

# LVCC ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



Lehigh Valley Children's Centers

# OUR MISSION

LVCC provides high quality early childhood education and childcare to promote healthy child development, meet the needs of families, and encourage children to discover the joy of learning



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**Kristen Onder**  
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## LVCC EXECUTIVE STAFF 2023-2024

**Charles Dinofrio, M.Ed**  
President and CEO

**Karen Kemmerer, MBA**  
CFO & Vice President | Finance

**Jessika Nasatka**  
Vice President Early Education & Child Care Programs

## FINANCIALS

Over 60% of LVCC revenue stems from contributions, grants, and government subsidies Your support helps us continue providing the highest level of early education in the Greater Lehigh Valley.

## REVENUE | \$14,981,230

Contributions and Grants	\$6,664,455
Subsidized Child Care	\$3,163,863
Tuition	\$2,119,452
Child Care Food Program	\$2,598,929
Investment Income	\$393,924
Other Income	\$40,607

## EXPENSES | \$14,273,695

Child Care	\$11,842,037
Administration	\$2,362,729
Fund Raising	\$68,929



## A MESSAGE FROM CHARLES

On behalf of Lehigh Valley Children's Centers Inc., I would like to applaud our team as we continue to navigate the current child care crisis. In the face of this issue, we remain focused on our mission and vision by advocating that every child receives the resources needed to succeed.

The childcare workforce issue is a national one. Recently, I was one of the presenters at a multi-state advocacy event in West Virginia, discussing how the United States Small Business Administration can ensure fair and livable working conditions for all early childhood professionals.

Over the past year, LVCC built stronger relationships with our partners, advocated for accessible childcare for all families, and continued to be a leader in high-quality early education by developing our teachers.

Access to high-quality childcare is critical to both the educational advancement of a child and the economic security of a neighborhood. In response to the unmet and growing need for childcare, LVCC opened its first center in Jim Thorpe through a partnership with St. Joseph's Regional Academy and the Jim Thorpe Rotary Club.

We grew our partnerships by collaborating with the Da Vinci Science Center and the Lehigh Valley Arts and Cultural Alliance to bring STEAM to life with a 120-foot mural featuring the likeness of LVCC children.

Finally, the LVCC Coaldale Center received the gold award from The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), recognizing best practices in equity and inclusion through early education and child care. The hard work of our Coaldale team has continued to grow LVCC's culture to have a diverse and fully inclusive setting for all children.

The LVCC team continues to overcome adversity in the early education world to achieve positive outcomes for our children. As I look back at our achievements, it was possible due to our hardworking and dedicated team. Together, we achieved our goals in ensuring children and families receive the highest quality of services.

Our core values of high-quality early education, promoting healthy child development, meeting the needs of families, and encouraging children to discover the joy of learning have helped us to continue to move forward. We thank the many community partners and donors who join us in our commitment to be an organization where education begins for children.

Sincerely,



Charles Dinofrio, M.Ed  
President & CEO



# INFANTS TO INFINITE POTENTIAL



Lehigh Valley Children's Centers prides itself on being a local leader in early childhood education and childcare. Serving four counties and educating over 1,500 children a year from 6 weeks of age through 12 years old, we believe in helping children reach their high potential.

The cost of services nationwide has made one fact clear: childcare is an economic barrier for families to enter the workforce. As costs grow, more parents are forgoing their career to stay home with their child.

By providing no-cost services such as Infant/Toddler Contract Slots and Pre-K Counts, more families are getting the resources they deserve.

## LEARNING THROUGH CHILD DIRECTED PLAY

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) children learn best with "child-initiated, child-directed, teacher-supported play as the essential component of the program,".

LVCC's programs are child-centered. Learning occurs through active play and hands-on experiences.

The Creative Curriculum is used in infant and toddler classrooms and World of Wonders is used in preschool age classrooms to tailor our

programs to meet the developmental needs, abilities, and interests of each child.

These curriculum help children grow intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially. The Creative Curriculum and World of Wonders are aligned with local school district curriculum and Pennsylvania State Early Learning Standards.

Activities in the classroom span various subjects such as literacy, language, math, science, social studies, and music; all delivering a well rounded educational experience preparing children best for kindergarten.

**569 CHILDREN GOING INTO KINDERGARTEN know at least 70% of the alphabet**



**1500<sup>+</sup>**  
**CHILDREN ENROLLED**



## DETERMINING SCHOOL READINESS

Planning and organizing a successful family literacy training requires many considerations. Since 2019, LVCC implements Teach Me to Read at Home during the Pre-K/Preschool school year. This program is designed to empower families to be their child's first and best teacher.

