

ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022

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A NEW CHAPTER

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

When studying Leadership, there are always a few universal themes, one of which is having good people around you. In my experience as the Board Chair, this philosophy and practice has made the job much easier and has made the center undoubtedly more successful. Most importantly, I'd like to thank all of our: Teachers, Staff, Volunteers, Board Members and Donors. Their continued support has and will always continue to drive The Royce Learning Center.

At our core, the Royce Learning Center exists to supplement our Community with Educational Resources. First, we offer a traditional school environment through Chatham Academy, and our enrollment increased to 80 students. Not only do we have the traditional school year curriculum, but we hosted 53 students in the Summer School Program as well. For years Chatham Academy was under the immeasurable guidance of Carolyn Hannaford, and the history that she shares with the organization is something that will never be replaced. However, Laci Culbreth has stepped in fearlessly and has taken the proverbial, "Bull by the horns". This succession of leadership assures us that the future of Chatham Academy will continue to be bright.

In accompaniment, Royce also offers a Tutoring Service, which helps our students to supplement their traditional education path. For those that may need a little assistance, we can provide this invaluable service. As it stands today, we work with 120 students within Royce's Tutoring Platform, further evidencing its community demand. Personally relevant, I greatly benefited from Royce's tutoring during my Elementary and Middle School Years.

While we certainly have a focus on your stereotypical student body, we also have ACE, our adult literacy program. This program provides an incredible service to the community, and the intangible rewards that coincide are immeasurable. As it stands, we have 47 participants. This program as much as any illustrates our commitment to the Savannah and surrounding area.

Outside of the aforementioned programs, we have expanded our reach with a post-graduate curriculum called, Royce Collegiate Institute. RCI is within a few years of inception, however we will have five students participating.

Due to the strong leadership of each of these programs, and the people they have implementing these services, I am confident Royce will continue to provide excellent educational resources to the community.



Dana Stevens President of the Board

At our core, the Royce Learning Center exists to supplement our Community with Educational Resources.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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MOVING AHEAD

The year began with a large increase in the number of students in our elementary school due to adding second and third grade classes to the school. This is important because the earlier a student gets proper academic intervention, the less likely they will fall behind their peers and have negative experiences in school. Laci Culbreth, Head of School continues to have more teachers training in the Orton-Gillingham approach that has proven to be very successful working with students who have language based learning issues. The approach is effective at all grade levels. The teachers are to be commended for learning and implementing the approach, knowing how effective it can be to get students reading at grade level.

Of course, the topic of security has been at the forefront of planning to be sure our students are safe and secure at school. New protocols were implemented for people entering the school and security film has been added to limit sight into the building and providing a "bomb blast" barrier for the front door and all classroom windows. All gates and doors are locked to deter anyone from entering areas where students are studying and playing.

Much attention was given to updating facilities and equipment throughout the year. A new phone system was installed as well as touchless water fountains. Paint throughout the building was tested for asbestos and thankfully, came back negative. More Chromebooks were added for student use as well as upgrades for staff computers.

Sally Greenberg, Program Coordinator for the Tutoring Center and Summer Programs deftly handled an increase in tutoring requests due to so many students needing services after so much learning loss students experienced during the pandemic. She also oversaw another large enrollment in our Summer Programs. Evie Dominguez made a smooth transition for the Adult and Community Education (ACE) program as Bill Fox relinguished those reins at the end of the summer. She quickly learned the intricacies of the complex record keeping needed to satisfy grant requests and is increasing enrollment lost during the pandemic. Evie also coordinates and oversees the collaborations we have with Wesley Community Center and Savannah Baptist Center where additional ACE classes are held.

Royce is fortunate that the twenty member Board of Directors, led by President Dana Stevens, has remained stable and given generously of their time, expertise and finances to keep the organization strong, financially stable and mission oriented. Their wisdom will help us continue to move forward.



Ron Wilson **Executive Director**

The earlier a student gets proper academic intervention, the less likely they will fall behind their peers and have negative experiences in school.

