



Northland

EARLY EDUCATION CENTER



# Annual Report 2013

Shaping the future of children through quality early education and therapeutic intervention while teaching compassion for diversity

## Mission

Northland Early Education Center (NEEC) provides early education and therapy services for children who have special needs as well as early education for children who have typical needs, in a fully inclusive classroom environment in order for them to reach their full potential.

## History

NEEC was founded in 1981 by a group of concerned parents of children with physical and mental disabilities along with parents of children whose household incomes were low to moderate. These parents envisioned an early education center that would serve all children, regardless of their developmental level or socioeconomic status. The school began in a basement of a church north of Excelsior Springs, Missouri with a class of only six children. From then, the school continued to grow and as the need for fully-inclusive early education and therapeutic intervention for children with special needs continued to increase, it became evident that the school was in need of a larger building to ensure that services were available for all children with special needs residing in the Northland. In 1998, with funding from the Clay County Developmental Disabilities Resource Board, NEEC was able to move into a larger building in Kansas City, Missouri that was more spacious and inviting. The new facility provided, and continues to provide, an environment where children's classrooms are separated by age, not developmental level, allowing them to learn not only from their teachers but from one another as well. Since its inception NEEC has grown from a preschool serving six children to a nationally accredited early education center providing early education and therapy services for nearly 200 children annually.

## Early Childhood Education and Therapeutic Intervention Program

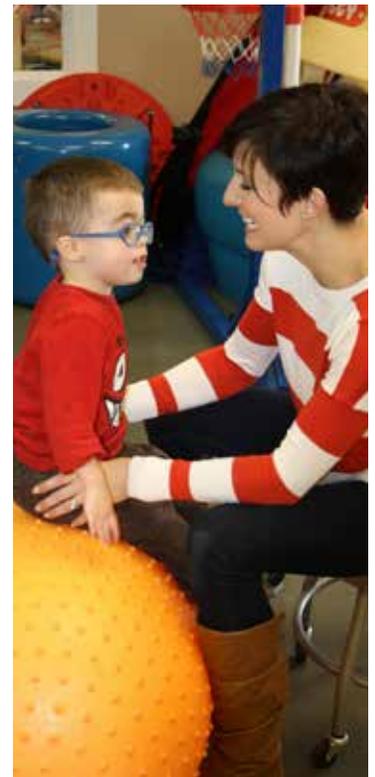
NEEC provides early education and therapy services for children who have special needs and early education for children who have typical needs age's birth to five. NEEC also provides a before and after school/summer program for children age's six to 14 who have special needs. NEEC's eight early education classrooms are staffed by dedicated childcare professionals, including a lead teacher with a Bachelor's degree in special education, early childhood education or a related field. All lead teachers prepare weekly lesson plans that fully utilize and incorporate the principles of the Project Construct curriculum framework. In a Project Construct classroom, children build their own knowledge, at their own pace and development level, through play and interactions in a well-facilitated educational environment. As a result, children become critical thinkers and creative problem-solvers while developing a love of learning.

Children are screened upon entry into the program and continually assessed each day; milestones are recorded

in each child's individual portfolio and discussed at bi-annual parent-teacher conferences. Success for a child, either with special needs or typical needs, in a NEEC classroom is demonstrated by the child's ability to think critically and creatively, problem solve, and cooperate with other children in a learning environment. At NEEC children attain these skills in a fully-inclusive classroom environment, meaning that children are separated by age, not developmental level.

