

# PARTNERING IN POSSIBILITIES

2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT | EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION



Exceptional Children's Foundation

**SEVENTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO** a seed of hope tended by a small group of concerned parents laid the foundation for our mission – a mission that has provided generations of hope, accomplishment, empowerment and inclusion for thousands of children and adults with special needs and unique abilities. Every partnership in our mission along the way extends our reach . . . and powers the possibilities inherent for and deserved by every individual we serve. Together and ever-growing, we are partnering in possibilities . . .



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**Our mission is to provide the  
highest quality services for  
children and adults who are  
challenged with special needs  
— empowering them to reach  
their greatest potential.**

## To our exceptional friends and family:

It is an honor to share with you the Exceptional Children's Foundation (ECF) 2022-2023 Annual Report.

Throughout our 77 years of service, the advancement of ECF's mission and growth in our organization's impact has been rooted in the shared commitment, dedicated service, innovative leadership and steadfast stewardship of our Board and staff in partnership with visionary business and community leaders, and our passionate family of friends, volunteers, and supporters.

Thanks to this ever-expanding network of partners, Exceptional Children's Foundation has grown from the founding vision of a group of concerned parents into California's most comprehensive provider of services for individuals of all ages with learning and developmental challenges.

Working together, throughout our history we have continually answered the call of the community we serve, broadening our reach to provide a lifespan of transformative programs and services that empower possibilities for children and adults with special needs.

**This fiscal year, having successfully innovated and surmounted the challenges of the worldwide pandemic, we proudly stand well-poised for the future, and the limitless advancement of our mission.**

We continued this year to expand supports and opportunities, providing early intervention therapies, education and resources for young children and their families, new technology and experiential learning opportunities for our students, new training and employment opportunities for adults and new opportunities for the creative expression and recognition of our exceptional ECF artists.

The breadth and impact of our mission is, as always, best reflected in their achievements, their milestone celebrations, and their smiles. We invite you to read and see further the impact of your investment and thank you, on behalf of all we serve, for partnering in possibilities.



**Veronica Arteaga**  
*President and CEO*



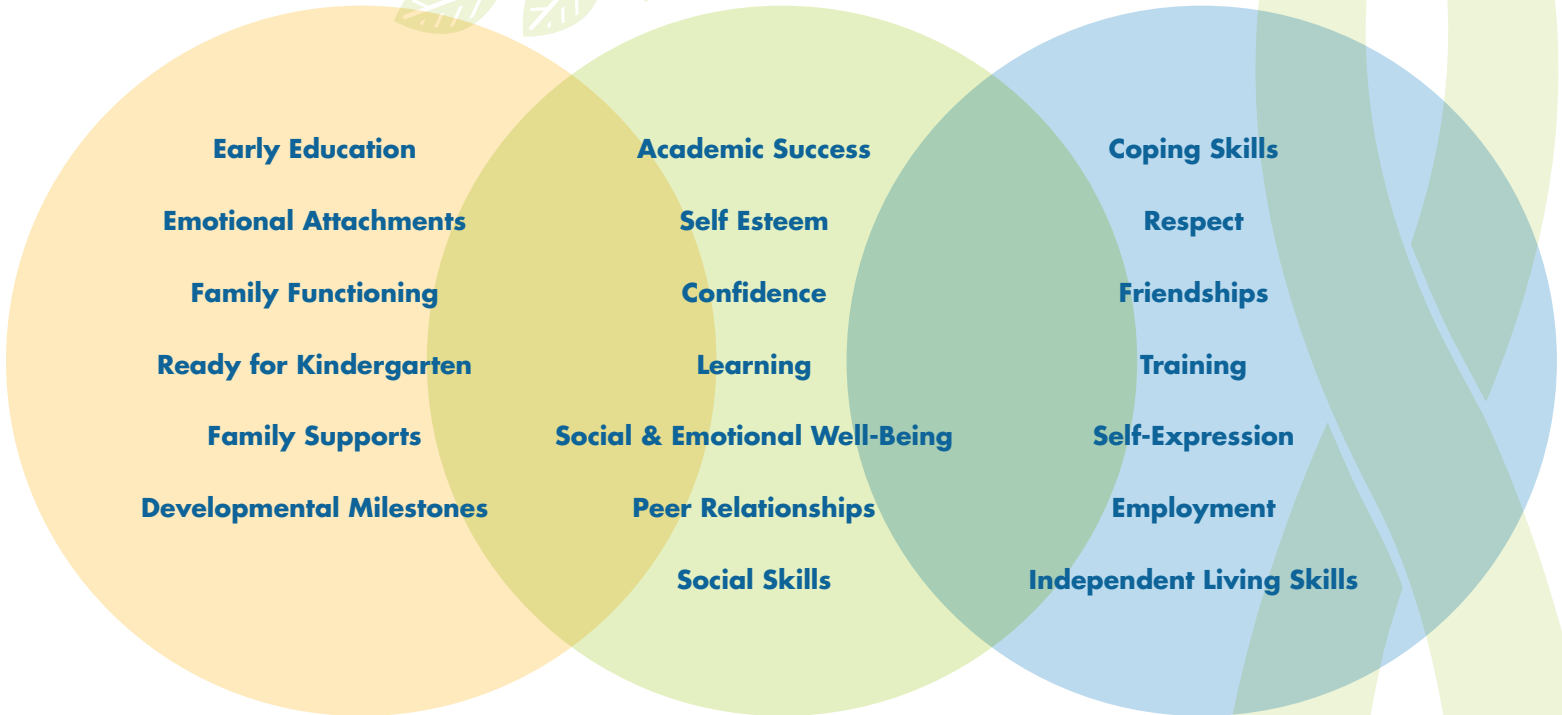
**Shelley I. Smith**  
*Chair, Board of Directors*

# Our Programs

**ECF WAS FOUNDED IN 1946 BY A GROUP OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS** who sought to establish a day training program as an alternative to institutional care for individuals with developmental disabilities. Over the past 77 years, ECF's services expanded to meet the changing needs of those we serve, successfully developing and implementing early intervention programs for infants and toddlers, as well as residential, work and day programs for adults.

**TODAY, ECF IS THE ONLY ORGANIZATION OF ITS KIND IN CALIFORNIA,** offering a full continuum of care and lifespan services for children and adults challenged with special needs.

## A LIFESPAN OF SERVICES YOUNG CHILDREN | STUDENTS | ADULTS



# EARLY START



**THE ECF EARLY START PROGRAM** provides early intervention and educational services for children from zero to three years of age who are developmentally delayed or disabled, as well as support for their families. We serve children challenged with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, intellectual disabilities, speech and language impairments, traumatic brain injuries and many other disabilities or special needs.

## CENTER-BASED SERVICES

Our **Center-Based Services** offer an inclusive, enrichment-based program for both children with special needs and typically developing children in a warm, family-friendly setting at two Early Start centers. We support each child's individual needs in a blended classroom where they learn and play with children with diverse needs and abilities. Much like a traditional preschool, our program provides socialization activities, outdoor play, healthy meals and field trips, along with occupational, physical and speech therapy for children who qualify for individual therapy. With the help of our licensed therapist, we integrate language enriched and functional skill activities into our classroom curriculum.

