



Annual Report | 2023





## *our mission...*

We provide affordable, high-quality early childhood education and childcare services for working families in the Lowcountry.

## *our vision...*

We strive to be the standard of excellence for early childhood education, development and care in the Lowcountry.

## *our purpose...*

We support our community by enabling parents to fully participate in the local workforce and ensuring every child is ready to achieve success upon entering kindergarten.



## Dear Parents & Friends,

As we close another year at The Children’s Center, we are honored to be a part of the amazing team of people who are not only stabilizing our local economy today, but also preparing children for a bright future. We started the year with a long wait list and limited staff. Our dedicated Board acted to ensure the resources were made available to increase staff wages to a competitive level, recognizing the value provided by our teachers. It has taken time, but as we close this year we have changed the narrative to opening classrooms and decreasing wait lists.

Let us tell you about one of our amazing teachers, she is bi-lingual and has been with our staff for three years. She began in a two-year-old classroom, but has worked hard, developed her skills and is now a PreK-three teacher. Each day she comes to work anxious to engage the curiosities of her students and provides play opportunities that build valuable cognitive and social skills. She does not just teach ABC and 123, she develops those “soft skills” that employers look for. The young brain is maturing and growing quickly at this age. Learning to share, learning to question, learning to use words instead of hitting, these skills are all the beginning of adult success.

This year’s graduation class was incredible. Nineteen young students earned their diplomas and mastered 90% of South Carolina kindergarten readiness skills. Four (21%) of them have been at The Children’s Center since they were infants. Parents have said how grateful they were to have had TCC for their children and how well their child is doing in kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers have said they are appreciative of having children coming from The Children’s Center in their classroom because they are ready to learn and behave in a formal learning environment.

We entered the year with high expectations of our Development team. As you can see from our enclosed financial report, they exceeded expectations and ensured “affordability” remains the backbone of our mission.

Everyday across the local and national media we see the words “childcare” and “crisis” used in the same sentence. Many providers have closed their doors because post-pandemic operations are impossible to manage. High costs, low staffing levels and the need for affordability are roadblocks to ensuring a viable business plan. At The Children’s Center, we remain committed to affordability for working families. We are providing high-quality early childhood educational experiences daily and serving as many local parents as possible within the parameters set by our license regulations.

Thank you all for shining a bright light into the futures of our community’s young children.

Gratefully,

**Robert Eberly Jr**  
Chairman of the Board

**Jody L. Levitt**  
Executive Director





# Inspirational Stories

“ I really enjoy connecting with the children and staff and feeling like part of the team. I think the teacher appreciates my help and the children are always happy to see me.”  
**Becky Powers**  
TCC Volunteer



“ Viv has pretty much grown up here and it has become a family to us. Our daughter has grown into a lovely lady here at The Children’s Center.”  
**Tim Nelson**, TCC Parent  
Chef/Owner, Char Bar, Holy Tequila



“ As a former teacher, this is where it begins. And it’s very important having a great start—they are getting it here!”  
**Ann Harrison**  
TCC Volunteer



“ As a long-term Hilton Head resident, I’ve seen the Children’s Center support our community over generations. It’s critical to financially aid this necessary institution, ensuring working families have a dependable, safe place for their children.”  
**Dr. Andrea Grant Guess, DDS**, TCC Alum  
New River Dental Center



“ My daughter and son are both here. We feel so grateful that we’re able to be part of the Children’s Center family. The care that we receive from the teachers and staff is beyond anything we ever expected.”  
**Kate McCullion**, TCC Parent  
Vacation Homes of Hilton Head





“ I’ve been here for 40 + years and it’s because of the children. It’s a pleasure to work with them. When their parents come in, some of them were students of mine when they were children. I love it here! ”

**Marsha Jenkins**  
TCC Teacher



“ From the moment we visited The Children’s Center and saw the love and care being provided to the children, we knew it was the perfect place to make our gift. The need for support in our community is overwhelming, and we are so thrilled to be able to help make a few families financial burden a little lighter.

**Doug and Ronda Adamson**  
Legacy Donors

“ Jay’s happy at drop-off, with no tears. The caring staff, even outside his class, all know him well. He truly enjoys being here.

