder of its ever-present mission to educate the child’s whole body, mind, and heart in order to support their development of respect, tolerance, love, and compassion for all. Since then, hundreds of children have graduated from Jin-A. Many have gone on to accomplish high academic degrees and honors in various fields and still carry fond memories of their time spent at the center.

Over the years Jin-A has developed strong community partnerships. The center’s membership in the National Association for the Education of Young Children and NJ Grow Kids helps connect it to research and best practices in the field. It also partners with Passaic Community College to provide fieldwork for student teachers and with Rutgers University for research.

In celebration of Jin-A’s 30th birthday, the center organized a series of activities and events that took place over the course of several months. During the summer, Jin-A invited alumni to celebrate with fair games and swimming. In January, Clifton’s Mayor, James Anzaldi, joined Jin-A staff and parents at a luncheon to help commemorate this milestone. Looking toward the future, Jin-A’s plan is to keep celebrating milestones, keep advancing children forward, and to keep building a better community.