Dear Friends and Supporters,

Every child deserves a strong start in life.

It is our pleasure to share our Annual Report for the 2018/19 Program Year, highlighting our accomplishments in providing Early Childhood Education Programs in 14 counties throughout Northern and Central Florida.

Our children and families continue to excel and thrive because of our commitment to excellence. Our results highlight the tremendous learning gains across every educational domain so that our young students are prepared for kindergarten. What makes these gains so impressive is that our children accomplish this growth in development even though 98% of our students come from low-income or highly vulnerable households. With intervention, we are helping these children build resilience to help withstand the stress of family economic hardships, trauma and other adverse childhood events.

Our Head Start program is built on the foundation that parents and caregivers are their child’s first, and most important teachers. We are justifiably proud of our parent engagement results, with significant growth in family outcomes and parent involvement. We continue to excel in helping parents build sustainable careers right here with Episcopal Children’s Services, with 24% of our staff comprised of current and former Head Start parents.

We are honored and humbled by the recognition of consistent ability to deliver impact. Not only did we launch our annual Achieve Awards to celebrate the extraordinary accomplishments of our team, partners and parents, but we were recognized by the Florida Head Start Association.

The biggest recognition, however, comes when funders are willing to increase their investment in our work, and we were delighted to receive a new contract to expand our Early Head Start program in Duval County.

We hope you will be inspired by the successes we are able to share in this report. We are grateful for every friend, supporter, employee and partner of Episcopal Children’s Services for joining us in changing the lives of thousands of children every year.

Connie Stophel
Chief Executive Officer

Vicki Adams
Board President
The Mission of Episcopal Children’s Services

is creating opportunities for the children we serve to reach their full potential.

CREATING
We are relentless in perfecting the art and skill of teaching young children to grow intellectually, emotionally, physically and socially.

OPPORTUNITIES
We build foundations for the future with strong learning environments for children, support and education for parents, and professional development for teachers and staff.

THE CHILDREN WE SERVE
We serve our community’s most vulnerable children and families - those living in poverty and children with disabilities. We provide high quality early learning as well as comprehensive health and wellness services.

REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL
Children who enter kindergarten ready to learn have better outcomes for their entire lives. It all begins with quality early learning.

Episcopal Children’s Services

EVERY CHILD DESERVES A STRONG START IN LIFE.

Episcopal Children’s Services delivers the highest quality of services, utilizing data-driven practices that result in demonstrable outcomes. Our young students grow in every aspect of their lives – cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically – all while learning language, literacy, mathematics and creative arts. We build strong and healthy families with our family advocacy and parent engagement.

Since our beginning as a small early learning center serving 30 children in Jacksonville in 1966, Episcopal Children’s Services has grown to provide early childhood education services in 14 counties in North and Central Florida, serving over 53,000 children every year through multiple programs.

Over the past 50 years, Episcopal Children’s Services has helped hundreds of thousands of young children build a solid foundation for success in school and life.

It all begins with quality early learning.
2019 Individual Honoree

Our 2019 Individual Honoree is State Attorney Melissa Nelson representing Florida’s Fourth Judicial Circuit and the people of Clay, Duval, and Nassau counties, primarily in criminal matters. She is an impressive and passionate children’s leader and was selected for her introduction of the “Cure Violence” initiative, an approach to treating violence as a health and education epidemic. Ms. Nelson’s hard work and determination will turn violence and crime around in our great region.

2019 Corporate Honoree

This year’s corporate honoree is Black Knight, Inc. as a leading provider of integrated software, data and analytics solutions. The medieval knight is incorporated into their company identity as it represents their corporate values of Knowledge, Nobility, Innovation, Growth, Honesty, Teamwork, and Service. Over the past 57 years, Black Knight has led in service with its “Community Commitment” and works with local non-profits to help make children’s lives brighter, healthier and more fulfilling.

The Children’s Champion Award was established in 2006 by Episcopal Children’s Services to recognize individuals and organizations who work passionately on behalf of children to elevate their welfare to the highest priority in our community.