Teach Me To Read At Home is designed for success. Each section builds on the previous, and is developed for both family and children to succeed when they are going through the activities. LVCC invests fully in family engagement because when all of the pieces of the puzzle are together everyone achieves more, and the child is ready for their future.

**500 FREE BOOKS**  
provided to LVCC families  
to build home libraries



## GEARING UP FOR KINDERGARTEN

Starting school is a major moment for both a child and their family. Children need to have support and structure that readies them for class. We offer Gearing Up for Kindergarten, classes to prepare children and their families for school success.

Parents and children attend four summer-time Gearing Up for Kindergarten classes led by an early education specialist from Penn State Cooperative Extension.

**MORE THAN 40**  
family education  
workshops held

The specialist teaches parents about effective parenting, routine management, the skills their children need for school, and how to support their child's education. Families receive materials and instructions for mini-lessons that they can do at home while the children work on Kindergarten preparation activities with PA Pre-K Counts teachers. At the end of each session, the parents and children come together for a joint family activity.

## WATERFORD EARLY LEARNING

The Waterford Early Learning online platform provides a comprehensive, adaptive curriculum that supports young learners in developing essential reading, math, and science skills. The program helps close the achievement gap between economic families, builds critical skills, and reaches all early learners. Its engaging multimedia activities and personalized learning paths ensure that each child progresses at their own pace, preparing them for future academic success.

**471,510 TOTAL MINUTES**  
spent on Waterford Early Learning  
by preschool aged children last year



# NAVIGATING AFFORDABLE

## AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE LOWERS BARRIERS

The determination of a child's academic success is often an economic one. When all families have access to the same resources regardless of income, communities thrive. High-quality childcare delivers positive results at the most crucial moments of a child's development.

Scholarships are often the only way that families without subsidies can afford childcare. Receiving an LVCC scholarship enables parents to work or train for a new career knowing their child is safe in a high quality childcare program.

**51%** of children come from low income households



## PA PRE-K COUNTS

LVCC is a proud provider of Pennsylvania's state-funded preschool program, Pre-K Counts. The program is free for those who qualify and operates on an academic calendar year (late August - June).

A family can apply for PA Pre-K Counts if their child is currently three or four years old and their household income falls at or below 300% of the federal poverty level.

**650+** children enrolled in PA Pre-K Counts at LVCC

All LVCC PA Pre-K Counts lead teachers hold a bachelors degree or higher in early education or a related field, a Pennsylvania Certification in Early Childhood education, and engage in ongoing professional development to stay current with educational practices and regulations.

Children are selected based on age, income, developmental delays, and other risk factors.



## ITCS

Families of children younger than three receive help as well with our Infant Toddler Contracted Slots (ITCS) program at select LVCC locations. This free program operates year round and serves Child Care Works eligible infants and toddlers.

# AFFORDABILITY

## CRISIS IN CHILDCARE

Lehigh Valley Children's Centers believes in equitable and affordable child care for all. In the Summer of 2024, we joined other Pennsylvania child care professionals and bipartisan lawmakers at the Capitol Building to urge lawmakers to increase childcare funding to recruit and retain qualified teachers.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Preparing our teachers to lead the next generation of bright thinkers has always been our top priority at LVCC. Each August, our team heads to DeSales University for two days of trainings.

During our annual professional development days, our educators learn of recent developments in the early childhood education industry and effective ways to incorporate them into the classroom.

Partnering with our certified consultants, the team learned about effective and meaningful ways to communicate and interact with children, how to best address special needs and challenging behaviors; how to build positive relationships with children and their families and much more.

Professional Development Days allow us to celebrate career milestones with the LVCC team. It is the only time each year where everyone in LVCC is together under one roof for a true celebration of our educators.

Thank you to our incredible staff for two wonderful days of learning and laughs.





# PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

## INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION

Recognizing that every child learns differently, teachers at LVCC individualize lesson plans to meet each child's unique needs based on appropriate developmental milestones. Children enrolled in a LVCC classroom grow within the areas of social-emotional, language, cognitive, and physical development.

LVCC measures development using the accepted assessment by the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) - Teaching Strategies GOLD; which follows widely held expectations for children from birth through third grade.

Early literacy plays a key role in enabling early learning experiences associated with academic achievement, higher graduation rates, and enhances productivity later in life.



## ENTERING THE WORLD OF WONDERS

For the 2024-2025 school year, LVCC has implemented the The World of Wonders curriculum by McGraw Hill, designed for early learners ages 3 to 5, aiming to build a strong foundation for early literacy.

The curriculum features instructions tailored for young learners with cross-curricular activities that integrates subjects like math, science, social studies, music, and movement.

