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Our
East Lake
2012 Annual Report
Dear Friends,

2012 was a year of tremendous progress for the East Lake Foundation. I was deeply honored to join the Foundation as Chairman of the Board late in the year. From humble beginnings in 1995, the East Lake Foundation’s work is now a series of success stories, some of which you’ll read on these pages.

We are helping residents at The Villages of East Lake build job skills that allow them to find employment to support their families. We are teaching children crucial life skills in The First Tee® of East Lake’s year-round programs. We are seeing tremendous academic progress in every grade level at Charles R. Drew Charter School. And we look forward to completing the dream of a cradle-to-college education for all East Lake children as construction begins on Drew Charter School’s Senior Academy, for grades nine through 12.

There’s still significant work to be done here in East Lake. Families still need our support to break the cycle of poverty. We work every day to assist them in finding productive work to begin to build a new life. Each year, we welcome new children to both Drew and The First Tee program – children who will learn values that will carry them successfully into adulthood. Our CREW Teens, who went on to high school from Drew, still need East Lake’s programs to successfully navigate high school and college, emerging career-ready. And there’s much to learn – and share – about community sustainability through the East Lake Community Learning Garden and Urban Farm.

I thank all of you who have already made our East Lake yours. An investment here pays remarkable dividends. If you’re thinking of becoming a donor, give us an opportunity to share East Lake with you. With your support, we can change people’s lives.

Dr. Lawrence M. Schall
Chairman
East Lake Foundation Board of Directors

Our East Lake Mission Continues...

We’ve seen remarkable things happen in East Lake since 1995, when the East Lake Foundation first began its work. Back then, East Lake Meadows was one of the most violent housing projects in the nation, with a crime rate 18 times the national average. Unemployment was rampant. There was little hope for a better day.

When we began in 1995, we kept it simple: a focus on mixed-income housing, a cradle-to-college education and community wellness. Through this model, we have transformed a neighborhood and helped break the cycle of poverty for hundreds of public housing families. East Lake has become a place where children and families, no matter their circumstances when they arrive, have a chance to build a bright future.

Perhaps the biggest milestone of all came in the summer of 2012 when the Atlanta Public Schools’ Board of Education approved Charles R. Drew Charter School’s charter amendment, fulfilling our dream to build a Drew Charter School Senior Academy. In 2013, we’ll welcome the first freshman class to this new high school.

In 2012, The First Tee® of East Lake introduced more than 650 children to important life skills. The Resident and Community Support Program at The Villages of East Lake shepherded adults through workforce development and economic stability programming. Our Community Learning Garden expanded to include an Urban Farm, where residents from around the neighborhood grow fresh produce and sustainable lifestyles.

We’re still learning. We know these programs help individuals succeed, help families grow and thrive. But every day, we learn how much more work is yet to be done to break the cycle of poverty. It’s more than mixed-income apartments and fresh vegetables. It’s how we are changing hearts, changing habits, changing lives…one individual and one family at a time.

Thank you for making our East Lake yours.
Melba Potter speaks matter-of-factly about her life before she came to The Villages of East Lake. The days — just three years ago — when she had nowhere to live, no job and very little hope. Today, she works at Zoo Atlanta, is an active gardener at the East Lake Community Learning Garden and, most of all, is a proud grandmother to two little boys, Matthew and Elijah.

It wasn’t easy, but the Resident and Community Support Program (RCSP) helped Melba realize her dreams. Today, Melba and the RCSP staff reminisce about what it took to get Melba employed. She completed several classes in the Workforce Development series, including resume writing, interviewing skills, dressing for success and financial management. She visited the DeKalb County Mobile Career Center when it made its monthly visits to The Villages of East Lake. And when a job opportunity at the Zoo opened up, the RCSP staff helped her get the paperwork she needed, signed, sealed and delivered. In her spare time, Melba’s passion for gardening, coupled with what she learned in the RCSP’s entrepreneurship workshops, has led her to start a composting business.

Melba is an East Lake success story, but she’d really rather talk about the opportunities her grandsons have here. Matthew is a student at the East Lake Early Learning Academy at the YMCA and Elijah is now a third grader at Drew Charter School. “Before he came to Drew, he had seven teachers in first grade! He read just 11 words per minute. Now,” she added proudly, “he reads 67 words a minute!” Her infectious smile is just what you’d expect from a proud grandmother.

In 2011, East Lake Foundation introduced the Resident and Community Support Program at The Villages of East Lake to provide residents with the services and resources needed to foster economic stability and self-sufficiency.
Small investments reap big rewards

Just ask Charles R. Drew Charter School parent Carol Corkran. Her daughter Lucy, now a second grader at Drew has been enrolled in Drew’s After School Program, supported by the East Lake Foundation, since Lucy started attending Drew. “When Lucy was a baby, she was enrolled in Babies Can’t Wait (a Georgia Department of Health program for infants and toddlers), due to a birth injury she sustained. Our caseworker told us about Drew Charter School as Lucy was approaching school age. Lucy has flourished at Drew and amazes us with her talents and intelligence every day!”

