Visit the Day Nursery Auxiliary Tree at the Festival of Trees

The Day Nursery Auxiliary will once again be decorating a tree for the Indiana Historical Society’s Festival of Trees this holiday season. The festival opens Friday, November 17 and runs through Saturday, January 6. Be sure to stop by and vote for the Day Nursery Auxiliary tree!

Day Early Learning to Hold First Annual Kindergarten Fair

To assist families with their children’s transitions to kindergarten, Day Early Learning will hold the first annual Kindergarten Fair for its pre-K families on Thursday, November 30 from 6 - 8 p.m. at the Early Learning Indiana offices. Local Indianapolis public, private and charter schools will be present to answer questions and help families enroll in kindergarten.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Recognizing Remarkable Generosity

In late September, Early Learning Indiana recognized and honored its most loyal donors through the creation of The Loyalty Society

The Loyalty Society honors individuals who have made consecutive annual gifts to nurture young minds through quality early care and education for more than 20 years. By providing consistent, annual financial support, the members of the Loyalty Society join in our mission of ensuring the highest quality early care and education for children in Indiana.

The Loyalty Society inducted 166 individuals into this new group and celebrated their collective gifts of $949,857. Early Learning Indiana will celebrate these donors each year as the Loyalty Society continues to grow.

In honor of the Loyalty Society’s generosity, a sunshade was dedicated and erected at Day Early Learning State Government Center. A plaque will hang at the State Center as a thank you to the Loyalty Society and as a reminder of their financial contribution to ensure that the future is bright for Indiana’s young.

Interested in joining many others in supporting our lifetime giving society with a bequest in your will for Early Learning Indiana? You can ensure your support will serve children for decades to come. If you have questions about the Next Century Society, please feel free to contact our philanthropy officer at 317-737-1267.
As a friend and supporter of Early Learning Indiana, you may be interested to know about our transition plan for our next CEO.

Every organization goes through change, and Early Learning Indiana has had its share over the past few years. When you are on the leading edge, change comes with the territory.

As you may know, Ted Maple announced that he would step down in October as Early Learning Indiana's president and CEO to join the Lilly Endowment as program director of education. After four years of leading Early Learning Indiana, Ted has made a deep and lasting impact on Indiana's young children and their families. Since this announcement, our Board of Directors implemented a process to help find the best person to lead us into the future and to build on the organization's momentum.

Over the past two months, the board has met with Early Learning Indiana employees and partners to create a solid search process. We hired a search firm to assist in providing the best candidates possible. Our goal is to have a new CEO in place by April 2018 or earlier. As of October 12, 2017, Julie Goldsberry, Early Learning Indiana's CFO and Vice President of Finance, assumed the role of Acting CEO until the board hires a permanent leader. Julie and our team are well-equipped to lead the day-to-day operations of Early Learning Indiana during this time.

I'm sure our next CEO will be excited to know that you and our many generous donors and friends will continue to be dedicated to improving the lives of young Hoosier children and their families. The board will find the right leader to make a great organization better and we will do so with your help and partnership.

Thank you for all you do!

Jennifer Dzwonar
ELI Board Chair

P.S. We can’t think of a better way to honor Ted than to create a scholarship in his name that will help to fund a year’s tuition for two children. If you would like to make a donation to this fund, you can send a check in the donation reply envelope attached here or make a gift online at EarlyLearningIN.org.

Lives You Have Touched
July - September 2017

Children served by Early Learning Indiana’s Tuition Assistance Program

Children impacted by trainings held for child care professionals

Early childhood professionals currently enrolled in higher education

ELI Welcomes Six New Board Members

Welcome new board members!

