



BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES

Together

Parents
Children
Teachers
Staff
Community

SPRING
2021

Inspiring, Amazing, Remarkable



MESSAGE FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CRISTY MORRELL

It is hard to believe that our community has been dealing with COVID-19 for over a year. Although there have been a number of challenges, I am profoundly grateful and very proud that Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers, with the help of our generous donors, has been here for our families and children in every way possible.

When people think of frontline workers, the nurses, doctors, police officers, and firefighters come to mind. I firmly believe that childcare providers should be included in that list. Last June, when Governor Hogan announced that childcare providers could reopen, CACC teachers returned to their classrooms without hesitation. Since then, they have bravely continued to teach and care for the children in our programs.

Because so much was unknown about COVID-19, returning to the classrooms was nerve-racking. Our courageous teachers had to redesign every aspect of their classrooms to ensure the safety and well-

being of their children, families and themselves. Additionally, teachers creatively modified all their lessons so students could work individually and still have fun. Although simple enough in theory, planning individual lessons for preschoolers is quite a feat because little kids are very busy and love to share.

Miss Jocelyn's preschool class learned about graphing by first reading the children's classic, "Bread and Jam for Frances." After the story, each child taste-tested strawberry, raspberry, and grape jam. With sticky smiles and happy bellies, students tallied and graphed their results: grape was the hands down favorite. This is only one of countless wonderful experiences our children have had.

This past fall, when Talbot County Public Schools opted not to have in-person learning, we expanded our pre-K - 5th grade before- and after-school care to all-day programs. School age children in our programs have benefited from the fact that our classrooms are located within area elementary schools. Our teachers are there to help


children log on to their virtual classrooms, encourage students to pay attention, and help with the completion of lessons. Children in CACC's programs have received the academic support they needed. We have asked a lot of our teachers, and they have risen to every occasion.

REMARKABLE.

Inspiring, amazing, remarkable, describe the way our teachers have dealt with COVID-19 this past year. These words also describe you, our fabulous and dedicated donors. For without your support, none of this would have been possible.

Thanks to your generosity and the several state and federal grants we qualified for, CACC is still here, one year after the pandemic began. My gratitude for you, our CACC champions, for our unbelievable staff, and for the opportunity to serve our families and community is overwhelming. Thank you for believing in Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers.

If I could give each one of you a huge hug, I would.

It's All Because
of You... 

2018



New Board Members



Pamela B. Clay

Five Talbot County community leaders recently joined the Board of Directors of Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers. They are Pamela Clay, Rodanthe Hanrahan, Elizabeth Potter, Tom Reynolds and Sally Smith. "We are thrilled to add to our board these talented individuals whose extensive backgrounds in education and finance are two areas of expertise critical to the governance of Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers," said Julie Crocker, President of the Board.

PAMELA B. CLAY was the Career and Technology Education Supervisor for Talbot County Public Schools until her retirement in June 2018. Her volunteer commitments are many and varied, including serving on the Advisory Board for the Perkins YMCA in St. Michaels as well as on the Talbot County Public Schools Education Foundation.



Rodanthe Hanrahan

RODANTHE HANRAHAN enjoyed a career in energy development with the AES Corporation and with Ernst and Young's Energy Management Consulting Group. She has served on the boards of The Country School and the YMCA of the Chesapeake as well as on the boards of the Academy Art Museum, Women & Girls Fund, the Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy and the Talbot County Garden Club. She is currently Vice-Chairman of The Easton Utilities Commission.



Elizabeth Potter

ELIZABETH POTTER has worked for the Talbot County Public Schools in several capacities for 28 years. She spent the first 26 years in the classroom teaching mathematics to students in grades 6 through 8. She earned advance professional certification in teaching Grades 1-8 from the Maryland State Department of Education and is an active member of the Talbot County Education Association.



Tom Reynolds

TOM REYNOLDS returned to the board after serving several earlier terms, beginning in 2000. His professional life was spent with First National Bank of Maryland, filling many roles with that institution. He has been a volunteer leader on numerous boards in Talbot County, including the Chesapeake Maritime Museum, the Academy Art Museum, and the Oxford Community Center. He currently serves on the boards of the Talbot County Historical Society and the Talbot County Free Library Foundation.



