



GEORGIA FOUNDATION FOR
EARLY CARE + LEARNING

ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2023





WHO WE ARE

The Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning is an independent 501(c)3 that supports the efforts of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). In 2017, the Georgia General Assembly passed legislation enabling the foundation to form. Shortly after Governor Nathan Deal signed the legislation into law, the nonprofit was created and began making strategic investments to improve and expand high-quality education.

OUR MISSION

To support access to high-quality early childhood education to Georgia's youngest learners and their families, providers, and teachers through established strategic investments, collaborations, and partnerships to equip Georgia's current and future workforce.

OUR VISION

To provide the best beginnings possible for all of Georgia's children.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Research has shown that every dollar invested in high-quality early education saves, on average, \$13 later in reduced crime rates, lower demand for social services, and increased tax revenues. Investing in early childhood education is vital to the success and stability of individuals and our communities.

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of Early Childhood Care and Education,

I have just completed my first year as Executive Director of the Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning (Foundation), and I am profoundly proud to report in these pages what we have accomplished this fiscal year.

Herein you'll learn the ways the Foundation has celebrated and supported:

- Georgia's early care and education (ECE) workforce
- Georgia's ECE programs
- Georgia's Quality Rated, the state's innovative quality rating and improvement system



I'm proud of the work the Foundation has done this year, and I acknowledge we could not have been successful without the dedicated child care providers who care for Georgia's children day in and day out; the generous corporate and private philanthropic partners who support us; DECAL's professional and committed staff; the Foundation's Board of Directors that advises and supports our work; and Governor Kemp and other state policy makers.

Looking ahead to the upcoming year, I am eager to continue this important work and to explore establishing new programs for the Foundation. Please visit our website at gaeearlyed.org for updates and information about how to subscribe to our newsletter. If you have any questions about the contents of this report or the Foundation website, contact me at laura.wagner@decalfga.gov.

Sincerely,

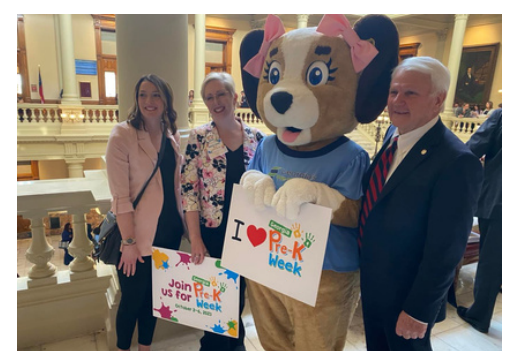
A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to read 'L Wagner', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

LAURA WAGNER

CELEBRATING GEORGIA'S ECE WORKFORCE:

Since 2017, the Foundation has recognized Georgia's Pre-K Teachers of the Year from private child care programs and public schools. In 2021, we began recognizing Early Childhood Educators of the Year. So, in the 2023 Fiscal Year, we awarded winners in the following five categories: Infant Early Childhood Educator of the Year, Toddler Early Childhood Educator of the Year, Preschool Early Childhood Educator of the Year, Georgia Pre-K Teacher of the Year (Private School Category), and Georgia Pre-K Teacher of the Year (Public School Category).

As in previous years, the Foundation identified a diverse group of educators who have made a significant difference in the lives of young children. By highlighting their achievements, we have not only acknowledged the hard work and commitment of these educators but also inspired others in the field to strive for excellence.



Why does this matter? Georgia's early care and education workforce lays the foundation for lifelong learning and success for children, families, and communities—and these professionals deserved to be praised in this special way.

