



St. Mark Center's Shuryce "Niqui" Hill The Epitome of Excellence in Early Education

Infant/Toddler teacher Shuryce "Niqui" Hill is the type of Pre-K teacher parents hope for, and the early educator who every child deserves. Each day, she helps her students at St. Mark Center find their voices, and listens to what they have to say.

"Children have a vital voice and they are active contributors to their learning process," Hill said. "When teachers take the time to truly listen to our students, we model what good communication looks like and help increase their social and emotional development."

In April, Hill was named the recipient of the 2019 Excellence in Early Care and Education Award. The accolade is given by The Family Conservancy to honor one early education provider in the Kansas City metro area who is changing the lives of their students. She was nominated by Crystal Everett, a parent whose one-year-old daughter is taught in her classroom.

"Ms. Hill is the epitome of a great educator," Everett said. "She is always looking for ways to support the educational development of her students by adapting lessons that meet the babies where they are in their development, while at the same time, gradually stretching them to learn something new."



Passionate. Patient. Persistent.

These qualities and 20 years of dedication to quality early learning have earned St. Mark Center Infant/Toddler teacher Shuryce "Niqui" Hill The Family Conservancy's 2019 Excellence in Early Care and Education Award.

When I advocated for this to change, I was redirected or written up," Hill said.

Hill saw that her strategies helped students to learn and to grow, and continued advocating for change. Rather than be discouraged, she earnestly sought programs that aligned with her teaching methods.

"UICS and St. Mark Center supported my approach of listening to students, celebrating successes, and giving grace to grow. I found what I was looking for," Hill said.

Hill has taught at St. Mark Center since 2016. When she found out that she received the award, she said she was humbled, grateful, and validated.

"All of my write-ups were worth it," Hill said. "This award validates the voices of my students and highlights the progress that can be made when we strive to do better for our students."

Seeing her students make new connections is one of Hill's favorite things about teaching infants. This 20-year teaching veteran knows that it hasn't always been easy to pursue a career in education.

"I worked for many early education programs where children were seen, but not heard."





Dream big, little ones!

One-by-one, 47 tassels are turned as UICS/St. Mark Center students prepare for Pre-K and a lifetime of learning.

Dear Friends,

Watching our 4- and 5-year-old students in cap and gown cross the graduation stage - well, it might just be one of the most gratifying sights ever! This special ceremony hosted May 23rd at the historic Gem Theater is a significant milestone in a lifetime of learning. It's a sign of success that our students' developmental growth aligns with innumerable studies demonstrating that children with access to quality early learning are more prepared for kindergarten.

As you review our 2018 Annual Report in this issue, you will see proof of our hope-filled mission in action, as our newest graduates enter kindergarten with expanded vocabulary; better language, math, and social skills; more positive relationships with classmates; and higher scores on school-readiness assessments.



As they go forward in school and in life, they are less likely to need special education services or be held back a grade, and are more likely to graduate and go on to college.

Our faculty and staff are forever grateful for the gift of these children and the promise and potential their education inspires in their lives, their families, and our community.

Your support ensures the benefits of their UICS/St. Mark Center education remain long after their tassels are turned!

With gratitude,

Deidre Anderson, Chief Executive Officer
UICS/St. Mark Center



Early Education - Community Benefit



If children start school ready to learn, they are more likely to read at grade level by 3rd grade. Remedial costs go down, potential lifelong gaps could be eliminated, and our entire school system would be more effective in positioning students for academic and life success.

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OUR MISSION

Building bridges. Inspiring minds. Impacting futures.

VISIT

Learn how we empower our students and families by providing high quality educational experiences. To schedule a visit, please contact Chief Engagement Officer Gene Willis at 816-994-5445, gene.willis@uicskc.org.

OUR VISION

We envision a community where children thrive and families flourish.

GIVE

Your time, talent and treasure make a difference! Visit uicskc.org/invest or contact Individual Giving Coordinator Cynthia Hoffman at 816-994-5432, cynthia.hoffman@uicskc.org

2018 Annual Report | Highlights

A kind and generous community brings our mission to life!

91%

On the mark: language and literacy

Students met language and literacy benchmarks, with 91% demonstrating readiness in such areas as auditory comprehension, vocabulary, and narrative language.

93%

Among friends: social interactions and relationships

93% of students met the social/emotional benchmark for healthy relationships and social interactions with their peers. Additionally, 92% of students mastered the benchmark for conflict negotiation, - all important indicators of school-readiness.

52%

Perform better than kindergarten peers

UICS/St. Mark Center students were well-prepared for kindergarten in 2018, with assessments revealing that 52% performed better than the average child.