**Marcy Grenlee “Glamma”**  
TCC Grandparent



“ Tener a nuestros hijos en el Children’s Center fue la mejor decisión que tomamos. TCC es un lugar seguro donde ellos pueden estar; estoy muy agradecida desde el fondo de mi corazón por todo el cuidado que les dan maestros y administrativos, ya que TCC es como nuestra familia.”

**Scarleth Barahona**  
TCC Parent



“ Our long-standing partnership with The Children’s Center has been crucial in hosting our community-benefiting events. Their staff and volunteers have consistently manned our event gates, solidifying this alliance. Without their help, our community events wouldn’t possess the same impact.

**Frank Soule**, Executive Director Parks and Recreation  
for Hilton Head Island Recreation Association, Community Partner

# Collaborations

Adding value to our programs, families and community

## ISLAND REC CENTER

The Hilton Head Island Recreation Association is a local nonprofit that hosts several community events throughout the year to raise funds for the David M Carmines Memorial Children's Scholarship Fund to ensure no child is denied recreational or educational activities at the Island Recreation Center. The Children's Center has partnered with Island Rec for the past eight years, working these events to ensure success. It's a great example of non-profits working together to support our community.

## DEEP WELL & SECOND HELPINGS

The Deep Well Project and The Children's Center serve many of the same families. This year, Deep Well volunteers packed and delivered twenty plus weekend food bags every week that helped several families ensure they had nutritional breakfasts, lunch and dinners for the weekend. Once a week, Second Helpings delivered fresh produce for families to prepare and serve at their table. Both organizations have contributed to helping ensure healthy bodies for our young children, promoting strong educational development.

## UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA BEAUFORT

Providing hands-on learning for college students is an important learning tool to prepare them for careers. We partnered with Dr. Ronald Erdei's computational science students to build, from scratch, a data base management tool for tracking the developmental progress of all children enrolled at our Center, offering parents regular progress updates and ensuring our graduates have mastered skills to enter kindergarten ready to succeed. The USCB students used their classroom education to create a real-life project, working through the successes and failures of real life. Dr. Beth Hammond offered her early education students the opportunity to visit our Center for observation and evaluation of a PreK classroom. Their observations included feedback for our teachers from an outside, academic perspective.



## SERG GROUP

“The Children's Center plays a crucial role in our community by providing an early childhood education and childcare, but especially for working families on the island who need reliable and affordable childcare. Many of the SERG Restaurant Group's employees have relied on The Children's Center for years and without the option for childcare like this, staffing our locations would be an even bigger challenge.”

**Rob Jordan**  
**SERG Group**



# Fundraising Events

THE CHILDREN'S CENTER™

## CELEBRATION

**April 29, 2023**

Westin Hilton Head Island Resort and Spa

**\$107,874**

SWING FOR THE FUTURE

**September 18, 2023**

Wexford Golf Club

**\$46,278**

THE Tot Trot

**August 4, 2023**

Jarvis Creek Park

**\$18,544**

# Partners in Educational Excellence

## Grants

- |                                            |                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Beaufort County Human Services Alliance    | Hickory Fund                                                |
| Berkeley Hall Charitable Fund              | Hilton Head Island Alumnae Association of Kappa Kappa Gamma |
| Clark Family Foundation                    | Junior League Sustainers of the Lowcountry                  |
| Coastal States Bank                        | Junior Service League of Beaufort                           |
| Community Commitment                       | Kappa Delta Foundation                                      |
| Community Foundation of the Lowcountry     | Long Cove Community Charitable Fund                         |
| David M Carmines Memorial Foundation       | Moss Creek Giving Fund                                      |
| Eleanor A & Bernard H Breedlove Foundation |                                                             |

- Palmetto Dunes Cares
- The Bargain Box
- The Church Mouse
- The Eberly Foundation
- Ward Family Foundation
- Women's Association of Hilton Head