## HOME-BASED SERVICES

Educators in our **Home-Based Services** provide early childhood education along with parent education in the home on a weekly or monthly basis. After assessing a family's needs, our staff creates a personalized service plan that can include early education, parent education, occupational/speech/physical therapies, medical assessment and medical services.

## SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

We also provide **Speech and Language Therapy** for children with language processing disorders, hearing loss, language delays, stuttering and voice or articulation disorders. Licensed Speech Therapists help each student learn to communicate more effectively in all areas of their lives.

## FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

To help ensure each child's success, our **Family Support Services** teach families how to better advocate for their child and how they can participate in the services their child is receiving from ECF. Services include parent support groups, legal aid referrals, one-on-one social work support, immigration assistance, crisis counseling, marriage and family counseling, mental health and medical care and on-site emergency food pantries.

## BILINGUAL STAFF

All Early Start services are provided by culturally competent and **bilingual staff** who can effectively work with families speaking Armenian, Farsi, Russian, and Spanish.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## Provide Thanksgiving Meals for ECF Early Start Families



ECF community partners Big Sunday and International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 13 once again stepped up to make sure our client families had turkeys and groceries for Thanksgiving, bringing relief and big smiles as bags were distributed by ECF staff.

Both Big Sunday and the ILWU Local 13 have been providing Thanksgiving meals for ECF's Early Start program families for several years. ECF is grateful to these generous partners for their ongoing commitment and care for our community.

# KAYNE ERAS SCHOOL



**ECF’S NONPUBLIC SPECIAL EDUCATION KAYNE ERAS SCHOOL (KES) helps TK-12 students develop the social, intellectual, emotional and academic skills they need to learn at their fullest potential. KES Experiential Learning empowers students to explore and achieve, increases their academic and social skills and helps them find joy in learning.**

**EACH CLASSROOM** is staffed by a credentialed teacher and highly skilled assistant. Our self-contained elementary and middle-school classrooms vary by student need in order to effectively serve students with emotional/behavioral challenges and specific learning disabilities, as well as students with autism spectrum disorder.

High school students work toward earning a high school diploma. Classes follow common core standards for academics, with individualized

instruction to meet each student’s ability level. Homeroom teachers serve as case managers who communicate with families and members of each student’s educational team of teachers, therapists, administrators, service providers and support staff, who collaborate to help students meet graduation requirements and provide transition planning, college readiness and vocational preparation.

KES has long been recognized for its excellent Enrichment program. Enrichment activities help

develop the multiple intelligences we all possess and provide opportunities for students to succeed and express themselves both in and outside of the classroom. Activities include performing and visual arts, technology education, financial education, culinary education, vocational training, self-defense, team sports and community service.

ECF's Therapeutic Services program offers a range of interventions and treatments to encourage the healthy development and growth of students and their families. Students receive counseling to help them manage their emotional and psychological challenges so that they can reach their highest academic potential, improve their social relationships and learn to feel good about who they are.

KES also provides speech/language and occupational therapy, as well as mental health services to both KES and non-KES students and families.

KES holds full accreditation status from the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.



## ECF KAYNE ERAS SCHOOL CLASS OF 2023 GRADUATE, ANTHONY BROWN, CAPS OFF AN EXCEPTIONAL SENIOR YEAR!

Anthony, who led the Kayne Eras School champion Bulldogs football team as quarterback, was also a reporter on the school's student-run Bulldog News broadcast. Always actively involved in school activities, Anthony, a talented drummer, also performed at the school's talent show and other events throughout the year.

Beloved and looked up to as a mentor by fellow students, Anthony was proud to represent the school, leading informational tours and speaking at events about his challenges and victories to ECF partners, as he did at the Angels Luncheon in May.

"When I first started at Kayne Eras School at the end of first-grade, I used to throw things, have tantrums, refuse to listen to anyone. This detrimental behavior and my rage was how I thought I was protecting myself. But at Kayne Eras the teachers, counselors and staff began to break down the barriers and walls I had built. They showed me how to mend fences and helped me build bridges so that I could open up to new experiences. They taught me that school can be fun, and helped me find my voice."

After all his high school achievements and an exciting graduation, Anthony was thrilled to receive word of a new opportunity he'll be stepping into this fall – thanks to ECF partners – and Anthony's "dream team" – the **Los Angeles Rams**.

The Rams offered Anthony a job working as a Game Day Ambassador at SoFi Stadium for the coming season! Celebrating the good news with CEO Veronica Arteaga, Anthony was overjoyed. "I can't believe I'm going to be working for the LA Rams! I can't wait to start! I'm so proud, and I'm so grateful to the team, and to the team at ECF, for helping me reach this goal."



# EMPLOYMENT ART CENTERS AND RESIDENTIAL

**ECF PROVIDES AN ARRAY** of programs and services to help adults with special needs reach their personal, residential and employment goals. ECF believes that every adult who wants to work deserves the opportunity to earn a paycheck. Too often, adults with developmental disabilities face barriers to employment due to lack of experience and specialized training.

**Exceptional Works** is a continuum of employment services that help adults find employment in the community.

The **Accelerated Preparation Program** expedites the time it takes adults with lower-than-average work productivity levels (below 75%) to prepare for more advanced employment training by teaching the work, life and soft skills needed to become employable. Participants complete the program with a broader set of skills and increased self-motivation to accelerate their transition into Work Readiness classes or the Exceptional Training Academy.

Through instruction and group learning in ECF's **Work Readiness Program**, participants develop the

skills needed to conduct a job search and maintain employment, including: understanding different job opportunities, completing applications, writing a resume, interviewing, professional grooming and hygiene, workplace communication, and personal development and growth.

ECF's **Exceptional Training Academy** offers vocational training in computer literacy, culinary arts, janitorial services, retail sales and warehouse operations. Upon successful completion of their training, participants will have learned the skills necessary to help them secure meaningful employment with a community employer. Participants also have the option to participate in the Exceptional Packaging Solutions program for up to three hours per day, earning minimum wage.



In our **College Classroom Program** and in partnership with educational institutions, ECF staff provide in-class support to adult students, helping them successfully complete vocational training courses.

ECF also partners with NTMA Training Centers of Southern California to give adults the opportunity to become **Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machinists**, learning how to program, set up and operate CNC machines to produce complex precision parts and tools for the aerospace, military, medical and other industries.

Participants in our **Exceptional Packaging Solutions** program gain paid work experience with packaging and assembly contract work. **Exceptional Employment Solutions** helps participants prepare for and find community-based employment. Once hired, they can receive ongoing job coaching from ECF to support them in their new role. ECF proudly partners with over 70 local businesses to provide a wide variety of employment opportunities in industries including retail, computer software testing, clerical, warehouse operations, culinary services and janitorial.

Our renowned **Art Centers Program** provides fine arts training in a variety of mediums, at four locations throughout Los Angeles. Art produced by ECF adult artists is showcased at juried art shows and is also available for purchase at **artECF.org**.

The **Developmental Activity Center** provides participants with opportunities to strengthen their

independence, social skills and self-determination, all with respect for each person's ability level. Skills are reinforced through community integration experiences such as grocery shopping, attending cultural events and participating in volunteer opportunities.

Participants in **Exceptional Community Connections** enjoy meaningful volunteer opportunities while integrating into the community.

**Individual Pathways** provides in-depth transitional plans for adults, particularly young adults, to help them access community resources and gain more training and skill development to enter the job market, or engage in community volunteering.