• Scott Fadness, Mayor, City of Fishers
• Kendra Harper, Law Clerk, Office of the Indiana Attorney General
• J Miller, Vice President/Financial Advisor, Stifel Financial
• Liz Paxton, Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer, Riley Hospital for Children
• Stephen Reynolds, Attorney and Partner, Ice Miller, LLP
• Jill Robisch, Vice President, National Bank of Indianapolis

Although her term as a board member has ended, we’d like to recognize Melissa Avery for serving on our board for many years and for her cherished commitment to the children and families served by Early Learning Indiana.
Decades of Developing Young Minds

Teresa Carter celebrates 36 years of teaching at Day Early Learning

Each morning, Ms. Teresa greets her young learners with a warm smile that never seems to disappear. She reassures young moms with a confidence that comes from nearly four decades of caring for and educating children at Early Learning Indiana’s Day Early Learning centers. She knows all of the words to the “school song” and can sing them with pride. Ms. Teresa is an icon of what early education is all about.

Ms. Teresa began her career in early childhood education 36 years ago as a substitute teacher at the Day Nursery in Wishard Hospital. She was part of a pilot program of Day Nursery workers that attended Ivy Tech to receive a degree in early childhood education. She taught at the Wishard Hospital location until 2002 when the hospital shut its doors, and then transitioned to the Day Early Learning center at Fort Harrison.

“At first, I started working in early education because it was a job, and I was in need of a job,” said Teresa. “But Day Early Learning quickly became my family, and the children became my love.”

Through her tenured history in child care, she has seen many changes. There are a lot more assessments, and she says paperwork is demanding. But parents are engaged in new ways, and there are a variety of learning tools available to teachers, including various forms of technology. Ms. Teresa still favors some of the traditional ways of teaching. For example, on Grandparents’ Day last month, she helped her two-year-old students make cookies for their grandmothers and grandfathers. “It gives the kids hands-on experience in making something they can share,” says Ms. Teresa. “Not only are they learning about counting and measuring, they are also learning about gratitude and helping others.”
Her most memorable moments involve the children who were the most challenging. She readily shares stories about a young immigrant from Haiti who struggled to learn English and was unfamiliar with American traditions. She helped his family find resources to assist with the transition to a new country. One of her fondest memories is watching the boy adapt and flourish in his new surroundings. She also speaks of Ethan, a young boy with Down Syndrome. His infectious personality won her heart. “He was so tiny and would always try to slip out of the room. We put bells on his shoes, so we could always know where he was.” She laughs out loud and wonders how he’s doing today.

She often thinks of her past students and wonders where their lives have taken them. A great big smile spreads across her face as she discusses her greatest accomplishment - “that we instill for the children to be the best that they can be. Even though they are only two years old, we want them to know that they are well-loved and have the potential to be whatever they want to be,” said Ms. Teresa.

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It is easy to see that Teresa’s love of children infuses every part of her being. Her passion for young children transcends her professional life into her personal life where she and her husband spent years as foster parents, taking care of young children whose parents battled addiction and who were born dependent on drugs. Five years ago, they adopted siblings, a little boy and little girl, out of the foster system. And like the children she teaches each day, they know they are well-loved and full of potential.

After 36 years in a career she has cherished, Ms. Teresa looks to the future. She knows her own children need a greater investment of her time and energy as they grow. But she can’t help but be satisfied, knowing she has impacted so many young lives over several decades. “I love hearing stories about the children’s success as they grow up. It makes you feel good to know that we are their earliest influence.” She says with a voice of pride. “I had a part in that.”

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FULLBEAUTY Brands commits to giving back to communities where they operate and where their customers live. Fortunately for us, they are located near the heart of downtown Indianapolis.

Their annual carnival demonstrates their generosity. This summer, FULLBEAUTY Brands invited our Day Early Learning children, along with children from their neighborhood, to this elaborate celebration. They transformed their workspace into a lively carnival atmosphere. Employees were dressed in costume as they read stories, played games and danced with the children. They took them through a petting zoo and played with them in various play zones and bounce houses. The day ended with a fun-filled lunch and every child took home a backpack - certainly a day to remember!

“FULLBEAUTY Brands has been committed to the Indianapolis community since the 1940s, and has been passionately engaged with accelerating the improvement of early childhood education for over ten years,” says Chip Edgington, Executive Vice President of Operations at FULLBEAUTY Brands and Early Learning Indiana board member, “The efforts of our team has been particularly focused on the inner city neighborhoods and we have valued our relationship with ELI greatly and continue to appreciate their partnership in improving the lives of children.”

