My son absolutely loves The Hill Center and all of his teachers. This experience has changed his academic and personal life.

He tells his Mom and me every day how much he loves going to The Hill Center and having the opportunity to be taught and CARED for by experienced, professional teachers.

His confidence has grown enormously as he knows that he is getting a great education, and that he will be much, much better prepared for college and for life.
MESSAGE FROM HILL LEADERSHIP

As we approach our 40th anniversary year, we know the need for The Hill Center’s programs is greater than ever. One in five children struggle mightily in school due to learning or attention issues. Many others fall behind due to language barriers or foundational gaps resulting from growing up in poverty.

The statistics are startling. For example, only 53% of North Carolina 8th graders read on grade level, and only 45% perform proficiently in math. Students who cannot read, write, and do math successfully lose confidence, which leaves them ill-equipped to contribute to the workforce of tomorrow.

But here’s what we know: instructional strategies and supports developed for students with diagnosed learning differences can help all children reach their potential in school, and in life.

That’s why we’re committed to strengthening and expanding our learning solutions for students, educators, and families across four platforms: Student Programs, Hill Learning System, Educator Professional Learning, and Community Education.

What makes our approach distinctly Hill is that we ground our work in research, practice, and our core values. Over the last year, we have also made an even greater commitment to embracing diversity and expanding access and affordability.

We couldn’t do any of this critical work without the support of an extensive network of Hill families, foundations, corporations, and friends committed to giving the gift of learning to students and teachers across the state of North Carolina.

Thank you! This report highlights the progress your investments have made possible. Together, we will continue to empower students who need additional support to become confident, independent learners.

Beth Anderson, Executive Director
Hill faculty, staff, and trustees engaged in a review of our organizational values this year in order to ensure that they reflect the genuine behaviors that already distinguish The Hill Center and that should persist and define our work no matter what changes we face internally or externally. We are pleased to announce and celebrate our new core values. Our service to students, educators, and families is deeply rooted in these commitments:

**We Learn**
We are lifelong learners. We approach all that we do with a growth mindset and a commitment to continuous learning and improvement. We learn from our students, our colleagues, other educators, and our partners. We seek out and embrace new ideas while remaining true to strategies we know work.

**We Empower**
We empower students to take charge of their own learning and lives. We empower teachers to use their knowledge, skills, and creativity to lead students to success. We empower staff to discover new and better ways of doing things.

**We Reach**
We strive to reach an ever-increasing number of students, teachers, and schools to support their growth and success. We partner to extend our reach, expand our expertise, and learn from others. We challenge and support students, teachers, our partners, and our colleagues to reach their full potential.

**We Relate**
We develop personal relationships with students, parents, teachers, colleagues, and partners. We empathize. We listen. We communicate. We collaborate. We connect. We relate.

**We Care**
We care about students and their families. We care about teachers. We care about each other. We care about making a difference in students’ lives, in schools and school districts, and in our community.
OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

Led by board member Andy Short, Hill’s Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee began its work in the fall of the 2015-16 school year. It can be said that The Hill Center was founded in 1977 on principles of inclusion and diversity: in creating a half-day model school, founder George Watts Hill sought to establish a program in which children who learn differently—and who were being marginalized or failing to thrive in mainstream schools—could be helped to achieve academic success and realize their full potential.

Today, The Hill Center is a diverse learning community of students, educators, and parents spanning North Carolina and beyond. Why, then, did we need a formal statement of diversity and inclusiveness? Hill’s mission uniquely positions us to celebrate and embrace differences. At our core, we value cognitive differences and the distinctive strengths they offer individuals and society. We believe we must continue to build upon this foundation and the diverse populations we already serve to more intentionally reflect, understand, and embrace differences across race, ethnicity, gender, economics, and viewpoints. Only then will we truly be the learning community we aspire to be.

The following statement grew out of months of conversation among faculty, staff, board members, community members, and experts in topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion:

The Hill Center believes all children can succeed and deserve educational experiences that develop their full potential. We strive to create diverse, inclusive, safe, and equitable learning environments representative of the communities we serve. We acknowledge, celebrate, and honor diversity, which has many dimensions including learning styles, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and economic background. Therefore, we actively identify strategic goals and implement policies that strengthen our diverse community. This commitment is crucial to our ability to value each individual and ensure the success of children and educators.