The **Residential Services Program** provides housing, life skills training and support for adult clients, ranging from independent living with minimal assistance to fully staffed group homes providing medical care.



► To learn more about ECF programs, visit **ECF.net**

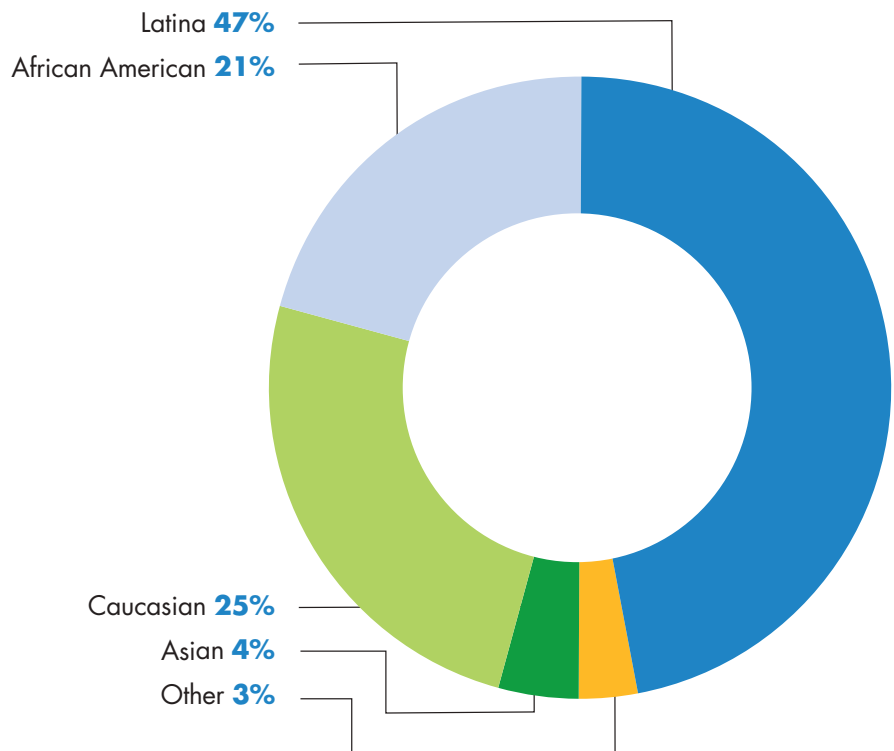
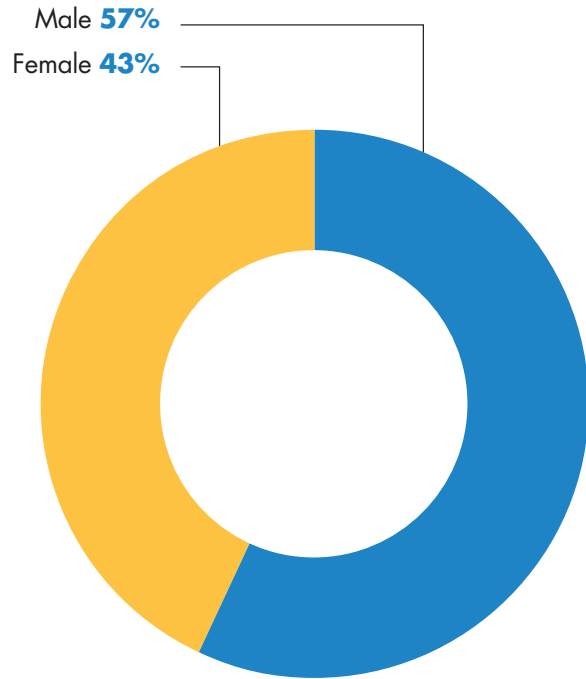
# LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY SERVICE SITES

## Where We Work



**EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**  
Participants Volunteer at sites in the community

# Who We Serve



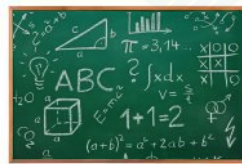
# OUR IMPACT AT A GLANCE



# 306,845

## OVERALL HOURS of SERVICE PROVIDED

**2,450** HOURS OF  
SCHOOL-BASED  
COUNSELING



# 15,693

## HOURS of CLASSROOM-BASED EARLY INTERVENTION



## CLASS OF 2023

**100%** ELIGIBLE  
SENIORS  
GRADUATED

# 13,662

## HOME VISITS



For families  
with infants and  
toddlers with  
developmental  
delays



# 61,560

## HOURS of TRAINING and WORK

PROVIDED TO CLIENTS  
THROUGH ECF EXCEPTIONAL  
PACKAGING SOLUTIONS

# 100% of CLIENTS EMPLOYED

through Exceptional Works  
program earn minimum  
wage or above



# 1,580

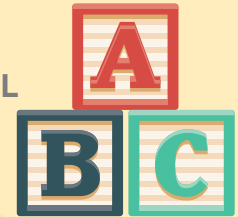
## PIECES of ARTWORK SOLD

by Art Centers Program Client Artists

# 11,637

## HOURS OF SPEECH AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS



# 91 CLIENTS PLACED/WORKING



NUMBER OF EXCEPTIONAL EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS CLIENTS PLACED/WORKING IN COMMUNITY JOBS

# 21,019

## HOURS OF JOB COACHING

For adults with developmental disabilities working in community jobs

# 30,505 HOURS OF

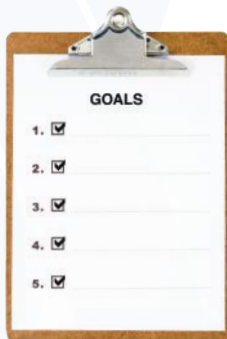
WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS/FULFILLMENT SKILLS, COMPUTER LITERACY, JANITORIAL AND CULINARY TRAINING PROVIDED TO CLIENTS IN ECF'S EXCEPTIONAL TRAINING ACADEMY

# 4,733

## HOURS of RN/LVN CARE



Higher level RN/LVN care provided at ECF Residential Services sites



# 90%

## CLIENTS IN ADULT PROGRAMS WHO MET THEIR INDIVIDUAL GOALS



# 5,089

## HOURS of ABA (APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS)



# ZELDA SERRANO

EARLY START

**Zelda loves to play dress up** doctor and take care of the animals and baby dolls in her classroom at Early Start. “She always picks out the doctor coat for dress up play,” says her teacher, smiling, “And she takes her work as a doctor very seriously!” She also likes to show off her favorite picture book, “Goodnight Moon,” pointing excitedly to the pictures and saying “moon,” and “red balloon.”

That’s just one of many big accomplishments for Zelda. When she first came to ECF Early Start in September at age two, Zelda had only about 7 words – “agua,” “hola,” “no,” “Cesar,” (her uncle’s name) “shoe,” and a few others in her vocabulary. She didn’t make eye contact or respond to commands, walked on her tiptoes, often tripped and fell when she walked, and was fearful of loud noises like vacuums and trucks. Her mother, Laura, was concerned about Zelda’s speech and her overall and social development. Zelda’s older brother, Aiden, had been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and is a graduate of ECF Early Start, so her mother was aware of the benefits of early screening and intervention – and she knew where to turn for the support Zelda needed.

