



VOICES
for
Georgia's Children

2014

BIG VOICE
for CHILDREN
AWARDS

TO OUR GUESTS AND FELLOW CHILD ADVOCATES,

Welcome to one of the most inspiring events of the season, honoring seven phenomenal leaders and organizations that have positively changed the lives of Georgia children. Each recipient of the Big Voice for Children Awards demonstrates the influence of a single voice in securing a better future for our children and thus the power of our collective voice to make children a priority for policy makers and civic leaders in our communities, our state and the nation.

Amplifying the collective voice of Georgia citizens for a public agenda for children is the work of Voices for Georgia's Children. We engage coalitions and networks to generate awareness and commitment among their respective members, and we organize calls to action when lawmakers need to hear from their constituents. To be effective we must be relentless in our outreach and tireless in our communications. We meet with decision makers in their offices, in Pre-K classrooms, in afterschool programs, and in the halls of the Capitol. And we communicate with advocates through electronic and social media, special events, and public forums.

We need your help to sustain the momentum we have built over the past eleven years. Not only do we ask you to add your voice to the voices of our honorees and our partners, but we ask for your financial support to help fund the costs of our outreach activities. As we grow the number of voices and the volume of our advocacy, children will become the priority for Georgia that they are in our own families.

Thank you for your consideration and have a wonderful evening.



JOHN HARBIN

Board Chair



PAT WILLIS

Executive Director

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MINIS AND CO./MARK AND JULIE ALLEN ~ BANKS, FINLEY, WHITE & CO. ~ ANGIE BARBER
SARAH AND WADE BEARD ~ JIM AND SIS BLANCHARD ~ RICK AND SUZANNE DETLEFS
STEVE AND JANE DOLINGER ~ JOHN AND SHARA HARBIN ~ PHIL AND JENNY JACOBS
BOB AND CREEL MCCORMACK ~ OZ NELSON & ANN STARR
NELSON MULLINS RILEY & SCARBOROUGH ~ BRIAN AND ANGELA ORKIN
TOM AND KAY RAWLINGS ~ BILL AND BECKY RUMER
ALLISON THOMPSON ~ TOM AND PATSY UPCHURCH
ROBERT AND POLLY DUNN FOUNDATION, KAREN WILBANKS & CHRISTOPHER WILBANKS

PROGRAM

OPENING SONG

J.B. Academy of Musik Pupils

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

John Harbin, Board Chair

YEAR IN REVIEW

Pat Willis, Executive Director

BLESSING

Sania Chandrani & Anna Kelly

DINNER IS SERVED

Roasted Beet Salad with Goat Cheese Chantilly, Garden Greens, and Balsamic Vinaigrette

Duet of Braised Beef Short Rib and Pan Seared Salmon, Vegetable Fricasee - Haricot Verts, Carrots, Brussel Sprouts, and Tomato Confit, Potato Dauphinoise with Merlot Reduction

Pumpkin Cheesecake with Caramel Sauce
Chocolate Crunch Bar with Chocolate Macaroon

MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT

J.B. Academy of Musik Pupils

BIG VOICE AWARDS

Presented by Katherine Dunn, Board Secretary

RACHEL ALTERMAN WALLACK

MARK SHURETT, DDS

NANCY BOXILL, PHD

NINA HICKSON, JD

DEBORAH RICHARDSON

MAAC, INC.

ANN CRAMER

CALL TO ACTION

Becky Rumer, Board Vice Chair



ANN CRAMER

Her Episcopalian confirmation at age 12 moved Ann Cramer to make the welfare of children her life's mission. In her 20s, she lived that mission in her community work in the streets of Inman Park, and in the late 70's she took that advocacy for children into the business community of Atlanta through the IBM Corporation. One of just three women in 1978 to work on the Atlanta Chamber's vision for the 80's, she inserted the issues of children, arts and quality of life into the discussion of the city's infrastructure of streets and bridges and buildings. And for almost 40 years thereafter Ann has provided voice, vision, and leadership for improving the lives of children through early learning, education, and community development.

Ann has served as a member and leader on at least 50 boards and commissions, locally, regionally, and nationally, including appointments by every governor since Governor George Busbee. To attempt to enumerate them is to risk leaving out many important accomplishments and influences. Her current memberships include chair of the Atlanta Partners for Education, the board of the Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta, the Metro Atlanta Chamber Education Committee, the Governor's Office of Workforce Development and the Georgia Foundation for Public Education. She also serves on several non-profit boards including the Council on Foundations, Woodruff Arts Center, the Alliance Theatre Company, Public Broadcasting Atlanta (PBA), the ARC Educated Sub Committee, UGA Board of Visitors, the Hands-on-Atlanta Advisory Board and the Atlanta Cities of Service board. She currently chairs the Advisory Councils for the Alliance Theatre, Imagine-It the Children's Museum of Atlanta, TechBridge and CHRIS Kids.