Going forward, an expanded committee led by faculty and staff is engaging the Hill community in a year of learning and discovery to operationalize this statement and advance our commitment to diversity and inclusiveness across all of our programs.

Special thanks to all Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee Members:

Advisors:
Jessica DeCuir-Gunby, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, N.C. State University
Diane Evia-Lanevi, Executive Director, Tomorrow Fund
Lisa Guckian, Senior Director, Leadership for Educational Equity and Hill Board Member
Kemi Nonez, Director of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs and Assistant Director of Admissions, Durham Academy
Andrew Short, Psychologist and Hill Board Member
Alexandra Zagbayou, Executive Director, Student U and Hill Board Member

Hill Faculty and Staff:
Carrie Anazia, Hill Lower School Faculty
Beth Anderson, Hill Executive Director
Bryan Brander, Hill Head of School
Glynis Hill-Chandler, Hill Assistant Head of School and Dean of Students
Darius Horton, Hill Middle School Faculty
Katie Mgongolwa, Hill Upper School Faculty
Michelle Orvis, Hill Chief of Staff
Magan Thigpen, Hill Manager of East Durham Learning Collaborative
Jennifer Thompson, Hill Upper School Faculty
Jeanne Tilley, Hill Manager of Grants and Communications
Thanks to a $650,000 challenge grant from the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust and generous contributions from other philanthropic leaders, Hill has launched the **East Durham Learning Collaborative**. This project symbolizes Hill's commitment to core values, diversity, and accessibility.

**In East Durham, only 30% of 3rd graders read on grade level.** The East Durham Learning Collaborative brings the research-based Hill Reading Achievement Program (HillRAP) to five public schools in East Durham – including three charter and two district schools – that serve high-need populations of students. This partnership aims to close early literacy gaps through the HillRAP intervention, targeted teacher training and coaching, and collaborative efforts across the five schools.

In addition to funders, The Hill Center, and the participating schools, the Learning Collaborative includes a network of partners that collectively support the project goals, including Durham Public Schools, the East Durham Children's Initiative, and N.C. State University's Friday Institute for Educational Innovation researchers.

By establishing East Durham as a pilot site for the Hill Learning System (see page 10), providing intensive remediation for students and extensive training for teachers, and establishing forums for shared learning across all partners, the impact of this initiative will endure long after the project is complete – building capacity in these schools and a model for others.

**The East Durham Learning Collaborative is possible thanks to:**

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Mr. Lucas Wolf

You can help ensure our success, and help more students learn to read, by responding to the Kenan Challenge today. To make a gift to the East Durham Learning Collaborative, please visit www.hillcenter.org/donate.
OUR COMMITMENT TO ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY

N.C. GlaxoSmithKline Foundation Awards $1.2 Million Grant to Support Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Access

Over the next four years, this landmark grant from the NC GlaxoSmithKline Foundation will increase access to and affordability of Hill’s programs in three key areas:

- Providing financial aid to our Student Programs, including two full scholarships for students from underrepresented communities (see below)
- Increasing access for public school teachers and school districts across North Carolina to Hill’s training opportunities, reading methodology, and the Hill Learning System (see page 10)
- Supporting the East Durham Learning Collaborative (see page 6)

The North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation has been instrumental in Hill’s growth over the years, starting with supporting the initial development of our teacher training program in 1990. We are grateful for their continued investment in expanding our programs.

Gifts to Financial Aid Critical to Expansion of Access and Affordability

Learning differences do not discriminate by socioeconomic status—and families rarely set up savings accounts with hopes of sending their children to The Hill Center. For these reasons, increasing the funds available for student financial aid for our flagship School Year Program is key to our ability to expand access and affordability. While we have increased our financial aid budget in recent years, endowed funds only provide 40 percent of the annual budget. Consequently, only 20 percent of Hill families receive aid, and we are only able to meet 50 percent of their demonstrated need.

We know many families do not consider, apply to, or enroll at Hill due to the gap between tuition and the aid Hill can offer. Sustaining and growing our financial aid program is dependent on the success of Hill Mile and the generosity of private donors. We are pleased to announce the creation of two new scholarship funds this year:

North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation Scholarships
As part of its 4-year, $1.2 million dollar grant, the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation established two full scholarships for underrepresented minority students.

