

# APPLAUSE



## Meet Our New Board of Directors President

Ever since I first stepped foot on the campus of the Achievement Academy, I was convinced that its mission was important and that its services were life changing. The families that I met through my involvement have inspired me. I proudly take on the role of President because I get to serve along side others who wholly believe in this program as I do. I believe that together we can continue to impact the lives of these deserving children and their families. I simply could not pass up this blessing.

Chandra Frederick, President  
Achievement Academy Board of Directors

## Lasting Impacts: Eli's Story

As a young mother of her first child, Ashley could not wait to hold her baby and create a bond that would last a lifetime. Ashley had a typical pregnancy and gave birth to a healthy baby boy. Soon after, Ashley encountered postpartum depression. She had a desire, as any new mother, to bond with her dark-haired, hazel-eyed baby boy...but that was not happening naturally. Many things from this point were unfamiliar territory for Ashley, as baby Eli was a challenging infant. He did not enjoy being held and cuddled, and seemed detached from his parents. Going out of the house was no easy task as he was difficult to soothe or satisfy.

When Eli began to walk, he walked on his tiptoes and could not walk flat-footed. Also as a toddler, Eli made no babbling sounds and did not know how to communicate his wants and needs. Ashley knew this was a concern and Eli's pediatrician referred him for further testing. Ashley soon learned at 18 months old that Eli had Autism.

Luckily, the family soon found out about Achievement Academy, a special place where knowledgeable staff could help their precious little boy. Eli enrolled in August of 2017 and began receiving specialized instruction, physical, occupational and speech therapy...all in a collaborative setting.

After only seven months enrolled in Achievement Academy's charter school, Eli made huge developmental gains. He began to interact with his parents and has bonded beautifully with his mom and dad. He went from drinking from a bottle to a cup and began trying to use a spoon to feed himself. Eli learned to communicate several words that his parents could understand, which helped to ease frustrations. He now walks flat-footed, can walk up and down stairs and can jump appropriately.

Eli has made significant gains over the past year. He recently graduated from physical therapy and is now on track with his gross motor skills. Eli can communicate with four to five-word sentences and has a great bond with his one-year-old brother.

"Not only has Achievement Academy helped our son and family, but his grandparents as well." stated Ashley.

"Eli's grandfather has picked him up from school and learned from staff and other parents, that it is okay if your child or grandchild has a different ability and that they are not alone. The Achievement Academy has given our family help, hope and without it we would not have made it this far."





## Achievement Academy: Save the Date - Monday, February 25th 2019

Join us for our signature event: the 5th annual **"Top Chef of Polk County"**

We will have a night of delicious food and fellowship, while raising much needed funds for children with special needs.

Guests will enjoy a cash bar, silent and live auctions, music and, of course, a tasting of signature dishes from Polk County's leading chefs. Chefs will create and prepare their signature dish (tapas style) accompanied with a wine or libation that complements the flavors of the dish. All guests will have the opportunity to taste all of the chef's signature dishes.

Guests will vote for their favorite creation to award the title of "Top Chef of Polk County 2019." In addition, guests will rate each dining station to award the "Top Table Décor." The chef who raises the most funds for Achievement Academy through their donated auction item/s and online voting will earn the "Top Philanthropic Chef" award.

Sponsorship Information can be found online at [www.AchievementAcademy.com](http://www.AchievementAcademy.com)

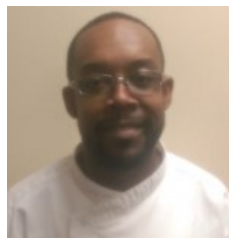
### 2019 Participating Chefs



Chefs Vernon Allen  
& William Ball  
**Cob & Pen**



Chef Jeff Conley  
**Publix Aprons  
Cooking School**



Chef Wayne Haggard  
*"Top Table Décor 2018"*  
**Spectra/RP Funding Center**



Chefs Bobby King  
& Joel Vann  
**Lakeland BBQ Company**



Chef James Lazaros  
**La Imperial Bakery**



Chef Anthony Pineda  
**Cuban B's Burger  
Bazaar & Bake Shack**



Chef Steven Rojas  
**Nutwood**



Chef Patrick Schaefer  
*"Top Chef of Polk  
County 2018"*  
**Patio 850**



Chef Chris Worley  
*"Top Philanthropic  
Chef 2018"*  
**Terrie Lobb Catering**



Chef Abigale Weech-Starkey  
**The Chop Shop**



Chef Jose Vicente  
**Brasa Latina**

**2018/2019 Board of Directors Officers:** President, Chandra Frederick; 1st Vice President, Jamie Sturgill; 2nd Vice President, Luke Markham; Secretary, Karli Hughes; Treasurer, Mike Brossart; Immediate Past President, Sam Houghton  
**2018/2019 Board Members:** Stephanie Colon; Steve Earley; Janice Jones; Michael Peeples; John Weber

#### IMPORTANT DATES:

**Veteran's Day 11/12 (CLOSED) ... Fall Break 11/19-23 (CLOSED)... Winter Break 12/24-1/3 (CLOSED)**