CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF LEARNING

Founded in 1977, The Hill Center is one of the oldest schools for students with learning differences in the Southeast.

In this 40th anniversary annual report, we celebrate our community of learners – the students, teachers, families, and friends who have made Hill what – and who – we are today, and who will fuel our forward progress for the next 40 years.

In honoring forty years of learning, we renew our commitment to improving outcomes for the 1 in 5 students who learn differently – by empowering students to develop both their academic skills and their self-confidence, and working with teachers to ensure they have the tools and knowledge to unleash the potential of all learners.

Forty years in, we remain focused on our mission to transform students with learning differences into confident, independent learners. And we are committed to continually striving to increase access and affordability, to stay on the forefront of research and practice related to how we learn, and to expand our reach and deepen our impact in innovative ways.

Thank you for being part of this incredible community of growth, support and learning – we are all grateful for you!

Warmly,

Beth Anderson, Executive Director

Photo: Executive Director Beth Anderson (back row, second from right) and Head of School Dr. Bryan Brander (front row, second from left) gather with students before an assembly.
CELEBRATING HILL’S COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

From our start with 13 students, 4 teachers and 1 donor, see how our community has grown!

1,000+ Triangle students served

1,800+ Hill school alumni since 1977

26 NC public school district partners

1,200 teachers and tutors trained

696 generous donors and sponsors

144 Hill teachers and tutors

800 attendees at Community Education Series

“My son used to come home from school talking about all that he could NOT do. Now, he comes home from Hill proudly saying all the things he has mastered!”

“There isn’t a day that goes by that I don’t utilize the skills that I developed at Hill.”
When The Hill Center welcomed its first students to the “Yellow House” in 1977, no other school or organization was providing a similar type of specialized support for students.

Over the following forty years, thanks to the vision and dedication of its founders and early faculty, and the generosity of many families and foundations, Hill developed a reputation for its unique half-day model, exceptional teachers and professional development, and innovative, research-based methods for meeting the individual needs of each student.

Hill also became known for its commitment to expanding its impact well beyond the walls of its facilities – continually seeking new and better ways to reach and support students, teachers, and families with practical, effective programs and strategies for addressing learning differences.

The Hill Center’s name and building have evolved over the last 40 years - but our commitment to educating all learners is enduring.

“I have never seen my son smile at school like he has this week. He told me on the way home today that he wants to be a teacher at Hill when he grows up. Thank you for encouraging and teaching him. It is incredible to see him enjoy learning!”

The Hill Center is proud to have our programs accredited by:

- International Dyslexia Association
- International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Southern Association of Independent Schools
Hill's commitment to expanding its impact continues today. In the last year alone, Hill:

- Developed new executive function coaching, after-school, and summer programs

- Piloted the Hill Learning System with 155 teachers and tutors and 1,250 students across North Carolina

- Launched the East Durham Learning Collaborative to help close literacy gaps for 300 students across five high-need schools

- Partnered with Ravenscroft School in Raleigh to offer Wake County families an expanded summer program in a welcoming learning environment

Hear from tutor Dawn McClendon, students, and other East Durham Learning Collaborative participants at bit.ly/EDLCoverview.

**THANK YOU WELLS FARGO**

“Wells Fargo has provided scholarships for NC public school teachers to attend Hill Center trainings for many years.

In honor of Hill’s 40th Anniversary, we are thrilled to have made a $40,000 grant to help bring Hill’s innovative, effective reading intervention to East Durham students and schools.”

Carrie Gray
Vice President of Community Relations
Wells Fargo
2017 Road Less Traveled Alumni Award Recipient

Chris Fields, Class of 1999

The skills and confidence Chris gained at Hill fostered his love of exploring new countries and cultures, and support his success every day as a Freight Specialist for Interra International, candidate for a Master’s Degree in Accounting at UNC-Chapel Hill, and loving husband to Sara and father to Aurora.

“My teachers drove me to push myself. They did that by helping me not be afraid to ask questions, by helping me not be embarrassed about the way I learned.”