PREVIOUS CHILDREN’S CHAMPION AWARD HONOREES

2006  The Honorable John Peyton
2007  Delores Barr Weaver
2008  Edward E. Burr
2009  Pamela Y. Paul
2010  The Jessie Ball duPont Fund
2011  John D. Baker, II
2012  Mr. & Mrs. Russell B. Newton, Jr.
2013  Betsy Ross Lovett
2014  J.F. Bryan, IV
      Dr. H. Warner Webb
      Dr. Albert Wilkinson (Posthumously)
      Connie Hodges
      The Boselli Foundation
      Wells Fargo
2016  Michael Aubin, FACHE
      Gary Chartrand
      Helen Lane
2017  Deborah Gianoulis Heald
      Davalu “Davy” Parrish, DPA
2018  Florida Blue
      The Honorable John Delaney
      Nathaniel Glover
      Dr. Richard Skinner

2019 Individual Honoree: State Attorney Melissa Nelson

2019 Corporate Honoree: Black Knight, Inc.
New Milestone for Episcopal Children’s Services

1966
FIRST CENTER
Episcopal Children’s Services opens our first child care center serving 30 children with the leadership of Dr. Nancy Reddy, a highly recognized leader and advocate for quality early childhood education.

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2002
ENHANCING EARLY EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS
Recognizing the need for other child-serving organizations to utilize our professional expertise, Episcopal Children’s Services develops an early childhood education curriculum to raise the quality of classroom lesson plans and teaching tools. Regularly updated with the latest research, Links to Early Learning supports classrooms throughout Florida.

2006
CHILDREN’S CHAMPIONS
The Children’s Champion Award is created to recognize individuals and organizations who work passionately on behalf of children to elevate their welfare to the highest priority in our community. Children’s Champion is now one of the highest honors to be bestowed on those most dedicated and committed to improving the lives of children and their families.

1996
FIRST HEAD START GRANT
Episcopal Children’s Services receives our first Head Start grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, leading the implementation of comprehensive childhood education and development in Northeast Florida.

2010
EARLY HEAD START EXPANSION
With continued success in Head Start as well as other Early Education programs, including School Readiness and Child Care Resource and Referral, Episcopal Children’s Services is awarded the expansion grant for Early Head Start, to serve our youngest citizens, beginning our work with parents before the baby is even born.

2016
GROWTH TO NEW COUNTIES
Episcopal Children’s Services wins competitive grant competitions to expand our Head Start and Early Head Start to a total of 14 counties in Florida, making us one of the largest providers in the country, with revenues now exceeding $60,000,000.

2019
INCREASED SERVICES FOR DUVAL
Episcopal Children’s Services has been awarded the grant to expand our Early Head Start Program in Duval County for five years. With annual funding of over $5,000,000 per year from the Office of Head Start, our Head Start/Early Head Start enrollment grows to 2,392 of our community’s most vulnerable preschoolers, toddlers, infants and pregnant women.

1985
MORE SERVICES FOR FAMILIES
With enrollment exceeding 1,400 students, Episcopal Children’s Services adds new services to better meet the needs of our students, with a nutrition program to fill critical dietary gaps that could hinder child development and subsidized child care to provide high quality child care while giving parents the ability to seek or maintain employment.
Head Start/Early Head Start provides comprehensive education, health and nutrition services to almost 2,400 of our most vulnerable infants, toddlers and preschoolers and their families. Our young students and pregnant women receive intensive child development services. Parents receive education and support for family well-being as well as tools to support their children’s success in school. Our Head Start and Early Head Start provides comprehensive and intensive child development and family-centered services in three critical arenas:

- **Education:** Our highly trained teachers build on each student’s learning needs, strengths and abilities. Children grow intellectually, emotionally and socially through safe, age-appropriate play-based learning activities.

- **Family Advocacy:** Professional Family Advocates improve family well-being with supportive services and resources. Our services are free, so low-income families can direct their limited budgets to the necessities of rent, food and health care. As childcare can consume almost 25% of a low-income working family’s budget, our work directly impacts the financial stability of our families.

- **Health, Wellness and Nutrition:** Our whole child approach goes well beyond education with healthy meals and snacks to ensure proper nutrition. All children are regularly screened and connected to medical and dental preventive care.