EXECUTIVE & ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM



Ron Wilson Executive Director







Guieneverre Cutlip Director of Development



Sally Greenberg Tutoring Center Program Coordinator





Amanda Shewtahal Royce Collegiate Program Coordinator



Administrative Assistant



Bill Fox Adult Learning Program Coordinator

CHATHAM ACADEMY **HEAD OF SCHOOL**

The 2021 - 2022 school year was filled with exciting changes. Chatham Academy enrollment surged to 80 students and our staff expanded to meet the needs of our growing student body. The concerns of COVID-19 began to lessen and we enjoyed a slow return to normal. It was the perfect time to move the school forward and plan for the future.

Chatham Academy staff and students collaborated to create our own unique socialemotional/mindfulness curriculum. This unique curriculum focuses on self-awareness, self-regulation, mental discipline, stress management, and interpersonal communication. Skill development in these areas are the foundation of executive functioning skills and the "soft" skills that are in great demand in higher education and the workforce.

Chatham Academy enjoyed a fantastic level of parent involvement in the 2021 - 2022 school year. Parents were excited to participate in classroom activities and volunteer their time at the school. New traditions were started beginning with a celebration of Winter Holidays Around the World, a gorgeous prom at Cohen's Retreat, and a memorable graduation held at Chatham Academy. Parents also generously supported our "Operation Orchard" where we raised money to plant a citrus garden behind our pavilion and a BINGO fundraiser to expand our extracurricular activities for the next school year.

The positive changes in the 2021 - 2022 school year provided Chatham Academy with the momentum needed to propel the school forward in the next school year.



Laci Culbreth **Chatham Academy Head of School**

The positive changes in the 2021 - 2022 school year provided Chatham Academy with the momentum needed to propel the school forward in the next school year.

Chatham Academy Teachers



Rosalind Brady



Caroline Christiansen



Elizabeth Danosh



Evie Dole



Catherine Duke



Catherine Futrell



Joe Levan



Jason Newman



Mary Prescott



Annie Quaile



Rebecca Sasser



Susan Sullivan



Catherine Vaughn



Alley Eaton After Care







Davita Cossey



Alaijah Dixon



Abbigale Green



Ja'maya Gresham



Mattox Hall



Alexander Lee



Matthew Pendleton



Nicholas Sedlock



























































































- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Sports
- Technology Instruction
- Theater/Improv
- Yoga



























Operation Orchard

We raised over \$4,500 for our orchard and garden! 12

TUTORING CENTER

Over the last program year, The Tutoring Center has concentrated on addressing the needs of its students. These efforts are particularly true as students, teachers and parents all try to return to a normalcy, in our schools and in our lives. We are very proud of the efforts and successes for our students and tutors.

Education is the cornerstone of our mission. The development of a student's learning skills is critical to not only day to day progress at school, but the longer-term success, happiness and fulfillment for each and every student. Our wide range of programs consisting of the individualized Tutoring Program, Summer School and Enrichment Camp are tailored to meet the needs of students who seek our services. We are fortunate to have teachers in all these programs who love what they do and even more importantly are dedicated to increasing the achievement of each student. Seeing their student's success and progress is what each educator strives to accomplish.

During the program year from August 1, 2021 through July 31, 2022, The Tutoring Center served 120 students. This is an increase over the past program year, which shows a continued demand for individualized services. We work with parents, teachers, school administrators and other resources to assess the needs of each child then address and prioritize in a one–on-one setting. We continually are recruiting active and retired instructors from a wide range of disciplines who render a strong commitment to all our students.

The Tutoring Center is a recipient of funds from United Way of the Coastal Empire, as well as grants from the City of Savannah, Dollar General and other excellent community organizations. Theses funds not only support all our programs but allow for generous scholarships to deserving and qualified families. The question of monetary ability should never be a barrier to the ability of a child to access our services and create a bright future. This belief is at the forefront of what we are and what we do.

The smile on a child's face when success has been experienced, one step at a time, is a moment of gratification for all involved.