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on social-emotional learning, helping children understand and manage their emotions, build relationships, and develop empathy.

By partnering with McGraw Hill, a trusted name in childhood education, children are more prepared for Kindergarten than ever before for when taught at Lehigh Valley Children's Centers.





# SUMMER PROGRAMMING

The fun at LVCC doesn't have to end when school is out of session. Thanks to supporters of our program enrichment fund, children get to experience a world of firsts.

Do you remember the first time you went strawberry picking? The first time you saw a theater performance? The first time you met an otter?

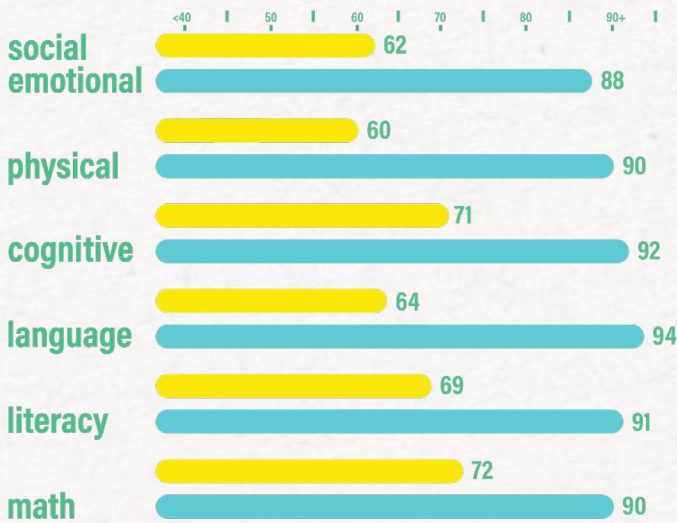
When children have their eyes open to more parts of the world, their curiosity and love of learning is unlocked. Summer program enrichment is provided at no additional cost to families with children enrolled in a summer school age classroom.



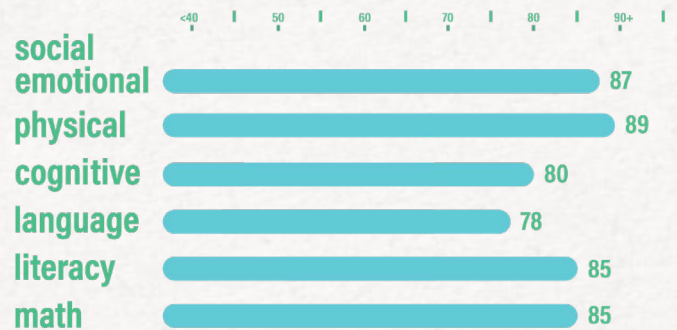
## DETERMINING KINDERGARTEN READINESS

LVCC utilizes Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI) to measure essential pre-literacy and oral language skills needed for kindergarten. The PELI assessment measures alphabet knowledge, vocabulary and oral language, phonological awareness, and listening comprehension.

### Kindergarten Readiness: Teaching Strategies GOLD learning outcomes based on 624 children aged 3 through 5 years old



### Infant/Toddler Development: Teaching Strategies GOLD learning outcomes based on 148 children aged 3 through 5 years old



Commonly held expectations of children's development are monitored at LVCC. Physical, literacy, language, and cognitive ability were the biggest improvements in the 2023-2024 school year.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## DA VINCI SCIENCE CENTER

Lehigh Valley Children's Centers values its partnerships and collaborations with all community organizations and groups. At the forefront of these partnerships is the Da Vinci Science Center.

The Da Vinci Science Center partners with LVCC for joint grant proposals, in-center science activities, parent education workshops, and field trips for our preschool and school-age groups. This partnership enhances children's experiences at LVCC to increase their knowledge of STEAM.

The Da Vinci Science Center and Lehigh Valley Children's Centers believe that if we work together to enhance experiences for the children of the Lehigh Valley, we enhance the future leaders of tomorrow.

Children learn foundational concepts through the enrichment programs at LVCC. Learning STEAM skills and concepts early on enhances opportunities for play and discussion within the classroom. These skills children learn when engaging with STEAM concepts in preschool are transferable and valuable across many aspects of their lives.

“Study the science of art; study the art of science. Realize that everything connects to everything else.”  
— LEONARDO DA VINCI





## STEAM THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

Located at the Da Vinci Science Center, a 120 ft. mural featuring images of LVCC children experiencing the worlds of science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) can be found. LVCC partnered with the Da Vinci Science Center, Lehigh Valley Arts and Cultural Alliance, and Bethlehem School Teacher and muralist Carla Majczan to visualize STEAM through the eyes of a child!