At Early Start, she’s received speech and occupational therapy to work on her cognitive, social-emotional, adaptive and sensory processing skills, in addition to attending Center-based care at the Early Start Adams Center. Her mom also took advantage of

ECF’s Mommy & Me program, to learn ways to support Zelda’s progress and growth.

Now, Zelda has become much more comfortable socially. She looks forward to going to the program each morning and doing activities and playing with the other children. And, her vocabulary has grown to more than 60 words.

When a large, noisy truck with power trimmers starts work on a tree near the playground, Zelda is not afraid – she’s just curious. “Tree trim!” she smiles, pointing up. In class, she’s excited to announce the alphabet letters and identify objects that start with the letters. She’s learning many new words, and every one of them is a celebration!

**“I just want for her what every mother wants – for her to be a happy little girl and to continue to succeed in life.”**

“Zelda has made such great progress in the Early Start program. Her development overall has improved, and she’s so much more social and independent – she’s really thriving,” says Laura. “I just want for her what every mother wants – for her to be a happy little girl and to continue to succeed in life. Thanks to the excellent care and support she has received from her therapists and teachers at ECF Early Start, I know that she will.”



# NIKO SHANNON

KAYNE ERAS SCHOOL

**It's hard to miss Niko** at Kayne Eras middle school. See the boy with the big, beautiful smile walking down the hall to class with his buddies, waving to others calling out his name? Or the one practicing football with his teammates at recess? Or the well-spoken boy representing his class at the student council meeting? You might find him in the broadcast studio where he reports for the student-run Bulldog News or nailing some complicated hip-hop dance moves with his instructor in dance class. Niko has a lot of interests, and a lot of friends at Kayne Eras School. It's hard to believe he's the same boy that started at the school four years ago – angry, defensive, scared, unable to express himself and convinced he was unable to learn.

Niko has ADHD, and before coming to the Kayne Eras School he had difficulty concentrating in his classes; he struggled with frustration, lashing out or shutting down, and would not interact with other students.

"He used to sit in a corner and refuse to speak to people. He couldn't manage his emotions; he was always angry," his mom Nicole says.

At ECF Kayne Eras, Niko was provided counseling that helped him learn how to regulate his emotions and to have proper social interactions and make friends. Educational Therapy at the school

helped Niko "learn how to learn." Kayne Eras School's experiential learning built his academic success while increasing his confidence doing activities he loves – like sports and dance.

Exposure to older, successful students who also have overcome challenges – like Niko's friend and mentor, graduating senior Anthony Brown\* – motivates and inspires him, too.

**"I am so proud of how Niko has changed and grown since he started at Kayne Eras. My hope is for him to graduate, and for all his dreams to come true!"**

"Now Niko has so many friends and is part of winning football teams both at school and on the Santa Monica Fire Hearts," his mom, Nicole, says. "I am so proud of how Niko has changed and grown since he started at Kayne Eras. My hope is for him to graduate, and for all his dreams to come true!"

Niko says when he graduates, he really wants to be a professional football player – that's the big dream – or maybe a sports broadcaster. Then again, his dance instructor thinks he has rare high-level talent. He's also interested in photography, and video production, and well . . . the possibilities are limitless.

\* See page 7



# STRICKLAND "LANNIE" PRESLEY

## EXCEPTIONAL WORKS

**Strickland Presley is known** by everyone at ECF Exceptional Works by his nickname, “Lannie,” and for his warm, friendly smile and kind, courteous nature. He loves to meet new people and always makes a good impression. With a polite and professional handshake, he’ll repeat your name with a “very nice to meet you” and tell you his name is “Lannie – L-A-N-N-I-E Presley – yes, like Elvis!”

**“I’ve learned all kinds of things here – from my very good teachers.”**

Lannie came to Exceptional Works last year, after the pandemic led to layoffs at the County Courthouse where he had been working as a file clerk. “I came here to get some good training, in a lot of interesting things,” says Lannie. “I’ve learned all kinds of things here – from my very good teachers.”

“Lannie is interested in learning just about everything!” says Job Readiness Specialist Mark Anthony Campoy. “He’s a participant in Computer Training as well as the Culinary Training program and has also taken part in our group doing volunteer environmental work and studies at Kenneth Hahn Park.” He is a regular participant of the Computer Class trips for partner training at the Apple Store, learning how to make and edit videos, photographs and more. All of ECF’s training

courses are designed to increase participants’ social, independent living and work readiness skills.

In Computer Training, Lannie has increased his computer literacy significantly. Before joining the program, he had very limited computer knowledge, and now he can Zoom, play games and use the internet. He’s also learned how to use a variety of smart phone apps, like Instacart to order groceries and Spotify to find and listen to his favorite music.

In Culinary Training he’s learned about shopping for and preparing healthy foods. “I like cooking,” he says, “and now I make my own lunch every day, and it’s a very good one, and healthy, too!”

Every new thing Lannie learns seems to trigger his interest in exploring another. After learning to download and use Spotify, Lannie was really interested in learning to play piano and make music himself. Now among his busy week’s activities, he’s added piano lessons at home!

His sister, Nicole, is impressed with how much he’s learned and grown since joining the Exceptional Works program. “Lannie has increased his verbal and social skills. He’s become more comfortable and confident. He has just flourished over the past year,” she says. “I am so grateful for the support Lannie is getting. Everyone on his team at ECF is kind, positive, supportive, gentle, and encouraging.”

Just like Lannie.



Daisy Hunt, "Untitled"

>View more; visit [artECF.org](https://artECF.org).



# DAISY HUNT

## ART CENTERS

### Daisy's name is well-suited to her.

Stop by ECF Art Centers West Los Angeles studio to visit with Daisy, and the radiance of her smile and her sunny spirit is bound to make an impression along with her artwork.

Her work is really an extension of that radiance. In an illustrative style focusing on inked line work and watercolor, she likes to beautify and celebrate things in nature that are often overlooked, like foliage and even insects. Daisy's work is playful, and she has a talent for making anything – even a cockroach – adorable.

That positive energy that she exudes is really appreciated by her studio mates at the West Los Angeles center, where she has been creating her art since 2011.

During a period in the last year when Daisy couldn't come into the art center in person, her instructor, Josh, would have Zoom sessions with her. "Every time we had a Zoom, there would be a line of artists in the studio by my desk, eager to say hello to Daisy and to tell her how much they missed her," he says. "She's a big and beloved part of our crew!"

Daisy's mom, Barbetta, says the ECF Art Centers is, "such a wonderful program for Daisy. She's so enthusiastic about going to the program, and the people there. She's so proud of the work she is doing."

Barbetta explains that Daisy, who is challenged with cerebral palsy, never realized as she was growing up that she had artistic ability. "She was in a different day

program, but it wasn't inspiring for her." Daisy's counselor suggested looking into the ECF Art Centers program. When Daisy first started at ECF she was tentative in her artwork. Then she met the beloved and celebrated ECF artist Milton Davis, who took her under his wing and helped to give her the confidence she needed.

"Daisy blossomed! She started painting and drawing and her art went from abstract to more realistic – she has been doing amazing work and everyone in the program at ECF has been so helpful to her," says Barbetta.

**Daisy blossomed! She started painting and drawing and her art went from abstract to more realistic – she has been doing amazing work and everyone in the program at ECF has been so helpful to her. Daisy is thriving – inside and outside of the studio, thanks to ECF," says Barbetta. "It really has changed her life!"**

Her family is very proud – in fact, Daisy's uncle purchased many of her works to ensure that every family member has an original Daisy Hunt piece at home.