Ann led a group of child advocates in business, philanthropy, and service organizations in 2002-2003 in creating Voices for Georgia's Children and chaired the board from 2006-2008. She retired from IBM Corporation in 2012 as director for corporate citizenship and corporate affairs for the Americas and is now senior consultant with Coxe Curry & Associates.

MAAC

Amidst many changes and evolving approaches to children’s services over the past 20 years, one thing has remained constant, the commitment of MAAC to providing a seamless continuum of behavioral and mental health services for children in Georgia.



In 1996, several private non-profit agency directors gathered together to create what ultimately became the MAAC collaborative. These directors were driven to create “a new way of doing business” in the field of behavioral healthcare. Their vision was to create a seamless continuum of care to address all of the needs of the child, adolescent and family while reducing treatment “failures” and uncoordinated multiple placements. The MAAC approach provides much needed stability for children, maintaining the same case manager throughout the child’s service, regardless of changes in the DFCS worker, the CASA worker, the therapist, and the provider.

By teaming together to create a continuum of collaborative care, each MAAC member-agency maintains its individuality and expertise in the service areas they uniquely provide. The scope of services offered by MAAC’s member agencies ranges from assessments to intensive psychiatric care, adoptions to residential group homes, therapeutic foster care to maternity care and much more. MAAC has grown from one employee serving 50–60 youth to 36 employees and 2 offices, serving 400 to 500 children each year. Nine non-profit behavioral healthcare providers make up the MAAC membership, supported by MOUs with nine other providers throughout the state of Georgia.

MAAC values youth participation in decisions about their own lives, allowing them to make choices related to their placements and seeking recommendations from the MAAC Youth Advisory Board about internal operations. In addition, MAAC sponsors and houses youth-driven organizations that support transitioning and former foster youth as advocates, leaders, parents, and independent adults. Organizations include EmpowerMENT, Georgia Youth Opportunities Initiative, and Teen Parent Connection.

MAAC, Inc., Heather Rowles, Executive Director

Members	CEO/Executive Director
CHRIS Kids	Kathy Colbenson
Creative Community Services (CCS)	Sally Buchanan
Devereux Georgia Treatment Network	Gwen Skinner
Elks Aidmore	Abe Wilkinson
Georgia Baptist Children’s Homes and Family Ministries, Inc.	James S. Harper
Hillside	Emily Acker
The Methodist Home	Alison Evans
Twin Cedars Youth & Family Services, Inc.	Mike Angstadt
Youth Villages	Kate Cantrell



RACHEL ALTERMAN WALLACK

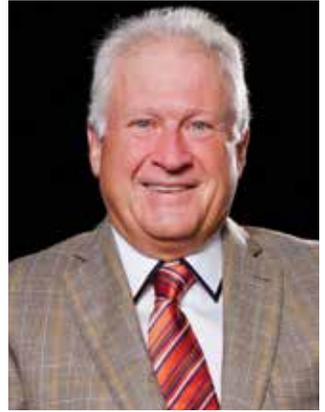
Rachel Alterman Wallack brings a conscience to all who work with youth. She is a strong advocate for authentic youth participation in decisions that affect their lives. In any community discussion about children she will gently raise the question of how the group will hear from young people. Her 21 years of working with teens have affirmed what she learned as an intern for Junior Scholastic Magazine: teens are smart, concerned, and appreciate an opportunity to tell their story. She knows it is not easy for most adults but, in her words, “young people (are) experts in their lives so they can inform quality programming and relevant policy.”

Barely out of her teens herself in 1993, Rachel founded VOX Teen Communications, Inc., a youth-development program uniting teenagers from diverse backgrounds in an afterschool program that builds skills and community. Teen governance, diversity, and self-expression are fundamental to the experience offered to VOX participants. Together they produce a quarterly newspaper and other social media that address topics important to them and their peers. VOX is distributed to 90,000 readers in 300 high schools and community organizations. Rachel and VOX have supported more than 1,000 young people over the last 20 years, developing their skills, confidence and aspirations. She has affirmed for them that their voice matters.