Frances Moschler Heard Financial Aid Endowment

Please see page 15 for a list of other permanent endowment funds for student financial aid. Join these “Hill Heroes” by considering an annual gift to student financial aid or a permanent endowment fund in honor or in memory of a loved one.
STUDENT PROGRAMS

Hill’s Student Programs - the School Year Program, Summer School, and Tutoring - are the bedrock of Hill, providing a continuum of services to help local students with learning differences and attention challenges achieve academic and life success. These programs not only deliver powerful learning experiences for students, but also help us continually develop new solutions to disseminate to more students, educators, and families.

Investing in Faculty of the Future
The Hill Center strives to empower not only our students, but also the faculty who work with them. Hill is distinguished by an effective teaching methodology but, even more importantly, by our deeply devoted and highly skilled educators who bring it to life. For this reason, Hill takes continuous learning and professional development seriously. Each year, Hill supports members of the faculty pursuing master’s programs to join the 85% of Hill faculty who currently have master’s degrees. In addition, we fund a two-year coaching and mentoring program for new teachers, conference attendance, and on-site workshops led by experts in the field. Professional development programs are more important than ever for Hill as many of our 30-year veteran teachers are retiring. New faculty, like Kate Christensen, will define The Hill Center’s next 40 years.

Meet Kate Christensen ‘08
Kate is the first former Hill student to become a full-time faculty member, making her uniquely qualified to teach and inspire our students. Kate has earned awards as a student and alumna that acknowledged her hard work, academic progress and perseverance. And Kate is not done achieving yet! Through our Faculty Professional Development Program, Hill is helping Kate complete her Master of Education (M.Ed.), with a concentration in Special Education, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

With passionate faculty like Kate Christensen and funds for ongoing professional development, Hill is poised to further its impact on students with learning differences today and beyond.

“Our core values make for a great culture at Hill, but our teaching salaries lag behind the public schools. Continuing to recruit and retain the best faculty is paramount to our value proposition and our funding for professional development makes an important difference. Like our students, each faculty member has an individualized professional growth plan. Our teachers want to learn, innovate, and teach each other. This is part of The Hill Center magic that must be maintained at all cost,” says Head of School Bryan Brander. “The investment in our faculty has a ripple effect, not only on our students but in reaching other teachers across the state through our Educator Professional Learning program.”
Investing in Innovation: Executive Functioning

Another way that Hill supports faculty—and its own continuous improvement—is through funding to develop new curriculum for use in all student programs.

Veteran teacher Geraldine Pesacreta has developed new executive functioning offerings based on years of experience and success with Hill students.

Executive Functioning addresses how students learn and what tools to use to remember information, tasks, and deadlines.

Our new coaching and courses help students grow in four core areas—preparedness, focus, advocacy, and specific learning skills—and explicitly teach the time and project management strategies they need to learn and study independently.

Thanks to support from a generous donor who invested in curriculum design, three new program options are available to boost students’ executive functioning skills:

- One-on-One Coaching through Hill Tutoring
- Group After-School Study Skills Classes for middle schoolers
- Summer Study, a five-week learning experience for rising 7th through 9th graders

In addition, Geraldine offers workshops for teachers and parents—and they are receiving rave reviews!
The Hill Learning System capitalizes on technology to better serve more teachers and students across North Carolina and beyond. It has three major components:

- A tablet-based app for delivering the Hill Reading Achievement Program (HillRAP) by trained teachers anywhere
- An online teacher portal for professional development and ongoing resources
- A platform for data collection, analysis, and reporting to track student progress

With support from several major donors, the Hill Learning System is currently being piloted in 8 North Carolina public school districts and 6 individual schools.

Carteret County Embraces Hill Learning System

The Hill Center and Carteret County Public Schools have been working together for more than ten years. As a result of our strong partnership, the school system served as a beta-site for the Hill Learning System last year. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and showed that the technology-enabled platform boosted the impact of Carteret's reading program by:

- Offering a flexible yet structured program that is easy to adopt, adapt, and integrate into classrooms
- Effectively engaging students in learning the foundations of reading
- Empowering teachers with real-time data at their fingertips

Not only are students and teachers loving the flexibility and fun of the Hill Learning System, it is paying dividends for student success: students using the tool showed an average 1.5 years’ growth on the NC End of Grade tests!

We are grateful to the generous donors who have supported the partnership between Hill and the Carteret County Public Schools.

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EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Hill’s Educator Professional Learning solutions provide teachers with in-person and online training to aid and equip them with the tools to effectively teach students who learn differently.