We congratulate the following WINNERS for 2022-2023:

Mary Williams

Infant Early Childhood Educator of the Year
Kids Express Learning Center Inc., Hawkinsville

Elianne Aguilera

Toddler Early Childhood Educator of the Year
Eli's Academy, Lawrenceville

Tierra Faulcon

Preschool Early Childhood Educator of the Year
Faulcon Prep Academy, Smyrna

Alaina Jones

Georgia Pre-K Teacher of the Year (Private School)
Akers Academy, Cumming

Shannon Gibson

Georgia Pre-K Teacher of the Year (Public School)
Baldwin Elementary School, Baldwin

Additionally, we would like to celebrate the achievements of our Finalists in these categories:

DiAnne Coggins

Infant Early Childhood Educator of the Year Finalist
The Learning Village, College Park

Janet Thomas

Toddler Early Childhood Educator of the Year Finalist
The Right Start Early Learning Center II, Palmetto

Ashley Langley

Preschool Early Childhood Educator of the Year
Finalist
The Waseca School, Athens

Shazia Ali

American Learning Center, Norcross
Georgia Pre-K Teacher of the Year Finalist (Private School)

Silina Hodges

Georgia Pre-K Teacher of the Year Finalist (Private School)
Discovery Point #29, Newnan

Melissa Boswell

Georgia Pre-K Teacher of the Year Finalist (Public School)
C.B. Watson Elementary, Warner Robins

Debbie Carraway

Georgia Pre-K Teacher of the Year Finalist (Public School)
Hand in Hand Primary, Thomasville





A Decade of Stars: Quality Rated's 10th Anniversary

This year, 2023, marks 10 years of DECAL assessing and communicating quality in Georgia child care programs through Quality Rated, the state's quality rating and improvement system.

We began our year-long "Decade of Stars" celebration with the Atlanta Braves in September 2022, as Commissioner Amy Jacobs threw the ceremonial first pitch, and our Quality Rated program was advertised in multiple formats throughout the stadium. Later, we recognized our initial participants in Quality Rated—the 127 child care providers rated in the 2012–2013 in Dalton, Clarkston, and Valdosta. In each location, we also celebrated three special Georgians who helped lead the charge for Quality Rated: Dixie Kinard from Dalton, former Valdosta Mayor John Gayle, and Governor Nathan Deal.

These events and supports reinforced the importance of quality child care and celebrated the growth of Quality Rated to include more than 2,800 rated programs in 2023.

Celebrating Georgia's ECE Programs

This year, we also celebrated and highlighted the successes of Quality Rated providers across the state. In FY23, the Foundation received \$517,500 through our partners at the United Way of Greater Atlanta (UWGA) via the Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation to support Quality Rated marketing materials for every Quality Rated provider in our state. Through this generous support, each Quality Rated provider received a new Quality Rated sign with refreshed graphics to display at their facility to let the public know they provide quality child care above and beyond minimum state licensing requirements.

Quality Rated is a key program established by DECAL to assess and improve the quality of early care and education programs in Georgia. Through rigorous evaluations, Quality Rated recognizes and supports providers who meet high standards of care and education.



Overall, in FY23 the Foundation achieved significant milestones in promoting quality early childhood education through initiatives such as Quality Rated and celebrating Early Childhood Educators of the Year and Georgia Pre-K Teachers of the Year.

These accomplishments demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that every child in Georgia has access to high-quality early care and education, setting them on a path to lifelong success.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

REVENUES

Contributions and Grants*	626,519.81
Other Revenue	34,669.70

TOTAL REVENUES 661,189.51

EXPENSES AND GRANTS

Awards and Grants	96,104.51
Supplies and Maintenance	6,272.32
Other Operating Expenses	67,164.55
Contracts	511,302.00
TOTAL EXPENSES AND GRANTS	680,843.38

CHANGES IN NET POSITION	(19,653.87)
NET POSITION JULY 1, 2022	231,743.23
NET POSITION JUNE 30, 2023	212,089.36

* COMMUNITY SUPPORT

UNITED WAY OF METROPOLITAN ATLANTA	522,500.00
NASERIAN FOUNDATION	44,500.00
ANNA SUE AND BOB SHAW FOUNDATION	5,000.00
GEORGIA POWER	1,500.00
THE ELLIS FAMILY	1,500.00
GREATER VALDOSTA UNITED WAY	500.00
OTHER MISCELLANEOUS DONORS	1,555.40

IN KIND SUPPORT

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AMY M. JACOBS

COMMISSIONER, GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CARE AND LEARNING



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