We are grateful for the tremendous effort FULLBEAUTY Brands’ employees invest in our community’s youngest children and the various projects of Early Learning Indiana. They are a fundamental part of our volunteer corps.

What’s up next for FULLBEAUTY Brands? They are helping to remove an older infant playground and supporting the installation of a new one at IU Health Day Early Learning center. Thank you for all that you do for our children!

FULLBEAUTY Brands, headquartered in New York City, has an Indianapolis fulfillment center and corporate support function, and the company is known and trusted as the authority on plus size fashion and fit.
$1.43 Million Awarded to Ball State University to Address Early Childhood Education Teacher Shortage

Anticipating a state shortage of 9,000 early childhood education teachers in the coming years, Early Learning Indiana has invested in scholarship and academic programs around the state including scholarships for students at Ball State University. This initiative is funded by a generous gift from the Lilly Endowment.

“This is the largest award Early Learning Indiana has provided to a college or university in our 118-year history,” said Ted Maple, former president and CEO of Early Learning Indiana. The $1.43 million grant supports Ball State’s early education students, from those getting bachelor’s and master’s degrees to those learning to be mentors and coaches.

The award also lets Ball State create the state’s first and only Early Childhood Master Teacher Certificate, part of Early Learning Indiana’s efforts to improve access to and quality of early childhood programming statewide. “The goal is that the professionals who get this certificate will be able to go back to their own early childhood programs and mentor other teachers to better improve the quality of care and education in their classrooms,” according to Professor Patricia Clark, who chairs the Department of Elementary Education.

Lee Ann Kidwell, a teacher at IU Health Day Early Learning who received a scholarship to pursue her master teacher certificate, has taught preschool for 25 years. “The scholarship is important to me since I am an older student and will most likely only work for about 10 more years,” said Kidwell. She earned her early childhood education bachelor’s degree from Ball State last year while working. “I do not wish to be a director but rather move into a coaching, mentoring or workforce-training type position with the same organization I already work for.” The new certificate program and courses are examples of the lasting effect the funding will have on the early childhood education program.

Forging His Way in the World

Harper Pockrass loves basketball, horror movies and hip-hop music, like many 5th grade boys. So much so, that he dreams of one day being a professional athlete, or a movie or music star. Harper is 11 years old and attends St. Richards School. He is growing into a fine young man. He started off his early education at IU Health Day Early Learning center.

His sister may be setting a family trend for a career in the arts: she also attended a Day Early Learning center many years earlier than Harper, and she is currently in pursuing her M.F.A. at New York University after completing her B.F.A. at the arts school in the Art Institute of Chicago.

Harper’s parents have both served on the Early Learning Indiana (then Day Nursery) board of directors and have been actively involved in the organization’s success. Harper’s mom, Kathy Osborn, remembers Harper’s time at the IU Health center, “One teacher I very fondly remember is Ms. Nicki, who cared for Harper as a baby when he first came to Day Nursery at 4 or 5 months old. She was so caring, fun and joyful in the way she cared for Harper and all of the babies.”

Harper recalls the snacks “I remember getting treats at the end of the day!” Another lasting influence of his time at the center is his friendship with his best pal Thomas. Thomas and Harper attended the center together and both went on to St. Richards. Harper says they are still best friends today.

We know there are great things ahead for this alum and will look for him on the big screen, the court, or the airwaves!
Our mission is to ensure the highest level of early care and education for children in Indiana.

How to Get Involved

DONATE. Give online at EarlyLearningIN.org or mail a check.

VOLUNTEER. Contact us for more information: info@earlylearningindiana.org
- Participate in advocacy efforts
- Assist with playground landscaping
- Serve on a board committee
- Provide skilled services

Join Our Social Network

Follow us for cute pictures of kids and news from Early Learning Indiana and the field of early education, plus resources for parents and providers!

Volunteers from Eli Lilly worked on our preschool playground for their annual Lilly Day of Service. Thank you!

Family time is learning time. Text ‘BLOOM’ to 95577 for free texts full of fun, simple learning ideas for family time for children age 0 to 5.