ALUMNI UPDATE

2007 Road Less Traveled Alumni Award Recipient

Jennifer Diliberto, Class of 1988

Dr. Jennifer Diliberto decided in seventh grade that she wanted to be a special education teacher. She taught in special education classrooms for six years before pursuing her Ph.D. Now, Jennifer is a Clinical Associate Professor of Special Education at UNC-Chapel Hill. She recently published an evidence-based supplemental curriculum through Attainment Publishing, Inc., Taking on Tough Words, which provides instruction and practice in reading and spelling multisyllabic words.

Jennifer’s work as a teacher educator will contribute to increasing the knowledge and understanding of future generations of special educators.

We’d love to hear more Hill Alumni updates!
Visit hillcenter.org/alumni to let us know how you’re doing!
The George Watts Hill Award
for Citizenship, Academic Progress, Initiative, and Community Service

Since 1993, Hill has honored our founder and outstanding students for their commitment to learning and contributions to their community.

Amryn Murray, Upper School Recipient

“My time at Hill has had a huge impact on my life. I know, always, that my teachers are here to listen and help - and teach me to advocate for myself even after I leave Hill. They gave me a mindset of ‘I can do this.’

Hill taught me techniques and fundamentals so I can focus on learning the content. Now, I’m going to NC State University to study Engineering and Agriculture - and I am excited, because Hill helped me be ready to succeed there.”

Jannire Camey, Middle School Recipient

Jannire embodies the strong work ethic and positivity Hill recognizes with this award. Two of her special strengths are building trust with teachers and classmates, and making everyone feel welcome.

Jannire wrote a letter to herself, offering advice as she heads to high school. Quoting Reba McIntyre, she wrote, “to succeed in life, you need three things: a wishbone, a backbone, and a funny bone.” Jannire says her experiences at Hill have helped her develop and express all three “bones” required for success!

Jackie Wenzlik, Lower School Recipient

In addition to her tenacious commitment to learning, Jackie inspires us with her community involvement. Not only do she and her family participate in Hill Mile every year, Jackie is also a mentor with Girls on the Run and volunteers as a Taekwondo teacher - now that she has earned her black belt, she wants to share her skills with others!

“Doing martial arts helps me get stronger, mentally and physically. Combined with all I learn at Hill, I feel like I can do anything!”
CELEBRATING HILL FACULTY & STAFF

Special thanks to the 39 incredible individuals who have dedicated at least a decade - a collective 412 years and growing - to empowering students with learning differences. Individuals with asterisks have retired or moved on from Hill. We especially thank them for their service!

Sara Gray Horne
Jan Lamb*
Shary Maskel*
Jean Neville*
Becky Rohn
Shauna Saunders
Anita Shore
Wendy Speir

2017 Maskel Methodology Award Recipient
Wendy Speir, Director of Admissions
Since coming to Hill as an intern in 1979, Wendy has counseled thousands of parents and admitted well over 2,000 students.

Of Hill students through the years, she says “they have their challenges, but they are all good kids and many have great senses of humor. It has been amazing to work in a place where the teachers can direct their students’ energies and truly support their learning.”

2017 Maskel Methodology Award Nominees:
Sara Gray Horne, Pam Hoggard, Wendy Speir,
Sue Duncan, Sara Miller, and Anita Shore with retired Executive Director Dr. Shary Maskel.
Not pictured: Geraldine Pesacreta.

Mary Bell*
Bonnie Cheek*
Kathy Klein*

Hill Faculty Celebrate School Spirit Day!

Top Row, L-R: Becky Rohn, Bonnie Cheek, Shary Maskel, Peter Ahlfeld, Mary Beth Markham, Shauna Saunders, and Margie Baldwin. Bottom Row, L-R: Kathy Klein, Jennifer Thompson, Jean Neville, Pledger Fedora.
Celebrating 2007 George Watts Hill Award recipient Antonio Smith (bottom left) with Anne Gibson Hill, Antonio’s mother Princess Williams, and Hill faculty Jan Lamb, Jennifer Thompson, Mary Beth Markham, and Sue Roth.