"Daisy is thriving – inside and outside of the studio, thanks to ECF," says Barbetta. "It really has changed her life!"

## RECOGNITION for EXCELLENCE

This year we proudly celebrated well-earned recognitions awarded across our ECF leadership, volunteers, and direct support professional staff — awards recognizing the highest levels of service and impact, received by three exemplary ECF partners in possibility.



**Exceptional Children’s Foundation President and CEO Veronica Arteaga** — the third in our 77-year history — was appointed by the (ECF) Board of Directors and joined the organization in June, launching the next generation of innovative service, impact, and mission momentum.

With a deep and personal commitment to ECF’s core values of advancing access to highest quality programs and

person-centered services to support children, students and adults with special needs and their families, Veronica’s inspirational leadership has been lauded within the disability services and business community.

In October, Veronica was presented the **Nonprofit Leader of the Year Award** by the Culver City Chamber of Commerce at the 7th Annual Women in Business Leadership Awards luncheon. The Women in Business Leadership Awards honor women who lead through their professional and community endeavors and spotlights innovative and visionary women who influence their respective organizations and community.

She was also selected as a nominee for the prestigious 2022 *Los Angeles Times* Inspirational Women Forum and Leadership Awards in October, held at the Beverly Hilton, Los Angeles, and was selected as an Industry Leader and Influencer in the Nonprofit Industry by *Desert Charities News* 2022, “Women in Philanthropy.”

**ECF Kayne Eras School Director of Arts and Student Development Joelene Walker-Stephens**

was honored with the ANCOR 2023 Direct Service Provider of the Year Award for California at a national awards ceremony held in Chicago in April.

**“Joelene’s exceptional passion and dedication empowers the students we serve and truly transforms lives.”**

— **VERONICA ARTEAGA, ECF PRESIDENT & CEO**

ANCOR is the leading advocacy voice nationwide for providers that support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The annual ANCOR award is the premier recognition for professionals in the field. Ms. Walker-Stephens was selected from a record number of more than 350 nominees for service excellence and the impact of their work supporting individuals with special needs.

“We are so proud and delighted that Joelene has received this well-deserved national recognition,” said ECF President and CEO Veronica Arteaga. “Joelene’s exceptional passion and dedication empowers the students we serve and truly transforms lives.”





**ECF Board Member and CEO of Turner Techtronics, Inc. Ellen Turner** was honored with the 2023 *Los Angeles Business Journal* Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Volunteer of the Year Award.

The award was presented to Ellen at a ceremony and luncheon held at the Biltmore Los Angeles in April. The Volunteer of the Year Award honors an individual who donates their time, funds, and efforts to improve the communities they serve.

Ellen has been a passionate supporter of ECF since 2019. Since beginning her volunteer service for ECF as a member of ECF's Board of Directors, Ellen has been an ardent and innovative catalyst for ECF's growth, raising critical funds for ECF programs and services.

"Despite the demands of her successful business, Ellen continues to extend her time, talents and relentless energy helping to advance our mission and impact," said ECF President and CEO Veronica Arteaga. "We are thrilled to see her recognized as the 2023 Volunteer of the Year."

**The nearly 4,000 young children, students, adults with special needs — and their families — served with skilled, enriching, and empowering programs each year at ECF — are the greatest inspiration. Their smiles; their hugs; their successes. I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve with the exceptional board and team at ECF."**

— ELLEN TURNER



## **BLANK ROME** **ADOPT-A-CENTER PROGRAM** Equips Broadcast Studio for Kayne Eras School Students' Bulldog News

Student reporters from our Kayne Eras School Bulldog News broadcast visited the law offices of Blank Rome LLP to interview and thank Partner Stacy Phillips, founder and Advisory Board Chair of the Blank Rome Adopt-A-Center Program, which this year selected the school's student-run news program as the fundraiser beneficiary.

Blank Rome's Adopt-A-Center Program annually selects a Los Angeles-based nonprofit organization that benefits children and families in the local community who are in need of outreach and support.

**"If you do well, you must do good.' I often share this favorite life lesson that I learned from my parents."**

— STACY PHILLIPS

Produced entirely by the students, the **Bulldog News** broadcasts cover school activities, sports, and the weather. Following the School's experiential learning model, the students apply a variety of learned skills to produce the broadcast.

Thanks to Blank Rome and the generous donors who contributed to the Blank Rome Adopt-A-Center fundraiser, students now have needed professional production equipment for the Bulldog News studio — including a high-definition studio camera, video editing computer and software, a teleprompter, studio mics, lights, and more!

## ECF 7TH ANNUAL BUSINESS PARTNERS LUNCHEON AND AWARDS

Recognizes Local Businesses Investing in Individuals with Special Needs



**AT THE 7TH ANNUAL** Business Partners Luncheon and Awards, Exceptional Children’s Foundation (ECF) honored ECF business partners across Los Angeles creating a more inclusive workforce through employment training, hiring and philanthropy. The event was emceed by KCAL News reporter Kristine Lazar and the Keynote Speaker was Big Sunday Founder and Executive Director David Levinson. Three businesses were presented with 2023 Exceptional Business Partner Awards for their exemplary efforts on behalf of the special needs community: **Brilliant Corners**, **Hollywood Park Casino**, and **Nature Nexus Institute**.

“These businesses demonstrate leadership by creating pathways to employment for individuals with special needs, and to a more inclusive future for Los Angeles,” said ECF President and CEO Veronica Arteaga.

At the luncheon ECF also presented the 4th Annual Steven J. Rose Exceptional Culver City Business Award to David Voncannon, founder and owner of D & E Associates. The award recognizes an individual who has helped to shape the future of Culver City and strengthen its business community. Voncannon served for eight years on the Culver City Planning Commission, including two years as Commission Chair. He served for nine years on the board of the Culver City Chamber of Commerce (one year as interim CEO). He was also a member of the former Culver City Advisory Council on Redevelopment, and currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Culver Arts Foundation and the Culver Palms YMCA.

This year’s Business Partners Luncheon and Awards was the first in-person live event since the COVID pandemic in 2020. More than 80 business guests attended the ceremony and luncheon held at Killer Shrimp in Marina del Rey.



## SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT AND CITY YEAR LA Partner to Help Paint a Bright Future for Students

**MORE THAN 100 VOLUNTEERS** from Sony Pictures Entertainment, in partnership with City Year Los Angeles, rolled up their sleeves and grabbed paintbrushes, hammers and wheelbarrows to provide a beautification project at ECF Kayne Eras School this year. Sony Pictures hosted the Sony Global Volunteer Day project as a demonstration of their commitment to volunteerism and our community.

The volunteers painted a series of colorful, affirming murals on exterior walls of the lunch, garden and play areas, built planter boxes and filled the playground with fresh wood chip grounding – all in one fun, exciting day of organized hard work that was a sight to behold! Our students were amazed and excited as they watched the dedicated volunteers transform the outdoor area with vibrant and empowering murals, flowers and plants and a spiffed-up playground designed especially for them. “I can’t decide which part is my favorite,” said a student when it was finished. “It’s all so beautiful!”