In addition to high quality, fully-inclusive early education, NEEC offers therapy services for children with special needs who qualify. NEEC's therapy department consists of four therapists specializing in physical and occupational therapies, speech and language pathology and special instruction. The therapists work collaboratively in a teaming model to ensure the whole family's needs are being met. Primarily, the NEEC therapy program collaborates with Missouri's First Steps program to determine the appropriate level of

therapeutic intervention for children from birth to age three. NEEC therapists also work with families and children through Medicaid, and private pay. Each child that receives therapy services through NEEC has some form of individualized goals and a plan on which the therapy services are based. Predominately this plan takes the form of either an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IFSP guides the therapy process for children (ages birth - three) with special needs based upon their family's needs and goals. An IEP is for children three and older and consists of a written plan developed by a team to help an individual child with educational goals. All therapy service plans at NEEC include a statement of the child's present levels of educational and/or developmental performance, measurable annual goals, and outlines the specific services that will be offered to help the child meet these goals. Success for a child receiving therapy services through NEEC is as individualized as the child.



## Before & After School/Summer Program

In order to fulfill a growing need recognized in our community, NEEC provides a before and after school program for children ages six to 14 with special needs. This program, which meets before and after public school and during the summer months, has its own teaching staff that incorporate each child's Individual Education Plan goals into the classroom's daily activities and lesson plans. Knowing that the fully-inclusive environment is the most appropriate for all children, this program is seeking to incorporate typically developing peer models. However, space for this program is limited and children with special needs still remain the number one priority for this continued learning program at NEEC.

## Licensing and Accreditation

The Northland Early Education Center is proud to be accredited through both the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Additionally, NEEC is a licensed private agency with the Missouri Department of Health and holds certification through the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These accreditations, licensures and certifications ensure that NEEC's program standards are among the highest in the nation.

## Service Area

NEEC serves children age's birth to five who have special needs and typical needs, as well as children who have special needs age's six to 14 predominately in Clay and Platte counties, as well as surrounding counties in the Kansas City Metropolitan area.

In 2013, NEEC served children who resided in the following counties, Andrew, Buchanan, Clay, Jackson, Platte, and Ray counties.



## Outcome Measurements For 2013

The families of NEEC have entrusted their most cherished loved ones with the staff and teachers at the Center, their children. In order to ensure that our program is continually improving, NEEC utilizes an Outcome Measurements format for evaluating annual goals. The Outcome Measurements serve as a motivating and tracking tool, allowing us to better qualify the impact that our programs have on the children and families we serve. The NEEC Board of Directors, administration, and staff believe that the well-organized, thoughtful, and honest program evaluation the Outcome Measurements provides is imperative to furthering our mission to provide early education and therapy services for children who have special needs as well as early education for children who have typical needs, in a fully inclusive classroom environment in order for them to reach their full potential.

- NEEC provided a total of 4,987 units (1,247 hours) of physical and occupational therapy, speech and language pathology and special instruction
- 95% of children with special needs receiving services from NEEC made progress on at least 75% of their IFSP/IEP/classroom goals
- 8% of children with special needs receiving in-home therapy services transitioned to the on-site early education program
- On average, 39% of children enrolled on-site at NEEC were children with special needs
- 62% of children receiving services from NEEC, both in-home and on-site, were children with special needs
- NEEC provided early education for 132 children onsite and 52 children received in-home therapy services. In total, NEEC provided early education and/or therapy services for 184 children throughout the Northland.
- 76% of staff had been employed at NEEC for at least one year



## 2014 ACTION PLAN

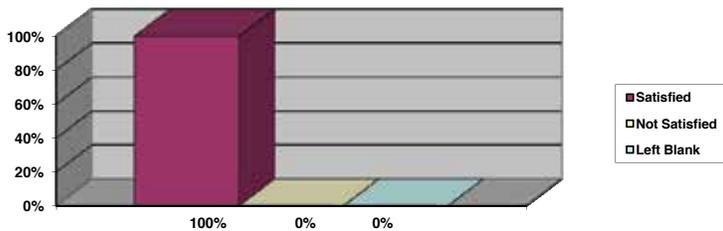
The long-term goal for NEEC is an on-site consistent enrollment of 50 percent children with special needs and 50 percent children who have typical needs. In 2014, NEEC's goal is to continue to work to ensure our on-site enrollment is consistently at least 43 percent children with special needs to 57 percent children who have typical needs. On average in 2013, 39 percent of the children served on-site had special needs.