Nancy Arellano*
Bryan Brander
Justin Carlson
Betsy Emerson*
Lori Gaddy*
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Keri Merritt*
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Pam Hoggard
Mary Beth Markham*
Emily Oliver*
Geraldine Pesacreta
Antoinette Qutami
Louise Rollins
Michele Sparrow*

Hill faculty gathered outside the Yellow House, in the early days of the “Learning Development Center.” L-R: Kelly Timberlake, a summer teacher, Rebecca McKee, Paul Keene, Emily McGown Birgel.

“I loved my time teaching at Hill. I really liked the fact of small classes, the way we were able to reach each student. It felt like we could really help.”

-Margaret Miller
from The Yellow House: an oral history

Make a 40th Anniversary gift in honor of longtime Hill educators - a meaningful tribute and an investment in the development of the next generation of faculty and staff.

Visit hillcenter.org/anniversary to celebrate YOUR Hill Hero!
CELEBRATING HILL ADVOCATES

Honoring the families of Hill students

Every Hill student’s journey is supported by caring, committed family members advocating for and learning alongside their children.

Remembering her own experience, and the support Hill teachers and other families provided along the way, Waynell Morris, mother of Scott Morris ’01, established an endowed fund at Hill in honor of mothers who advocate for their children.

This fund will help ensure the school remains on the forefront of teaching and learning by providing unrestricted funding for priority investments.

“When my son started showing signs of a learning difference, I was so worried about him. But when we found The Hill Center, we both knew we had discovered the place that would help him be successful. The three years he spent at Hill truly gave him the foundation he needed to learn and thrive.

Fifteen years later, our whole family is still involved with Hill as champions and advocates. Because of what Hill has done for my family, I am committed to ensuring many more generations of students and their families can discover their paths to success at Hill.”

- Waynell Morris

Photos by Graham Terhune, courtesy of the Morris Family.
Advocating for students across North Carolina:
Meet Zina Pittman, Edgecombe County Public Schools

“I have been teaching for 29 years now. Once I started using the Hill Reading Achievement Program (HillRAP) with my students, I quit thinking about retirement. I don’t want to stop using this program!

My students are wonderful. My students are learners. However, my students are struggling learners, and especially struggling readers.

They come from a wealth of backgrounds – from the coolest kid in the school to the quietest kid in the school. But once they get started, every single one of them loves HillRAP. They really do. It makes them successful right where they are, and gives them a pathway to grow.

Now my students say to me ‘I see my goals increasing, and I’m hitting my goals, so I know I’m getting better.’ This program is changing their futures.

And for me, when I leave here in the afternoon, I truly feel like I’ve made a difference. I feel like these children that I’ve had an opportunity to teach are better for having come and sat around this table. They learned! And I just keep thinking - what can I do tomorrow? How can I be better for my students tomorrow? HillRAP is helping us all grow. I love it.”

Learn more about Ms. Pittman and the Barnhill family's generous support of Hill's partnership in Edgecombe County at hillcenter.org/program-spotlight.
EXPANDING HILL’S ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY

Hill Mile Raises $63,000 for Student Financial Aid

Hill Mile’s growth over the last three years has been fueled by students and families sharing their stories of what Hill means for them, and how financial aid makes a difference in their lives:

“The Hill Center has changed our son’s life in so many positive ways. Without financial aid we wouldn’t have been able to send him here. Hill has given our son confidence and has allowed him to become an HONOR ROLL STUDENT. That is right! For the first time in his life he has all As and Bs. One of the best decisions we have ever made was sending our son to Hill, and we hope to support other families who need extra help as well!”

Through the generous support of Hill Mile participants and sponsors, and other donors, we have been able to increase our investment in student financial aid every year for the last five years.

In honor of our 40th Anniversary, we aim to raise $325,000 in support of student financial aid to help us continue this trend in the years ahead!