# INAUGURAL FALL ART CRAWL

and VIP Patron's Preview Breaks  
Records for Art Sales Featuring  
Works by ECF Artists

This year a newly-launched Fall Art Crawl series of open studio sales introduced communities across Los Angeles to ECF Art Centers artists and studios in Whittier, South Los Angeles, San Pedro and West Los Angeles.

The inaugural Fall Art Crawl raised nearly \$40,000, with 786 original pieces by ECF Art Centers artists sold – the largest amount ever generated by an Art Center sale.

The event, conceived and shepherded by volunteer and ECF Board of Directors member Azita Karimkhany Fatheree, kicked off in October with a VIP Patrons Preview at the South Los Angeles studio, catered by ECF's Culinary Training participants, and was followed by individual open house sales at each of the other ECF Art Center locations throughout the month.



## ECF KAYNE ERAS SCHOOL Celebrates Class of 2023 Graduates

ECF Kayne Eras High School celebrated another exceptional group of graduates at the Class of 2023 Graduation Ceremony in June.

Excited families, friends and staff joined together in the school gymnasium to honor the accomplishments of our graduating seniors.

ECF President and CEO Veronica Arteaga applauded the graduates for the culmination of their hard work and determination, noting that this year's graduates had persevered through the pandemic spanning three of their four high school years. She encouraged the graduates to, "remember the pride, and the love you feel surrounding you today. We are always here for you."

**When I first came to Kayne Eras, I thought becoming Valedictorian was impossible. Today, I know if you work hard, you can truly accomplish anything."**

**— VICTOR ALBERT III, 2023 VALEDICTORIAN**

Principal Lauren Weiser introduced student speakers, Saniya Holliday and Anthony Brown, who shared their personal reflections, thanking their teachers and congratulating their fellow graduates.

After an inspiring awards presentation where students were individually acknowledged by faculty and staff, Valedictorian Victor Albert III was surprised and moved by a special introduction from his mother, who reflected on the challenges they had experienced prior to coming to Kayne Eras School, and Victor's remarkable growth and success.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS\*

## FY22-23

### REVENUE

#### Program and Other Revenue

Regional Centers – Tuition and Fees	\$ 11,361,602
Unified School Districts - Tuition and Fees	2,634,085
DMH Contract	1,741,830
ICF Medi-Cal Fees	2,780,264
Non Public Agency Fees	986,440
Contract Sales	1,832,498
Endowment Transfers Authorized	1,672,112
HUD Program Revenue	758,861
MISC Income	248,509
Sale of Merchandise	65,212

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**Total Program and Other Revenue** **24,081,412**

#### Community Support

Contributions (Net of Special Event Costs \$224K)	1,359,341
In-Kind Donations - KEC Food	31,245

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**Total Community Support** **1,390,586**

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**Total Revenue<sup>1</sup>** **\$ 25,471,998**

### EXPENSE

#### Programs

Early Start	3,943,198
KEC School	4,242,735
Residential Services	3,044,976
Art Centers	2,616,261
Exceptional Employment Solutions (SEP)	2,185,099
Mental Health	1,534,874
Exceptional Works (excluding SEP)	1,527,206
Exceptional Community Connections and Community Fusion	1,479,015
Diagnostic and Therapy (NPA)	883,578
HUD Properties	805,230

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**Total Program Expense<sup>2</sup>** **22,262,172**

#### Administrative

Administration	2,929,577
Development and Fundraising	817,331

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**Total Administrative Expense<sup>2</sup>** **3,746,909**

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**Total Expense<sup>2</sup>** **26,009,081**

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**Surplus (Deficit) before Interest & Depreciation Expense** **\$ (537,083)**

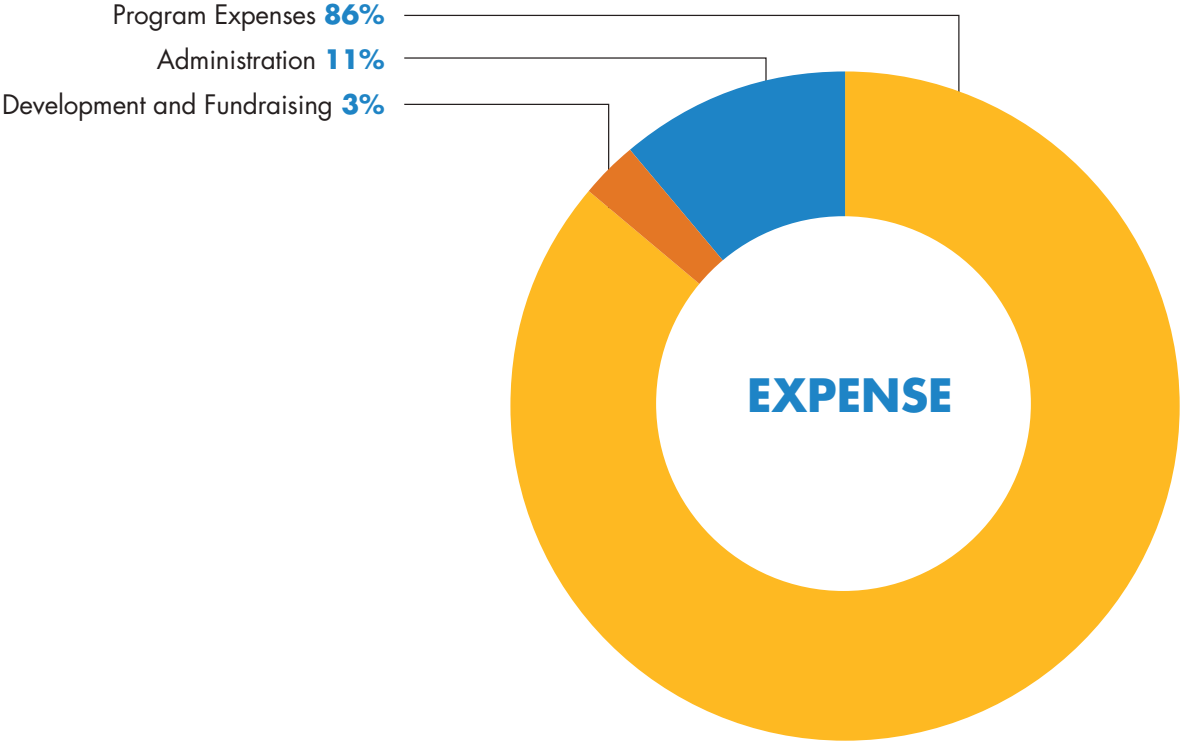
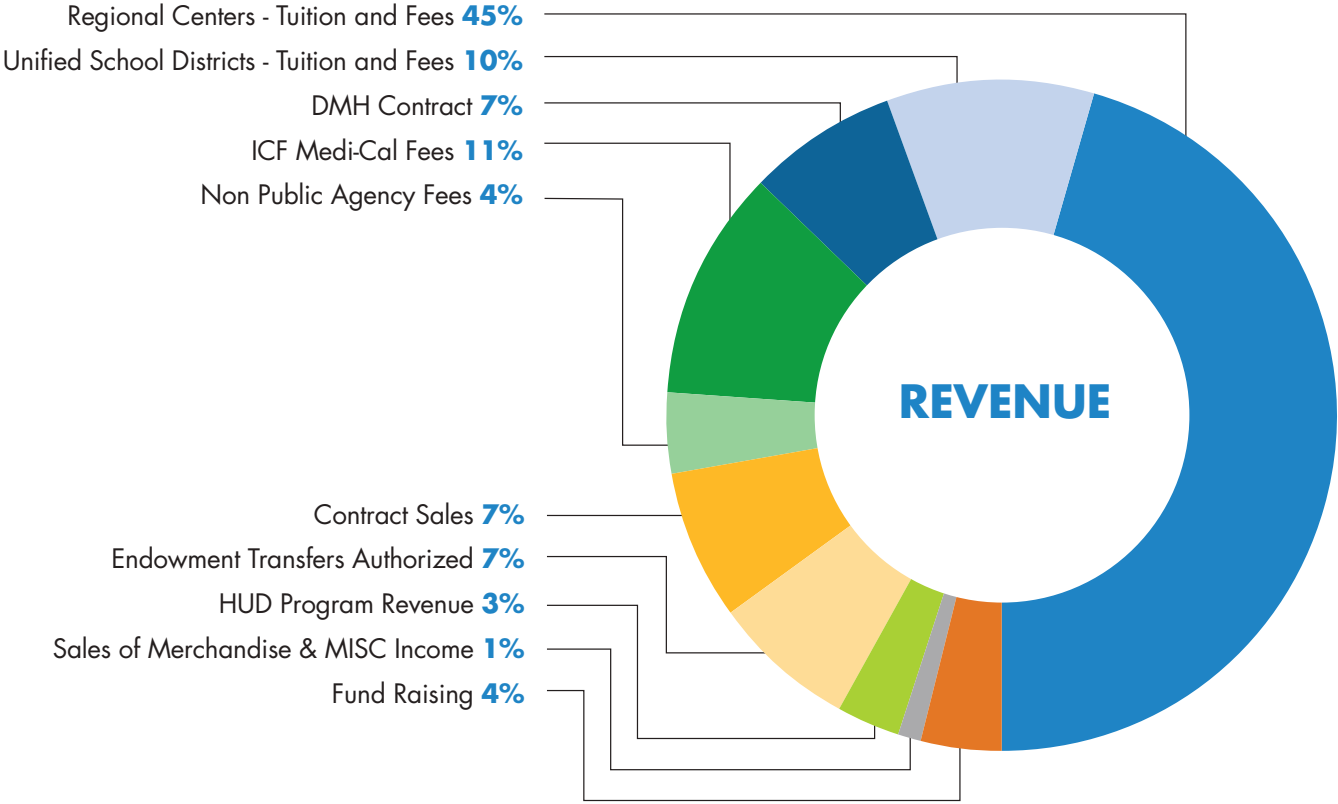
\* Information in Financial Highlights is Unaudited

