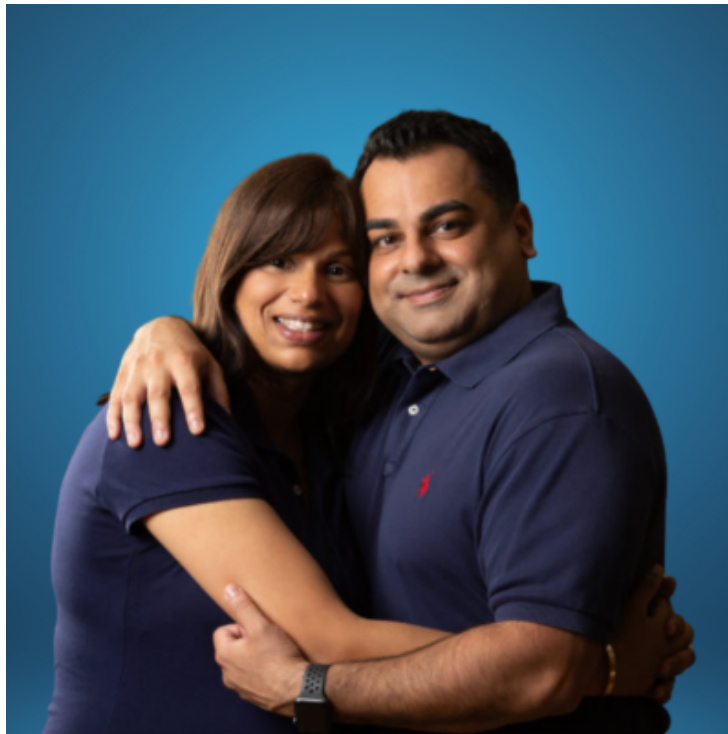


J.P. Morgan's Hiral Shah honored by Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester



Vidya Bhat and Hiral Shah were honored Thursday, June 5, by the Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester with the Humanitarian Award at Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase. Photographs courtesy Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester.

Investment advisers are by necessity guarded individuals, but recently Hiral Shah, CFP, a Private Client adviser and managing director of investments at J.P. Morgan Wealth Management in West Harrison, opened up about his youthful experience with the Boys & Girls Club.

The occasion was the [Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester's](#) "Dream Big Gala," held Thursday, June 5, at Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase. Some 250 guests saw Shah, who is on the club's board, and wife Vidya Bhat, Ph.D., principal of Ardsley Union Free School District's Concord Road School, receive the club's Humanitarian Award. (The other honorees were Monique and Stephen Grayson, M.D., recipients of the John Beach Award.)

[In a teasing video with his wife](#) —which was presented at the gala along with [one on the Graysons](#) — Shah acknowledged that, growing up in Wallington, New Jersey, he was not the easiest of children. He didn't quite fit in.

"You were mischievous," Bhat said.

"The main thing for any kid is to be accepted," he said. When he arrived at his local Boys & Girls Club, in Lodi, he thought – and here he exhaled at the memory – "I'm home."

The Lodi club didn't offer as much as the Mount Kisco-based Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester, he added. But he learned swimming and other sports before adding crafts.

“The (Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester) is a true extension of how school days can be enhanced for students,” Bhat said of the nonprofit, which was founded in 1939 and serves children ages 3 to 18. “It’s analogous to what we as educators refer to as Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework, CRSE Framework, and the basic tenet of the framework is creating a welcoming environment for all students, children. That’s what this club represents. It embodies (this) not only in its core beliefs but in the actual application of the core beliefs....”

They include Character, Advocacy and Leadership Development; Education and Career Development; Health and Life Skills; Arts and Social Recreation; and Sports and Fitness. (More than 75,000 children have learned to be water-safe in the club’s Learn to Swim classes.)To address the mental-health challenges facing young people today, the club has a mental wellness program for all members, staff and families, with two clinicians and five Ph.D. interns.

The club has also taught Shah friendship, he said in the video. He and Bhat – who share three children, two rescue dogs and a home in Purchase — are not only husband and wife; they’re best friends. (She also serves as proofreader for his emails, he joked.)

Relationships are also a big part of Shah’s work at J.P. Morgan, which he joined in 2009 after launching his career six years earlier. Armed with a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Shah worked for such firms as Citigroup and Morgan Stanley Smith Barney (now Morgan Stanley Wealth Management).

At J.P. Morgan, Shah partners with individuals, business owners, executives, entrepreneurs and foundations, delivering a range of services that include investment portfolio design, investment management and retirement planning. He also works closely with multigenerational families, developing strategies to help protect and grow their assets across generations. i

Shah, however, isn’t being honored for his career but rather for the values he embodies and lives. Under the couple’s photograph in the [“Dream Big Gala” program book](#), there is a quote from Mahatma Gandhi: “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”



Monique and Stephen Grayson, M.D., were honored by the Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester with the John Beach Award for 40 years of volunteering with the club’s Marlins swim team. “Life

is like swimming,” they said. “Sometimes you hit a wall, turn around, try again and just keep on going.”