Owen was born prematurely, weighing just over two pounds, and spent the first months of his life in the NICU. When he was 16 months old, his worried Mom looked to us for help – he didn’t walk or even crawl, he did not use any words or gestures and would not eat any food.

Our teachers engaged Owen in multiple approaches to learning, which has given him confidence to try new skills. He conquered much of his separation anxiety and began to enjoy being with all his friends in the classroom. He tried new foods and found that utensils help. He loves music, reading, using his sensory skills at the sand and water table and his vocabulary grows daily.

Owen is now walking — or rather running — everywhere! His first year with Early Head Start was filled with progress and accomplishments!
Student learning gains are assessed regularly to determine progress. These results demonstrate our impact in learning gains, with this example showing the improvements made by our three-year-old students from Fall, 2018 to Spring, 2019.

Early Education Across Six Learning Domains

We create nurturing learning environments that support the development of all children with appropriate schedules, individualized lesson plans, and classroom and outdoor environments that provide the opportunity for exploration. We want every child to be ready to be successful when they enter Kindergarten. This School Readiness is measured through individual child assessment toward this goal in six learning domains.

Language
Our teachers actively engage in conversations to give children the words and the skills to express their thoughts and feelings.

Cognition
Our approach builds curiosity, wonder and discovery, which provides the basis for problem-solving, mathematical thinking and scientific reasoning.

Social Emotional Development
Our team creates warm and supportive relationships to give children the capacity to connect to others and learn about their world.

Mathematics
Our instruction uses everyday experiences so that children grasp counting, recognize patterns and understand shapes to create the foundation for algebraic thinking and geometry.

Literacy
Our education builds skills to recognize letters and phonetic sounds as well as to understand how printed words convey meaning.

Physical Development
Our teachers shape experiences for children to develop perception, motor skills and complex coordination.
Despite having some physical and social-emotional challenges, Gracelynn’s parents were determined that she should live her life without limits and have the same opportunities as every other child.

When Gracelynn began, she could not walk and was behind on her motor skills and language. In addition, she was shy and would sit in the corner just watching the other children. Her teachers quickly went to work with individualized activities and extra supports. Because Episcopal Children’s Services creates a supportive environment, children gain confidence to explore their world. Her teachers helped her increase her communication and socialization by encouraging other students to sit by Gracelynn to play with her and inviting her to play with them, utilizing children’s natural empathy.

Gracelynn’s Mom tells us, “Among so many other challenges she is beating the odds and beyond all limits, Gracelynn strives to be even better and stronger in this journey.”

Wellness and Nutrition

CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND WELLNESS

When children are healthy, they achieve academically. Our Family Advocates and Health Services team works with parents to ensure that each child has a medical and dental provider, is receiving preventive care and have health insurance.

94% Students with Health Insurance

92% Students with a Medical Home

76% Students with a Dental Home

CHILDREN’S NUTRITION

Nutrition is critical for child development as undernourished children lag their peers in physical activity, curiosity, attention spans, independence and social abilities. We provide high-quality meals and snacks that meet all state and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Health Plate Standards.

In the past year, our Nutrition Team delivered

415,509 Healthy Meals

185,593 Healthy Snacks

INCLUSIVE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Episcopal Children’s Services is committed to ensuring that every child will have experiences that will help them to develop their physical, social-emotional, language development, and cognitive skills. We ensure that program services are delivered in the least restrictive environment possible so that children fully participate in program activities.

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Gracelynn’s Mom tells us, “Among so many other challenges she is beating the odds and beyond all limits, Gracelynn strives to be even better and stronger in this journey.”
After relocating to Jacksonville from New York, Stephanie was unemployed, and she and her 4 month-old son, Arion, were experiencing homelessness. She came to Jacksonville to find employment while her husband remained in New York with their two teenage daughters. When she enrolled Arion at our Westside Early Head Start Center, she worked with our Family Advocate to set family goals, with an immediate focus on employment and housing.

