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John Burton, Executive Director
Cindi Parker-Pearson, Principal

Interested in taking a
tour of our campus?
Please call 863-683-6504 to
schedule an appointment.



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Dates to Remember

Executive Committee
November 7, 2016

(Holiday) Veteran's Day
November 11, 2016

Big CUP Golf Tournament
November 14, 2016

Board Meeting
November 15, 2016

Thanksgiving Break
November 21 - 25, 2016

Executive Committee
December 12, 2016

Winter Break
Dec 19, 2016 - January 2, 2017

Executive Committee
January 9, 2017

(Holiday) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 16, 2017

Board Meeting
January 17, 2017



APPLAUSE!

Lasting Impacts: Early Intervention is Key

Ethan was born premature at 31 weeks gestation at Lakeland Regional Health on March 2, 2016, nine weeks short of a full term birth (40 weeks). His stay in the NICU lasted 5 weeks. During that time he was on a feeding tube because he was not able to eat by mouth. Oral feeding requires suckling, swallowing, and breathing coordination, which is the most complex sensorimotor process the newborn infant undertakes. Ethan also had a brain bleed at birth. Intraventricular hemorrhage (IVH) of the newborn is bleeding into the fluid-filled areas (ventricles) inside the brain. The condition occurs most often in babies that are born early (premature). The brain is still developing. The area where IVH usually begins has a very fragile network of tiny blood vessels. These burst easily causing the bleeding and could cause complex health problems and possible development delays.



Early Interventionist, Becky Jacklin, shows Chad an exercise he can do with son, Ethan, to help strengthen his core muscles.

A referral to Achievement Academy's Birth to Three Program came from Lakeland Regional Health due to extreme prematurity. Becky Jacklin, Early Interventionist, began serving Ethan in his home in April of 2016. Becky provided black and white developmentally appropriate mats and toys to help with early focusing. Newborn babies can only see 8 – 15 inches in front of them. Not only are they extremely near-sighted, they are unable to see color and highly detailed designs. Black and white toys offer newborns and infants just enough stimulation to learn essential eye development through high contrast. For the first six months, babies prefer toys with simple shapes, bold outlines and contrasting colors. Most black and white toys also contain the color red — red is included to stimulate vision through contrast, which holds a baby's attention for a longer period of time. When a baby is able to focus and become visually stimulated, physical activity follows close behind.

The home visits also focus on the importance of tummy time with Ethan. Babies need time on their tummies to develop strong neck muscles which will help them accomplish all of their physical milestones like

sitting, crawling, and walking. During each home visit Becky demonstrates developmental techniques to Ethan's parents, Ashley and Chad, to encourage Ethan's progress in his development. Today at 4 months adjusted age, Ethan is able to roll in one direction, vocalize, is visually engaged with toys and individuals, and reaches up to swipe toys.

Chad states, "Because of the health problems Ethan has experienced, the Birth to Three Program has given us one less thing we have to worry about with a preemie reaching his milestones. We are thankful we have Becky coming out once a month to help us know what to look for and how to help Ethan in his development."

Early intervention is key; the sooner you start the better.

Has Achievement Academy helped you or someone you love?

If you would like to share your personal story of how
Achievement Academy has helped you, please contact:

Stacy Williams at 863-683-6504 or
Stacy@AchievementAcademy.com.

Wishlist

Did you know . . . Achievement Academy has a Wish List? Items on the wish list are hand-selected by our teachers and therapists to help students reach their developmental goals. For more information, please visit our website and click on the "Wish List" button.

Lasting Impacts: Together We Are Creating Brighter Futures

Kim had always wanted children but she and her husband, Derek, had been unsuccessful in starting a family. In 2009, they heard of a situation where a boy and a girl were placed in foster care. At that time the little girl, Megan, was six years old and her younger brother, Ethan, was ten months old. Kim contacted Heartland for Children, the foster care agency for Polk, Hardee and Highlands County, and asked what she needed to do to get custody of the children. The children moved in with Kim and Derek on October 30, 2009.



Elizabeth

In January 2013, Kim and Derek received a phone call that a sibling of Megan and Ethan was in medical foster care due to a head injury. After spending two nights at All Children's Hospital, Kim was able to pick up the baby girl, Elizabeth, and bring her home. Elizabeth's injury was to the left side of her brain, the side that controls gross motor skills, fine motor skills and speech. Because of the area injured and the potential for developmental delays, she was referred to Early Steps but did not qualify for their services. She was then referred to Achievement Academy's Birth to Three Program that serves babies and toddlers who are at-risk for developmental delays. Becky Jacklin, Achievement Academy Early Interventionist, was assigned to the family. For one year, Becky provided monthly home visits to the family to help with Elizabeth's development.