## Corporate & Community Donors

- |                                          |                                      |                                           |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 100 Women Giving Back to the Lowcountry  | Hilton Head Security Systems         | ROC Dental Group                          |
| Beaufort Memorial Hospital               | Heritage Classic Foundation          | Rotary Club of Hilton Head Island         |
| Bishop Eye Center                        | Icon Golf of South Carolina          | Rotary Club of Hilton Head – Sunset       |
| Burnt Church Distillery                  | Island Getaway, LTD                  | Sea Bees Harbor Tour LLC                  |
| Carey & Company, CPA                     | Island Legacy Fund                   | Seacoast Insurance                        |
| Charlestowne Cabinets                    | Island Recreation Center             | Sea Pines Real Estate                     |
| COAST, LLC                               | Italian American Club of Hilton Head | Sea Pines Resort                          |
| Coastal Long-Term Rentals                | J McLaughlin                         | SERG Restaurant Group, LLC                |
| Coastal States Bank                      | Jolley Law Group                     | Servpro of Beaufort County                |
| Daily Café & Market                      | Kenneth Kowalyk, DMD                 | Signature Catering and Events, SERG Group |
| Dyess Heating & Air, Inc.                | Lang 72 Degrees                      | The LVP Warehouse                         |
| Fifth Generation                         | McGriff Insurance                    | The Herb Society of Hilton Head Island    |
| First Presbyterian Church HHI            | Mike Reichenbach Chevrolet           | The Sisters!! – Church of the Palms UM    |
| Hammerhead Builders                      | Needlepoint Junction                 | Triad Brand Marketing                     |
| Hilton Head Area Association of Realtors | Nightengale Yacht Sales              | South State Bank                          |
| Hilton Head Insurance and Brokers        | Nitelites of Hilton Head & Bluffton  | Synovus                                   |
| Hilton Head Island Community Church      | Oceanside Electric, LLC              | United Way                                |
| Hilton Head Health & Wellness            | Palmetto Electric Trust              | Vacation Homes of Hilton Head             |
| Hilton Head Plantation Newcomers         | Parrella Law Firm LLC                | Windermere Insurance Group                |
|                                          | Pinnacle Financial Partners          |                                           |
|                                          | POPS of Hilton Head                  |                                           |
|                                          | Reflections Pool Service             |                                           |



# Community Involvement

Adding value to our programs, families and community.



## *Holiday gift drive*

**COMMUNITY PARTNER:**

**WAHHI**

(Women's Association of Hilton Head Island)

**GIVING BACK**

**96**

Families adopted by WAHHI including 196 children, 93 moms, 61 dads and 14 grandparents