Episcopal Children’s Services worked with her on all aspects of her needs - helping her with English as a second language, using the parent resource computer for on-line job applications, and supporting her with her search for affordable housing. After successfully applying for HUD-assisted housing in a safe area, Stephanie was able to call her husband and the entire family has been reunited. When the teenage girls were struggling to adapt to their new school, our Social-Emotional Specialist was able to talk with the parents and help them get outside services for their daughters.

Stephanie tells us that she has dedicated all her strength to the goal of becoming fully self-sufficient.
EARLY LEARNING SERVICES

In partnership with the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida, we provide over 9,000 families with needed financial assistance, so their children can learn in quality care through the following:

- **Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten:** Episcopal Children’s Services provides four-year-olds with free, high quality educational program using professional curriculum and staff to prepare our young learners for success in kindergarten.

- **School Readiness:** We help low-income families pay for childcare so their parents can earn income with the assurance that their children are thriving in high-quality care.

In addition, our Early Learning Services Program operates the Child Care Resource and Referral Program, where more than 35,000 parents and caregivers are provided with free information on local childcare providers to meet their family’s specific needs.

COACHJAX!

By leveraging our expertise in early learning, we provide over 76 childcare centers with coaching to improve their quality of care to improve the outcomes for the 2,900 children they serve. To provide the best education for all the children in our communities, teachers must be equipped with tools and knowledge to nurture child development. Ongoing coaching ensures that educators are provided with ongoing feedback on the quality of their work.

In partnership with the Kids Hope Alliance and Early Learning Coalition of Duval, teams of certified coaches and technical staff work directly with childcare facilities in Duval County to improve children’s outcomes. Our comprehensive approach includes environmental quality, teach effectiveness and use of quality curricula to help centers improve their quality and educational outcomes.
EARLY LEARNING CENTER AT GOOD SHEPHERD

With small class sizes and individual plans for each child, we are fostering childhood development in the Riverside area of Jacksonville. Because research has clearly identified the impact of early activities on brain development for young children, our center is equipped with environments that encourage exploration and playthings that engage young imaginations.

We believe that the potential for learning is greatest during the early years of a child’s life, so we strive to provide children with learning opportunities at the earliest possible age. Our learning experiences support children’s continuous physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth and development. We encourage parent involvement because parents are the first and primary educators of their children.

Our Programs

When Melissa enrolled her two youngest children into our Leesburg Early Head Start program, she was struggling to make ends meet as she could only find part-time work as a caregiver. Melissa is a very involved parent, as she is passionate about the needs of every one of her 9 children and began volunteering as well as finding ways to increase her income.

Our staff was so impressed with her dedication that we encouraged her to apply to become a Substitute Teacher with Episcopal Children’s Services, as she could work with us while also keeping her new job as a dispatcher.

Episcopal Children’s Services is dedicated to our employees, and we pay for the outside training and credential requirements for positions in Early Childhood Education. We are delighted that Melissa has finished the 40 hour course required by the State of Florida and is now looking to obtain her Child Development Associate credential. Our Head Start program not only provides excellent care and development for young children; we also provide successful careers for many of our current and former Head Start parents.
The purpose of the Achieve Awards is to celebrate the extraordinary accomplishments of our top Teachers, Staff Members, Parents, and Community Volunteers and Partners who work with our Head Start and Early Head Start children and families.

TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Mecca Stewart, Teacher
Mecca creates a physical and emotional environment for her young students that is warm and engaging.

Julia Meehan, Teacher
Julia has an amazing passion for teaching along with an unfailing ability to meet every child where they are.

Sandra Dawsey, Teacher
Sandra exemplifies dedication and a commitment to help every child learn.

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS/PARTNERS OF THE YEAR

Sinclair Hugh, Community Volunteer
Sinclair uses his generous heart and passion for teaching to help immigrants and others who struggle with language to learn to speak and write in English.

Jackie Atkinson, Lake County Public Schools
Jackie ensures smooth transitions when children progress from preschool to kindergarten by supporting their teachers and parents.

Julie Holt, Red Robin
Julie’s commitment and leadership has resulted in thousands of dollars in donations of food and volunteer service from her organization.