In order to expand NEEC's 2014 goals, the NEEC Quality Improvement Committee has established the following action items:

1. The Executive Director, Program Director and Development Director will increase community outreach through newsletters, presentations, contact with hospitals and advocacy groups, and special events with the specific purpose of growing a constituency of community members.
2. The Program Director will ensure that several spots on-site are left available for children birth - two years of age with special needs requesting placement at NEEC.
3. The Executive Director and the Development Director will research additional funding opportunities for the scholarship program, making every effort to ensure that all children with special needs seeking placement at the school can find scholarship opportunities.
4. The Executive Director, Program Director, Development Director, and the Board of Directors will continue the action steps needed to potentially expand the program as outlined during the final year of the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan.

## 2013 Family Satisfaction Survey

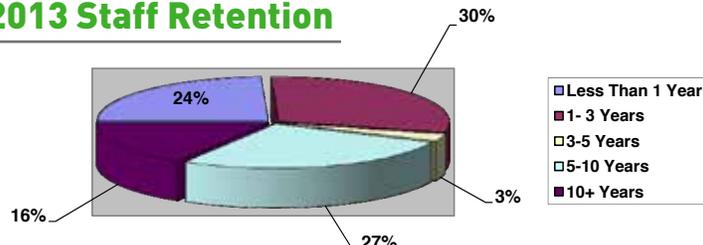
Are you satisfied with the services provided for your child by NEEC?



How would you rate your child's improvements since he/she began attending NEEC?



## 2013 Staff Retention





## 2014 Calendar Of Events

### January 1 • NEEC Closed

New Year's Day Observation

### February 17 • NEEC Closed

President's Day Observation (teacher in-service)

### April 6-12 •

Week of the Young Child™

### April 12 •

Free NEEC Carnival

### May •

Family/Teacher Conferences

### May 26 • NEEC Closed

Memorial Day Observation

### May 31 •

Pioneer Run at English Landing Park

### June •

Day of Caring

### July 4 • NEEC Closed

Independence Day Observation

### July •

Graduation

### August •

Enrollment

### September •

Community Helper's Month

### September 1 • NEEC Closed

Labor Day Observation

### September 13 •

13th Annual Diamond K Ranch Party and Auction

### October 13 • NEEC Closed

Columbus Day Observation (teacher in-service)

### November •

Family/Teacher Conferences

### November 27 • NEEC Closed

Thanksgiving Day Observation

### November 28 • NEEC Closed

Day after Thanksgiving

### December 24 • NEEC Closed

Christmas Eve Observation

### December 25 • NEEC Closed

Christmas Day Observation



## Current Student Spotlight

Our second daughter was born in the spring of 2009. In the 38th week on an ultrasound they noticed that baby's head was small and they thought she was only going to weigh around 5 pounds. I was induced just 3 days later and to the surprise of the staff in the room I delivered a healthy baby girl that weighed 6 pounds 12 ounces. She had great APGAR scores, breathing, and ate like a champ. The day after she was born I asked our doctor why her head was so small. I still remember him looking her over very carefully (finding nothing else to be concerned about) and saying that he wasn't terribly worried about that since she wasn't big and her proportions were good. Life was good. She was perfect.

Three and a half months later I was picking my daughter up from her learning center and I noticed that she wasn't doing anything the other kids in the room were doing. I wondered if all the other children were prodigies. After the initial doctor's appointment and subsequent physical therapy sessions we were eventually referred to a neurologist. After meeting with the doctor she agreed that something was wrong and ran blood work along with ordering an MRI.

