



NORTH CAROLINA  
**FOUNDATION**  
FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN

2024 – 2025

# ANNUAL REPORT

*Champions  
for Children*





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**North  
Carolina**

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# In Loving Tribute



DEAN  
DEBNAM



REV. DR.  
WILLIET.  
RAMEY, III



SARAH  
JORDAN



NORTH CAROLINA  
**FOUNDATION**  
FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN



# Thank you for your support!

Dear Friends of the Foundation,

On behalf of the North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children, thanks to YOU, we are humbled to continue providing every school employee in North Carolina a place to go when a child in their school has a need.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, almost 4,000 public school children were impacted by this Foundation.

For far too long, educators have paid for student needs out of their own pockets. A system that is dependent on the personal finances of our educators is a broken system. That is why this Foundation was created. We count on school employees being our eyes and ears in the schools throughout the state. All the school employee must do is ask. The Children's Fund assures no child will endure a hardship that will prevent them from learning – and enjoying - school.

Thank you for enabling the Foundation to continue growing future teachers for North Carolina through the Teacher Cadet Program. Thank you for ensuring the Foundation was able to step in just days after Hurricane Helene' devastated Western North Carolina.

Yes, it is a privilege to help our school children, but it is not just us - it is WE. When you donate to this Foundation, you become part of a family who will not wait for someone else to come to the rescue. We will, and we will do it quickly so the child can move forward with learning and enjoying school without the barrier of shame and hopelessness.

WE are changing and saving lives.

With gratitude,

**Marca B. Jones,**  
**Executive Director**

*NC Foundation for Public School Children*





# Children's Fund

Poverty is the most handicapping condition a child faces. Needs are often unmet due to their family's limited resources for food and shelter. For over 25 years, the NC Foundation for Public School Children has systematically delivered a fast and efficient program so children's needs can be met and the children can be in school and focus on learning.

The system is simple. Public school personnel identify needs, and the Foundation responds to requests within 24-48 hours. Teachers and support personnel are not burdened by paperwork in order to get help for their students. Whether it is eyeglasses, eye exams, hearing aids, dental help, orthotics, medications, medical and mental services, band instruments, reading books, school supplies, clean clothing and shoes that fit, or emergency temporary shelter, the Foundation comes through for kids.

Here are a few of our Children's Fund stories with only the names changed:

First grader Caleb's glasses broke. While his mom works at Waffle House and his dad at Walmart, they still live below the poverty line. It is all they can do to keep food on the table and pay utilities so coming up with money for eyeglasses was just not possible.

Caleb's mom tried gluing the eyeglasses back together, wrapping rubber bands around them, and taping them; but finally, they fell apart. Because Medicaid won't help with a new pair more than once in a six-month period, Caleb was without what he needed to see and succeed at school. Caleb's school social worker sent a request to the Foundation asking for help. Just one week later, Caleb was sitting happy and proud in his first grade classroom wearing his brand-new eyeglasses.



# Children's Fund

Jasmine is in 6th grade. After a year of being in transition, Jasmine's mother finally found permanent housing and a little stability. Mom works hard to provide for her three children but cannot afford any extras. The school social worker helps the family by delivering orders from the school-based food pantry twice a week.

Jasmine loves music and was excited that, now in middle school, she would be able to enroll in band class, but Jasmine sat in her band class without an instrument to play. Jasmine was ashamed and, once again, was reminded that she was different from most of her classmates. Jasmine's mom could not afford to rent, much less buy, an instrument. Jasmine's favorite instrument is a clarinet. When her school social worker found out, she searched for help and found this Foundation. Now, Jasmine has her very own clarinet. The social worker sent a message to us that we would not believe how Jasmine's eyes lit up when she saw the shiny, new clarinet and found out it would be hers to keep.

\*\*\*

Little third-grader Kayla recently enrolled in school. The school's Data Manager was reviewing her records and discovered Kayla did not have a current health assessment on file. North Carolina law requires students to have a current health assessment to be in school. Kayla's mom was given 30 days to obtain the assessment and, if one was not received, Kayla would be suspended until one was completed. Unfortunately, Kayla does not have health insurance. Her mom has been out of work for almost a month now and, as a single mom, she is struggling to make ends meet.

Kayla's school social worker contacted the local health department and was told there was not a physician on staff at this time and would be unable to provide medical services to the community until further notice. The social worker then contacted two local medical clinics who provide services on a sliding fee scale, but neither clinic was able to schedule an appointment for Kayla for 2-3 months.

Kayla was at risk of being suspended, and she needed to be in school. The social worker learned that CVS Drugstore can complete a health assessment within a week for \$105. Thanks to this Foundation, Kayla did not have to sit at home, suspended for months, waiting for a health assessment. Instead, her education was not interrupted and she is happily attending every day.





# Children's Fund

In addition to responding to over 350 individual requests for help for school children, the Foundation:

- provided over 1,000 school supply-filled backpacks to several high-poverty communities and school districts before the new school year started.
- partnered with organizations whose sole mission is to get reading books into the hands of children all over North Carolina.
- supported clothing closets that were experiencing supply shortages.
- partnered with organizations that provide for school children in foster care.
- partnered with food banks to provide food to allow school employees to access food for students.

Students helped by the North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children experience life transformations and are given hope, opportunity, and success. Once in a while, a child's life is saved.



# NC Teacher Cadet

Christa McAuliffe said, "I touch the future; I teach." The Foundation is touching the future by providing a pathway into the profession for bright high school students who want to shape the future as dedicated teachers

The NC Teacher Cadet program has grown and is having a positive effect on the teaching profession in our state. The program has become the major teacher recruitment program in North Carolina. Some colleges are giving academic credit to our Teacher Cadets. School systems are offering employment contracts to our Teacher Cadets upon their high school graduation. We are proud to announce that the Teacher Cadet program is now the state affiliate for Educators Rising, a national program of Phi Delta Kappa.

The 2025 Teacher Cadet State Conference brought together 350 high school students from across the state, students who are in Teacher Cadet classes and Future Teachers of America clubs. These students are seriously considering a future career in teaching so they gathered for two days to network, hear from inspirational educators, and participate in breakout sessions designed to give them information about what to expect as teachers. They also had time to eat, dance, and sing. This year's conference was planned and led by the 2024-2025 Teacher Cadet state officers who chose as their theme "Be the Light through Leadership."



## 2024–2025 Teacher Cadet State Officers



**Diana Gonzales,**  
*Communications Director,*  
Elkin High School

**Jonathan Glaze,**  
*Vice President,*  
Richmond Senior High

**Sawyer Wemyss,**  
*President,*  
East Forsyth High

**Genesis Howard,**  
*Social Media Director,*  
Edgecombe Early College





South Granville High School Teacher Cadets with teacher, Mr. Nicholas Hendley



Teacher Cadet State Officers with Governor Josh Stein and First Lady Anna Stein

# Scholarships For Future Teachers

The North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children is proud to support young people on their journey to become a teacher through our Scholarships for Future Teachers.