STAFF MEMBERS OF THE YEAR

Jamillah Abdullah, Family Advocate
Jamillah equips parents to advocate for their children and themselves.

Cynthia Voss, Early Learning Specialist
Cynthia goes above and beyond to coach our teachers on quality interactions with children.

Joseph Casale, Maintenance Technician
Joe takes extra care to ensure our classrooms are safe and inviting while serving as a role model for children.

PARENTS OF THE YEAR

Alexus Geddes, Parent
Alexus is a testament to the power of faithfulness and hard work with her advocacy for her daughter, McKenzie who is challenged by numerous health issues.

Stephen Cleveland, Parent
Stephen is the devoted single father of his daughter, Chloe, and always lends a helping hand to support every person at our Clermont Head Start/Early Head Start Center.

Sharlene Singleton, Parent
Sharlene demonstrates her commitment to education of her children with her ability to overcome obstacles and setbacks, and still find time to give back to Head Start.
PRAISE IS WHAT WE DO
COACHJAX! INITIATIVE AWARD

This Center’s leadership and staff consistently strive for excellence in every part of their operation. Their care, concern and love for children shines through all they do.

SCHOOL READINESS COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARD

Don Sutton
Despite being the busy owner of Brighton Day and four other centers in St. Johns County, Don uses his time and his heart to meet the needs of vulnerable families.

BEST CLASS SCORE

Shirley Crooms
The quality of teacher interactions is objectively assessed using CLASS, which stands for Classroom Assessment Scoring System, which assesses teachers in three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organizations and Instructional Support. Shirley attained a score of 6.88 (out of a maximum of 7.0), which is the highest score across our six-county program area - a truly amazing accomplishment.

Florida Head Start Association Recognition

Episcopal Children’s Services is proud of our two award winners. Sharlene Singleton, Head Start Parent and Chair of the Central Florida/Lake Policy Council received the Beating the Odds Award, which recognizes a parent who has overcome significant challenges on the journey to self-sufficiency.

Autumn Tomas, Vice President of Head Start/Early Head Start will represent our state as a nominee for the Vanessa Rich Leadership Award, awarded to a new Head Start/Early Head Start Director (3 years or less) who is carrying on Vanessa’s legacy of “Head Start doesn’t stop on the front porch, it comes all the way into the house.”
Financial Highlights

**2018/2019 REVENUES**

- **Revenue**: $67,217,903
  - State: 48%
  - Federal: 37%
  - Contributions & Other: 12%
  - Local: 3%

**2018/2019 EXPENSES**

- **Revenue**: $66,926,194
  - Program Services: 99%
  - Management & General: 1%

**EPISCOPAL CHILDREN’S SERVICES IS REPORTING OUR MOST SUCCESSFUL YEAR IN OUR HISTORY.**

With the hard work of a dedicated team, we continue to expand our revenues while maximizing the dollars that directly pay for desperately needed programming.

Our Federal, State and Local Governments invested $58,976,217 in our program delivery this year alone. And we will continue to compete for additional investment.

**BUT THESE INVESTMENTS HAVE A PRICE.**

We must prove that our local communities value these investments by raising local support from contributions and other revenues. These funds are crucial to ensure our community is preparing our youngest citizens are entering school ready to learn. Because when children succeed in school, they enter the workforce prepared to compete in the global economy.

To continue this desperately needed investment, we need the support of every sector – corporate, local government, foundations, service organizations, religious groups and individuals. Every donation, no matter the size, is critical.

**AUDIT RESULTS**

Our financial audit is conducted annually by Ralston & Company, a Jacksonville firm, that holds an impeccable reputation in the community, with specific expertise in auditing financials for nonprofit organizations. We have used Ralston & Company for the past 7 years.

Episcopal Children’s Services is understandably proud of our track record of receiving an unqualified opinion on our audits, with no material weaknesses or issues of non-compliance in our financial statements. In addition to the audit of our Consolidated Financial Statements, Ralston & Company also audits compliance for each major Federal Program and State Program as required. Again, these audits have received an unqualified opinion, with no material weaknesses or issues of non-compliance.