Learn more at hillcenter.org/anniversary.
Mark your calendar and get involved with the 4th Annual Hill Mile at hillcenter.org/hillmile

4/22
2018

497
registrants

68
Crowdrise
pages

39
sponsors

$63,000
for students

Thank you to all who made the Hill Mile a success, including our 2017 Hill Mile Sponsors!

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COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERIES

Last year, over 800 attendees joined us for presentations on topics related to executive functioning, concrete math and reading strategies, and how to develop a growth mindset. David Flink, Chief Empowerment Officer at Eye to Eye (pictured), told a powerful story of how he grew to understand and embrace his learning differences, and how his early challenges shaped his career inspiring and advocating for others who think differently.

Thanks to Morris Commercial’s generous support, in honor of Scott Morris ’01, these events are free and open to the public. For information about the series, visit hillcenter.org/ces.
EXTENDING HILL’S REACH AND DEEPENING IMPACT

Taking HillRAP into the Future: the Hill Learning System and Hill Readers

The Hill Reading Achievement Program (HillRAP) helps struggling students learn to read. Each year, thousands of students across North Carolina, and beyond, receive HillRAP in a range of schools and learning environments. More than 93% of HillRAP students are demonstrating reading growth on standardized tests.

Thank you to the Fields Family and Rogers Family and the following foundations for underwriting the development of the Hill Learning System and Hill Readers - two powerful tools that are strengthening HillRAP’s impact and leading the way to the future.

Hill Learning System:
a tech-enabled platform combining a personalized smart app for the classroom, a teacher training and support portal, and robust academic data tracking, the HLS is used in 15 NC public school districts and many individual schools – including here at Hill.

Hill Readers:
a set of 13 books aligned with the HillRAP level progression, written by former Hill Executive Director Dr. Shary Maskel. Incorporated into the HLS, and developed to save HillRAP teachers from purchasing other expensive, non-aligned texts, the books are appropriate as supplements to any reading program.
“Receiving HillRAP training was truly a blessing. Because Hill helped me, now I can help others. My students are from lower income families and their parents are often unable to help their children in school. I will use HillRAP to teach my students, and now they will experience success in school and will be encouraged to continue with their education. This will create a cycle of success instead of a cycle of failure!”

- Teacher, Durham Public Schools

493 NC public school teachers from 46 counties received $175,000 in teacher scholarships and 5 new districts received seed funding for HillRAP thanks to the generosity of:

- Durham Merchants Association Charitable Foundation
- The Glass Foundation
- MORGAN CREEK FOUNDATION
- STROWD ROSES
- Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

“Reaching Out Across North Carolina

Hill-trained teachers in the highlighted districts are using HillRAP with their students.

Blue diamonds indicate school districts within counties: Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and Mooresville Graded School District.

“I attended a Hill training on supporting struggling readers. It was outstanding and provided our team with new insights and ideas for how to better implement this kind of intervention. Our budget this year would not have permitted funding for this training, so I thank you for your support from the bottom of my heart.”

-Durham Public Schools Teacher

[Map of North Carolina showing highlighted districts]
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*deceased

Board Vice Chair and Hill Alumnus Charlie Atwater ‘93 received the Road Less Traveled Award in 2003 in recognition of his achievements.

Pictured at the ceremony (L-R) are Hill educator Jean Healy Neville, Vickie Atwater, Charlie Atwater, Jr., and Charles Atwater, Sr.
The Hill Center Endowment

Throughout The Hill Center’s history, families have established named endowment funds to provide lasting support for operations, student financial aid, and faculty professional development. Our endowment is a collection of various restricted and unrestricted funds which totals $8,346,802 (6/30/17 market value).

Thank you to the many families and supporters who are ensuring Hill’s long term sustainability!