Two days before Christmas I received a call on my cell phone from the neurologist while I was in Sam's Club. I still remember walking to the mattress aisle so that I could hear the phone better. The doctor said she had a diagnosis that explained all of Alexis' symptoms. My daughter has Bilateral Perisylvian Polymicrogyria (and borderline microcephaly). Her brain didn't form in the typical manner in utero due to either a genetic issue or catching a virus that looks like nothing more than a common cold (cytomegalovirus). The doctor said there was no need to follow-up unless seizures started occurring and she should continue receiving therapies. It turns out that even after working 20 years in neurology this doctor had never seen a case of PMG before. After depressing Internet searches it didn't take us long to find a book called "Schuyler's Monster" by the father of a girl with the same condition. It was a great book that offered us a bit of hope about our daughter's future. It inspired us to work even harder to help Alexis.

Alexis has developmental delays in most areas and continues to work hard for everything she accomplishes. We have worked with a small army of therapists, teachers, and other specialists (PT, OT, ST, GI, Ophthalmology, Audiology, and the team at NEEC) to gain new skills. She strives to do most everything that everyone else does (no matter how long it takes her to master a new skill). This is especially evident with her love of copying her older sister, Mariska. Although almost entirely non-verbal, and lacking almost all practical use of her mouth, Alexis uses gestures (we often lovingly refer to them as charades), sign language, and an AAC device (a small computer that can speak when buttons are pressed) to communicate. When we switched to NEEC in 2012 they didn't bat an eye when she came back from an illness with a NG tube running out of her nose and again no trouble when we switched to a Mic-Key button (feeding tube in her stomach) a few weeks later. In fact, we quickly learned that her teachers were more familiar with this new equipment than her parents. I remember being very impressed with the teachers and staff for such a smooth transition.

Alexis is truly her own unique individual and her condition contains no roadmap for the future. Never has there been a child with her unique combination of sweetness, passion, stubbornness, independence, fearlessness, and excitement. These days some of Alexis' favorite things to do are going to the zoo, riding horses, playing dress-up, going down slides at the park, practice letter recognition, riding her bike, playing with baby dolls, and weekly practice for the Rainbows special needs cheer team. We have many struggles on a daily basis raising a daughter with multiple special needs, but we are comforted that she is in such good hands at NEEC. It means the world to us that each teacher and staff member at Northland Early Education Center treats Alexis with love and respect and doesn't take her "off" days personally.

Finally, it is inspiring to raise someone that is so excited to experience all the world has to offer. We're so lucky she's still perfect...

Shelly and Tom Gifford



## Alumni Spotlight



My water broke when I was 33 weeks along, after teaching the first week back from summer break. After two days of steroids to develop her lungs a little more she showed up with a head full of caramel red hair. She seemed perfect! She had a small hole in her heart that the doctors were sure would close up on its own. We hung out in the NICU for 13 days while she gained weight and learned to eat on her own. We got her home and she gained weight and blessed us each and every day. We could not get her into the childcare facility we had chosen because she was two months early. It seemed to be an answer to our prayers when we found an in-home daycare that in that moment just felt right. Gwen was an easy baby who was sleeping through the night at six-months-old. Her lungs were highly susceptible to allergies and anything such as a cold almost always turned into bronchitis or pneumonia, but we were doing great despite.

Then the worst day of our lives happened when she was 14-months-old. I received a call from the in-home daycare that I needed to get to the house because Gwen had fallen and was not acting right. I drove faster than legally allowed. When I got in the house, my perfect angel was completely lifeless and unconscious. At the hospital, I learned that someone in that house had violently shaken and shoved my princess. She had a subdural hematoma (a bleed between the two halves of the brain) and retinal hemorrhaging (the blood vessels of her eyes had burst). These two things combined ONLY happen when shaken baby syndrome has occurred. Legally, I was not able to have any contact with her and the police department began their investigation of this woman, her home, and the police in her life.

We came home again from the single most horrific event anyone can ever suffer through. We were told at the many doctor's appointments that followed that her eyes were going to be fine, but it could be weeks, months, or years before we saw any of the effects of the traumatic brain injury. Gwendolyn seemed to be on track with her development until the expectations on her social skills came into play.



