



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

**Brian P. Kemp**  
Governor

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
Commissioner

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Former Valdosta Mayor John Gayle to Receive  
2022 Community Star Award from DECAL**

*Special Recognition Part of Quality Rated's "Decade of Stars" 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration*

**ATLANTA, Ga., (December 6, 2022)** – As part of Quality Rated's "Decade of Stars" 10th Anniversary celebration, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has named 126 child care providers to the exclusive Quality Rated Class of 2012 in recognition of their unique status as early adopters that have consistently delivered high-quality, star-rated care and education to Georgia's youngest learners. The agency is also recognizing former Valdosta Mayor John Gayle for his leadership and inspiration in promoting literacy and Quality Rated in Valdosta and Lowndes County. Gayle served two terms as Mayor of Valdosta, from 2011-2019.

The South Georgia Anniversary Celebration will include an invitation-only awards luncheon on **Friday, December 9, 2022**, at 11:30 AM, at Wiregrass Georgia Technical College, located at 4089 Val Tech Road in Valdosta where Mayor Gayle and members of the Quality Rated "Class of 2012" will be honored.

"Mayor Gayle recognized the success of a program started by former Governor Nathan Deal and First Lady Sandra Deal called 'Read Across Georgia,'" said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. "For several years, he took the time to personally read to our earliest learners at Quality Rated programs in Valdosta and Lowndes County during the summer months. This effort served as a great reminder to municipal and county leaders across the state that early childhood education is very much a grass roots issue. The 2022 Community Star Award recognizes leaders who have been influential in making Quality Rated a success across Georgia."

The 126 providers are being singled out for beginning the Quality Rated process when the program launched in 2012, earning a 1-, 2-, or 3-star rating by July 2013, and maintaining a star rating continually over the past 10 years. DECAL will continue to honor the Class of 2012 during statewide Anniversary celebrations over the next month. Names and locations of the providers that are members of the Class are listed on a separate page below.

“The members of the Class of 2012 are the brightest of all the Quality Rated stars,” said Commissioner Jacobs. “They have made early and sustained commitments to the goal of creating high-quality, nurturing learning environments for Georgia’s youngest learners that have contributed significantly to Quality Rated’s success during its first decade.”

In addition to recognizing the Class of 2012, the Anniversary celebrations will commemorate Quality Rated’s achievements and engage with the program’s longstanding stakeholders and partners. Over the past 10 years, the Quality Rated star rating has become a symbol of excellence that providers across the state covet and that gives parents confidence that their children are receiving high-quality care and education. Since 2012 when the first star rating was awarded, the program has grown steadily. As of August 15, 2022, more than 2,850 child care providers are Quality Rated. Additionally, 93% of children with Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) scholarships are enrolled at a Quality Rated provider, putting DECAL ever closer to realizing its vision that every child in Georgia regardless of their family income or geographic region has equal access to high-quality early child care and education.

“We are extremely proud to reach this important milestone with Quality Rated,” said Dr. Bentley Ponder, DECAL Deputy Commissioner for Quality Innovations and Partnerships. “The 10th Anniversary gives us a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the great progress we have made in improving access to and elevating the quality of child care across the state with our star-rated providers, as well as our stakeholders and staff.”

### **About Quality Rated**

Quality Rated is Georgia’s systemic approach to assessing, improving, and communicating the level of quality in early care and education providers. Similar to rating systems for other service-related industries, Quality Rated assigns a star rating to child care providers that meet a set of defined program standards. By participating in Quality Rated, providers embark on a path of continuous quality improvement, with the goal of instilling lasting, positive effects on Georgia’s children, families, and economy.

### **About DECAL**

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program; licenses child care centers and home-based child care; administers Georgia’s Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Program and federal nutrition programs; and manages Quality Rated, Georgia’s community-powered child care rating system. The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov).

## QUALITY RATED CLASS OF 2012

Discovery Point Child Development Center #46	Acworth
KinderCare Learning Center (Wade Green #889)	Acworth
Teachable Moments Learning Center	Adel
Miss Jan's Nursery & Playschool, Inc.	Albany
ABC Child Development Center	Alma
Sheltering Arms - Elaine P. Draeger Model Teaching Center	Atlanta
The Sunshine House #96	Atlanta
KIDazzle Child Care and Learning Center	Atlanta
Premiere Scholar Early Learning Center	Atlanta
KinderCare Learning Center #404	Atlanta
Sikes Rockin Horse Ranch	Auburn
McIntosh Trail ECDC- Lamar County Head Start	Barnesville
Discovery Point #63	Braselton
Children's Learning Center	Buford
Discovery Point #40	Buford
Friendship Learning Center	Buford
Discovery Point #37	Canton
The Sunshine House #131	Cartersville
KinderCare Learning Center #412	Chamblee
Academy for Little People	Chickamauga
Sheltering Arms - Stonewall Tell	College Park
Little Scholars Academy of Atlanta	College Park
Creative Beginnings Pre-School Academy	College Park
KinderCare Learning Center #411	College Park
Discovery Point #61	Conyers
La Petite Academy - Highway 138	Conyers
Discovery Point #59	Covington
Newton County Head Start Center	Covington
Johnson, Vanessa	Crawfordville
Dawson, Debora A.	Dacula
The Sunshine House #105	Dallas
Reflections Learning Academy #2	Dallas
Friendship House	Dalton
Whitfield-Dalton Day Care Center	Dalton
Whitfield Head Start/Early Head Start	Dalton
Family Resource Agency, Dalton Heritage Pre-K	Dalton
Washington County Head Start Davisboro Center	Davisboro
Child Prophesies	Decatur
Pleasant, Carolyn D.	Decatur