Sally Greenberg Program Coordinator Tutoring Center Summer Programs Coordinator

The smile on a child's face when success has been experienced, one step at a time, is a moment of gratification for all involved.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

The 2022 Summer Programs at Royce once again were a significant success. This year we were thrilled to provide services to 53 students from entering 1st grade to 8th grade.

The Summer School, Enrichment Camp and Study Skills programs are specialized programs during the summer months. They all give students the opportunity to work on improving educational abilities without the normal school year academic commitments.

Our five week Summer School program is geared for students who need to strengthen academic skills. Small classes focus on reading, writing, language arts, and math. We also emphasize study skill, organizational skills and social skills as these factors can have a direct impact on the success of the student.

The Enrichment Camp, also a five week program, is a complement to our Summer School. It offers a wide range of activities that include: summer reading, team building, character building, outdoor activities, arts and crafts, games, and music. In that way, we are not only looking at academic progress, but also creating an enjoyable and nurturing environment.

With our early drop off and late pickup we have provided services for parents from 7:30am through 5:00pm.

Children are the future and worthy of our investment of time and resources. It is with that philosophy that these programs are conducted.

For over 50 years The Tutoring Center, through its programs, has worked diligently to be an educational resource to all the children of Chatham County. It is a goal which our staff and tutors are pledged to year- in and year- out.

It is a goal that is reflected in the growth and achievement of our students, and in their eyes which look forward to the next day of learning.

Mary Prescott Summer Programs Coordinator

Children are the future and worthy of our investment of time and resources. It is with that philosophy that these programs are conducted



ADULT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (ACE)

It has been an honor to serve as the Adult and Community Education Program Coordinator.

I want to thank the Board of Directors, the Royce staff, the Executive Director, volunteers, our learners, and our funding partners and supporters. I want to give special thanks to Khani Morgan, my predecessor, for building this wonderful program.

There are several wonderful things about the ACE program.

It gives learners dignity and a chance to get an education. As a member of the ACE program, I get to share in our learners' triumphs. By improving our learners lives we also improve our community. The strides we make in the ACE program not only enhances the lives of our learners, it resonates for generations to come.

During my tenure as the Program Coordinator, we faced many challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program went from on-site to online. My priority as Coordinator was the health and safety of our learners, volunteers in the ACE program, and the students and personnel at the Royce Learning Center.

Before COVID-19 the program was flourishing. Recruiting could be conducted in a crowded location. Teachers, volunteers, and learners could interact without the fear of serious illness. The COVID pandemic changed everything.

During COVID recruiting was curtailed. No longer could we gather in large groups. Even one-to-one contact with individuals was curtailed. All learning had to be done at a distance. There were two techniques for distance learning. The use of Zoom as an online platform worked well for learners and volunteers who were comfortable using a computer and had reliable internet service. However, many of our students did not have internet service and in that case, classes were conducted by mailing learners packets of material and conducting learning sessions via the phone.

When the COIVD 19 vaccine was available, onsite classes resumed with safety protocols in place. Even with masks, vaccinations, regular sanitizing, and six feet of distance, many ACE participants still were unable to return to in-person learning, and the online and mailing programs had to be continued.

We hope the program will continue to fully transition back to its original onsite classes and recruitment procedures. With my technical and distance learning background I was able to get the program through the COVID-19 pandemic, but now as the ACE program enters a new phase, I will be stepping down from the position of Program Coordinator. However, I will not be leaving, I will resume being a volunteer in the program where I can continue to help adult learners in the community.



Bill Fox ACE Program Coordinator

There are several wonderful things about the ACE program.

ADULT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (ACE)



On June 14, our Adult & Community Education (ACE) class came together to acknowledge the Learners and Volunteers who dedicate themselves to the program.