The Jane Hansel Teacher Cadet Scholarship, named after the program's first state coordinator, awards \$1,000 to high school senior Teacher Cadets.

In partnership with the North Carolina Association of Educators, the Mary Morrow-Edna Richards Scholarships awards \$2,500 to future teachers. The scholarship is named in memory of Mary Frank Morrow who served as the first president of the North Carolina Classroom Teachers Association, and Edna Cotton Richards, an outstanding leader in the North Carolina Teachers Association and the North Carolina Association of Educators. The scholarship is open annually to high school seniors and college juniors pursuing degrees in teaching.

The 2025 future teacher scholarship recipients are:

## HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

**Elizabeth Lynn Chambers** - *West Henderson High School, Henderson County*  
*Western Carolina University*

**Benjamin Chase DeJonge** - *Ashe County High School, Ashe County*  
*North Carolina State University*

**Robert Peyton Denning** - *South Caldwell High School, Caldwell County*  
*Western Carolina University*

**Feliciana Nicole Escalante** - *West Caldwell High School, Caldwell County*  
*Caldwell Community College*

**Ally Bryann Greer** - *Ashe County High School, Ashe County*  
*Caldwell Community College*

**Isaiah Eric Hatcher** - *Anson County Early College, Anson County*  
*Johnson and Wales University*

**Anna Parker Heath** - *Wayne School of Engineering, Johnston County*  
*Campbell University*

**Victoria May James** - *West Caldwell High School, Caldwell County*  
*Western Carolina University*

**Taylor Carolina Madigan** - *Pitt County Early College, Pitt County*  
*East Carolina University*

**Holly Rosalee Moats** - *North Davidson High School, Davidson County*  
*Western Carolina University*

**Camryn Tate Perkins** - *East Rowan High School, Rowan County*  
*Roanoke College*

**Lakota Brooke Poe** - *Alleghany High School, Alleghany County*  
*Virginia Polytechnic and State Institute*

**Kate-Marie Reece** - *North Buncombe High School, Buncombe County*  
*Appalachian State University*

**Mackenzie Logan Walser** - *West Davidson High School, Davidson County*  
*North Carolina State University*



# Disaster Relief

September 27, 2024. That date will be in the minds of North Carolinians for a long time, the day Hurricane Helene devastated Western North Carolina.



So many families lost everything. Among those were school children and educators. The needs were tremendous. When the time came for schools to reopen, children and educators needed clothing, shoes, school supplies, and help with transportation. This Foundation quickly aided students and school employees with financial assistance so they could go back to school with what they needed and so that learning could continue.

When you enter a classroom, much of what you see - the classroom library of books, cozy reading areas, items to create a beautiful, colorful, inviting atmosphere for students - has been purchased through the years from the teacher's own pockets. In Western North Carolina, teachers saw their carefully built classroom inventories destroyed, gone in one day. Through this Foundation's disaster relief grants, we were able to send funds quickly so teachers could replace what was destroyed.

In addition to supporting individual teachers, the Foundation sent grants to schools that had been totally displaced. Those funds were for schools to use for the needs they determined were greatest.

We are here for our children and public schools in Western North Carolina and beyond. When our professionals experience a flood, a tornado, or a fire, the Foundation will be there to help for as long as they need us.

# Disaster Relief Donors

*"Each of us as human beings has a responsibility to reach out to help our brothers and sisters affected by disasters. One day it may be us or our loved ones needing someone to reach out and help."*

–**Michael W. Hawkins**, American Red Cross

When Hurricane Helene' devastated Western North Carolina, the Foundation immediately shared about our Disaster Relief program for students, schools, and teachers. Word spread - not only in North Carolina - but around the country.

From the Bezos Family Foundation to a Kindergarten penny drive in New York, the donations came. PTAs in other states sent donations, small businesses we have never heard of collected contributions from employees, and a homeschool association in Texas sent funds and handmade cards for Western North Carolina children. These are just a few of the stories from the over 400 donations the Foundation received that include the following:



North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE)

Rochester Community Schools

Stanford J. Gibson Primary School

Portland Association of Teachers

LLR, Inc.

Boulder Journey School

South Raleigh Civitan Club

Neal, Bradsher & Taylor, P.A.

Watauga County RSP - Region 1B

V.G. Murray & Company, Inc.

Musser Company, Inc

Raymond James and Associates, Inc

Alpha Delta Kappa

Medinah Elementary School District 11

Caldwell County RSP

IData Incorporated

Winston-Salem Forsyth County RSP

Region 3 Retired School Personnel - Book  
Collection

Randolph Cloud and Associates

The Brawley School



# Back Our Students Sponsors

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Sesha Debnam

## TITANIUM

Ann & John Campbell  
Malbert & Alisa Smith

## PLATINUM

Peg Abrams  
June Atkinson  
The Honorable Rufus & Linda Edmisten  
Mark Jewell  
John I. Wilson

## GOLD

Myra Best  
Jane Brown  
Randolph Cloud  
Dr. Catherine Cunningham  
Alan Duncan  
Governor Mike & First Lady Mary Easley  
Patsy Keever  
Maginnis Law  
Pat Orrange  
Donna Rosefield  
Perry Safran  
Lanty Smith  
Mike & Hope Morgan Ward  
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Cal Cunningham  
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Jane Stein  
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Patty Williams  
Smedes York

## BRONZE

Senator Gale Adcock  
Lynda Anderson  
Anonymous  
Malethia Armstrong  
Cindy Arriagada  
The Honorable John Arrowood  
Diana Bader  
Sid Baker  
Bonnie Barefoot  
Maggie & Todd Barlow  
James Barrett  
Kristin Beller  
Susan Book  
Tama Bouncer  
Matt Calabria  
Leslie Coman  
Cam Cover  
Elizabeth Cunningham  
Alison Dalziel  
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Special Counsel Hampton Dellinger  
John Dowd  
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Lynn Edmonds  
Carolyn Evans  
Commissioner Susan Evans  
Pam Seamans Feldman  
Marge Foreman  
Sarah Fuerst  
Sue Garris  
Kaye Gattis  
Talton Gibson  
Laura Gross  
Gerry Hancock  
Roy Haithcock  
Ellis Hankins  
Amy Hinson  
Barbara Hopkins  
Laura Ivey  
Dr. Henry Johnson  
Monika Johnson-Hostler  
Barbara & Ed Kelley