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Capital Gains from the Sale of the SMT Building for \$4,173K

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Capital Investment Gain from the NMTC Project of approximately \$2M

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Appreciation/(Depreciation) from Investment Accounts of \$2,092K

<sup>2</sup> Excludes \$310K interest and \$724K depreciation expense



## PARTNERING IN POSSIBILITIES

Our donors' support and generosity help to sustain and ensure the future of Exceptional Children's Foundation.

## ANNUAL DONOR RECOGNITION JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023

### \$50,000 – \$100,000

Robert A. Day  
The Green Foundation  
Suzanne & Ric Kayne  
L.L. Foundation for Youth  
Merle Norman Cosmetics  
SHARE, Inc.  
Skylight Foundation  
Paul K. Zimmerman

### \$20,000 – \$49,999

The Albertsons Companies Foundation  
The Carl & Roberta Deutsch Foundation  
Gerald Ducot  
The Joanne Marie and Marcel George Foundation  
George Hoag Family Foundation  
The Kenneth T. & Eileen L. Norris Foundation  
Gary Patrick  
Steven J. Rose Family Trust

James Rothstein  
Skechers Foundation

### \$10,000 – \$19,999

Nancy & Leslie Abell  
Selma Archerd  
The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation  
Suzanne Booth  
Johnny Carson Foundation  
Robert Adler & Alexis Deutsch Adler  
Don Levin Trust  
The Audrey & Sydney Irmas Charitable Foundation  
JHM Charitable Foundation  
Jessica & Christian Lander  
The Fred and June MacMurray Foundation  
Milken Family Foundation  
Mockingbird Foundation  
Renvy Pittman  
Tamara & Albert Rabil



## TEeing OFF FOR ECF: The Garemani Wines Golf Benefit

### MORE THAN 80 ECF SUPPORTERS

enjoyed a gorgeous weekend in the Palm Desert at the Garemani Wines ECF Golf Benefit held at Bighorn Golf Club.

The event kicked off with a pre-tournament dinner and silent auction featuring award-winning Garemani wines and an array of fabulous auction items, followed by a beautiful day on the green that included a Hole-in-One contest for a Porsche 718 Boxster donated by Porsche Palm Springs. The event raised more than \$85,000 and was the third successful annual golf event created and hosted by former ECF board member Kristin Garemani, benefiting ECF's life-changing services for children, students, and adults with special needs.



**\$10,000 – \$19,999 continued**

Lynne & Larry Rabineau  
Robert Ronus  
Lon V. Smith Foundation  
Iris & Michael Smith  
Shelley & Grady Smith  
United Imaging  
The David William Upham Foundation  
Terri & James Walker  
Women Helping Youth  
Carl E. Wynn Foundation

**\$5,000 – \$9,999**

A.N. Abell Auction Co.  
Kathe & Steven Beltran  
Beverly Hills Rotary Community Foundation  
The Hugh & Hazel Darling Foundation  
Steven Doren  
Azita Fatheree  
Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation  
Kristin & Noyan Garemani  
Hollywood Park Casino  
Insperity  
Martha & Bruce Karsh  
Anita & Allen Kohl  
Cynthia & Michael Malone  
Harold Masor  
Malcolm McNeil  
Nancy & Bruce Newberg  
Pacific Western Bank  
Michelle and Anil Ranavat

Royal Kennedy Rodgers and Johnathan Rodgers  
Elaine Spierer  
Jane & Jim Stern  
Lizette & Morgan Trent  
Ellen & Brendan Turner  
Winningham Becker & Company

**\$1,000 – \$4,999**

Homeyra & Fred Alavi  
Andrews McMeel Publishing  
Pat Antin  
Nancy Aossey  
Veronica Arteaga  
Rachel Artenian & Thomas Greenhalgh  
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.  
Debbie & Mark Attanasio  
Samuel Bakula  
Bonnie Barnes  
Sue Bartholomew  
Bayhurst Foundation  
Catherine Benkaim  
Carol Biondi  
Cindy & Bob Broder  
Pamela Buffett  
Mark Burger  
Terrell Burgess  
Ron Burkhardt  
Jack Cairns  
The Charitable Foundation  
Russell Ching  
Patricia Christensen



**ECF'S LONGTIME PARTNERS, SHARE, INC.,** provided generous support for the ECF Early Start Occupational Therapy program. ECF President & CEO Veronica Arteaga joined members and guests at the SHARE Grant Reception at Hillcrest Country Club. The ECF Occupational Therapy program provides over 4,800 hours of therapy annually for young children with significant learning, emotional and developmental disabilities.



**I give to ECF because I fundamentally believe that all individuals deserve the chance to live their fullest life regardless of the circumstances of their birth.** This year I was fortunate to attend the Class of 2023 graduation at the ECF Kayne Eras School. Watching the 16 graduates walk up and receive their diplomas in front of their families, friends, and teachers validated for me the importance of this organization and the need for its continued success.