After going to remote learning during the COVID pandemic, our adult learners finally returned to in-person learning this past September. Tests were given, scores were tabulated, and we had two learners that not only kept up with their learning, but who scored even higher upon their return. David Anderson had progressed one grade level, and Maybel Wilson progressed by almost two! That is quite an accomplishment for these adult learners who are in the program working diligently on their literacy and reading skills. All of the learners received a Certificate of Participation and David and Maybel were also awarded with a certificate of Academic Achievement for their increased test scores.

While there are four learners in the program that are studying for sections of the GED (General Equivalency Diploma) Test, the majority of the adult learners attending the program are learning to read and increase their literacy skills. They diligently attend class on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, for a total of four hours a week, and are dedicated to continuing their academic goals.

Of course, none of this would be possible without our Volunteers who give unselfishly of their time to work one-to-one with these learners. Not only do they teach the learners to read, they also work on other academic skills such as math, science, social studies, or computer skills. Volunteers encourage the learners and guide their study along the way. Celebrating their achievements and milestones, some form lifelong friendships.

As our Executive Director, Mr. Ron Wilson always says; Royce is a feel good place to work. "I am proud to be part of an organization that changes lives and gives new hope to individuals each and every day."

If you are interested in learning more about what it means to be a volunteer, know someone who wants help studying for their GED, or needs help with their literacy skills, we invite you to reach out for more information.

ROYCE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE (RCI)

Royce Collegiate Institute (RCI) is a transition year program designed to help young adults gain the skills necessary to take their next step in life, be it employment, further education, or other endeavors. RCI students receive academic and vocational guidance and support depending upon their personal goals, through small group and individualized instruction.

The program focuses on practical skills that are necessary for student success regardless of their life plan. Lessons cover motivation, time management, organization, reading comprehension, and communication, as examples. Royce Collegiate Institute provides opportunities for students to develop and practice life skills that are required for employment or collegiate settings.

Each year at Royce Collegiate Institute brings forth new endeavors and goals, but the past year continued to pose unique challenges. We continued to use a virtual classroom through the Google Classroom platform as an alternative to in-person instruction when required. Students participated in social-emotional learning opportunities through deep breathing, yoga, and meditation exercises. This assisted students with self-regulation and test-taking skills, and helped keep them engaged and focused in their learning.

The recent year's focus was on the increased expectations and responsibilities associated with the transition from adolescence to adulthood. This past year, students focused on job training skills and dual enrollment. One student was able to obtain a part time job at Auto Shine Car Wash and Door Dash. He also participated in dual enrollment at Savannah Technical College on a part time basis in Business Administration. Another student focused on a pre-college course called Introduction to Game Development, which he enjoyed tremendously! This led him to pursue Computer Science at Georgia Southern University.

The RCI program begins in the fall, and pre-planning stages begin at the end of the previous academic school year. The process begins with the parent and student attending an intake meeting. This meeting is a collaboration between student, parent, and teacher, where goals are set for the upcoming school year in areas such as job training, vocational training, and/or college readiness.



Amanda Shewtahal Program Coordinator

RCI students learn valuable lessons in time management, responsibility, and accountability.

OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT

I always say I have the fun job. From grant writing, to fundraising, networking and PR, there is never a dull day. This year I also worked with Laci Culbreth (Head of School) to help create new marketing materials, update brochures, and was involved with designing materials for Prom, Graduation, and the Yearbook!

While all of this is the fun, creative side, I'm also the one who is always asking for donations and support. But if you could see what I do on a daily basis - and how it really does change lives - you would know why I'm so passionately persistent in my pursuit. I am always in awe of how many people believe in what we do at Chatham Academy and Royce Learning Center.

I have the privilege of seeing the relief on a parents face when their child is accepted into Chatham Academy. Having our students share their excitement of learning, like what they learned that day, or making 100% on a test. Watching these kids overcome their fears and anxieties to grow into young adults. Sharing in the success of an adult learner when they pass a section of their GED, or learn a new skill.

Being persistent pays off because it was another record breaking year for us! From exceeding our Annual Fund goal and raising over \$62K for unrestricted funds, to securing over \$111K for academic scholarships via the Apogee scholarship fund, to several smaller FUNdraisers, there is no doubt we are back in the swing of things. I know that all of these funds; whether it's a \$1 donation, \$50K grant award, and everything in between, helps makes a difference at Royce and Chatham Academy.