# Back Our Students Sponsors

## BRONZE

Tamika Walker Kelly  
Allison Kron  
Jason Kron  
Christine Kushner  
Nick Leisey  
Jasmine Lauer  
Jen Mangrum  
Caroline Massengill  
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Robert Schmalfeld  
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Janice Snow  
Cheryl Stallings  
The Honorable Linda Stephens  
Brenda Summers  
Rose Tikvart  
Frederick & Elaine Turner  
Margaret Wells  
Amy Womble

## FILL A BACK PACK

Eddie Anderson  
Christi Broadway  
Donna Charneskie  
Charles Coble  
Eddie Davis, III  
Patricia Deck  
Faye Dunn  
Nancy Greiner  
Mary Guglielmo  
Linda Gunter  
Charlene Hall  
Maria Hampton  
Tammy Hill  
George Houlihan  
Greyson Kuhn  
Dana Hale King  
Lynn Lee  
Ruth Massie  
Deborah Maxwell  
Evon Mazyck  
Senator Graig Meyer  
Lauren McCray  
Dixie Newsome  
Marcia Perry  
Ashley Perkinson  
Tonia Pridgen  
Millie Ravenel  
Angela Schell  
Jewell Tidwell  
Kathleen Ward  
Judy Wiggins  
Thomas Williams

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Maryann Daly  
Pamela Jackson  
Rose Klapchar  
Jackie Lee  
Alma Roberts  
Susan Ward



# Champions for Children Gala 2025

## The Honor Roll of Caring and Sharing

### NC Retired School Personnel

Region 1A, Region 2, Region 3, Region 4, Region 5, Region 6A, Region 7A

Alamance-Burlington RSP, Alexander RSP, Asheville-Buncombe RSP, Bladen County RSP, Caldwell County RSP, Catawba County RSP, Cleveland County RSP, Cumberland County RSP, Dare County RSP, Durham County RSP, Forsyth RSP, Franklin County RSP, Gastonia County RSP, Greene County RSP, Iredell County RSP, Johnston County RSP, Lee County RSP, Lincoln County RSP, Moore County RSP, New Hanover County RSP, Polk County RSP, Robeson County RSP, Rockingham County RSP, Wake County RSP, Warren County RSP, Wayne County RSP

John I. Wilson, Karen Garr, Julia Kron, Geraldine McNeill, Rose Marie Lowry Townsend, Carolyn McKinney, Sheri Mulling, Linda Gunter, Julia Thorn, Mirka Christesen, Laura Woods, Myra Best, Tama Bouncer, Hazel Sanders, Amelia Dewberry, Bonnie Barefoot, Judy Cardy, Margaret Todd, Jackie Lee, Dixie Newsome, Cynthia McCoy, Alma Roberts, Ava Bailey, Marrion Dunn, Margie Gibson, Margaret Campbell, Paulette Jones Leaven, Joyce Wilson, Elizabeth Norval, Marshall Timmel, Mary Mullins, Evelyn Barfield, Maria Spingfielld Rashid, Ophelia Noble, Sarah Davis Walker, Angela Farthing, Sophelia Jones, Marge Foreman, Faye Dunn, Lillar Barnes, Carolyn Evans, Deborah Shephard, Maebelle Hudson, Alma Roberts, Karen Gaines, Barbara Reid, Charlotte Johnson, Gwen Brown, Barbara Jones, Betty Timberlake, Julie Oliver, Marilyn Dixon, Dudley Flood, Lynda Anderson, Paul Alan Trogon, Sue Garriss, Judy Wiggins, Maletia Armstrong, Rose McKnight, Joyce Jarrett, Caroline Massengill, Patsy Ballance, Robbie Rogers, Elizabeth Chance, John Sisk, Tonia Pridgen, Richard Suggs, Alison Strong Smith, Carolyn Black, Elizabeth Conroy, Stephen Unruhe, Patrick Nelly, Linda Strickland, Diane Lamb, Lois Williams, Laura Keith, Laura Roberts, Gretchen Lampe, June Pearson, Joyce Ingle, Jacqueline Ward, Emily Chapman, Susan Phipps, Janice Pritchard, Sandra Hatley, Colleen Lanier, Vicki Simmons, James Carmichael, Anonymous, Judy Champion, Greg & Mary Lowe, Dee Williams, Melinda Watkins, Sharon Douglas, Mary McCray, Anna Faye Whitley, Gilbert Spears, Jennifer McDowell, Charles Whiteside, Richard Jordan, Carrie Durley, Gloria McKenzie, Darnell Ivory, Susan Bales, Evelyn Miller, Wilma Means, Darinda Fredrick, Theresa Sisson, Althea Wright, Karen Purser, Fran Caldwell, Cookie Jacumin, Lila Bostian, DeAnn Chandler, Doris Eudy, Elizabeth Cook, Mae Teal, Melanie Hudson, Donna Kennedy,

# Champions for Children Gala 2025

## The Honor Roll of Caring and Sharing

### NC Retired School Personnel

Region 1A, Region 2, Region 3, Region 4, Region 5, Region 6A, Region 7A

Sally Johnson, Sharon Seitz, Zelma Higgins, Rosalyn Sampson, Ruby Brinson, Oliver Johnson, Belinda Newsome-Huggins, Mary Powell, Helen Everhart, Angela Wise, Sid Baker, Sandra Tetteron, Samuel Martin, Kay Richey, Mark Hamilton, Linda Vitsyn, Vicki Lassiter, Liesa Hawks, Charlene Hall, Donna Charmeskie, Leslie Haines, Shelly Stroud, Bettye Canada, Linda Hester, Cyndia Heath, Karlyn Johnston, Louise Waters, Catherine Sigmon-Mitchell, V.S. Kelly, Mary Morrison, Theresa Chapman, Terry Edwards, Connie Dare, Julia Perkins, Denise Carraway, Marilyn Royal, Wenonia Wall, S.H. Stockton, Alice Cobb, Paula Harrison, Nelia Ann Crain, Barbara Anderson, Jackie Wooten, Karen Kookan, Kristen Russ, Mary Jo Brewer, Fleming El Amin, Chris Andrews, Kathy Steen, Alina Lebrato, Chris T. Smith, Patsy Squire, Mary Billingsley, Roger & Fran Scott, Marian Lovenshimer, Bobby Stern, Dr. Willie Stevens, Barbara Foster, Jackie Pierson, Phil Lanier, Lori McManus, Rhea Thompson, Deborah Rudolph, Helen Williams, Janice Benjamin, Rena Giles, Debby Keller, Jami Smutek, Norman Hill, Carolyn Matthew's, Bob & Carolyn Ely, Dee Crisler, Tonia Walker, Remonia Alston, Beverly Huff, Patsy Squire, Winifred Giddings, Darlene Owens, Marshall Marvelli, Anonymous, Marilyn Futrelle, Khadija Edwards, Amy Bridges, Fayetteville Young, Joyce Lackey, Deborah Sue Cox, Selvyn Jordan, Murphy Wellman, Gene Griffith, Barbara Hayes, Paulette Mabry, Doris Joseph, Jacqueline Green, Betsy Wells, Tom & Janis Simmons, Eva Bridges, Denise Johnson, Pat Randall, Annie Smith, Sharon Erwin-Smart, Melanie Hudson, Gracie Chamblee, Vivian Branch, Dalphine Sinclair, Linda Cooper-Suggs, Elizabeth Huie, Sarah Bailey, Sandra Oliver, Calvin Cogdell, Edna Cogdell, Sheila Swift, Stephanie Salvador, Rosalyn Sampson, Norman Crotts, Deborah Parker, Richard Gardner, Realer Warren, Debra Cole-Jones, Georgette Kimball, Carolyn Stewart, Theresa Sisson, Karen Slade, Barbara Grau, Robert Grau, Emma Walker Sorce, Marva Moss, Marie Freeman-Barber, Robert Stern, Cindy Thomas Sellers, Blanchie Carter