Polnitz, Wanda L.	Decatur
The Sunshine House #104	Douglasville
Intelli-Kids	Dublin
The Sunshine House #77	Duluth
Discovery Point #3	Duluth
Big Blue Marble - Duluth	Duluth
Avila, Alba R	Duluth
Little Linguists International Preschool - East Point	East Point
First Baptist Church Weekday	Ellijay
Magic Learning Academy	Evans
Harvest Rain Academy	Fairburn
Discovery Point #65	Flowery Branch
Little Ones Learning Center	Forest Park
Joyland Christian Academy	Fort Oglethorpe
Noah's Ark Christian Learning Center	Fort Oglethorpe
Glascocock Co. Head Start Center	Gibson
The Sunshine House #79	Grayson
Spalding County Pre-K	Griffin
Stepping Stones Educational Therapy Center	Griffin
Raulerson, Karyn L	Hahira
Hinesville Child Care Learning Center	Hinesville
Elite Academy	Hoschton
Happy Hollow Christian Academy	Irwinton
Butts County Head Start & Pre-K	Jackson
Little Creations Learning Center	Jonesboro
The Sunshine House #49	Kennesaw
Family Resource Agency, South Walker Head Start/EHS/Pre-K	LaFayette
Childtime Childcare #1110	Lawrenceville
Childtime Childcare #1117	Lawrenceville
Cinthya's Angels Group Day Care, Inc	Lawrenceville
KinderCare Learning Center #1313	Lawrenceville
Sierra, Maria G	Lawrenceville
Lopez, Emma	Lawrenceville
Acosta, Flor A	Lawrenceville
Laruy, Janeth	Lawrenceville
Valdivia, Roxana E	Lawrenceville
Estrada, Gleydis	Lawrenceville
The Sunshine House #73	Lilburn
Elliott, Antoinette C	Lithonia
Henry County Head Start Center	Locust Grove
The Sunshine House #80	Loganville
Clay, De'angela	Mableton
The Sunshine House #91	Marietta
Discovery Point #43	Marietta

MJCCA Sunshine School	Marietta
KinderCare Learning Center #1690	Marietta
La Petite Academy - Williams	Marietta
Little Caterpillars Development Center, Inc.	Milledgeville
St. Stephen's Day School	Milledgeville
Learning Safari Child Care and Learning Center	Milledgeville
KinderCare Learning Center #410	Morrow
Skinner, Erin L	Nashville
StoneBridge Early Learning Center	Newnan
Sheltering Arms - Norcross Center	Norcross
The Sunshine House #92	Norcross
The Sunshine House #161	Norcross
Jesus Loves Me Daycare	Ray City
Marcelle, Susan P.	Rex
La Petite Academy - Taylor	Riverdale
Felts, Linda D	Riverdale
Weimer, Noel K	Roswell
Washington County NB & PW Club	Sandersville
Tutor Time Child Care Learning Center	Smyrna
KinderCare Learning Center #414	Smyrna
The Sunshine House #74	Snellville
Childtime Childcare #1150	Snellville
Ivywood Academy - Snellville	Snellville
Kid's World Learning Center	Statesboro
The Sunshine House #64	Stockbridge
Childtime Childcare #1101	Stone Mountain
Lovejoy, Valerie N	Stone Mountain
Rodriguez, Erica	Stone Mountain
Family Resource Agency, Chattooga Head Start/EHS/Pre-K	Summerville
KinderCare Learning Center #5003	Suwanee
McIntosh Trail ECDC Head Start	Thomaston
Mother's Love Child Care Center	Tifton
Mother's Love, Too	Tifton
Dade Head Start / Early Head Start	Trenton
Academy for Little People/Trion	Trion
Williams, Gennatt P	Valdosta
Mathis, Keisha I	Valdosta
Watson, Alberta C	Valdosta
Wilkes County Head Start	Washington
Discovery Point #7	Woodstock
The Sunshine House #55	Woodstock
Burns, Brenda T.	Wrens
Johnson County Head Start Center	Wrightsville
Pike County Head Start Center	Zebulon

# QUALITY RATED'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

## Regional Celebrations



### **October 24 – Dalton**

*Whitfield Career Academy  
2300 Maddox Chapel Road NE  
Dalton, GA 30721*

*Doors Open at 11:00 a.m.*

### **November 18 – Metro Atlanta**

*Georgia Piedmont DeKalb Conference Center  
495 North Indian Creek Drive  
Clarkston, GA 30021*

*Doors Open at 8:00 a.m.*

### **December 9 – Valdosta**

*Wiregrass Georgia Technical College - Sidney & Sharon Morris Hall  
4089 Val Tech Road  
Valdosta, GA 31602*

*Doors Open at 11:00 a.m.*