— **SARGENT PILLSBURY**

**\$1,000 - \$4,999 continued**

City National Bank  
 Christopher Cohick  
 Lori & Scott Cooper  
 The Davidow Charitable Fund  
 Rick Dinger  
 Caroline Dinsmore  
 Joan & Gerald Doren  
 Phyllis & Jim Easton  
 The Eisner Foundation  
 Joshua Ellin  
 Lynn & Thomas Finkelor  
 Sandra & Mark Flagel  
 Linda & Martin Frank  
 Marilynn & Richard Garcia  
 The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation  
 John Glynn  
 Hagopian Family Foundation  
 Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary  
 Janet & Thomas Hopkins  
 Christopher Janostin  
 Sandra Javaheri  
 Jeri Jones & Robert Farkas  
 Christiane Joubert  
 Mary & Stephen Kayne  
 Lenore & Fred Kayne  
 Tameron Keyes  
 Thomas Kneafsey  
 Brian Kneafsey  
 James Korsen & Sandi Coapman  
 Alice & Nahum Lainer

Mark Lapresle  
 Rob Leon  
 Kimberly Lewis  
 Phillip Lewis  
 Jennifer Lewis  
 Emily Lloyd  
 Palm Springs Porsche  
 Los Angeles Lakers Youth Foundation  
 Los Angeles Trial Lawyers' Charities  
 Carol & Doug Mancino  
 Paula & Robert Metcalfe  
 Joan & Philip Miller  
 Teresa & Dean Milligan  
 Merle & Peter Mullin  
 Grant Abramson & Miriam Muscarolas  
 Charles Naddour  
 Helen & Jack Nethercutt  
 Patti Neuwirth  
 Patty & John Nickoll  
 Fred Nigro  
 Dena Oberst  
 Carrie Odell  
 John Powell  
 Debbie & Rick Powell  
 Sunder Ramani  
 Carena Reber  
 Rey-Crest Roofing & Waterproofing  
 Sonhui Robilotta  
 Esther & Rick Rosenfield  
 Katy Saei  
 Sandpipers



**A FUNDING GRANT FROM WOMEN HELPING YOUTH**

will provide virtual reality headsets, educational software, training, and technical support for ECF Kayne Eras School. The virtual headsets will be used to promote our Experiential Learning curriculum, opening doors to expanded learning opportunities for students with special needs and learning differences.

Women Helping Youth is a women’s philanthropic organization committed to improving the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of children and young adults in underserved communities throughout the greater Los Angeles area.

The grant award was presented at the Women Helping Youth Grant Award Brunch on in April. Principal Lauren Weiser along with Kayne Eras School student Victor Albert expressed their appreciation on behalf of the school.

**\$1,000 – \$4,999 continued**

Laura and William Siart  
Eugene Siciliano  
Rosa & Bob Sinnott  
Sony Pictures  
Entertainment  
Eva & Marc Stern  
Vivian Stewart  
Strategic Portfolio Advisors  
Ginny Sydorick  
Jocelyn Tetel  
Linda Thieben  
Barbera Thornhill  
Ting Internet  
Tito's Handmade Vodka  
U.S. Bank  
Gillian & John Wagner  
Ralph Walter  
Weingart Foundation  
Arlene Weinstock  
Jacqueline Wickser  
Judith & Barry Wolstan  
Eric Yu  
Julia and Monty Zimmerman  
Devon Zopfi

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*This annual report covers the fiscal year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. Gifts received after June 30, 2023 will be acknowledged in the next annual report. We have made every effort to ensure the information included is accurate. If an error has been made, please accept our apology and contact Lisa Kelly at lkelly@ecf.net or 310.204.3300.*



**From 1996 to 2017, I managed the Wells Fargo Foundation in Los Angeles** – at the time, the largest corporate donor to nonprofit organizations in the city. During my 21-year career, I made – literally – tens of thousands of grants to nonprofits. And among those that stand out one of the absolute best is the Exceptional Children's Foundation. **The organization provides simply outstanding care and services to the children and families they support and have done so consistently for decades. They are led by a dedicated team of professionals and enjoy richly deserved support from thousands of supporters.** Proud to continue to support them personally, and as someone who knows the profession – this organization is among the finest. **When I think of ECF, I think of caring, dedication and love. Simply put, as good as it gets.**

— JONATHAN WEEDMAN

**One of the things I am most thankful for this year is that my nephew has the support of a wonderful organization like ECF. The more I see of the ECF staff, the more impressed I am.**

— ROYAL RODGERS



**EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION** is privileged to have highly qualified and deeply committed community leaders serving on its Board of Directors and Board of Governors. In partnership with an experienced Executive Management Team, these individuals give generously of their time and resources to help fulfill the organization's mission.

## 2022-2023

### BOARD OFFICERS

**Shelley I. Smith, Esq.**  
President & General Counsel,  
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*Chairperson*

**Anil Ranavat**  
Chief Financial Officer,  
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*First Vice Chairperson/  
Vice Treasurer*

**Malcolm McNeil, Esq.**  
Partner, Arent Fox  
*Second Vice Chairperson/Secretary*

**Thomas Hopkins**  
Vice President, U.S. Bank  
*Treasurer*

**Ellen Turner**  
CEO, Turner Techtronics, Inc.  
*Assistant Secretary*

**Steven P. Beltran, Esq.**  
Senior Partner, Beltran, Beltran,  
Smith & MacKenzie, LLP  
*Immediate Past Chair*

## 2022-2023

### BOARD MEMBERS

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A Professional Corporation

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EH National Bank

**Lisa C. Anderson**  
Client Advocate

**Russell Ching, Esq.**  
Attorney, Stonesifer & Chong

**Scott Cooper, CMC**  
Principal, Pegasus Squire, Inc.

**Azita Karimkhany Fatheree**  
Disability Rights Advocate

**Monica M. Jaramillo**  
Co-Founder, LABEL the Agency

**Mary Kayne**  
Community Volunteer

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Ervin, Cohen & Jessup, LLP

**Lan Nguyen**

**Larry Rabineau, Esq.**  
Attorney, Law Offices of  
Larry Rabineau

**Eugene Siciliano**  
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Associates

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Oxford

**Leonard Washington**  
Digital Media and Business  
Operations Consultant

**Montgomery Zimmerman**  
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BNY Mellon Wealth Management

**Paul K. Zimmerman**  
Independent Businessman,  
Imperfect Partners

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**Suzanne Kayne**

### BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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*Founder, Kayne Eras Center*

**Monte Markham**

**Jerry Moss – In Memoriam**

**SHARE, Inc.**

**Honorable Dickran Tevrizian**

**Robert D. Shushan, Ed.D.**  
*President Emeritus –  
In Memoriam*

**Scott D. Bowling, Psy.D.**  
*CEO Emeritus*

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**Veronica Arteaga, LCSW**  
*President & CEO*

**Maryam Hamedaninia**  
*Chief Programs Officer*

**Paige Newbold**  
*Chief Administrative Officer*

**Lauren Rayner**  
*Chief Development Officer*

**Sonhui "Sunny" Robilotta**  
*Chief Financial Officer*

# THANK YOU



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Exceptional Children's Foundation

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