# Champions for Children Gala 2025

## **The Honor Roll of Caring and Sharing**

### **NC Retired School Personnel**

Region 1A, Region 2, Region 3, Region 4, Region 5, Region 6A, Region 7A

Linda Gunter In Memory of Willie T. Ramey III

John Wilson in Memory of Representative Joe John

Karen Garr in Memory of President Jimmy Carter

Julia Kron in Memory of Linda Liles

Rose Marie Lowry Townsend in Memory of Dr. Welton Lowry

Rose Marie Lowry Townsend in Memory of Mary Deese Lowry

Carolyn McKinney in Memory of Gladys Graves

Tonia Pridgen in Memory of Jesse Pridgen

Julia Thorn in Honor of the Men and Women of NCRSP

Region 1A RSP in Memory of Dale Jackson

Colleen Lanier in Memory of Willie T. Ramey III

Geraldine McNeill in Memory of her Mother, Sarah Murphy McNeill

Betsy Wells in Memory of Willie T. Ramey III

Cindy Thomas Sellers in Memory of Lawton Hatley

Gretchen Lampe in Memory of Ralph Booher

Gretchen Lampe in Memory of Lawton Hatley



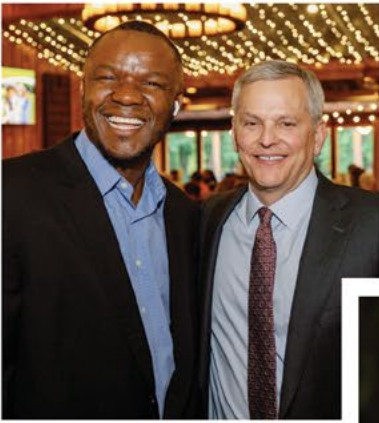
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12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
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*Gala*  
2025



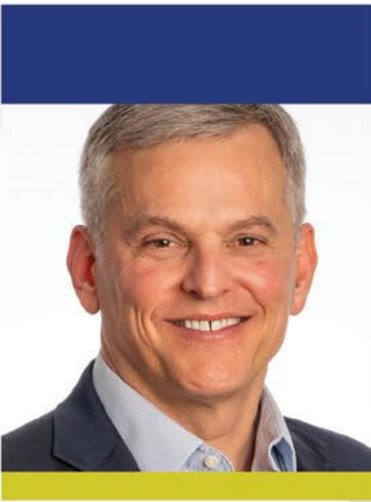




The Honorable  
**Becky Wallace**  
Chair of the 2025  
Champions for Children Gala







# GOVERNOR JOSH STEIN

Governor Josh Stein was called to public service by his faith and his family. His faith teaches him that we are all called to make a difference. His parents Adam and Jane, raised his brother Eric, sister Gerda, and him to try to do what is right. They grounded him in our shared values of freedom and opportunity for everyone.

As Governor, Stein's focus will be on creating a safer, stronger North Carolina. He will bring people together to help western North Carolina recover from Hurricane Helene, create economic opportunity for all North Carolinians, invest in public schools, and keep people safe.

Stein spent the past eight years serving as North Carolina's Attorney General. During that time, he and his team worked to clear the nation's largest backlog of untested rape kits and hold accountable the big drug companies that created and fueled the opioid crisis, securing more than \$50 billion in settlement funds, including nearly \$1.5 billion for North Carolina to help people struggling with addiction. They held e-cigarette manufacturer Juul accountable for sparking a teen vaping epidemic – the first state in the country to do so – and protected vulnerable North Carolinians from fraudsters and scammers, including going after companies that price gouged customers in the wake of natural disasters. Stein advocated for fully funding North Carolina's public schools through the Leandro Plan and defended people's right to vote and women's right to choose.

Before his time as Attorney General, Stein served in the state Senate and was a champion for public education, clean energy, and public safety. Between 2001 and 2008, he served as senior deputy attorney general for consumer protection in the North Carolina Department of Justice, where he helped run the payday lenders charging loan shark interest rates out of the state and helped enhance people's privacy protections.

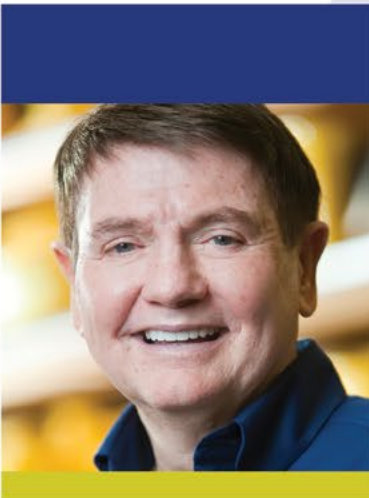
Stein earned law and public policy degrees from Harvard University and graduated from Dartmouth College and Chapel Hill High School. After college, he taught high school English and economics in Zimbabwe for two years. As a young lawyer, Stein worked with the Self-Help Credit Union to develop affordable single-family homes in Durham and with the North Carolina Minority Support Center to raise capital to invest in small businesses across North Carolina. Josh and his wife, Anna, live in Raleigh and are members of Temple Beth Or. They are the proud parents of Sam, Adam, and Leah, who all attended North Carolina public schools, just like they did.





REPLACEMENTS, LTD.

# REPLACEMENTS, LTD. BOB PAGE, CEO



Replacements, Ltd. Founder, Chairman, Director & CEO Bob Page was born in Reidsville, North Carolina and lives in Greensboro, North Carolina. He is a dedicated community member and works, with others, to make it better.

Bob remains true to his roots. He grew up on his family's small tobacco farm in Ruffin, North Carolina, where he helped by working alongside his family in the field. Bob's late father taught him the importance of helping his neighbors and sharing what little they had. After graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Bob served in the United States Army, leaving active duty in 1970.