In the After School Program, Lucy and more than 320 Drew students have the opportunity to spend several hours after the regular school day in academic, recreational and athletic activities that supplement the students’ daytime learning. Each week, the children receive two days of academic support and three days of enrichment classes, all grade-appropriate.

“The enrichment classes have been invaluable to Lucy becoming well-rounded. She’s tried drama, storytelling, puppetry, arts and crafts, cooking, science, soccer and gardening without a huge commitment of time or money since enrollment is for a semester. If she doesn’t like an activity one semester, she can choose a different one the next,” Carol added.

Best of all, Lucy’s After School time has benefits for the entire family. “The After School extracurricular activities are in a convenient time and place, which gives Lucy the chance to experience different activities without us having to shuttle her around all weekend – we actually get to spend our weekend time together as a family.”

“We have been so blessed to be a part of Drew Charter School,” Carol said. “We are looking forward to the day when Lucy’s younger sister, Lorelei, will be a Drew After School student, too!”

Charles R. Drew Charter School opened in 2000 as Atlanta Public Schools’ first charter school. Ranked 69 of 69 elementary schools then, Drew Charter School’s elementary program is now ranked fourth in the city, while the middle school is ranked first in Atlanta Public Schools. In 2012, over 97% of all Drew students (grades 3-8) met or exceeded state standards in all subjects tested. The school’s success is built on a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) curriculum, along with a strong foundation in literacy. The school’s After School Program, funded by East Lake Foundation, serves more than 320 children and is one of the most comprehensive programs in Georgia.
This is East Lake

It’s a simple concept:

Develop youth in East Lake into well-educated, well-rounded and productive citizens. That’s the mission of The First Tee® of East Lake, our year-round golf instruction and life skills program. In 2012, over 650 children, ages 5 to 17, were impacted by The First Tee of East Lake programming.

Kyler Hart is a great example of how well The First Tee program works. Kyler’s always been an East Lake child, since his family moved here in 1997. He’s 16 now, a graduate of Charles R. Drew Charter School and a junior at Carver School of the Arts. He’s been involved in The First Tee of East Lake since elementary school and says the program’s nine core values “have kept me out of plenty of trouble, because they make me think before doing something.” Those core values range from responsibility and honesty, to integrity, respect and perseverance. Golf has been good to Kyler, and he hopes to land a college golf scholarship, where he’ll major in business management. His career goal: to manage his own business, so that “when I’m older, I don’t have to work for anyone!”

Kyler stays busy with CREW Teens, Young Life and the Carver High School Concert Band, Golf Team, Beta Club and Music Technology Program. He caddies at East Lake Golf Club and, in the summer, participates in Atlanta Junior Golf. He’s definitely bringing “Golf With a Purpose” to life.

The East Lake Foundation has been serving junior golfers since 1995, and established The First Tee of East Lake (one of the first The First Tee programs in the country) in 2005. This golf and life skills program uses the principles of golf – discipline, hard work and integrity – to build academic achievement and confidence. The program serves more than 650 students each year, ages 5 – 17, through golf classes for Drew students, after-school classes, year-round Saturday programs and seminars.

Kyler also participates in CREW Teens, an after-school academic support program helping more than 400 East Lake teens to complete high school and prepare for higher education and careers.
Golf with a Purpose

Thousands of golf enthusiasts head to East Lake each September for the TOUR Championship by Coca-Cola, the finale to the PGA TOUR’s FedExCup® Playoffs featuring the top 30 players in FedExCup points. This relationship has continued to grow since the first TOUR Championship was held here in 1998, and both the PGA TOUR and The Coca-Cola Company are valued partners. This signature event has given us the opportunity to tell our East Lake story to the world, while raising more than $13.25 million since the inaugural year. In 2012, the TOUR Championship by Coca-Cola contributed more than $2.25 million to local charities, including the East Lake Foundation and The First Tee® of East Lake.
Over time, great teams – working together – have accomplished monumental things! So it is appropriate that we turn our donor spotlight on a team that made incredible strides in fundraising in 2012: The Drew Charter School Senior Academy Capital Campaign Committee. Chaired by David Ratcliffe, these eleven dedicated civic leaders took on a goal to raise $73 million - $55 million for the 200,000 square-foot facility alone, so that Drew Senior Academy will be built at no cost to the Atlanta Public Schools system.

David credits the entire team, and Drew’s outstanding academic record, as key factors in the Capital Campaign’s success. “I simply agreed to be involved because the team has done a good job and the outstanding success of the Drew cradle-to-eighth grade experience has helped immeasurably. Anyone who sees what has happened at East Lake cannot help but be very impressed.” The Capital Campaign Committee was recognized at the Drew Charter School Senior Academy Committee Groundbreaking on January 15, 2013.
2012 Donors continued...

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