

# 15 YEARS OF PROGRESS:

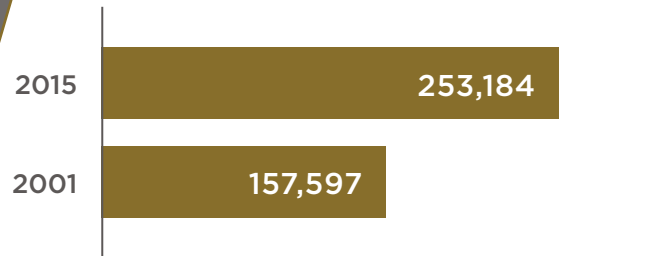
IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF WAKE COUNTY CHILDREN

## SERVING WAKE COUNTY CHILDREN

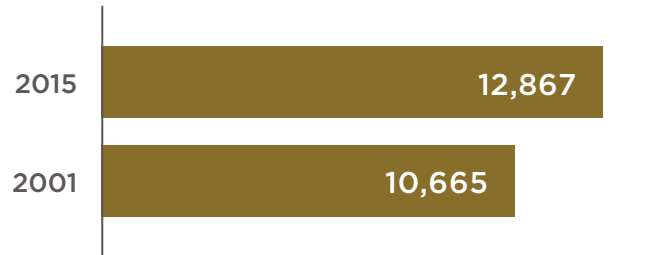
For 15 years, the John Rex Endowment has held steadfast to its mission by funding projects that address factors impacting the health and well-being of Wake County's children, from birth to age 18. Over the years, as environmental factors changed and new trends evolved that influenced the health of our children, so too did the foundation adapt its funding support.

<sup>1</sup>censusviewer.com

### CHILDREN UNDER AGE 17 IN WAKE COUNTY<sup>1</sup>

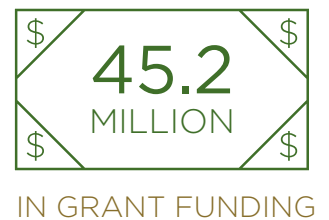


### WAKE COUNTY RESIDENT BIRTHS<sup>1</sup>



## 15 YEARS OF GIVING

2001 thru 2016



**\$3.7K**

GRANT VALUE RANGE

**\$2M**

### MISSION

The John Rex Endowment supports an environment where children and their families in greater Wake County live healthy lives.

# A MESSAGE FOR OUR COMMUNITY



As a pediatrician who practiced for more than 14 years, I understand the many points in a child's development and the impact certain factors have on his or her growth throughout those critical and impressionable years.

This is also why I know that Wake County children who were served by John Rex Endowment grant-funded projects over 15 years are living healthier lives because of the foundation's support. Whether it's access to services, food nourishment and active living to ensure healthy bodies, or safe places and education to support positive mental health and well-being, the foundation has made a difference in the lives of Wake County's kids.

The work supported by the foundation assures children are born, grow up and are nurtured in strong families and healthy communities. This critical approach requires we work together to develop programs and policies that shape children's environments so they can be successful in health and in life.

**LEAH MCCALL DEVLIN, DDS  
PROFESSOR, UNC GILLINGS  
SCHOOL OF GLOBAL  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

The partnership between the John Rex Endowment and the Wake County Public School System has made a collective impact with tremendously successful outcomes for children. The tight alignment of our efforts is an example for others to emulate.

**MARVIN CONNELLY, JR., EDD, M.ED,  
MSA, DDIV  
CHIEF OF STAFF AND STRATEGIC  
PLANNING, WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC  
SCHOOL SYSTEM**

Consider the infant in 2002, whose mother enrolled him in insurance thanks to a three-year Enrollment and Access for Children grant to **Wake Health Services** (now Advance Community Health). That child began life benefitting from immunizations, screenings and preventive care, and his enrollment in public insurance helped to guarantee access to care throughout his childhood, which contributed to his good health as a 15-year-old boy.

Or reflect on the 12-year-old girl who in 2007 joined **Girls on the Run of the Triangle** and now possesses a stronger self-image and greater confidence as a young woman because of her participation. The foundation's grant supported program expansion for this organization that inspires girls to recognize their inner strength and celebrate their uniqueness.

And imagine youngsters in childcare centers across Wake County who regularly are nourished by fresh-food snacks and meals because of a 2012 grant to **NCSU College of Design's Natural Learning Initiative**. Whether the food comes from local farmers or is grown at a center's garden, kids learn what it means to eat healthy, and they play outside in a space intentionally designed for fun and learning.

These are just a few examples of thousands of Wake County children who live healthier lives because of projects supported by John Rex Endowment. As we look ahead, we will stay true to our mission, while continuing to be responsive to areas in which the community is engaged, always adapting to changes in environmental factors that influence children's health.

Warm regards,  
Linda Butler, MD  
Chair, John Rex Endowment  
Chief Medical Officer, Rex Healthcare

# THE EARLY YEARS

The foundation's initial goal was to improve access to care. Our funding with **Wake Health Services** focused on expanding enrollment in government health insurance to address the needs of underserved children. Other early grants to **Wake County Medical Society Community Health Foundation** and **El Pueblo** helped lower barriers to care for non-English speaking youngsters.