We kicked off the year with the Operation Orchard fundraiser, which enabled us to plant citrus tress in our garden, and provide raised gardening beds. In the Spring, we had a Mindfulness Bingo fundraiser to provide funds for music, yoga, arts and sports. We got the students involved by having friendly competitions between the classes, with the class raising the most winning a pizza day or free dress down day. They had so much fun with it and it was nice to have them (and the parents) involved with a project from start to finish, and take pride in being a part of the process.

Once again we partnered with the Savannah Bananas for a Chatham Academy night at the stadium, and this year had a Papa John's pizza day.

After a year hiatus, we were able to host the Royce Oyster Roast to show our appreciation to those who believe in our mission and support our cause.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the dedication of our board, partners, and supporters.

Just knowing that you are a part of helping someone better themselves is such a humbling thing, and I am beyond grateful to be a part of it all.

Guieneverre Cutlip Director of Development

I am always in awe of how many people believe in what we do at Chatham Academy and Royce Learning Center.



Partners & Supporters

None of our programs would be possible if it were not for those who invest in education. Your support helps open a door to success for our students – in each of the programs – by supporting the hands-on, individualized education that has been our foundation.



Champions of Excellence \$1,000 - \$2,999

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T-Shirt Sales \$2,582

Mindfulness Bingo \$2,856

Operation Orchard \$4,523



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This report gratefully acknowledges gifts received between August 1, 2021 and July 31, 2022. Great care was taken to ensure the accuracy of this report. If there are any errors, please accept our apologies and notify Guieneverre Cutlip, Director of Development at 912.354.4047 or gcutlip@roycelc.org.

APOGEE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Apogee Scholarship Fund / Georgia State Tax Credit program is the main funding source of our scholarship fund for Chatham Academy students. This means so much to the families that receive scholarships, some of who turn to Chatham Academy as their last hope.

Anyone who pays taxes to the state of Georgia can choose to redirect that tax payment to the Apogee Scholarship Fund. You still have to pay your taxes, but with this program, your tax dollars stay in Savannah to provide academic scholarships for our students.

If you are a business owner, we hope you will consider reaching out to your accountant about this program to see if you are eligible for up to a \$25,000 Pass-Through.

By contributing the tax dollars you would spend anyway, you help provide financial aid for deserving families who need the specialized education we provide. It is an easy way to give back without having to give extra.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS OF THE APOGEE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Steven Arkin Alan & Diann Bailey Bud & Donna Ball Steven & Cynthia Beauvais Paschal Bignault Donna Brooks Steven & Deborah Carpenter Lori Carter Hays & Jamie Clark Scott Stanton & Tracy Cox-Stanton Michael & Marlene Dobbs **Rebecca & Larry Evans** Michael & Judith Fogarty Christopher & Rosemary Frame **Catherine Futrell** Morris & Marla Geffen Adelle Burnsed-Geffen & Theodore Geffen **Phillip Geffen** John & Bailee Gilbert Stephen & Sally Greenberg Thomas & Carolyn Hannaford Mitch & Cathy Hill Thomas & Starr Horn Nicole Hubbard Jan & Charles Kelly

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Apogee

Oyster Roast 2022





A Year in Review



Executive Director, Ron Wilson, was invited to be a part of Mayor Van Johnson's READ Savannah Task Force for a more literate community.



Our ACE Program provides an individualized approach to adult learning.



President Dana Stevens making sure all of the hard work is being done.



Ron Wilson representing Royce at one of the many networking events we attend.



ACE Teachers Delores Powell and Jo Robinson congratulate David Anderson on his achievements.



Some of the dedicated Board Members who devote their time and expertise to Royce.



FIND US 4 Oglethorpe Professional Blvd. Savannah, GA 31406



CALL US 912-354-4047



RoyceLearningCenter.org



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