Making a Difference: On the Right Track

Fourth grader Toronto King Jr. needed glasses, but his family did not have insurance at the time. Without glasses, he had difficulty focusing in school and on the track, where he was a budding track-and-field star. Pleasant Hill Elementary School referred Toronto and his brother DeAndre to Healthy Learners Georgetown. Healthy Learners helped his father, Toronto King Sr., apply for Medicaid for his sons and then arranged for them to receive a vision exam and glasses, and established them with a dentist.

Nearly four years later, Toronto King Sr. reports both boys are doing well in school and excelling outside of school. “I was a single parent back then and did not have the income to pay for their care. The resources Healthy Learners provided really were a big help,” he said.

Toronto King Jr. continues to excel at track and field, where he won the national standing long jump title for the 13-14-year-old age group over the summer. The Georgetown Times wrote about his national title in August. Below is an excerpt from the article.

A Jump of Faith
Desmond Phillips has seen hundreds of children come through the Georgetown County Parks and Recreation Department’s Hershey’s Track and Field Program. But he has never seen an athlete come through the program with as much heart and determination as Toronto King.

King, an eighth-grade student at Carver’s Bay Middle School, represented South Carolina at the Hershey’s Track and Field North American Finals on July 29 to Aug. 3 in Hershey, Pa. He brought home the national standing long jump title for his 13-14-year-old age group, after jumping more than 10 feet from a standing start.

“He was first in the nation,” Phillips said proudly. “When I tell you this is a good, respectful young man, I mean it.” On Aug. 23, Phillips honored King’s accomplishment with a recognition and plaque ceremony.

Support Healthy Learners

Your financial support helps remove children’s health barriers to learning to ensure healthy children, better students and thriving communities. Send your gift today.

Donate online at healthylearners.com or call 803.454.0350 to donate by phone. THANK YOU!
Continued from pg. 1

at the Beck Recreation Center in Georgetown. “This young man never gave up,” proclaimed Phillips. “He qualified three years in a row, and even gave up his solo spot, so that his team could compete one year. And then this year, he did it. He is the Hershey’s national standing long jump champion.”

King competed in the national finals three years in a row. He finished sixth in the nation in the standing long jump at the 2012 finals, and qualified to return to the event in 2013, but things took a little bit of a different turn for him. Just before the finals in 2013, Georgia pulled their 4x100 meter relay team from the competition, opening up an opportunity for South Carolina to send a team, rather an individual, to the finals.

Speaking to a crowd of family and friends gathered after the ceremony on Aug. 23, Phillips said, “This young man had a tough decision to make last year, but it took him about five seconds to make it. He told me without hesitation that he wanted to run with his team instead of jump by himself … a selfless act for such a young man.”

King returned to the finals this year, and on Aug. 3, he jumped 10-feet-1-inch, finishing first in the competition. U.S. Olympic champion Carl Lewis placed the first-place national medal around his neck, a moment King will never forget.

“It was pretty cool to have Carl Lewis put the medal on me. I was just happy I could represent South Carolina and do well for everyone here.” – Toronto King Jr.
Board Profile

HEALTHY LEARNERS BOARD CHAIR

John Heydel has only been the chair of the Healthy Learners Board of Trustees since May, but he has been involved with Healthy Learners since it first began in 1992. At the time of its founding, Heydel was serving as the president and CEO of Providence Hospitals in Columbia.

Heydel worked with Sister Mary Jacob Yelco, CSA, attorney Al Pollard and others in the community to establish Health Reach (renamed Healthy Learners in 2000) to provide care for children who were falling through the cracks of the health care system in Richland County.

“With a ‘Seeing is Achieving’ grant from The Duke Endowment, the program first focused on providing eye care to children at a handful of schools before expanding the services provided and greatly expanding the number of schools served,” said Heydel. “While the scope and number of lives impacted has expanded, the goal remains the same. If we can help children achieve in school, they can achieve in society.”

Heydel left Providence Hospitals in 1998 to become the president and CEO of Self Regional Healthcare until retiring in 2008. Heydel continued to stay involved with Healthy Learners after leaving Providence he said because of “my love for the program’s important mission and the mission of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine.”

As the board chair, he would like to see Healthy Learners expand to more communities in South Carolina while also reaching more children in the communities already served. “We continue to expand when the opportunity is right because there are so many children who need access to care, but funding remains a hurdle to serving more.”

Heydel began his career as a medic in the U.S. Air Force, serving in the Vietnam War in the 1960s. He returned from Vietnam to study respiratory therapy in college. He went on to become the administrative director of respiratory therapy at Stanford University Medical Center in Stanford, California. He later served as senior assistant administrator at Schumpert Medical Center in Shreveport, Louisiana, before moving to South Carolina in 1991.