### Putting the "A" in STEAM

Arts are an essential component of a truly balanced curriculum. LVCC supports children's creative minds and designs programs around STEAM education. Introducing arts into STEM, we offer positive benefits for children in early education programs. It makes STEM more understandable and enhances learning through design.

### Community Day

On March 28, LVCC children and our project partners gathered at the Judith Chase Early Learning Center for our first look at the mural. Within the Alliance Hall gymnasium, massive panels were strewn throughout. Hundreds of children contributed to the mural by painting segments, with some having their likenesses appearing on the panels.

### The Affinity Continuum

On July 24th, the official mural dedication ceremony was attended by community partners across the entire Lehigh Valley, with the mural marking the spirit of creativity, imagination, and collaboration for years to come! The mural would not be possible without the gracious support from Dr. Marvin Charles and Cheryl Koze Bohannon.



## LEHIGH VALLEY ZOO + STAFF APPRECIATION DAY

Children get to meet otters, giraffes, red pandas and more at the Lehigh Valley Zoo! The Lehigh Valley Zoo has been an incredible partner for years, and in the winter of 2023, we celebrated the hard work of our team by hosting our staff appreciation day at their Winter Lights spectacular.

Open exclusively to our team and their family, we enjoyed hot chocolate, roasting marshmallows over an open fire with Santa himself making an appearance.



## KIWANIS CLUB OF ALLENTOWN AND NORTHEAST ALLENTOWN

LVCC values its longstanding partnerships with our local Kiwanis Clubs. Their support brings winter parties, picnics, and more to our children.

## ARTIST IN RESIDENCY ARTSQUEST + CRAYOLA

We partnered with ArtsQuest in coordination with the PA Council on the Arts for our Summer Artist in Residency Program. Twenty children at LVCC Union Blvd expanded their listening and understanding skills, expression of feelings through art, and built on objectives derived from the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards.



Artist Claire Marcus was selected to lead the program, culminating in an artist showcase. LVCC would like to thank Crayola for their generous contribution towards making our artist in residency program possible.

## ST. LUKE'S SPORTS CENTER

At the St. Luke's Sports Center, children build an early interest in sports that can lead to healthier habits later in life. Combined with school sports teams requiring certain academic benchmarks, what happens on the field contributes directly to what happens in the classroom.



# IMPROVED PLAYGROUNDS

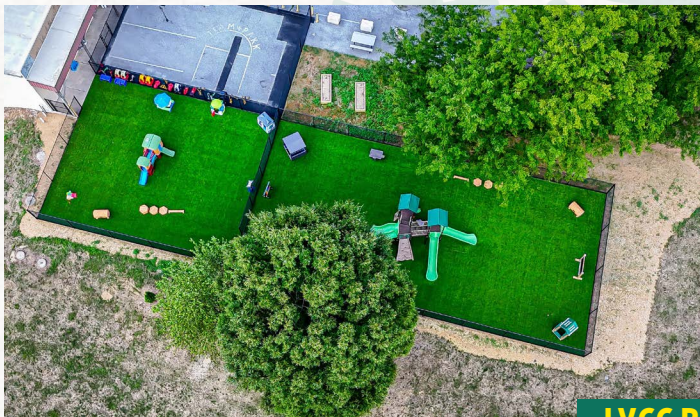
High quality outdoor play contributes positively to a child's development. Outdoor play refines a child's gross motor skills and social skills. Great friendships are forged when on the turf.

Through generous grants from our donors, LVCC was able to rebuild several of our playgrounds for a new generation of learners.

Thanks to the grant from the Trexler Trust, we updated our playgrounds at LVCC's Park Ave Center. The infant/toddler and preschool/school age playgrounds had new surfaces, fencing, and new play structures installed. Hard to clean mulch was replaced with fast drying turf. The Trexler Trust also previously provided a grant towards our playgrounds renovations at our LVCC Fairmont center.

Thank you to the R.K Laros Foundation for their grant towards the new playground at LVCC at St. Luke's. This fenced playground features new play structures, running paths, and large flower planters for children to experience the miracle of plant life before their own eyes.

This gorgeous open air space made all the more beautiful with the new playground primarily serves the children of workers at St. Luke's Health Network.



## JIM THORPE ROTARY CLUB

After surveying Jim Thorpe residents, the Rotary Club found that a lack of childcare in the area was a significant barrier to employment. We opened the doors of LVCC at St. Joseph's Academy to serve this need in the community. The Jim Thorpe Rotary club was instrumental to our success, and helped connect us with the NEPA Alliance and the Appalachian Regional Commission.



