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## **Randolph Partnership for Children Celebrates 20th Annual Night of the Stars**

**Archdale, N.C. (May 12, 2023)** — The Randolph Partnership for Children proudly hosted its 20th annual Night of the Stars event on May 11 at the Lazy E Events Center in Archdale, NC. This milestone event continued the tradition of celebrating early childhood educators for their exceptional contributions to the healthy development of young children in Randolph County. The event also honored teachers who have recently completed degrees or certificates in early childhood education.

Beverly Mooney, the owner of Millstone Creek Orchard, graciously emceed the event, which featured a keynote address by Dr. Sheri Grace of Piedmont Forest School. Dr. Grace's speech emphasized play activities, such as pretend play and storytelling, and their part in early literacy development.

"My concern is that, when we insist that children stay still, stay quiet, and stay indoors and refrain from interacting with one another so that we can "teach" them letters and academic skills, we displace the experiences kids should be having," said Dr. Grace in her keynote.

Lisa Hayworth, Executive Director of the Randolph Partnership for Children, presented awards to the honorees, highlighting their dedication and commitment to providing high-quality early childhood education.

"It was heartening to see so many of our county's early educators come together to celebrate their colleagues' educational achievements," said Lisa Hayworth, Executive Director of the Randolph Partnership for Children. She continued, "In a profession as demanding as early childhood education, it is vital to have peer support, and one could certainly sense that support and those feelings of pride in this celebration."

In a special segment of the event, Oliver Helsabeck, Campus Minister and Director of the Winston Salem Foundation, presented the Susan Helsabeck Scholarships to Cindy Booth, of Neighbor's Grove Child Development Center, and Brittany Lamar, of Precious Memories Preschool.

The Night of the Stars event recognized seven educators who completed their Associate Degrees in early childhood education, and three educators who completed their Early Childhood Education Certificates.

Graduates recognized for earning an Associate Degrees were Berenice Avila, an NC Pre-K Teacher at Randleman Enrichment Center; Savannah Belcher; toddler teacher at The Kids of



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Hope; Jazmin Bennett, toddler teacher at Shepherd's Way Day School; Victoria Brinkley, preschool teacher at North Asheboro Head Start; Kathy Coble, twos teacher at Building Blocks Academy; Alicia Cruz Ortega, twos teacher, Precious Memories Preschool; Morgan Drink, teacher at Head Start; Candace Hinojos, toddler teacher at First Church of God Day School; and Ashley LaPoint, preschool teacher at First Church of God.

Jessica White, NC Pre-K teacher at Ramseur Elementary, was honored for earning her Bachelor of Science at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Educators recognized for obtaining their Early Childhood Education Credentials were Autumn Hall, teacher at Randleman Enrichment Center; Melissa Osborne, teacher at Randleman Enrichment Center; and Raegan Thomas, School Age Teacher at Randleman Enrichment Center.

For earning their Early Childhood Educator's Certificate Haley Hammer, NC Pre-K Teacher at First Step Early Learning Center; and Savannah Law, school-age teacher at Shepherd's Way Day School were honored.

Hannah Staley, infant teacher at The Kids of Hope, was recognized for earning her Infants, Toddlers, and Twos Certificate.

These achievements signify the educators' steadfast commitment to their own professional development and their passion for providing the best possible education to the young children of Randolph County.

The Randolph Partnership for Children's Night of the Stars serves as an essential reminder of the vital role early childhood educators play in shaping the future of our community. Their unwavering dedication to nurturing and inspiring young minds ensures that the children of Randolph County will continue to thrive and grow into well-rounded individuals.



Dr. Sherri Grace, from the Piedmont Forest Preschool.



Oliver Helsabeck with scholarship recipient Cindy Booth.



Oliver Helsabeck with scholarship recipient Brittany Lamar.

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**About the Randolph Partnership for Children:** Since 1999, the Randolph Partnership for Children (RPC), a non-profit organization, has positively impacted the lives of Randolph County's young children. As the community's lead organization for young children and their families, RPC works with and through diverse agencies, individuals, organizations, and communities to ensure all children enter school healthy and ready to succeed in school and life. RPC is a United Way agency. For more information, visit [www.randolphkids.org](http://www.randolphkids.org).

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