A Certified Public Accountant, Bob spent the 1970s hating his job as a state auditor. As he says, he lived for his weekend hobby of searching for china and crystal at flea markets. Longing to make a living doing what he loved, Bob ignored naysayers and quit his job. When Bob founded Replacements, Ltd. in 1981, he never envisioned that a business begun as a part-time hobby in his attic would grow into a multimillion-dollar enterprise. Today, Replacements stands as the world's largest retailer of vintage and new tableware, collectibles, and estate jewelry. In 2024, Bob's long-held passion for the thrill of the hunt, coupled with his appreciation for giving cherished items new life, led to the creation of a new category inclusive of antiquities, art, and other curated treasures. A privately held company, Replacements offers more than 475,000 tableware patterns and has served millions of customers across 6 continents from warehouse space larger than 8 football fields.

The importance of family and fairness are core values for Bob. Bob says that nothing matters more than his young adult sons, Owen and Ryan, twins adopted as infants in Vietnam. Because of Bob's pain experiencing anti-gay discrimination, Replacements has been shaped by Bob's philosophy of creating a merit-based workplace in which all people are free to bring their talents and energy to their work.

Additionally, Replacements seeks to reflect the wide diversity of the community. As a result, Replacements has employed over 100 former refugees and boasts of employing people from 46 other countries who, among them, speak 21 native languages. While the Replacements workplace of over 350 individuals is too diverse to summarize neatly, it represents a rich array of ethnicities, cultures, backgrounds, and experiences.

Bob and Replacements give generously, and Bob supports the community with financial resources, time, goods, and volunteers. Bob believes passionately in fostering an open society and promoting human dignity. Bob works to make positive changes in the community, champion equality, expand civil rights, and advance progressive policies.

Bob directs financial contributions toward a large variety of local, statewide, and national organizations and institutions. He is especially involved in Bob's Closet, a charitable clothing program on-site at Replacements that provides clothing and other household items to low-income persons and communities at no cost. Annually, Bob's Closet serves thousands and shares more than 60,000 items in total.

Bob is honored to have received North Carolina A & T State University's Human Rights Medal, the National Conference for Community and Justice Brotherhood/Sisterhood Citation Award, Children of Vietnam's Ben Wilson Humanitarian Award, and the Latino Community Coalition's Corazón Latino, among other community recognition. In September 2021, Governor Roy Cooper presented Bob with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the highest honor given by the Governor for exemplary service.





# NC COURAGE

OWNER  
STEVE MALIK



## **Steve Malik & The Courage: Empowering the Next Generation**

As Chairperson and Owner of North Carolina Football Club, Steve Malik has been a pivotal force in transforming soccer in North Carolina, particularly through the incredible work of the North Carolina Courage. Since joining the club in 2015, Steve has championed initiatives that not only elevate the sport but also empower youth, especially young girls, to dream big and pursue their passions.

### **Inspiring Young Girls & Beyond**

Under Steve's leadership, the Courage has become a beacon of success, winning back-to-back NWSL titles in 2018 and 2019. But Steve's impact goes beyond soccer wins - he is committed to fostering a culture of inspiration, support, and leadership for young athletes, especially girls. The Courage's dedication to mentorship, role modeling, and accessibility is evident in their partnerships with local youth programs.

### **NCFC Youth Collaboration**

The Courage's collaboration with North Carolina FC Youth is a testament to their dedication to community engagement. Through this partnership, every NCFC Youth player receives a free season ticket, discounted family tickets, and access to special youth sections at matches, ensuring that families feel welcomed and supported. The program is designed to give young athletes the opportunity to see athletes at the highest level that they can aspire to be while growing within the sport and soccer community.

### **STEM Education through Soccer**

The Courage's commitment to making a difference also extends to education. In partnership with Lenovo, The Courage runs the Starting STEM program, a curriculum that merges soccer with STEM learning. Through hands-on activities, workshops, and interactive STEM Field Days, the program helps elementary and middle school students develop a greater appreciation for science, technology, engineering, and math—while seeing how soccer can inspire problem-solving and teamwork.

### **Bringing Joy to Children Facing Medical Challenges**

Another key initiative is The Courage's partnership with A Kid Again, an organization that creates joy-filled adventures for children battling life-threatening conditions. Through this partnership, families are welcomed to Courage matches for a special game day experience, complete with private training sessions with Courage players. This initiative gives families a much-needed respite and creates unforgettable memories for these brave children.

### **A Legacy of Giving Back**

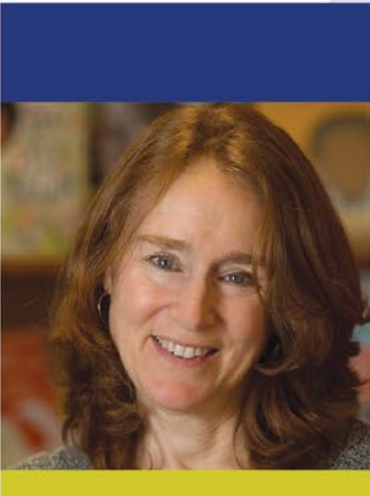
Steve Malik's leadership extends far beyond the soccer field, with a strong focus on creating meaningful experiences that positively impact the lives of young athletes and children in need. Through initiatives that promote inclusivity, education, and joy, Steve and the North Carolina Courage continue to make a lasting difference in the lives of children and teens, fostering a future where every young person feels inspired to reach their full potential. These initiatives are at the heart of who The Courage is; ensuring soccer is more than just a game but a force for good in our community.





book harvest

**BOOK  
HARVEST**  
GINGER YOUNG  
FOUNDER



Book Harvest works to realize a world of literacy and justice for all—a world in which every child grows up with an abundant home library from birth and with a love of books, reading, and learning, and every parent feels supported, celebrated, and affirmed in their role as their child's first teacher. Since 2011, children have harvested more than 2.5 million books to build their home libraries, ensuring that parents have the tools and power to ignite and strengthen their children's literacy. With programs grounded in evidence, Book Harvest believes that literacy starts at birth, in the home, powered by parents, and nourished with books.

Book Harvest's story began in 2011. The setting was Ginger Young's garage filled with donated books, and the cast of characters was small - just a handful of quirky dreamers eager to unlock book ownership and a love of a good story for children in Durham, North Carolina.

From those humble origins, Book Harvest's story has been written with great momentum. From a grassroots effort fueled by volunteers, to an ever-growing team of 19 professionals; from a handful of book provision events throughout the community, to hundreds of bookshelves brimming with books in homes, classrooms, and doctors' offices, on street corners, at bus stations, and in laundromats; and from a few boxes of donated books in a garage, to more than 1.6 million books harvested by children and families – books they have taken home to read again and again, theirs to keep forever.