**623**

Gifts given

**196**

Children received 2 gifts each





# Spaghetti dinner

**COMMUNITY PARTNER:**

**Hilton Head Area Realtors Association**

**GIVING BACK**

# \$5,000

Raised for The Children's Center



# Happy feet

**COMMUNITY PARTNER:**

**The Sunset Rotary Club**

**GIVING BACK**

# 125

Pairs of shoes and socks distributed to 89 families



# Playground build + mulch day

**COMMUNITY PARTNER:**

**The Rotary Club of HH**

**GIVING BACK:**

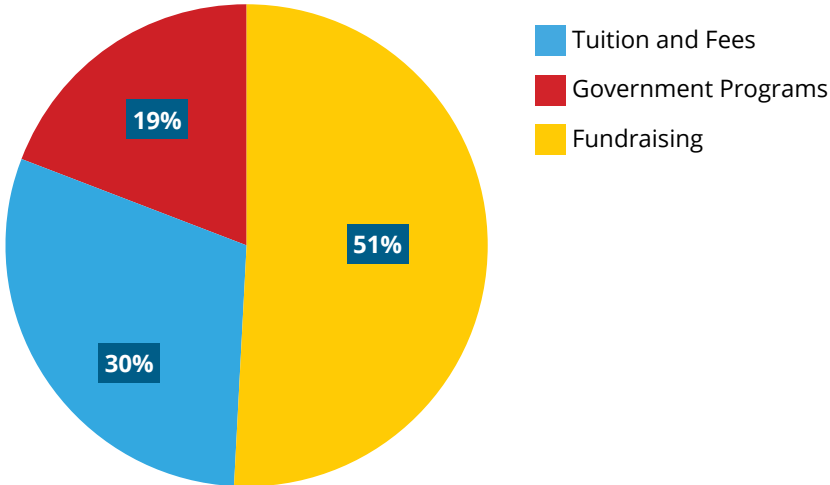
# 1,100

hours given to build our new playground and replace mulch

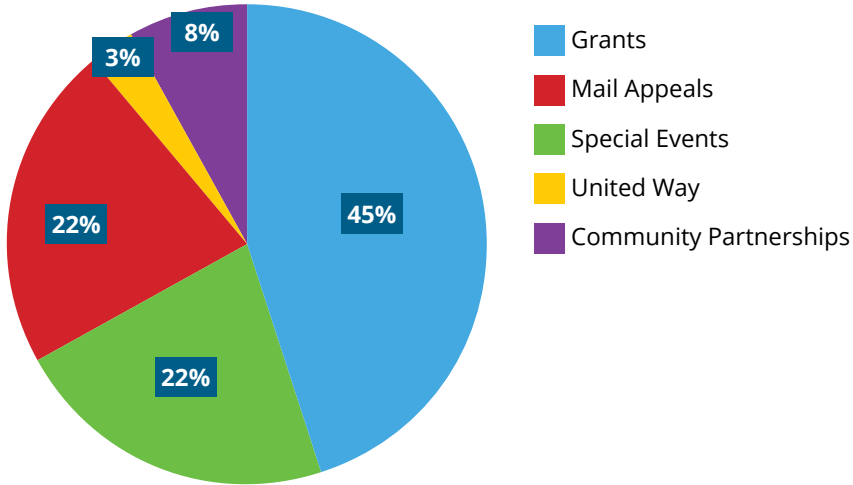


# By The Numbers

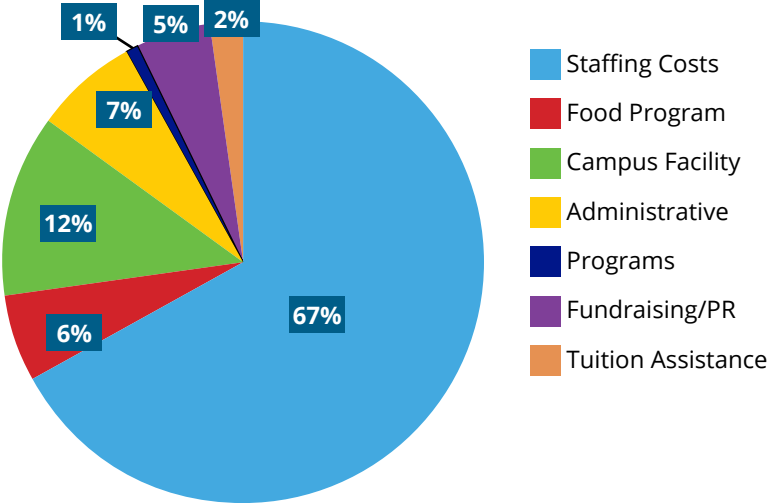
## 2023 Revenue Sources



## 2023 Fundraising Sources



## 2023 Expenses



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# Board of Trustees

Robert Eberly Jr.

**BOARD CHAIR**

Retired Attorney

Gretchen Griggs

**TREASURER**

Retired CPA

Ann McBrien

**VICE CHAIR**

Retired Marketing Executive

John Howe

**SECRETARY**

Retired Wealth Management

Robin Berkeley

Retired Early Educator

Larry Brown

Retired Attorney

Meredith DiMuzio

Magazine Publisher

José Fuentes

Jenkins, Esquivel & Fuentes – Partner

Joanna Hicks

Retired Educator

Helen (Rose) Jackson

Vice President, South State Bank

Teresa Kelly

Retired Marketing and Fundraising Consultant

Norman (Jake) Kriney

Retired Entrepreneur

Kimberly Lewis

Office Leader, Pinnacle Financial Partners

Robert Mason

Retired Info Tech Executive

Barbara Pawlishyn

Retired Hospital Administrator

Bob Rotella

Retired Supply Chain Executive

Celso White

Retired Supply Chain Executive

*did you know?*

**THE CHILDREN'S CENTER...**

***...was founded in 1967.***

***...is the 2nd oldest non-profit on Hilton Head Island.***

***...receives NO funding from Beaufort County.***

***...has NO debt.***

***...is the only Center to offer a sliding tuition based on income and family size.***

***...provides care for children 6 weeks to 8 years old.***

***...is open from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm.***

***...provides care for up to 200 children daily.***

***...provides Saturday care during peak tourist season.***

***...graduates mastered kindergarten readiness standards at a rate of over 90%.***

***...starts salaries at \$18/hour with no previous experience.***

***...offers employees discounted (up to free) tuition.***

***...has 2 employees with 40+ years of service.***





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Get involved!