After 20 years as executive director, in 2013 Rachel handed the reins of VOX to a new executive and now serves as director of strategic relationships. She also is a contributing editor of Youth Today Magazine and serves as a volunteer or board member in local youth-serving nonprofits and schools. In recent years she served as a facilitator for the Anti-Defamation League’s “No Place for Hate” workshop, an anti-bullying curriculum for K-12 educators and students.



MARK SHURETT, DDS



It started with a school nurse who stopped by his dental office in 1993 asking for help for several children in her school and today it has grown into a mobile fleet of 21 units serving more than 90,000 children each year. The “Help A Child Smile” mobile dental program partners with local communities and dentists to provide comprehensive oral healthcare to children who otherwise might not receive routine dental care. These services are delivered in over 800 schools, in 113 school systems throughout Georgia.

After the school nurse made the initial request for dental services for children in 1993, Dr. Shurett continued to look for children who needed care and bring them to his office. But transportation was unreliable and a family member suggested it would be easier for Dr. Shurett to take his services to the children. With an investment from his life savings, the first mobile unit went on the road in February 1994. His first contract was in Fulton County Schools.

Dr. Mark Shurett began a family practice in dentistry 34 years ago in 1980 after graduating from Emory University School of Dentistry. He acknowledges that his college roommate decided to go into pediatric dentistry, a decision that he found incredible at the time. Today, he says, “I can establish rapport with a child in five seconds.” Dr. Shurett’s traditional private practice serves the Rockdale/Newton County area and is currently one of the larger single location practices in the Atlanta area treating approximately 2,500 patients per month.



PIONEER ADVOCATES FOR SEXUALLY EXPLOITED CHILDREN

As child advocates, we are grateful for the many civic and community organizations that have made their voices heard to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Women's groups, faith groups, legal professionals and others have rallied to let public officials know their outrage about the conditions, laws and culture that must be changed to protect children from being sold for sex. The call for change has grown steadily for almost 15 years and public officials are responding. But how and when did we begin to realize that too many girls, as young as 10, 12, and 14, were being forced to have sex for money that went to the pimps who held them captive? Tonight we are proud to recognize three women who identified this untold secret in 1999, appealed to women throughout the community, organized to serve these young victims, and vowed to end child sex trafficking in Georgia.



NINA HICKSON

In May of 1999, Nina Hickson was appointed as Judge to the Fulton County Juvenile Court. After a few months on the bench she saw more and more girls in their early teens charged, not with prostitution, but for curfew violations or getting in a fight or under-age drinking. What struck her about the girls was "... they were so young and when I looked in their eyes they had what I call kind of a look of death. I mean there was just no light there."

Judge Hickson's queries of the girls, court personnel, the U.S. Attorney's office and others uncovered the horror of the girls' sexual exploitation and the complicity of the law in keeping the pimps on the street. Working with the juvenile court's program development director, Deborah Richardson, the two set out to find the means to serve the girls and to spark the community to take political action. They called on Fulton County Commissioner Nancy Boxill and the journey began.

During the Georgia General Assembly's 2001 session, Judge Hickson was a key proponent of legislation which made the pimping of minors a felony offense, rather than a misdemeanor, under Georgia law. Her public stance on this issue was also instrumental in the indictment and eventual federal prosecution of 15 of the most notorious pimps in Fulton County under the Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations Act ("RICO") statute, the first such prosecution in the nation.

Today, Nina Hickson is the ethics officer for the City of Atlanta. Throughout her career she has actively served in the community with children's organizations including Aid to Children of Imprisoned Mothers, Georgia CASA, Covenant House, and Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta. She initiated the Sister-to-Sister program with the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys and first time juvenile female offenders. She currently serves as Parliamentarian for the Buckhead/Cascade City Chapter of The Links, Incorporated.



DEBORAH RICHARDSON

One case was all it took to launch Deborah Richardson's commitment to end child sex trafficking. Even after 25 years of advocacy and social justice work in Atlanta, Deborah was shocked when she observed a 10-year-old girl in the juvenile court, in shackles, charged with a curfew violation. She had been found in the back of a van after 11 p.m. with a 42-year-old man who had rented her for two hours for sex. The girl spent three days in detention; the man got a ticket, a \$50 fine, and went home! As the program development director for Fulton County Juvenile Court, Deborah headed for the chambers of Juvenile Court Judge Nina Hickson. They began to hatch a plan.