We struggled through several more daycare centers until we were given one of the greatest gifts ever, Northland Early Education Center. When we got there it was no longer, "Gwendolyn is a horrible child" or "Gwendolyn is a severe behavior problem". We were now hearing things explained to us about her daily experiences and we were learning terms that meant something and we were being given the language to explain things to a specialist. This is exactly what Gwendolyn and her dad and I needed. We saw a developmental specialist who diagnosed Gwendolyn with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Asperger's Syndrome) and early ADHD. The Blue Room teachers in the three-to-five year old classroom began to work with her with this new knowledge and they assisted us in getting her into Early Childhood Special Education through the North Kansas City School District. How amazing it was to see Gwen get on a bus each day at NEEC and go to her classes. We saw immediate changes for the better. The knowing gave us power. Gwendolyn learned differently and saw the world from a different perspective.

Gwendolyn graduated from the Blue Room and began Kindergarten just as she was turning six-years-old. Her Individualized Education Plan (IEP) was in place and she was actually in school with several friends from her class at NEEC. It took two months of school and struggling before she was formally diagnosed with ADHD. She began medication and it wasn't two weeks before everyone was seeing very positive differences. At her last IEP meeting we have learned that Gwendolyn is flourishing in school and learning at such a rapid pace they are referring her for SAGE (gifted education). She is an extremely happy child and she can light up a room. The thought of never having NEEC in our lives is scary. This very special place will forever be in our hearts and we are forever in their debt.

Sincerely, Ryan & Lori Goodman



## 2013 Supporters

As a 501(c)3 not for profit organization, NEEC must rely on the generosity of community members, foundations and corporations for nearly 20 percent of its annual budget. Forty percent of NEEC's operating income is derived from parent paid tuition and the other 40 percent comes from county and state fees for services through contracts with the Missouri First Steps program, the Clay County Developmental Disabilities Resource Board, and the Platte County Board of Services. Each year NEEC strives to diversify its funding pool and form relationships with new community members and donors. Our goal is not necessarily to receive funding from every new person we meet; we simply want to convey the message of how important quality, fully-inclusive early education services are for all young children.

The Board of Directors, children, families and staff of NEEC would like to thank the following corporations, foundations and individuals, as well as the businesses and individuals who provided items or services for, and attended, our Annual Pioneer Run and 12th Annual Diamond K Ranch Party & Auction. We are grateful for their generous support they provided us in 2013. Thanks to the charitable spirit of our donors, NEEC is able to further our mission and continue shaping the future of children through quality early education and therapeutic intervention while teaching compassion for diversity.

### \$30,000 - \$20,000

Kenneth and Roswitha Schaffer

### \$15,000 - \$10,000

Irven E. and Nevada P. Linscomb Foundation  
PNC Foundation

### \$9,999 - \$5,000

Oppenstein Brothers Foundation

### \$4,999 - \$1,000

National Marketing Resources  
Kohl's Cares  
R.A. Long Foundation  
Harvest Ball Society  
John Stockinger  
Capitol Federal Foundation  
Nordstrom, Inc.  
Camo chic.com  
United Way of Greater Kansas City Foundation  
Royals Charities  
Harry Arnote Charitable Foundation  
The Arc of Clay and Platte Counties, Inc.  
North Kansas City Hospital  
CVS Caremark  
Lisa Pelofsky & Associates, Inc.  
The Walmart Foundation

### \$999 - \$500

Cobalt Astra Group  
David and Mary Sallee  
Insko Industries, Inc.  
Steve & Kim Thorne  
Thad and Jill Bartlett  
Dave & Chris Crockett  
Dobbe & Mary Alice Dobberstine  
Kansas City Life Insurance Co. CIS Cares (IT Dept.)  
LCS Companies, LLC  
Lou Rockford's Catering  
Shoal Creek Dental Care  
Soroptomist International of Liberty, MO  
Susan Eason  
The Power Group