Sally Smith

SALLY SMITH grew up in Talbot County and, with her husband, Andy, raised three children here. She taught third grade in Baltimore County, nursery school in Easton, and for many years was an assistant teacher in the first grade at The Country School. Now retired, she is active in the Garden Club of the Eastern Shore, the Herb Society, and the Christ Church of Easton Altar Guild. She is a long-time volunteer for the Waterfowl Festival.

Newly retired from the board are **Hugh Adkins, Susan Friedel, Nancy duPont, Karen Shook** and **Francesca Wiseman**. Also retiring from the board were **Bettie Kenzie** and **Paul Thut** who were elected Emeritus Directors.

Be the I in Kind

...because kindness always makes all the difference!

I have challenged my preschool students at White Marsh to try to say a compliment to someone everyday. Kind words can mean more than you know.

Let us model to our children how to be kind.



Kindness always makes a difference.

Because you care...



IN MEMORIAM

MICHAEL D. SHERIDAN



Mike Sheridan passed away in June 2020 at the age of 85. Mike's background was in finance, an expertise he brought to the board at Critchlow Adkins. In his professional career, he held various financial positions over the years, retiring from Goldman Sachs in 1988. In 1992, he and his wife Barbara moved to St. Michaels.

Mike served two terms on the board of CACC and was a member of the Finance Committee. He leaves behind a history of philanthropy in Talbot County, serving on the boards of multiple non-profits. He is deeply missed.

Thanks, CACC!

—FROM OUR PARENTS

Everett has been asking to go to school pretty much since he could talk. I would always say, "You may be ready, but Mommy is not!" When he turned four, we enrolled him in Pre-k in hopes that COVID-19 would subside by fall. As two parents working full time, our only hope of letting our son participate in school was if CACC would be able to handle virtual learning. Since he started attending school at CACC, he has been so happy, and we have loved watching him learn.

—THE DIEFENDERFER FAMILY

I am super thankful for having CACC in our lives for many reasons. First, the staff are wonderful, extremely caring and helpful, especially during this difficult time we are living in. They are willing to work with the children on many levels to ensure they are succeeding and completing schoolwork successfully (which is a HUGE bonus for us working parents) - and I cannot thank them enough. Having the ability to send Lily to a center that allows for online learning is a lifesaver. I am also thankful for the excellent communication between the staff and parents. Thank you all again, for EVERYTHING you do! You rock!

—KIM BEDNARIK-LILY'S MOM

Jozi, now seven, has been in CACC since she was approximately three years old. She has had a very difficult history for someone so young, and she has been welcomed with open arms since the very first day. It has been imperative that I have a safe, loving place for Jozi to attend as one of her issues is an attachment disorder which makes it extremely difficult for her to "share me." It was a nightmare trying to work from home and care for my daughter. All members of Critchlow, both past and present, have lovingly and patiently taken her under their wings and kept her safe and happy. So thank you all!

—LAURA SWANN - JOZI'S GRANDMOTHER

I am thankful for Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers because of all the hard work they have done to help give my son a safe and nurturing environment for him to grow. My son loves coming to CACC and, even though times have been scary and stressful, the staff at the Cordova CACC site have never once let it show. I know when I drop off my son he will be cared for and treated like family, which is all anyone can ask for. CACC has also gone above and beyond in helping with virtual school and making sure the students are able to access their classes and materials. Thank you for being such a positive influence on my child's development!

—JACKSON'S MOM

Their Future, Your Legacy

When our founding mothers, Happy Critchlow and Jan Adkins, established Easton Day Care in 1970, their wish was to assist working families in need of affordable childcare. Fifty years later, Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers (CACC) serves more than *400 children annually in our preschool classes, before- and after-school programs, and summer camps. In honor of our 50th Anniversary, we are launching **The 1970 Society** to honor past and future donors who remember CACC in their wills.

Throughout our 50-year history, Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers has greatly benefitted from generous individuals who have designated CACC in their estate plans. Their gifts have helped to assure CACC's future during challenging times and have improved the lives of the many children we educate and care for. By remembering CACC in their wills, legacy donors invest in our community's children and change lives for generations to come.

One of these donors was past board member **Robert Reynolds** who died in 2014. "Bob felt very strongly about education, and it does start with the young children," said his widow, Phoebe Reynolds. "Bob believed a good foundation gives children a great start as they get older."



Bob Reynolds

Another donor, **Dr. Margaret Baker Rennels**, a retired pediatrician and past CACC Board President, feels strongly about the need for quality childcare. "I included Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers in my estate plan because providing caring, fun education for children during this critical stage of brain development is one of the most important gifts one can give."