Heydel and his wife of more than 40 years, Drenda, live in Greenwood. Heydel likes to read and play golf, and enjoys giving back as much time as he can by volunteering with a number of other nonprofit organizations, including the Rotary Club and the board of directors of the Greenwood Regional Rehabilitation Hospital.
Champions for Children Golf Tournament a Major Success

The 15th annual Healthy Learners Champions for Children Golf Tournament in Memory of George Younginer teed off October 15 at the Fort Jackson Golf Club in Columbia. Despite the threat of inclement weather, more than 150 golfers came out for what turned out to be a sunny day of golf, food, entertainment, contests and prizes. Numerous volunteers and sponsors helped make this year’s tournament a major success, raising more than $100,000. Colonial Life was the tournament’s exclusive premier sponsor for the second year in a row. Dawn Staley, head women’s basketball coach at the University of South Carolina, and Michael A. Younginer, Younginer LLC Engineered Products, served as honorary co-chairs of the event. Michael Younginer, son of golf tournament founder George Younginer, was also recognized as the 2014 Healthy Learners Champion for Children.

Three Team Members Honored

The Sisters of Charity Health System, which is the parent organization of Healthy Learners, honored three members of the Healthy Learners team for their years of employment at a service awards celebration in October. Program Manager Rebecca Lammonds and Student Services Coordinator Merlethia Greene were honored for five years of service with the Healthy Learners Georgetown program, which opened in January 2009. Student Services Coordinator Kara Marsh was honored for 10 years of service with the Healthy Learners Midlands program.

Online Giving Event Raises $15,000

Healthy Learners participated in the Central Carolina Community Foundation’s 24-hour online giving challenge earlier this year, raising more than $15,000 from 130 donors—including 33 new donors. That level of participation placed Healthy Learners fifth out of 150 nonprofits for the total number of individual donations. The Central Carolina Community Foundation created Midlands Gives as a way to raise money and awareness for nonprofits in the South Carolina Midlands region. The online challenge happens again May 5, 2015.
Meet Our Board of Trustees

The Healthy Learners Board of Trustees plays an important role in providing fiscal and legal oversight, making policy decisions, providing strategic planning and more. Chosen for their professional expertise and understanding of community health issues, each board member can serve a maximum of three, three-year terms.

Sister Rosemarie Carfagna, OSU
Senior Vice President of Mission and Ministry
Sisters of Charity Health System

Dr. Sharon Reynolds Earle*
Owner, SIR Consultant Group
Owner & Senior National Sales Director
Partner, Primerica Financial Services

Tina Emerson
Marketing Director
Rogers Townsend & Thomas, PC

Taranda M. Frost*
Supervisor of Benefits
Administration & Compliance
SCANA Corporation

James L. Gallieshaw*
Retired Human Resources Professional

Jack Godbold*
Insurance Broker
Keenan & Suggs, Inc.

John Heydel
Retired Hospital President

Jenny Sarvis Isgett*
Assistant Vice President, Agency Representative
Old Republic National Title Insurance Company

Jo Pauling-Jones
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Debbie Locklair
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Assistant Professor
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University of South Carolina

Cleo Richardson, Ed.D
Retired School Superintendent
Community Advocate

Matthew B. Roberts
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Matthew Shaffer
Senior Vice President
Major Group Division
BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina

Teri Stomski
Senior Underwriting Counsel
First American Title Insurance Company

Margaret Bennett Stover*
Retired Teacher and Dedicated
Community Volunteer

*New board member; for information about our seven new board members, please see the other side of this page.
Welcome New Board Members

Healthy Learners is pleased to welcome seven new members to the board of trustees:

Dr. Sharon Reynolds Earle has more than 22 years of experience in education, with 16 years of district level administration in early childhood education, and parent and family services. Dr. Earle is the owner of SIR Consultant Group, and the owner and senior national sales director partner with Primerica Financial Services. She has a doctorate in education from South Carolina State University.

Taranda M. Frost is a certified human resources professional, serving as supervisor of benefits administration & compliance for the SCANA Corporation. She has extensive experience with health and welfare plans, and defined contribution (401k) and defined benefit (retirement/pension) plans.

James L. Gallieshaw had a 25-year human resources career, with professional experience that includes working as a human resources director at Babcock Center, Inc., a director of employee relations & recruitment at Palmetto Health (Richland Campus) and an investigator at the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission.

Jack Godbold is an insurance broker at Keenan & Suggs, Inc. Godbold is junior warden at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral and serves on the Richland County Public Library Board of Trustees. He has served as a board member of Columbia Sertoma Club and Crayton Middle School PTSO, and is a former president of the AC Flora High School PTSO.

Jenny Sarvis Isgett is an assistant vice president and agency representative at Old Republic National Title Insurance Company. Isgett has also served as an adjunct professor in the paralegal program at Midlands Technical College. She is a Top 20 Under 40 recipient from The State and is president-elect and a member of the board of directors for the Palmetto Land Title Association.

Dr. Lite Nartey is an assistant professor in the Sonoco International Business Department at the Darla Moore School of Business at the University of South Carolina. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. In her current work, she draws from network theory to outline innovative strategies firms can use to improve relations with stakeholders and thus build stakeholder support. Dr. Nartey’s work has been recognized for several national and international awards.

Margaret Bennett Stover is a retired teacher and dedicated community volunteer. She has served on the Trinity Cathedral Vestry and taught Sunday school, as well as served on a number of nonprofit boards.

Healthy Children. Better Students. Thriving Communities.