At 18 months, Elizabeth needed more intensive services because she wasn't walking. She was enrolled in Achievement Academy's Charter School where she received physical, speech and occupational therapies. Elizabeth's speech and communication skills have improved drastically because of the help she has received from Achievement Academy. Elizabeth is also being fitted for glasses as she has some vision deficits.

About a year after Kim and Derek brought Elizabeth home, Kim received a phone call from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to let her know about another sibling who was born substance exposed and was in protective custody. On January 1, 2014, Kim and Derek met DCF workers at a post office in Parrish, FL to pick up their special delivery and headed home to care for their rapidly growing family.

Kim resigned from her job as a claims adjuster to become a full-time stay at home mom and care for her four children with special needs. The adoption of Elizabeth and Tyson was finalized on December 22, 2014.



Tyson

At Tyson's first pediatrician appointment he was referred to Early Steps because of his birth history. At age one Tyson was not crawling or pulling to stand. He was enrolled in Achievement Academy's Charter School in August of 2015 where he receives physical, occupational and speech therapy. By the end of his first school year, Tyson has made great strides in his development and language skills.

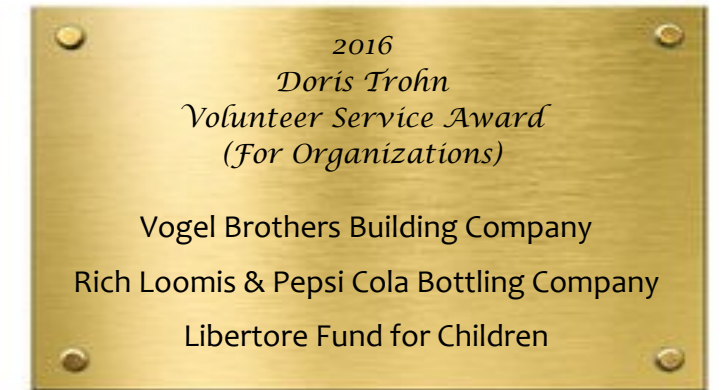
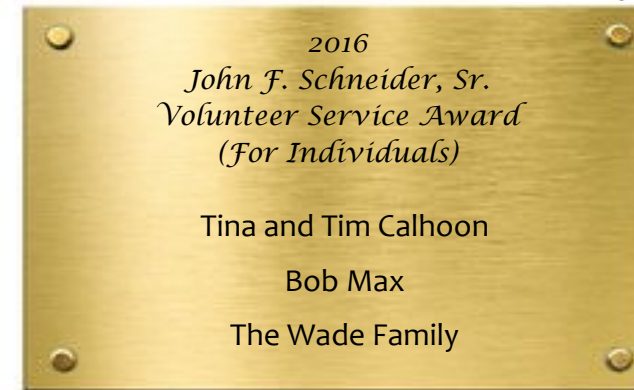
On December 3, 2015, Kim received yet another phone call about another sibling. Kim, having little space in her home but a huge heart, decided to welcome another child. The baby was born premature at 34 weeks gestation. The tiny infant was in the neonatal unit for 26 days and in an incubator with a feeding tube. The baby is currently receiving monthly early intervention from Achievement Academy's Birth to Three Program. Kim says she could not do it without the love and support from her family and Achievement Academy.

Together, in our community, we are creating brighter futures for children with special needs.



Recognitions and Announcements

Congratulations!



Paving the Way to Brighter Futures

Our bricks from the Paving the Way for Brighter Futures program have been installed! Thank you to everyone who purchased an engraved brick. Please stop by our Lakeland Campus and visit the brick garden to find your brick.



This program offers an opportunity for you to support Achievement Academy by personalizing a brick paver which will be engraved and placed on the school campus. Bricks purchased with your gift of \$125 can be engraved to honor a graduate, support a current student, engrave your family's name, celebrate your child's teacher, promote your business or whatever you like!

For more information or to purchase a brick, please contact Stacy at stacy@achievementacademy.com or call 863-683-6504.



A huge thank you to Day & Night Tire, LLC and J. Burns Pizza, our Presenting Sponsors for the 2016 Achievement Academy Big CUP Golf Tournament to be held on Monday, November 14, 2016!

Board Highlights



As we welcome incoming Board President, Sam Houghton, we would also like to take this time to recognize our outgoing President, Janice Jones. Through Janice's leadership, she not only inspired all board members to give of their time, talent and treasures, but through her passion and example she has inspired community members to get involved and give back to

their community. Achievement Academy has nominated Janice for Volunteer of the Year for the Association of Fundraising Professionals' National Philanthropy Day. Thank you, Janice, for your excellent service!

We welcome Luke Markham to our Board of Directors. Luke, who lives in Lakeland, is an attorney practicing in the area of residential and commercial real estate.



Staff Highlights



October 5, 2016 marked **35 years of service** to Achievement Academy for Debra Stephens, Early Interventionist with the Birth to Three program. Thank you so much for your dedication to Achievement Academy, Debra! Congratulations on 35 years!