### \$499 - \$100

Enterprise Bank & Trust  
Kansas City Southern  
Mark & Lorry Kelly  
Faubion United Methodist Women  
Christopher's Lawn & Landscape  
Dan Hirstein  
Denys & Jill Ashby  
First Missouri Bank  
Foto's Office Systems  
Hawk Health and Fitness - Pro Athlete, Inc.  
Ifft & Co. PA  
JE Dunn Construction  
Jeff & Michelle Marriott  
Jeff & Teresa Provost  
Kearney Trust Company  
Kelly & Pittman Law Firm  
Mark & Carolyn Lacy  
Mark Anderson & Denise Wheeler  
Matt Hurd  
Platte-Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Tom & Shelly Gifford  
Tony & Suzie Grafton  
Judith Goolsby  
Donald and Carol Lazar  
Gary and Linda Clevenger  
Larry & Sue Clevenger  
Nate and Andrea McKown  
Steve & Kathleen Hermes  
Lifetouch  
ERISE IP, P.A.

### Freightquote

John and Beth O'Bryan  
Mac's Sportswear  
Pur-O-Zone, Inc.  
The Running Well Store  
Delores Flexer  
Alan Grimes  
Betty Clevenger  
Charlie & Brenda Carpenter  
Cheryl Galloway  
David & Annette Vietze  
Cindy and Glen Humbird  
Duane and Ruth Kepler  
Eric Grampp  
Heather Kappes  
Northland Festivals, Inc.  
Russell & Connie Fortune  
Brian & Tina Kemp

### \$99 - Under

Meadowlark Extension Club  
Dr. Ganesh Gupta  
Kelli Partridge  
Kent & Kathy Froman  
Mark & Jane Van Elling  
Marlene Dinkmeyer  
Tammy Butler  
Town and Country Building Services  
Deborah L. Ferrell-Day  
Coltan H. McCoy  
Community America Credit Union  
J. Murphy and Jenelle Graber  
Dailygood by Goodsearch  
Katy Lee  
Wally Vives  
Carla Davidson  
Brian and Niki Monteil  
Jaime Taylor

### In-Kind Contributions

Antioch Printing  
Anytime Fitness in Kearney  
Barry Pointe Family Care  
Bart's Electric Co.  
Belvoir Winery  
Branson's IMAX Entertainment Complex  
Brant's Clothing  
Brent Webb  
BRGR Kitchen + Bar  
Bristol Seafood Grill  
Bruce & Lorna Murphy  
Buffalo Wild Wings  
Carolyn's Country Cousin's Pumpkin Patch and Market  
Christian Brothers Automotive  
Christopher's Lawn & Landscape  
Classy Chocolate  
Cobalt Astra Group  
Complete Nutrition in Zona Rosa  
Cosentino's Price Chopper in Liberty  
Coterie Theatre  
Crowley Furniture  
Crown Center  
CW Boutique  
Cycle City Bike and Running Company  
Dentistry for Children  
Discovery Center of Springfield  
Dr. Dohrmann Chiropractic & Acupuncture  
Dr. Robert G. Marx  
Eclektica Salon  
Famous Dave's BBQ  
Fiorella's Jack Stack Barbecue  
First Missouri Bank  
Fun-Run Indoor Play Center of Liberty  
Ginger Sue's