In 2021, Book Harvest concluded their first decade with a rich and effective portfolio of programs dedicated to transforming children's literacy.

In their home community of Durham, they have forged an ecosystem of robust and resilient children's literacy, fueled by their dream of books for every child and support for every parent, starting at birth, and by a passion for helping every community build a culture of childhood literacy.

In 2022, they began laying the groundwork to expand Book Harvest – and its impact – beyond their flagship community of Durham, NC.

Book Harvest is doing the hard, essential work to transform children's literacy across the state of North Carolina and beyond. Less than half of all U.S. children who live in poverty enter kindergarten ready to learn, yet book ownership is not within reach of every child. Book Harvest enters its second decade with three shimmering – and achievable – dreams:

1. Books for every child.
2. Support for every parent.
3. Literacy for every community.

Ginger Young recognizes every child's innate brilliance and boundless potential. Through Book Harvest, she works alongside parents to unlock opportunities for their precious children and to ensure that every child everywhere has what they need to thrive in school and in life.



# EPWORTH UMC REVEREND DONNA BANKS



Epworth United Methodist Church declares itself a Reconciling Congregation, seeking to welcome all persons, regardless of age, race, ethnicities, disabilities, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, into the discipleship of Christian living and proclaim our commitment to seek the reconciliation of all persons to God and to each other through Jesus Christ.

The first worship service for Epworth Church was on February 3, 1952, at the Hope Valley Elementary School. Today, the body of Epworth United Methodist Church is known for their outreach ministry to their community and beyond - and, especially to school children living in poverty. Their outreach model embraces their local schools to discover ways that they can help children lead a healthier and full life.

Epworth has partnered with other churches and organizations to create a strong after-school tutoring program each Monday and Wednesday during the normal Durham, NC School year. The program focuses on at-risk third, fourth and fifth graders. Part of the program is aimed at helping children with reading, writing, spelling, comprehension and math skills as well as general homework help. A more focused element of the program involves tutors who have voluntarily received training, paid for by Epworth, through the Augustine Literacy Project, that is designed to help students with a wide range of reading disabilities or problems.

Epworth United Methodist Church answers the call to help a growing number of children who are chronically undernourished. Many children rely on school lunches for their main meal of the day but go without an adequate meal on the weekends. Through their Backpack Ministries, Epworth delivers packs of nutritious food to their local elementary school to be distributed to kids who have been identified as needing them.

For over 23 years, Epworth has been a part of "Families Moving Forward," a ministry that helps families move from temporary homelessness to stable housing and provides support during this transformation. They also support feeding homeless individuals through Durham Urban Ministries by serving meals several times each year to over 150 people.

Rev. Donna Banks is the senior pastor of Epworth United Methodist Church. Upon graduation from Duke Divinity School, she joined the staff as the Associate Pastor of Christ United Methodist Church in Chapel Hill. She also served appointments as the senior pastor at Saint Francis United Methodist Church in Cary, NC and Evergreen United Methodist Church in Chapel Hill, NC, as well as District Superintendent for the Corridor District of the North Carolina Conference and Director of Student Life at Duke Divinity School. Prior to her call to ministry, Donna has previous experience from her 16-year career in the chemical industry, which afforded her the opportunity to have a succession of roles as a research chemist and in corporate sales, marketing and management. Donna is married with two daughters.



# Remembering our Great Champions for Children



## Dean Debnam

*May 22, 1954 - September 12, 2024*

Dean believed that to share more is to create more. He bridged the gaps he saw around him, small and large. A generous man, he opened his home to countless people, whether they were blood-relatives or not, and welcomed them into the family all the same. Dean would protect and uplift his people any way he could.

The only stingy thing about Dean was his patience. He moved as fast as he could and expected folks to keep up, whether walking down a street or running down an idea. He was knowledgeable, and he loved long thought-provoking conversations (or debates, depending on the subject matter). Dean had an incredible knack for diving into the depths of people's mind and motivations. He instilled that love of discussion in many of his kids. The people whose lives he touched will continue to find motivation in his example.



## Sarah Jordan

*May 26, 1934 - November 24, 2024*

Sarah Cole Jordan spent her life and career as an educator, a dedicated community service volunteer through church and all phases of local and state youth ministry, conference youth events, Scouts, and youth camps. She was personally dedicated to advocating for our state's youngest and most vulnerable children and families. After graduating from Woman's College with a degree in elementary education, she worked in the North Carolina Public Schools and as an advocate for children and higher education in the state. She served on the Board of Trustees at Louisburg College, the Board of Visitors for Bennett College, and the Board of Visitors for the Duke University Divinity School. She also served as a Director of the NC Child Advocacy Institute, a Director of Friends of the Library of NCSU as well on the board of the NC Methodist Home for Children for over three decades.



## Willie T. Ramey III

*March 24, 1945 - June 8, 2024*

Rev. Dr. Ramey led a life of service. He was a teacher, a principal, a minister, and a mentor to many young people. He served as President of North Carolina Retired School Personnel and Chairperson of the NCRSP Administrative Council and Executive Board, and he served NCRSP in numerous other state-level roles as well. Additionally, he was a member of the North Carolina Association of Educators Board of Directors and a life member of the National Education Association (NEA). He was appointed by Governor Cooper as a Trustee of the Vance-Granville Community College. Trustee Ramey was a Charter member Rho Beta Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., serving as its president for 16 years. He served as senior pastor for the Ridgeway Missionary Baptist Church for 46 years. He championed education for all.

# Champions for Children Gala 2025

## OUR SPONSORS

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# Champions for Children Gala 2025

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Mack Paul | The Honorable David Price | Thigpen and Jenkins, LLP

The Honorable Becky Wallace | Reg Weaver | John I. Wilson

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Sid Baker | Michelle Burton | Laura Crumpler | Karen Garr