We believe in putting our **minds, hearts, and souls** into **everything we do.**

5

Weekly Arts@St. Mark experiences

Our Arts Educator conducted an average of 5 unique art experiences each week for UICS/St. Mark Center students enrolled in the Child-Centered Creativity (C-3) curriculum.

We believe in the simple **power** of a **kind word** or **gesture** to **lift someone up.**

96%

Fit for school!

UICS/St. Mark Center students reached important milestones in perception, motor, and physical development to prepare for kindergarten.

100%

Helping families rise to everyday challenges

All families who self-identified as "in crisis" or "at-risk" on a Family Needs Assessment received support from our family engagement team, transitioning their status to "stable" by the end of 2018.

The gift of love.



A generous donor enhanced the holiday seasons of our 92 families at our "Snow Much Fun" winter event, providing each with a much appreciated \$200 gift card.



Chiefs quarterback and 2019 NFL MVP Patrick Mahomes visited UICS/St. Mark Center, courtesy of Heartland Coca Cola and the Kansas City Chiefs. Mahomes read *Chocolate Milk Por Favor*, a book about children of different cultures bonding over the things they have in common.



Nom. Nom. Nom.

Our resident chef prepared 51,884 nutritious meals for students in 2018, exposing children to a variety of healthy foods from different cultures..



We believe in the ability of **creative expression** to **fuel** and **ignite passion**.

60

Arts, cultural, and community-based events

Students, families, faculty, and staff had opportunities to experience more than 60 arts and culture events in 2018, including an on-site Fall Festival, a student gallery exhibit at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts courtesy of PNC Bank, and a performance by the Alvin Ailey Trio.

100%

Kindergarten-ready parents and caregivers

100% of parents whose children entered kindergarten in the fall of 2018 completed a readiness checklist, participated in a kindergarten transition home visit, and completed a transition plan.

10

Hours immersed in the arts

Designed with individual developmental needs in mind, UICS/St. Mark Center students spent an average of 10 hours each week immersed in artistic programming to inspire creative expression, regulate emotions, and develop fine-motor and problem-solving skills.

100%

Trauma-informed care environment

Trauma-informed care was implemented throughout UICS/St. Mark Center, with all faculty participating in training to help address the needs of students and families who have experienced trauma.

87%

Educator retention

Retention of UICS/St. Mark Center faculty was 87% in 2018, enhancing student learning with classroom consistency and dedication.

56

Hours of professional development

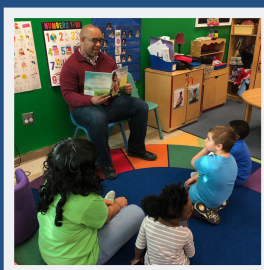
Quality early learning begins with exceptionally educated and trained staff. Each UICS/St. Mark Center faculty member completed a minimum of 56 hours of continuing education or professional development training in 2018.

700+

Volunteer hours

Our awesome volunteers contributed more than 700 hours of service to UICS/St. Mark Center to assist in the classroom, around the facilities, and at family programs and events.

In our commitment to social and emotional student development, UICS/St. Mark Center welcomed a new Student Support Coordinator, thanks to funding from the Health Forward Foundation.



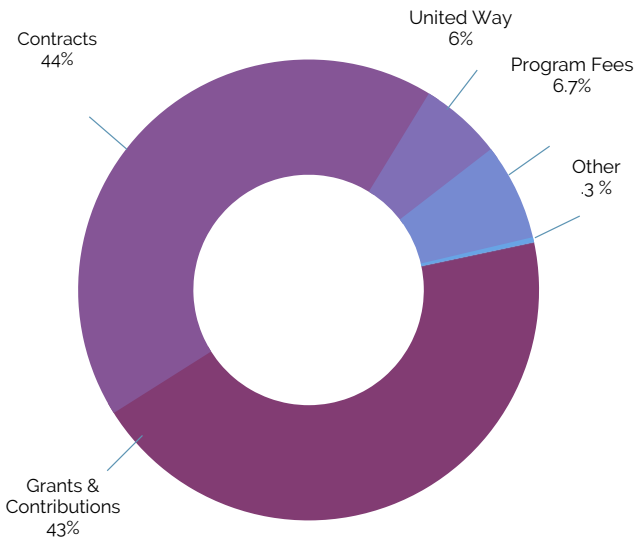
The Junior League of Kansas City, MO provided a literacy grant in 2018 for inclusive books and literacy kits that reflect gender equity and cultural diversity representative of our student body and faculty.



WE BELIEVE
in the nurturing
strength and support
of community.

