

Community Vision



Back-To-School Season

On July 31, the East Lake Foundation marked the start of the school year with our annual Community Day and Back-to-School Jam at The Villages of East Lake. Residents came together to enjoy food, fellowship, dancing and resources from partners including the East Lake Family YMCA, Start:ME East Lake, Sheltering Arms East Lake, Goodwill, and more.

Hundreds of students selected their own backpacks stuffed with school supplies, preparing them for a strong start to the year. We are deeply grateful to our partners at For the Kid in All of Us, BlackRock, RSM, RSUI, and Bank of America for donating school supplies and backpacks and to all our volunteers and partners for making the event a rousing success. ■



As we reflect on the end of summer and the beginning of school, we asked students at our annual Community Day and Back-to-School Jam what they are excited for this school year.



Start:ME East Lake *Celebrates* 12th Cohort of Entrepreneurs



On April 28, sixteen local ventures led by 19 entrepreneurs celebrated their graduation from the Start:ME East Lake 2026 program. A partnership with Emory University's Goizueta Business School, the no-cost 14-session accelerator provides East Lake, Edgewood and Kirkwood microbusiness owners with intensive business training, experienced mentors, network-building opportunities, and grant investment capital.

"Start:ME didn't just help me build a better business, it helped me believe in the vision and impact of what I'm building," shared Jasmine, 2026 graduate and owner of PTD Sports Co.

At the ceremony, ventures from Start:ME East Lake's 12th cohort, including East Atlanta Clay, Shakti Aging and Wellness Solutions, Il Inked, Caribea Events, Outside In Nutrition, Educators' Exchange, Jules Collective, and The Therapeutic Workshoppe, were awarded with a total of \$16,500 in grants and awards.

94% of businesses in this year's cohort are led by women, 81% by people of color, and 38% by residents of The Villages of East Lake.

Since the program began in 2015, 193 microbusinesses have participated, receiving \$191,000 in capital awards, creating or retaining 414 jobs and generating \$12.3 million in revenue each year.

Are you looking for the opportunity to bring your small business to life? Applications for the 2027 program open on September 1, 2026. If you are interested in participating in this small business accelerator, visit the Start:ME [website](#) to learn more. ■



SHAPE the Future of East Lake with a Planned Gift

Legacy giving, or planned giving, gives each of us the opportunity to make an indelible impact in support of the people and communities we care about.

A planned gift to the East Lake Foundation, such as naming the Foundation in your will, trust or estate plan, ensures that your passion and commitment have a lasting impact on the lives of the children and families in East Lake, while also inspiring others to leave a legacy.

You do not have to be wealthy to leave a legacy



gift. Planned giving allows you to share your philanthropic values and make a long-term investment to help sustain the organizations and communities that are near and dear to you.

Are you interested in investing in your legacy and the future of East Lake with a planned gift?

Visit the Foundation's [website](#) for information on planning your legacy gift today.

For more information on planned giving, please contact Kivatah Castilla, Director of Development, at kcastilla@eastlakefoundation.org. ■



Party on the Green

Party on the Green is back at East Lake Golf Club on **Saturday, October 24, 2026!** Mark your calendar and join us for the East Lake Foundation's annual signature fundraising event supporting our cradle-to-college and career continuum, which promotes learning and achievement for more than 2,200 students each year.

Join leaders from around Atlanta for an evening of purpose and fun with live music, outdoor games, an inspiring program, and delicious food and beverages.

This year's event honors our dear friends Rob and Pam Johnston, whose longtime generosity, leadership, and unwavering support of the East Lake Foundation and Drew Charter School have helped create lasting impact for families in our community. We will also recognize Reverend Doctor William E. Flippin, Sr., Senior Pastor of The Greater Piney Grove Baptist Church, with the second annual Eva Davis Community Advocate Award.

10-24-26

Sponsorship opportunities for Party on the Green are available. Please visit the Foundation's [website](#) or contact

Kivatah Castilla at kcastilla@eastlakefoundation.org for details. ■



Drew Charter School's Class of 2026 Continues a Tradition of *Excellence*



In May, 115 seniors from Charles R. Drew Charter School's 10th graduating class, the Class of 2026, walked across the stage to receive their diplomas. 100% graduated on time and 97% applied to college, of which 100% were accepted to over 165 colleges and universities.

An unprecedented 73% of graduating seniors attended Drew since pre-k or kindergarten, serving as a powerful reminder of the difference East Lake's cradle-to-college and career supports make for children and youth in our community.

Graduates were awarded more than \$22 million in scholarships, including 41 scholarships totaling

\$370,000 from the East Lake Foundation. Six received Posse scholarships, the most ever awarded to a single school in Atlanta Public Schools history. ■



East Lake Foundation *Appoints* Terri Block to Its Board of Directors



The East Lake Foundation has announced the addition of Terri Block, market executive at Bank of America Atlanta, to its board of directors. Block brings extensive cross-sector experience and a strong record of community investment work throughout Metro Atlanta.

As market executive at Bank of America Atlanta, Block directs the company's philanthropic investments and community engagement strategy, partnering across sectors to expand economic opportunity and address critical community priorities. Her work connecting corporate investment to community impact will benefit the Foundation's integrated approach to building strong, sustainable neighborhoods.

Block also serves as Board Chair of CareerRise Atlanta, where she guides workforce development strategies that connect talent to economic opportunity across the region. She also serves on the board of directors of Sweet Auburn Works. She is a member of Leadership Atlanta, Class of 2025, and has been recognized by Atlanta Magazine as one of its "Women Making a Mark."

"Throughout my career, I have seen the impact that strong partnerships can have in expanding opportunity and creating lasting change," said Block. "The East Lake Foundation has demonstrated what is possible when a community invests in people through education, housing, wellness, and economic vitality to create meaningful impact for families today while strengthening the future of East Lake." ■



Tech Connect Pilot *Promotes* Digital Literacy

In June, we gathered at The Villages of East Lake to celebrate the end of the first year of the Tech Connect pilot, a digital literacy training for residents led by the East Lake Foundation's Resident and Community Support Program.

Funded by AT&T, the program provided six-session workshops focusing on online safety and digital wellbeing to three cohorts, along with a technology bundle including a laptop and other accessories for all participants completing the course. Courses led by experts covered topics such as online safety, how to protect yourself from identity theft online, responsible use of online accounts and payment systems, and digital literacy skills.

More than 30 residents completed the program, successfully gaining the skills and confidence to navigate technology at work and in their personal lives. One resident even credits the course with helping her earn a promotion at work.

Congratulations to our Tech Connect graduates! ■



The East Lake Foundation is the originator of a holistic approach to community revitalization that focuses on four pillars: **cradle-to-college and career education**, **mixed-income housing**, **community wellness** and **economic vitality**. The Foundation serves as the lead organization working closely with its partners to benefit our youth and their families. To make a donation, visit eastlakefoundation.org/donate.