Mary McCray | Michael and Nancy Norton | Deb Shoemaker / Dorian Cromartie

Wake NCAE | Patty Williams

### SILENT AUCTION TEAM

Sid Baker | Julia Kron | Shirley Harris | Julie Parks

### VOLUNTEERS

Dr. Jorge Arriagada | Dana Bennett | Anthony Jones | Kasey Knight





## Unite with North Carolina Retired School Personnel – NCRSP –

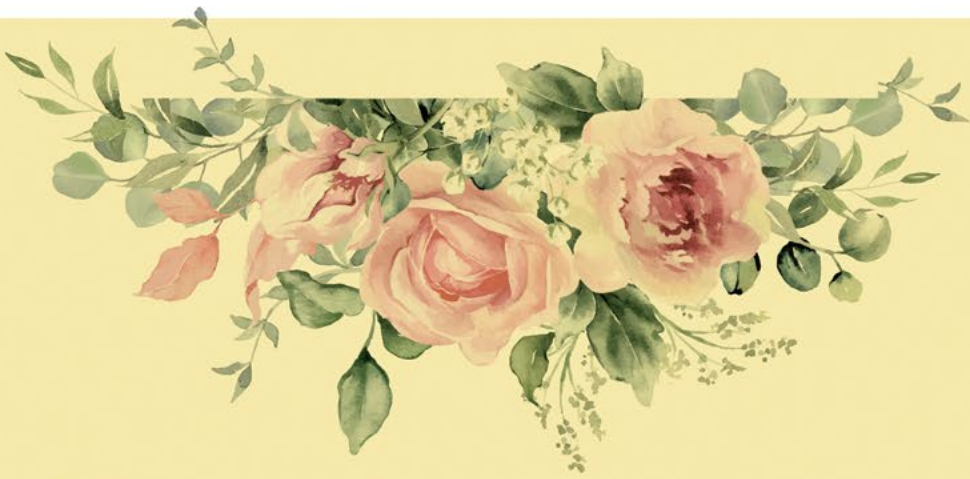
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# Remembering our Mom

*"She is this thread that runs through so many places, pulls us all together around really good ideas – and doing good things. It's a spark, and she gets other people connected. It was a vision about serving kids on a much broader spectrum in a much broader way. So, from that spark we all have warmed in the glow of her generosity - the gifts that you've given not only financially but the love, the support, the relationships and everything else. We are all better people for it, and we are grateful for all that you've done."*

–Bert Armstrong



**Mrs. Sarah Jordan**  
1934- 2024

**Betsy Jordan | Robert Jordan IV | Janie Cole Jordan**



# John I. Wilson

## Salutes the 2025 Champions for Children

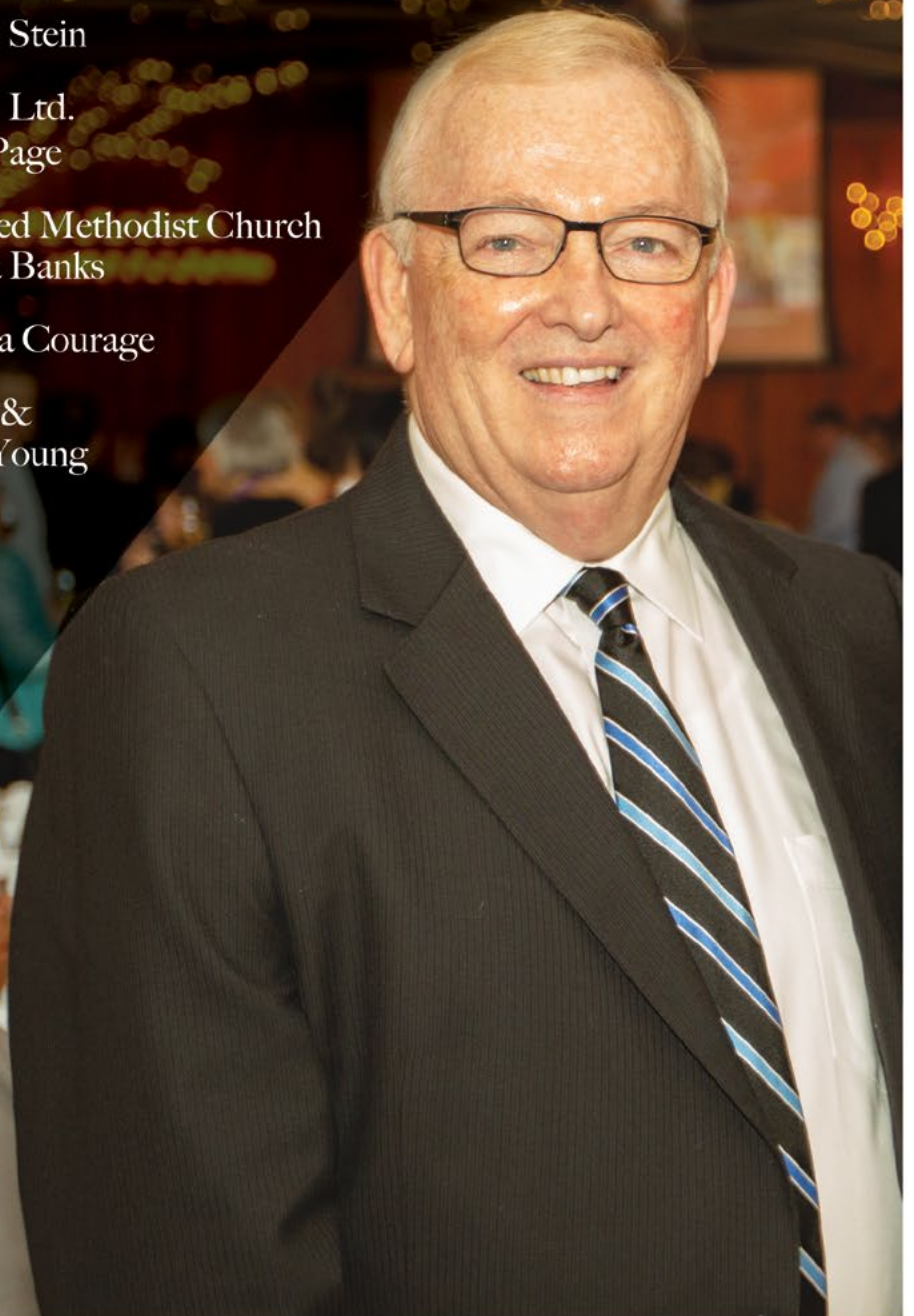
Governor Josh Stein

Replacements, Ltd.  
& CEO Bob Page

Epworth United Methodist Church  
& Rev. Donna Banks

North Carolina Courage

Book Harvest &  
CEO Ginger Young







**NCAE is proud to support its charitable branch,  
the North Carolina Foundation for Public  
School Children, and we congratulate this  
year's honorees for their support of  
North Carolina's public school students.**

## **HONOREES**

Governor Josh Stein  
Replacements, Ltd. and CEO Bob Page  
Epworth United Methodist Church and Rev. Donna Banks  
North Carolina Courage  
Book Harvest and CEO Ginger Young



# A Remembrance to our Beloved Dean Debnam

"Dean lived an extraordinary life, touching and helping thousands, even without their knowledge. This past May Governor Cooper awarded him the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, given for extraordinary service to North Carolina. Among a variety of business and community involvements, Dean was most recently former CEO and owner of Workplace Options, an international human services employee assistance company with locations in 195 countries, founder and president of Public Policy Polling, and founder and president of Debnam Commercial Real Estate.