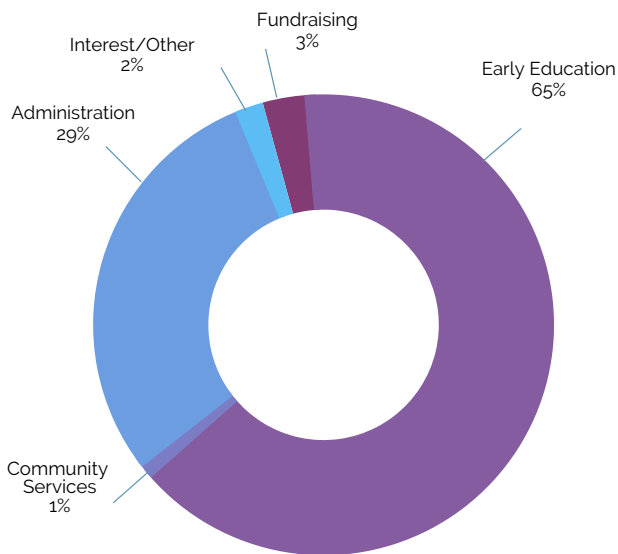
2018 Financial Overview January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS & REVENUE



Contracts	\$1,289,582
Grants/Contributions	\$1,241,756
Program Fees	\$197,344
United Way	\$168,214
Other	\$10,230
Total	\$2,907,126

PROGRAM SERVICES & EXPENSES



Fundraising/Marketing	\$81,187
Administration	\$814,452
Community Services	\$26,956
Early Education	\$1,801,002
Interest/Other	\$55,566
Total	\$2,779,163

Around UICS/St. Mark Center

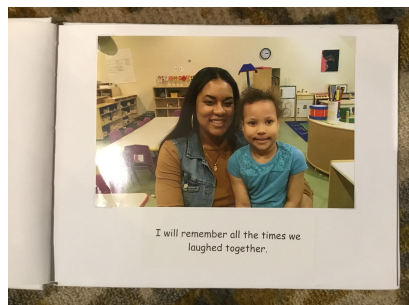


CHIEF ROLE MODEL

Kansas City Chiefs Wide Receiver Sammy Watkins spent time at St. Mark Center in June. Watkins and CEO Deidre Anderson discussed their shared vision that every child deserves access to high quality Pre-K education programs.

LIFE'S LITTLE LESSONS

UICS/St. Mark Center partnered with KCPT to deliver Daniel Tiger "Life's Little Lessons" curriculum in the classrooms to promote social and emotional development.



I WILL REMEMBER

Each St. Mark Center graduate received an "I Will Remember Book" to help ease kindergarten anxieties. "My daughter loves recognizing pictures of familiar faces and the memories made here," said parent Cristina Ortiz, whose daughter Yiudiel graduated in May.

LIFELONG LEARNERS

In June, members of our education team attended a Conscious Discipline Institute to learn strategies for building positive relationships, redirecting negative behaviors, and using conflict as a way to teach and connect.



FRESHMEN ROCK!

UICS/St. Mark Center was the recipient of Rockhurst High School's freshman generous fundraising efforts, with members of the Student Government Association (SGA) presenting their contributions to support Pre-K education!

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY

OCT. 26, 2019

ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL NOON - 4 PM UICS/ST. MARK CENTER

Join us for pumpkin decorating, live jazz, face painting, and art activities! The celebration is FREE and open to community members of all ages!



 St. Mark Center
UICS
2008 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64127

Visit UICSKC.org

UICS/St. Mark Center Alumni



Calling all former parents, teachers, and students:

Get ready to reconnect!

For 52 years, UICS/St. Mark Center has been part of students' and families' lives in Kansas City. This includes parents with second-generation students and former students who now walk through our doors as educators.

We are proud to announce the establishment of the UICS/St. Mark Center Alumni Group for former parents, teachers, and students! Our outreach to former students will include special event communications and service opportunities, a custom sticker for displaying alumni pride, and more!



"It's rewarding to give back to a community that has given me so much, specifically in early childhood education," said Ms. Gina Pisciotta, UICS/St. Mark Center Lead Pre-K teacher and alumnus.

Visit UICSKC.org to sign up and you'll receive information on upcoming events and news on all things UICS/St. Mark Center. Please help us in spreading the word to fellow alumni!



WAYS TO HELP

As we begin the 2019-2020 school year, we may have some students who do not have the basic necessities for a focused learning experience.

Shoes and clothing contribute to positive self-esteem and help set our students up for success in the classroom!

We currently need new clothing sizes 3T, 4T, and 5T for our Pre-K students, and new athletic shoes in children's sizes 10, 11, and 12.

Please drop off your donations at UICS/St. Mark Center, 2008 East 12th Street, KC, MO 64127.

Thank you!