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

WHO HELPS US TO DELIVER OUR MISSION TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN NEED.

DONORS | JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024

## DISCOVERY CLUB (\$10,000+)

Harry C. Trexler Trust  
Lehigh Valley Community Foundation  
Dr. Marvin Charles and Cheryl Koze Bohannon  
Julius & Katheryn Hommer Foundation  
Two Rivers Health & Wellness Foundation

## CURIOSITY CLUB (\$5,000+)

UGI Utilities, Inc.  
Carbon County Community Foundation  
Rotary Club of Jim Thorpe  
Mrs. Sandra Richard  
PA Partners for Education, LLC  
Packworld USA  
The Dexter F. & Dorothy H. Baker Fdn  
The PNC Foundation

## IMAGINATION CLUB (\$1,000+)

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The Ruth P. Seruga Charitable Trust  
American Bank  
Mr. & Mrs. Terrence P. Kennedy  
Crayola  
Rob and Kristen Bennett  
Ms. S. Catherine Kane  
Carbon County Community Foundation  
Warren Gericke & M. Blair Couch  
Fidelity Charitable  
Mr. James Coker  
Ms. Kathryn Stagl  
The Fred J. Jandl Foundation  
The George and Judith Arangio Family Foundation

## ADVENTURER CLUB (UP TO \$1,000)

Mr. & Mrs. David R. Drake  
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Lehigh Valley Institute for Learning in Retirement  
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Mr. William Derhammer  
Mrs. Judith Passaro  
Ms. Anna L. Kershner  
Thomas and Fay Fenstermacher  
Carol Pope

## WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS OUR MISSION?

You can help positively impact families in need of childcare.

Contact us at 610.820-5333 ext 203 or [lvccmarketing@gmail.com](mailto:lvccmarketing@gmail.com) to partner with a leading non profit childcare provider in the Lehigh Valley.





# SMILES NEARBY

WITH DOZENS OF CLASSROOMS AND MORE THAN THIRTY CENTERS ACROSS FOUR COUNTIES, A SMILING FACE AT A LEHIGH VALLEY CHILDREN'S CENTER IS NEVER FAR.

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

1501 Lehigh St, Suite 208 | Allentown, PA 1810  
www.lvcconline.org | 610-820-5333

## ALLENTOWN

LVCC at Allen High School • 106 N. 17th St  
LVCC at CAI Learning • 1033 W. Washington St.  
LVCC at Hays Elementary • 1223 W. Gordon St.  
LVCC's Judith Chase Early Learning Center • 540 Chew St.  
LVCC at Muhlenberg School • 21st & Washington St.  
LVCC at Salisbury Elementary School • 1400 Gaskill Ave.  
LVCC at South Mountain • 2002 S. Albert St.  
LVCC on Union Boulevard • 555 Union Boulevard  
LVCC on Walnut Street • 1145 Walnut St.

## BETHLEHEM

LVCC's Campus Center • 410 E. 5th St.  
LVCC's Fowler Center • 938 Main St.  
LVCC at Monocacy Manor • 395 Bridle Path Rd.  
LVCC at St. Luke's • 729 Delaware Ave.

## COALDALE

LVCC at Coaldale • 150 W. Phillips St.

## EASTON

LVCC at Avona School • 2317 Front St.  
LVCC at Forks School • 1709 Richmond Rd.  
LVCC at March School • 429 Reeder St.  
LVCC at Palmer School • 3050 Green Pond Rd.  
LVCC at Shawnee School • 1315 Echo Trail  
LVCC at Spring Garden ELC • 401 W. Berwick St. #103  
LVCC at Tracy School • 1243 Tatamy Rd.  
LVCC at Wilson School • 301 S. 21st St.

## EMMAUS

LVCC at Lincoln School • 233 Seem St.  
LVCC at Seven Generations • 33 E. Minor St.

## JIM THORPE

LVCC at St. Joseph's Academy • 25 W. 6th St.

## NAZARETH

LVCC at Lower Nazareth School • 4422 Newburg Rd.  
LVCC at Nazareth Intermediate School • 355 Tatamy Rd.  
LVCC at Shafer School • 49 S. Liberty St.

## NEFFS

LVCC on Park Avenue • 3880 Park Avenue

## PALMERTON

LVCC Palmerton • 480 Delaware Ave.  
LVCC at S.S. Palmer • 298 Lafayette Ave.  
LVCC at Towamensing • 7920 Interchange Rd.

## WHITEHALL

LVCC on Fairmont • 1325 Fairmont St.





1501 Lehigh Street, Suite 208  
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**THANK  
YOU!**