Hill draws on its own faculty and in-house trainers, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction trainers, and leading experts to deliver professional development in Hill methodologies, literacy and math instruction, and other instructional strategies to support their students.

In partnership with public school districts and philanthropists across the state, Hill also trains educators to deliver the Hill Reading Achievement Program as a literacy intervention for struggling learners.

Over 90% of the students who used the Hill Reading Achievement Program showed improvements in their literacy skills as measured by standard assessments.

Serving Students

1,587 students received Hill reading methodology in their classroom

Empowering Educators

86 teachers became certified in Hill’s methodology; 1,842 teachers attended other Hill trainings

$75,830 in scholarship funds were distributed to 298 teachers across the state

Community Support

Thank you to our philanthropic partners who make this work possible:

Avery and Ashe Counties: Mr. and Mrs. Melvin C. Fields; High Country Charitable Foundation; Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Ormond; Mrs. Laura C. Russell and Reverend Theophilus Russell

Edgecombe County: The Barnhill Family Foundation; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Barnhill, Jr.

Greene County: The BelleJAR Foundation

Mooresville Graded School District: The Mebane Foundation

Orange County: Anonymous; Education Foundation for Orange County Schools; Mr. and Mrs. George A. Horton, III;

Stanly County: Foundation for the Carolinas; Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Rogers, Jr.

Teacher Scholarships: BB&T Charitable Foundation; Duke Energy Foundation; Durham Merchants Association Charitable Foundation; Dr. Nancy J. Farmer and Dr. Everette James; F.M. Kirby Foundation; NC GlaxoSmithKline Foundation; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Neville; Strowd Roses Charitable Foundation; Town of Carrboro; Wells Fargo Foundation

Over 90% of the students in highlighted counties receive Hill Methodology in their own classrooms from Hill-trained teachers.

Blue stars indicate school districts within counties: Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools and Mooresville Graded School District.

Please see page 10 for supporters of Carteret County and page 6 for supporters of the East Durham Learning Collaborative.
Community Education Series
Hill’s Community Education Series engages and educates our community about topics related to the science of learning and learning styles. The series, free and open to the public, provides practical resources and information that are both grounded in research and accessible to all audiences.

An all-star line-up of speakers drew hundreds of participants to The Hill Center in 2016. The series is free thanks to the generous support of Morris Commercial of Chapel Hill, NC. Distinguished Hill alumni Scott Morris ‘01 and Whit Brannon ‘00 work at Morris Commercial.

We are grateful to Morris Commercial, Scott and Elizabeth Broyhill Morris, Johnny Morris, and Waynell Morris for their support in honor of longtime educator Jean Healy Neville. Mrs. Neville was a founding member of the Hill faculty and helped launch our Educator Professional Learning program. She has provided the gift of learning to thousands of students across the state and remains a steadfast champion for The Hill Center and our students.

Boys & Girls Club Partnership
Hill also serves community organizations through partnerships with nonprofits like the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Durham and supporters like the Carolina Hurricanes Kids n’ Community Foundation.

Struggling readers from the Boys & Girls Club come to Hill after school twice per week during the school year to receive Hill’s reading methodology from Hill-trained tutors. Students, and their parents, appreciate the program not only for the reading gains they demonstrate, but also because the opportunity to attend Hill makes them feel special.
Meet Paula Borden ‘94

Dr. Paula Borden, Ph.D., joined the Hill board in 2016 as an alumni representative. Paula attended the School Year Program from 1987-1994, and her time at Hill helped her develop a passion for education. Since leaving Hill as a student, Paula has earned a B.S. from Wingate University, an M.A. in Counselor Education from N.C. Central University, and a Ph.D. from NC A&T State University in Leadership Studies.

She currently serves as the Associate Director, Carolina Higher Education Opportunity Programs and Associate Director, NC Health Careers Access Program where she pays it forward by ensuring that all students at the university access the resources they need to be successful. We are thrilled to welcome Paula back to Hill as an alumni representative to the board!
Since 1999, Hill’s first full year as a 501(c)3 non-profit, independent auditors have issued an unqualified opinion each year, reporting that the financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects and are in accordance with accounting principals generally accepted in the U.S.

**Sources of Funds: Revenues**

Operating revenue totaled $6.55M in 2015-16.

Primarily due to School Year program tuition, tuition and fees revenues were the largest source of funds.

**Uses of Funds: Expenses**

During 2015-16, The Hill Center spent 80 cents out of every dollar directly on program services.