Peggy Rennels

One year ago, our organization was just beginning to understand the potential devastating financial impact that COVID-19 would have on our programs. At the same time, we received a bequest from the estates of **Tom and Eleanor Requard**. Mrs. Requard had always been passionate about the need for early education and even played an important role in establishing early education programs in the Baltimore area.

By remembering CACC in their wills, Tom and Eleanor made a significant impact on CACC's ability to maintain our high level of care for our children and their families during this difficult time as well as in the future.

By creating a trust or including CACC in your will, you, too, can help ensure the future of the children and families in our area. In so doing, you will help strengthen CACC and your community for generations to come. For more information, email Cristy Morrell at cmorrell@cacckids.org or call (410) 822 8061. You can also find information on our website, www.cacckids.org.

Please keep an eye out for more information about **The 1970 Society**.

**Non-COVID-19 numbers*

Your support make fun possible...



Caring and Creativity at CACC During COVID-19

Children at Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers have always been blessed with caring and creative teachers, but during the past year they have been even more blessed. All of their teachers have met the Covid-19 challenge head-on, displaying a level of creative nurturing that is truly remarkable. Not only have they kept the sites open and the children safe, they also have provided learning experiences that have been fun both during school hours and beyond. Most of all, they have created a sense of community – a way to stay connected- for both the children and their families.



Mikeya Green

MIKEYA GREEN, one of the teachers at the Easton School Age Site, explained that her mission during the COVID pandemic has been to “give her children hope.” She has been there to help the children in grades 2 through 5 with their online lessons, working with them one-on-one to see that assignments are completed and that they continue to grow their reading and multiplication skills. Should the children not bring their work with them, Mikeya develops substitute assignments to keep them engaged and moving forward. But other issues beyond school work have sharpened her focus. Noting that these children have needed uplifting in order to fight the feeling of isolation, Mikeya gives them “telephone hugs” as necessary. She also has devised “Popcorn and Conversation” and “Hot Chocolate and Conversation” evenings via Zoom to give the children the opportunity to stay connected outside of school, to have fun, and to be “just plain goofy.” For these special evenings she sent them home with packets of popcorn and hot chocolate. The children added their stuffed animals which they showed off to their friends during these Zoom “sleepovers.” Mikeya promises more fun Zoom evenings ahead with the next one to focus on crafts. When asked what has been her biggest satisfaction regarding her work with the children during this difficult time, Mikeya quickly replied: “to see them leave with a smile on their faces.”



Jennifer Woessner

JENNIFER WOESSNER, a preschool teacher at the White Marsh Site, has also gone above and beyond to meet the challenges of COVID during the past year. She created a colorful classroom filled with the children's artwork and rearranged it into individual virtual learning spaces. She also added virtual learning centers for four children each so that she could give the children individual attention or facilitate assistance from the White Marsh teachers as needed. Jennifer has made it her priority to keep the children safe by meticulously cleaning their individual tactile boxes that are filled with beads, coins, sand, measuring cups, pompoms, and other small objects that she thinks the children will like. Similarly she has designed and fastidiously maintained baskets of school supplies and baskets of toys such as chalk, bug catchers, bubbles, and Frisbees that they take outside daily. Like Mikeya, Jennifer has focused on helping her children to stay connected and develop confidence. Reading to the children both in the classroom and on Facebook has been a top priority. Keeping their parents informed and involved has been equally important. Jennifer posts stories and pictures of the children's activities on Facebook and designed themed Family Paint Nights when the children painted snowmen and Valentine pictures via Zoom. She also has created a Facebook group for parents and drops off materials at their homes so that they can help with group activities. Jennifer went several steps further when she connected the community at large with the Critchlow Adkins children by contacting WCEI and sending a recording of the children saying the Pledge of Allegiance.



As Mikeya and Jennifer's approaches to the COVID challenge demonstrate, the Critchlow Adkins children have been loved, nurtured, tutored, encouraged, and uplifted throughout this past year. In so doing, these teachers, and the other teachers, have exemplified the principles set forth by Janice Adkins and Happy Critchlow fifty years ago when they founded what is now Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers. Their paramount mission continues to be providing outstanding daycare in which working parents have total confidence and that their children will thrive.



Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers

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LICENSED MARYLAND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS: Cordova 20-45445 / Easton Preschool 20-31291 / Easton School Age 20-31294 / St. Michaels 20-31292 / Trappe 20-53488