### Glow Imagery

Goods & Goodies  
Gordon Biersch Brewery  
Great Wolf Lodge  
Hair Lines & Skin Tech Day Spa  
Hawk Health & Fitness  
Helzberg Diamonds  
Hilton Omaha  
Hilton President Kansas City Hotel  
Hilton Promenade at Branson Landing  
Holiday Inn- Aladdin  
Houlihans  
Hughes Brothers Theatre  
Ideal Image of Zona Rosa  
InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza  
Jeff & Kimberly Lewis  
Jeff & Michelle Marriott  
Jim Stafford Theatre  
Joe's Crab Shack  
John R. Green Company  
Jos. A. Bank  
Kansas City Chiefs Football Club  
Kansas City Marriott Downtown  
Kansas City Repertory Theatre  
Kansas City Royals  
Kansas City Theater League  
Kansas City Zoo  
KC Hopps, LTD  
Kona Grill  
KRM, Inc. - 54th Street Grill & Bar  
L & L Distributing  
Mark & Jane Von Elling  
Mark Kay - Kay's Quilting & Gift Shop  
McKeever's Price Chopper in Parkville  
Meierotto Midwest Jewelers & Homeless & Associates, LLC.  
Michelle Clark, Mary Kay Consultant  
Missouri Sports Hall of Fame  
MottleyCakes  
Moyes Eye Center  
National Marketing Resources  
National WWI Museum  
NEEC Blue Baboons  
NEEC Board of Directors  
NEEC Brown Bears  
NEEC Goldfish  
NEEC Green Grasshoppers  
NEEC Orange Orangutans  
NEEC Pink Puffins  
NEEC Purple Pollywogs  
NEEC Red Ladybugs  
NEEC Yellow Bumblebees  
Nick & Jake's  
Nigro Law Firm, Elizabeth Hurley, Attorney at Law  
Nina Eason  
Northstar Garden Center  
Olive Garden  
Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium  
Panera Bread  
Paradise Park  
Parkville Mini Golf  
Parkville Title Boxing Club  
Paul Mesner Puppets  
Pete & Mac's Pet Resort  
PF Chang's China Bistro  
Pickled Curiosities by Natasha Upton  
Powell Gardens  
Premium Waters, Inc.  
Prenatal Imaging Center, LLC  
Quotations - A Fashion Statement  
Rancho Grande Cantina  
Red X  
Ride the Ducks  
Rio Salon & Spa

### Rock Stars & Divas

Room 39  
Salt & Light Photography / Videography  
Sam's Club  
Sarah Bruce  
Scentsy Package  
Season's 52  
Shoal Creek Dental Care  
Shoal Creek Golf Club  
Silver Dollar City  
Six Flags in St. Louis  
Smallcakes a Cupcakery  
Sorella's  
Sporting Kansas City  
Sports Authority  
Starlight Theatre  
Steve & Kim Thorne  
Steve & Nicole Shead  
Sugar Mamma's Custom Cakes & Kids Cakes  
Target  
Terri Teghtmeyer  
The Beer Kitchen  
The Bell  
The Carnivore Store  
The Cheesecake Factory  
The Kick Theater  
The Landing  
The Legends  
The McCoys Public House  
The Midland by AMC  
The Polished Edge  
The Q Hotel at Westport  
The Running Well Store  
The Track Family Fun Parks  
The Westin Crown Center  
Theatre League, Inc.  
Tiffany Greens Golf Club  
Union Station - Kansas City  
University Plaza Hotel & Convention Center  
Veterinary Center of Liberty  
Whiteside Jewelry  
Wicklund CarStar  
William Jewell College  
Wines by Jennifer  
Zona Rosa

# Northland

EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

8630 North Oak Trafficway  
Kansas City, MO 64155



NON-PROFIT  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
KANSAS CITY MO  
PERMIT NO 1986

## 2013 Board of Directors

Michelle Wood  
President

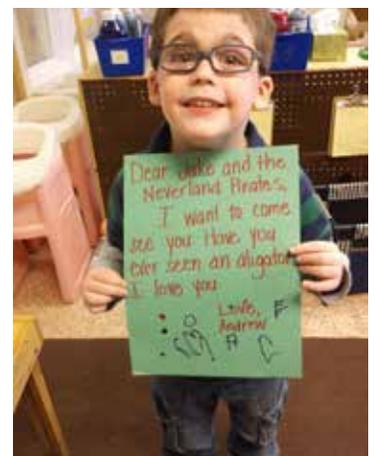


Michelle Marriott  
Vice President



Stephanie Wiley  
Treasurer

Jill Ashby  
Secretary



Lisa Hurley

Sandy Walker

Tammy Butler

Chris Gardner