Operating expenses were $6.59M.

**Fundraising: Gifts, Contributions, and Grants**

Foundaton and individual gifts in support of school district partnerships, teacher scholarships, and student financial aid to the School Year Program comprised the majority of contributions.

Total 2015-16 fundraising revenues were $1.53M.
Throughout The Hill Center’s history, families have established named endowment funds to provide lasting support for Hill operations, student financial aid, and faculty professional development. Our endowment is a collection of various restricted and unrestricted funds which totals $7,841,857 (6/30/16 market value).

**General Endowment Funds**

George Watts Hill Foundation  
Anne Gibson Hill Endowment  
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**Student Financial Aid**

The Buck Family Scholarship Fund  
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Peyton Brooks Strickland Memorial Scholarship Fund  
Timothy N. Whiting Student Scholarship Fund

**Educator Professional Development**

Kirby-Horton Endowment for Hill Faculty  
Lucy T. Davis Professional Development Endowment  
Master Mentor Endowment  
North Carolina Teachers Endowment

For more information about establishing a permanent endowment fund or including The Hill Center in your estate plans, please contact Emily Oliver at 919-719-7539.
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Thank you to our generous community of supporters.

This annual report recognizes all donations received by The Hill Center between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016. This listing also includes sponsorships and donations to the Hill Mile. Every attempt was made to ensure accuracy in this publication; however, errors do occur and we apologize for any inconvenience they may cause. Please contact the Advancement Office at 919-719-7539 for any corrections.

*indicates an installment of a multi-year commitment
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## SERVING FAMILIES, EDUCATORS AND COMMUNITIES

### Serving Students

- **175** students attended Hill's School Year Program, from **63** local base-schools across **6** counties.
- **368** students attended Hill Tutoring sessions in Durham,
- **68** received tutoring in Raleigh, and
- **135** met tutors in other settings including after-school programs.
- **132** total students attended Hill's Summer Program in either Durham or Raleigh.
- **1,587** students received Hill reading methodology in their classrooms across North Carolina.

### In Their Voices

- “I have been a student at The Hill Center for six years. With the help from Hill, I am now a more proficient reader and can answer comprehension questions way more easily than I had ever imagined.”

- “Thank you so much for supporting The Hill Center! If it were not for people like you, the teachers at Hill and teachers from other schools would not be able to get the proper training they need to help all students learn the way they need to learn.”

- “You have made a great impact by enabling teachers to get the training they need to help students like me and my classmates be successful in school and in the real world.”

### Empowering Educators

- **62** counties sent public school teachers to professional development trainings at The Hill Center.
- **$75,830** in scholarship funds were distributed to **298 teachers** across the state.
- **19** school districts or individual schools were HillRAP Partner Sites in 2015-16.
- **86** teachers became certified in Hill’s methodology; **1,842 teachers** attended other Hill trainings.
- **85%** of faculty at Hill have Master's Degrees in education.
We are proud and grateful to report that in 2015-16, 100% of Hill’s faculty and staff supported the organization.

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Thank you to our generous community of supporters!
Every year, The Road Less Traveled Award is presented to a Hill alumnus who has demonstrated remarkable perseverance and is a shining example of what a confident, independent learner can achieve and whose accomplishments are often a direct result of the challenges he or she has overcome.

Major Taylor Shenkman ’01 is someone who knows something about working towards a dream. At age five, Taylor decided he wanted to be a pilot. His mother said he watched “Top Gun” practically every day for the better part of 10 years. But it’s a long road from kindergarten to the U.S. Naval Fighter Weapons School, and Taylor spent many of those years with us at The Hill Center. At Hill he learned not only the foundational reading and math he needed to succeed in school, but also the organization skills, persistence, and self-confidence that would help him drive toward his dreams.

After graduation from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps – and finished training as the top Marine in his class. Major Shenkman’s list of honors, achievements, and services to our country over the last decade are numerous and impressive. But he is particularly proud of one recent accomplishment: in 2015, Major Shenkman graduated from the U.S. Naval Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN), fulfilling the dream he had since he was a little boy.

Few people have the determination, stamina, and drive to follow through on a goal they set in childhood. Major Shenkman did just that, achieving a level of success in his field very few people ever attain. He has served his country with honor and distinction, and we are proud to call him one of our own.
Our Mission:
Transform students with learning differences into confident, independent learners.

www.hillcenter.org