

Meeting Milestones.

"The teachers and therapists go above and beyond for their students! Roslyn and Elliott are blossoming at school."

- Desiree, Roslyn and Elliott's Mom

Lasting Impressions: Roslyn and Elliott's Story

Desiree and her husband felt blessed to be expecting twins after being told by doctors she would have difficulty conceiving. Desiree would see an Obstetrician-Gynecologist (OB/GYN) specializing in high-risk pregnancies monthly to ensure the twins' growth was on track. At 32 weeks, she was induced due to complications with the baby girl's umbilical cord; ultimately, Desiree had to have an emergency C-section because her daughter was breach.



Arriving two months early at Lakeland Regional Health, baby Roslyn weighed only three pounds, five ounces, and baby Elliott weighed four pounds, one

ounce. Desiree could easily hold both of her dark-haired, tiny twins in her arms. Both babies spent a long six weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

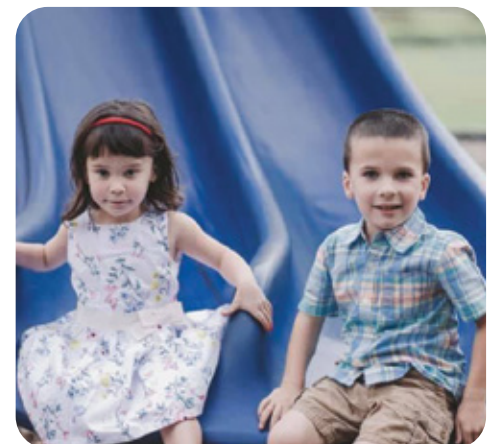
Roslyn and Elliott's pediatrician referred them to Achievement Academy's Birth to Three Program. Early Interventionist, Becky Jacklin, began providing monthly home-based early intervention services when they were four months old. Roslyn's low muscle tone made it difficult to hold her head up, while Elliott had tight muscle tone. Both muscle conditions could affect the twins' future ability to sit up, crawl, and walk.

Becky demonstrated different activities for Desiree to engage the twins with their developmental milestones, such as "tummy time" and bringing hands to midline to help with muscle conditions. Activities to improve their verbal abilities included singing, talking, and reading to them. By the age of two, the twins were able to walk, but still struggled with vocalizing.

At the age of two, the twins were referred to Achievement Academy's Charter Pre-School.

At this time, both were non-verbal and had other gross and fine motor skill needs. The quality education coupled with weekly individual speech, occupational, and physical therapy helped the twins reach important milestones.

Today, Roslyn and Elliott are four years old. Through services provided by Achievement Academy, their speech has improved; Roslyn can use words to express herself and feed herself independently, as well as ride a bike and jump. Elliott's language now consists of several words, and his fine motor skills have dramatically improved. At Achievement Academy, teachers and therapists work closely in a collaborative environment to reinforce each student's individual goals.





and the winner is...

Achievement Academy held its seventh annual Top Chef of Polk County event on Monday, May 17, 2021, at each of the ten participating chefs' restaurants. This year's format was different due to COVID concerns, with each restaurant hosting 25 guests. Attendees enjoyed a three-course meal that included their chef's signature dish accompanied by a wine or libation that complemented each dish's flavors. Thank you to the Chefs, Community Leaders, Sponsors, and Attendees for making this year's Top Chef of Polk County one of our best, raising more than \$190,000 for children with special needs!

In March, Community Leaders from throughout Polk County were paired with one of our participating chefs by a blind drawing during a fun-filled event, hosted by Frescos Southern Kitchen & Bar. Each Chef/Community Leader Team raised funds for, and awareness of, Achievement Academy's children, families, and programs during the six weeks leading up to the event.

Collectively, the Chef/Community Leader Teams raised a total of \$107,003.92! The Team with the highest combined donations from the auction and on-line gifts was awarded the "Top Philanthropic Chef" and "Top Philanthropic Community Leader."



Top Philanthropic Winners:

Community Leader Patrick Spinosa (AgAmerica Lending) and Chef Gene Gelb (Publix Aprons Catering & Cooking School) raised more than \$30,000 for Achievement Academy.

Frescos' Winning Dish

Chef Calhoon's winning dish was adobo marinated Angus filet with foie gras on top of a poblano bacon potato cake, crowned with shrimp and garnished with black raspberry BBQ sauce.



Top Chef of Polk County Winner

Chef Tina Calhoon with Frescos Southern Kitchen & Bar accepts the 2021 Top Chef of Polk County Award!

Pictured left to right are Tim Calhoon, Chef Chris Trimborn, Chef Tina Calhoon, and Chef Adam Walkover.

Thank you again to everyone who participated in our seventh annual Top Chef of Polk County event. Please continue to support our amazing chefs, community leaders, and sponsors, as they were so generous in supporting the mission of the Achievement Academy.

Participating Chefs:

Chef Brandon Bailey (*The Back Nine*)
Chef Jason Boniface (*Cob & Pen*)
Chef Tina Calhoon (*Frescos Southern Kitchen & Bar*)
Chef Lucy Cortes-Castaneda (*Red Door Lakeland*)
Chef Gene Gelb (*Publix Aprons Cooking School*)
Chef Scott Greenlee (*Patio850*)
Chef Richard Hoert (*Terrie Lobb Catering, Inc.*)
Chef Josh Lawley (*Craft + Kitchen*)
Chef Casey Ryan (*1916 Irish Pub*)
Chef Abigale Weech-Starkey (*The Chop Shop*)

Participating Community Leaders:

Crystal Goffe (*Swan City Title*)
Karli Hughes (*4-D Engineering*)
Alice Koehler (*Iron Horse Family Foundation*)
Chris McGarvey (*Wall Titus, LLC*)
Mac Miller (*AgAmerica Lending*)
Cory Neupauer (*Lakeland Automall*)
Kelsey O'Neal (*Artistic General Contracting*)
Devindra Ramdehal (*MYBOX*)
Adam Riley (*Ewing, Blackwelder & Duce Insurance*)
Patrick Spinosa (*AgAmerica Lending*)

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Thank you



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Kristin Aiken, *President/CEO*
Cindi Parker-Pearson, *Principal*



Welcome our new President/CEO

The Board of Directors is pleased to introduce and welcome Kristin Aiken as Achievement Academy's new President/CEO, taking over the role left vacant after John Burton's retirement at the end of 2020. Kristin's passion for children and for the community is evident and she brings an extensive background in strategic planning, development, capital campaigns, and marketing to our organization.

"I have seen firsthand the positive impact made possible by caring and committed citizens in our community," stated Kristin. "It is a privilege to work on behalf of the staff who are providing the youngest members of our community with brighter futures."

Inspired by the positive changes and progress made possible by the Birth to Three and Charter School teams, Kristin is excited to work with the Board to advance the mission and vision of our school.

Stacy Williams-Myers has spent much of her professional career as a champion and advocate for this school. In November 2020, Stacy accepted a position with Carter Global as a fundraising consultant to share her philanthropic experience. Since that time, Stacy had graciously agreed to continue serving Achievement Academy as a contract employee while the Executive Committee continued their search for the President/CEO. We are thankful for Stacy's service to the school and our mission, and we wish her the

best as she transitions to her position with Carter Global full time.

Kristin will assume leadership of the development efforts as she works on behalf of our students, staff, and families. Thank you for your continued support to provide children with special needs the support, therapy, and intervention they need to achieve brighter futures!