We then supported work at **Triangle Family Services** and other agencies to improve and enhance children's social and emotional well-being. Later our focus shifted to promoting healthy weight in response to a growing recognition of the serious health threat posed by childhood obesity. Our support included grants to organizations such as the **Inter-Faith Food Shuttle**, **WakeMed Health & Hospitals** and **Marbles Kids Museum**.

We are grateful for the passion and commitment of agencies and partner organizations across Wake County, whose projects are vital contributions to the success of the John Rex Endowment mission. Your work is essential to the foundation's impact.

## PLAN FOR IMPACT, 2013 – 2018

In 2013, we launched our five-year Plan for Impact with a focus on four funding goals. With community input, we identified the most promising avenues to make lasting improvements in the lives of vulnerable children. Our grants in these areas support approaches that are innovative, evidence-based and grounded in experience. While we remain committed to these funding goals, we also will consider emerging environmental factors as we look beyond 2018.

### HEALTHY FOODS & ACTIVE LIVING

#### TOTAL INVESTED: \$3.7M

Support six Wake County municipalities to improve policies, plans and environments for better access to healthy food and active living opportunities, including farmers' markets.

### POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

#### TOTAL INVESTED: \$7.6M

- Nurture children's mental, social and emotional well-being in places they live, learn and play
- Sustain a collaborative case management model to address needs of homeless children
- Coach preschool teachers how to build positive relationships with children

### CAPACITY BUILDING

#### TOTAL INVESTED: \$1.1M

- Alice Aycock Poe Center for Health Education
- Families Together
- Haven House Services
- Loaves and Fishes Ministry
- Passage Home
- SAFEChild

### PLAN FOR IMPACT GOALS AND EXAMPLE PROJECTS

### PREVENTING INJURY

#### TOTAL INVESTED: \$2.8M

- Prevent child pedestrian injury
- Prevent youth violence via a school-based intervention
- Train adults and youth-serving organizations on child sexual abuse prevention

# THE FUTURE: SHIFTING ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

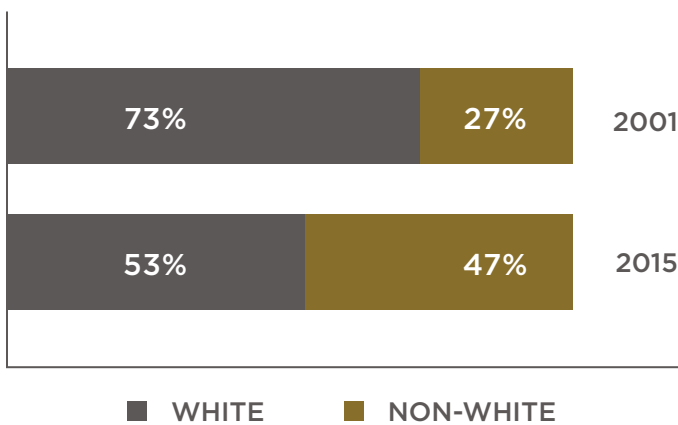
The needs of our county’s children do not change from year to year — children will always require safe places, healthy food, quality education and healthy surroundings. Yet the environments in which our children live, learn and grow do change. Being aware of and addressing the environment is how we improve their health and well-being.

We knew 15 years ago that children with health insurance were more likely to get prescriptions filled and less likely to visit the hospital Emergency Department. Today we are more aware of how positive and negative factors in the early years influence a child’s development, and of how social determinants and adverse experiences contribute to a wide range of health and social consequences.

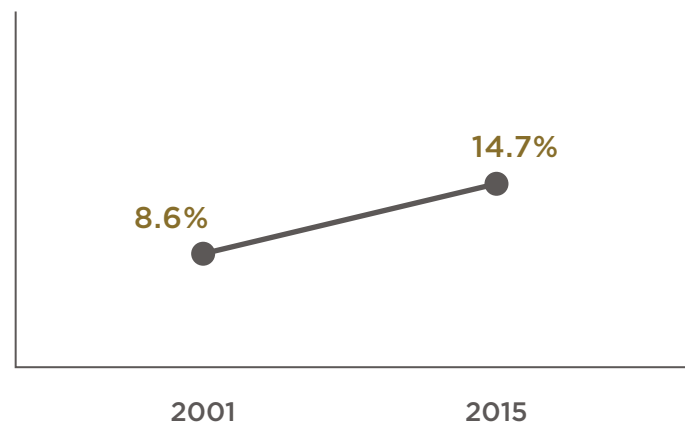
As we look at environmental factors of today and plan for future funding, we examine social influences, such as a growing income disparity, single parent households, domestic violence, bullying, emotional neglect, familial substance abuse and diversity as reflected in the rapidly emerging minority majority.

Faced with increasingly complex social factors, it is even more imperative we work together to address arising issues impacting our children’s well-being. We remain dedicated to engaging in ongoing conversations with agencies and members of the community at-large to ensure the health of children in Wake County.

**WAKE COUNTY RESIDENT BIRTHS<sup>1</sup>**



**WAKE COUNTY CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> [www.schs.state.nc.us](http://www.schs.state.nc.us)    <sup>2</sup> [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

**STAFF**

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 Gladys Hairston, Program Associate  
 McAllister Ross Myhra, Director of Operations  
 Kate Shirah, Program Director

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