Dean was a man of immense drive and will. He was unafraid to take risks personally or professionally. A creative, generative thinker, he launched hundreds of projects and empowered people around him to carry them forward. He was a catalyst, giving people the fuel, the responsibilities, or the opportunities to go further and do more than they had imagined for themselves.

Dean's commitment to the people of his city and state was deeply felt and drove his decades-long involvement in progressive causes and Democratic politics. He hated the misers, the bullies, and the small-minded oppressors of the world. He was passionate about doing the right thing, not the easy thing.

But Dean wasn't a joyless crusader and businessman. He had a vivid (and often profane) sense of humor. He loved the many pleasures life had to offer, keenly aware that each lifetime is finite and wasting one is a sin. He loved art, his home, his many orchids, and things of beauty. A soft fabric, a vibrant color, a clever lyric. He loved travel, a beautiful meal, a beautiful wine, and good company. Most of all, he loved to see the joy in others when he treated them. The joy of others may have been his favorite luxury of all. He truly basked in it."

**Sesha Debnam**  
**Public Policy Polling**  
**Debnam Commercial Real Estate**



**Dean Debnam**  
**1954 - 2024**



# Alisa & Malbert Smith

---

Thank you for your support!





We're honored to partner  
with the North Carolina Foundation  
for Public School Children.



THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU  
DO FOR OUR COMMUNITY.



In Memory of  
**Chris Wallace**

September 20, 1996 – February 16, 2018



Chris was a giver. He was known to empty his pockets to help someone in need. Chris loved animals and seeing people happy. He had a way of looking out for the underdogs. In that thought, my gift to honor Chris will help the "underdogs" of public school children.



From "Meme"

**Becky Wallace**

(The Honorable Becky Wallace was the First Female  
US Marshal in North Carolina)

We proudly support the work of  
NC Foundation For Public School Children

***John & Ann Campbell***

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NORTH CAROLINA  
**FOUNDATION**  
FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN





"We are proud to support the NC Foundation  
for Public School Children – a Lighthouse for  
North Carolina's school children."

**MARCA & ANTHONY JONES**



In celebration of our  
2025 Champions for Children  
and the work of the  
NC Foundation for Public  
School Children

PATSY R. KEEVER

THE HONORABLE







# Bob's Closet

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FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN





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SPECIALISTS

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the work of the  
NC Foundation for  
Public School Children



We honor **Becky Wallace** and  
her work to give North Carolina's  
school children a better life.

—Rita & Ron Jamey



*Julia  
Kron*

Thank you  
for your  
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**Mr. & Mrs. Glenn Pierce  
Chris & Susan Pierce**



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*As one voice, the Principals/Administrators Division aims to  
promote excellence in educational leadership in North Carolina.*





We proudly support the  
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## Commissioner Vickie Adamson

*Thank you for faithfully  
supporting the NC Foundation  
for Public School Children*



**LAURA CRUMPLER  
& JOHN DOWD**

**Thank you for faithfully  
supporting our children!**



# MARK JEWELL

NEA Executive Committee

Congratulations to the  
2025 Champions for Children



*Jo Ellen Holder*

Thank you very much for all your support!



# Jessica HOLMES

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for Public School  
Children



Thank you for  
your support!





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for Children

**JOHN KANE**

Sponsor of the North Carolina  
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Children



**TAMIKA  
WALKER  
KELLY**

NCAE President

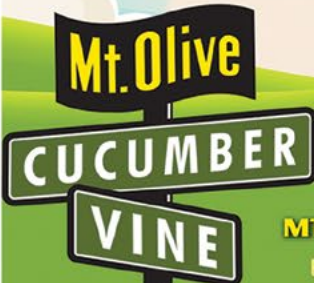
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**Richard H.  
Land**

In Loving Memory of my parents,

**Rev. Eugene Land**

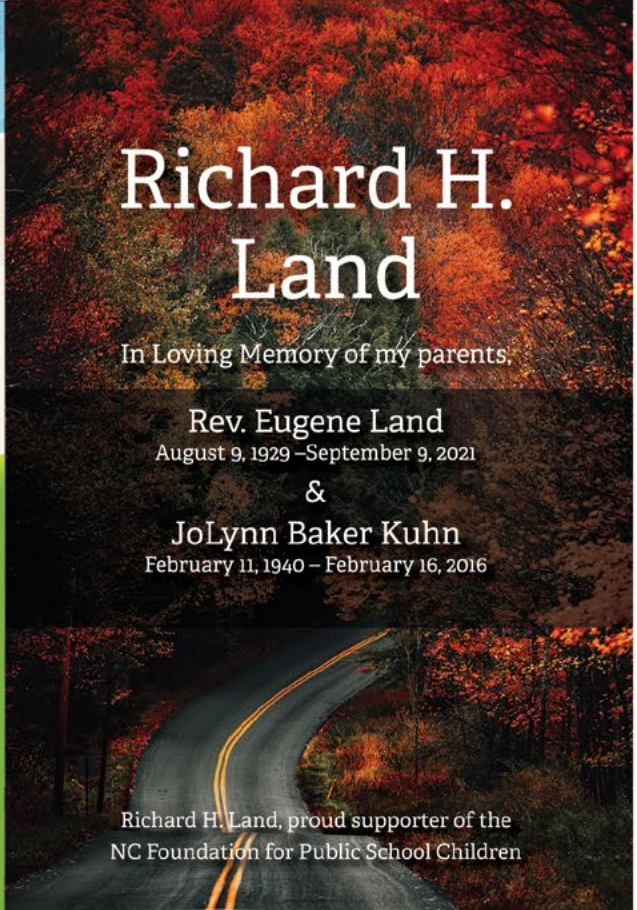
August 9, 1929 – September 9, 2021

&

**JoLynn Baker Kuhn**

February 11, 1940 – February 16, 2016

Richard H. Land, proud supporter of the  
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Susan Oller

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# The Honorable **STEVE RAO**



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**Deb Shoemaker  
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# Bishop Hope Morgan Ward & Dr. Mike Ward

Congratulations to the 2023 Champion for Children. We are proud to support the work of the North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children.



*"I applaud the work of the  
NC Foundation for  
Public School Children."*

The Honorable  
TERRY VAN DUYN



The Honorable  
**Dennis  
& Alisa  
Wicker**

Thank you  
for supporting  
our children!



Patty Williams &  
David Zonderman

Thank you for supporting  
our students!







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Thank you for  
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## OUR MISSION

The NC Foundation for Public School Children is the education lifeline and safety net that offers hope, dignity, and opportunity so ALL students have a fair chance to learn and enjoy school.





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*"The illiterate of the future will  
not be the person who cannot  
read. It will be the person who  
does not know how to learn."*

~ Alvin Toffler



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