Over the course of working with Judge Hickson and Commissioner Nancy Boxhill to end child sexual exploitation, Deborah became the founding executive director of the Juvenile Justice Fund (JJF), today called YouthSpark. JJF founded Angela's House, the first safe house in the Southeast dedicated to providing services for victims of child sex trafficking, trained law enforcement, social workers and others to recognize victims, and advocated for changes in how the law treats those who victimize our children. Deborah continued her work to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children when she was the executive director of The Atlanta Women's Foundation, the chief program officer of the national Women's Funding Network, and now as the executive vice president of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights.

Deborah has been recognized over the years for her community service and is known as a national leader on social justice for women and girls and ending child sex trafficking. She has designed leading programs for girls victimized by sex trafficking, served as national spokesperson for A Future. Not a Past., a campaign to stop the prostitution of America's children, and testified on these issues before Congress.



NANCY BOXILL

Hearing the stories from two colleagues at the Juvenile Court in the late 1990s about very young girls being brought to the court as victims of sexual exploitation, Nancy Boxill said, "my first response was to try to breathe. Hearing the stories just took my breath away." But she wasn't paralyzed for long. Joining with Judge Nina Hickson and the Court's program development director, Deborah Richardson, the three women set about engaging the women of Atlanta to do something to protect girls from this atrocity and to help restore victims to normal lives.

A member of the Fulton County Commission when the plight of sexually exploited girls came to her attention, Nancy Boxill had already used her position to influence issues that affect women, children and the homeless population. Nancy brought the issue of sex trafficking of girls to the County Commission and was able to get support for public safety training and policy votes from the Commission. Moving the issue to the General Assembly, she was a force for changing child prostitution from a misdemeanor to a felony in just six months.

Nancy has a long history of caring about children, child policy, and justice. She served as executive director of Atlanta's Inn for Children, an extended hour, non-profit early learning facility developed by five major hotels to serve hourly workers. Among her initiatives as a County Commissioner were the establishment of a pilot program for second and third-shift child care and creation of a vehicle through which the needs of children-at-risk are more effectively addressed. Dr. Boxill's leadership inspired the Board of Commissioners to approve and establish the Fulton County Human Services Department; a comprehensive, family-leave policy for county employees; and an employee child care lottery.

BIG VOICE PAST HONOREES

2013

100 Black Men of America
Kathryn Cheek
Gail Hayes
Phil Jacobs
Mary Margaret Oliver
Wendell Willard

2012

Bill Bolling
Georgia CASA (Court-Appointed
Special Advocates)
Elaine Draeger
Tim Johnson
Pat Nobbie

2011

Renée Lewis Glover
Emory University School of Law
Robin Ferst
Sally Fitzgerald
J. Tom Morgan
Larry Sanders

2010

Dennis Lockhart & Dr. Beverly Tatum
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Dr. Veda Johnson
Judge Velma Tilley
Sam Mitchell & Marc Upshaw
Becky Cheatham
Jeannie B. Edwards RN

2009

Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin
The Junior League of Atlanta
Franklin J. Richards II
Dr. Luther E. Smith, Jr.
W. Terence Walsh
Don Bower

2008

S. Truett Cathy
Judge Glenda A. Hatchett
Lynn Faulkner
Patricia Pflum & Neil Shorthouse
Becky Rumer

2007

US Senator Johnny Isakson
Stephanie Blank
Judge Aaron Cohn
Savannah Mayor Otis Johnson
Melvin Kruger
Linda Lowe
Tom Upchurch

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GEORGIA FAMILY CONNECTION PARTNERSHIP

THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ATLANTA

MULTI-AGENCY ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN, INC.

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GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TWIN CEDARS YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

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ENTERTAINMENT

J.B. Academy of Musik Pupils

HONOREE VIDEOS & PRODUCTION

John Godwin, John Godwin Productions

Polly McKinney, Producer

EVENT COORDINATOR

Reagan Goodnough – EventSmith, Inc.

INVITATION AND PROGRAM DESIGN

Kelly Wilder – Ugly Fish Graphics

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR EVENT
VOLUNTEERS THIS EVENING!

OUR MISSION

Established in 2003, Voices for Georgia's Children (Voices) is a nonprofit child policy and advocacy organization that envisions a Georgia where kids are safe, healthy, educated, employable, and connected to family and community. Our mission is to be a powerful, unifying voice for a public agenda that ensures the well-being of all of Georgia's children. We provide the necessary research-based information, measures, collective voice and proposed legislation to help guide decision makers toward supporting policies that ensure Georgia's kids grow up to be healthy, educated and productive citizens.

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404.521.0311

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...FOR CHILD HEALTH
...FOR AFTERSCHOOL
...FOR JUSTICE AND SAFETY

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