Student Financial Aid
The Buck Family Scholarship Fund
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George Watts Hill Foundation
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The George W. Brumley III Family Endowment
Margaret Holt McLean Endowment
Waynell Morris Fund

“He is a confident student. He knows how he learns. He knows when and how to ask for help. He works hard. He knows he’s smart, and he knows that everyone has their own kind of smart. He is an advocate for himself and for everyone who learns differently.”

For more information about establishing a permanent endowment fund, please contact Jeanne Tilley at 919-719-7558.
56% of revenues were generated from tuition, fees, and services for students and educators.

81% of expenses were associated with direct program delivery or investments in development of the Hill Learning System.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 696 individuals and institutions provided financial or in-kind support.
- Individuals contributed more than $360,000 in gifts and pledges, accounting for nearly 5% of total revenues.
- 14% of gifts, or nearly $320,000, were unrestricted, providing Hill with the flexibility to make investments in areas of greatest need or priority.
"Before we discovered Hill, my son was nearly defeated by academic demands he was unable to meet due to his learning differences.

But at Hill, his attitude toward learning immediately changed. Hill’s supportive environment and dedicated educators gave him the focused attention and specialized skills he needed to experience academic success.

Today he is a more confident, self-aware young man who has hope for a bright academic future that will be characterized by his abilities and will to succeed rather than his insecurities and challenges.

Thank you, Hill, for giving my son this priceless gift!"
HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

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($100,000 and above)

- Fox Family Foundation
- Goodnight Educational Foundation*
- William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust*
- Mebane Charitable Foundation, Inc.*
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**The George Watts Hill Society**
($10,000 - $99,999)

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($5,000 - $9,999)

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- Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Rosenberg
- Strowd Roses Charitable Foundation
- Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Trapani

Thank you to our generous community of supporters.

This annual report recognizes all donations received by The Hill Center between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017, with the exception of Hill Mile gifts. Please visit hillcenter.org/hillmile to celebrate our Hill Mile supporters.

Every attempt was made to ensure accuracy in this publication; however, errors do occur and we apologize for any inconvenience they may cause. Please contact Jeanne Tilley at 919-719-7558 for any corrections.

*indicates an installment of a multi-year commitment*
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Mr. Mark Bailey
Ms. Sue Behringer
Terrie and Van Blalock
    in honor of Jan Lamb
Mr. Jeffrey Borden
Ms. Cathy M. Breshears
Mr. and Mrs. John R. Brinkhous
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Mr. and Mrs. Gregory F. Duncan
    in memory of Peyton B. Strickland
Dr. Thomas Golding and
Ms. Antonia Valakas
Leonard and Elaine Goodwin
Ms. Caroline S. Goray
Dr. Marvin L. Hage and
Mrs. Miriam A. Hage
Ms. Anne Clark Hathaway
Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Hooker
Ms. Nadine G. Hoover
    in honor of Anita Shore
Ms. Natalie Jaitapker
Ms. Nahale F. Kalfas
Dr. Jonathan Klein and
Dr. Bonnie Rogers
    in honor of Lara K. Klein
Mr. William F. Lalor Jr.
Ms. Kristen Lane
Ms. Libby L. Lang
Ms. Kristen Leiggs
Dr. and Mrs. David C. Leonard
Mr. and Mrs. Felix Markham
    in memory of Frances Heard
Ms. Katie Mgonolwa
Dr. and Mrs. Sam R. Miglaresse
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Morsberger
    in honor of Courtney Morsberger
Susanne Newman
Mr. John A. Payne and
Ms. Kayce Meginnis-Payne
Ms. Geraldine Pesacreta
Ms. Kate L. Pick
    in memory of Peyton B. Strickland
Mr. and Mrs. John Quinn
Ms. Nancy S. Roberts
Ms. Sue Roth
Mrs. Shauna Saunders and
Mr. Bruce Saunders
    in honor of Bonnie Cheek and Jan Lamb
Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Schoenfeld
Ms. Sandy I. Silverman
Ms. Amy Stark
Ms. Sarah N. Starkey
Mr. and Mrs. Eric Thompson
    in honor of Bonnie Cheek and Jan Lamb
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