

Journeys

Living on my own terms:
Melissa's Journey

Page 4



Alumni Spotlight: Josh L.

“

Over the summer of 2018, I started struggling with **depression** and **anxiety** to the point where I didn't leave the house. I had applied to colleges near my hometown. I didn't get into any of them. That was really a hit to my self-esteem. I was basically living in my room and leaving to get food. That's what my life was. So I finally asked my Mom for help, and she brought me here to Skyland.

At first, I really didn't want to be here. I think my second day I ran around this giant campus and tired myself out asking different people how I could leave. I gave

it a week, and I had convinced myself I was all good. Then I started making friends and started realizing Skyland wasn't as scary as I thought it was. I think the social aspect really helped—meeting people with similar issues. After that I really started embracing it. I'm only 19 years old, but this is the best thing I've done in my life.

When I got here, I didn't know I was diabetic until I went to the **clinic** and got my blood taken. When I found out about that I was really scared. I started going to **healthy challenge** and eating the food here.

I was on the CBT track and that was very helpful for me. I was able to process my issues and learn ways to re-frame my thinking. One of my biggest problems was my low self-esteem. I was really needing to take my negative thoughts and turn them positive. CBT really helped me, and also exercising. I just felt really proud of myself when I finished healthy challenge.

I'm starting college in August. Hopefully I can get the same sense of community there that I have had here.

I'm only 19 years old, but this is the best thing I've done in my life. ”



CONTENTS

President's Letter 2
Skyland Trail celebrates 30 years

Feature Story 4
Melissa's story: Life on my own terms

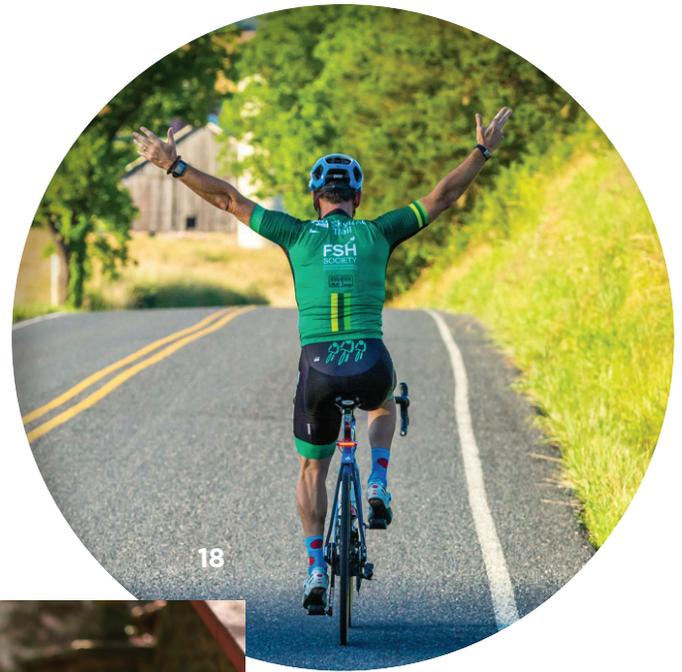
Family Stories 10
Families share the impact of giving and receiving help

Our New Adolescent Program 13
All about Skyland Trail's new adolescent program and staff

Community Support 18
Individuals, families, and businesses support our mission

Events Review 20
Associates Spring Luncheon & Fashion Show
Southern Shindig
Benefits of Laughter

Leadership 24
Meet our Board & Advisory Board



Each of our clients has a unique journey. This publication tells their stories and ours in aiding them along their way.



Located in Atlanta, Skyland Trail is a nationally recognized nonprofit mental health treatment organization serving adults ages 18 and older and adolescents ages 14 to 17 with a primary psychiatric diagnosis. Through our residential and day treatment programs, we help our clients grow, recover, and reclaim their lives. skylandtrail.org



Joint Commission
 Gold Seal of Approval
 since 1998

Member of:

National Association of
 Therapeutic Schools and Programs



American Residential
 Treatment Association





Just over 30 years ago, a group of community leaders identified the need for a new kind of mental health treatment organization in Atlanta. They envisioned a community where individuals and families struggling with mental illness could find hope, healing, and respect.

This year, Skyland Trail celebrates its 30th anniversary. Over three decades, the vision of our founders has materialized into a nationally recognized model for effective mental health treatment.

Skyland Trail was founded on the belief that recovery is possible, and today our clients remain at the heart of our mission. In this issue of *Journeys* magazine you will read stories of how treatment at Skyland Trail helped clients and families end unhealthy patterns and begin new paths forward.

You will also read about the October 2019 grand opening of the J. Rex Fuqua Campus and our adolescent treatment program for teens. Future issues of *Journeys* magazine will undoubtedly include stories of recovery from our teen clients and families, and I look forward to highlighting how,

together, the Skyland Trail community helped change the trajectory of a young person's life by providing the right combination of evidence-based treatment and compassionate support at just the right moment in their development.

You are a valuable part of the Skyland Trail community. Thank you to the Atlanta community for 30 years of unwavering commitment to our mission. Together we can continue to reinforce our shared belief that recovery from mental illness is possible and amplify the message that effective treatment changes lives.

Warmly,

Beth Finnerty, President & CEO

30

Years of Skyland Trail



Skyland Trail opens

1989

First financial aid scholarships awarded

Skyland Trail South Campus opens

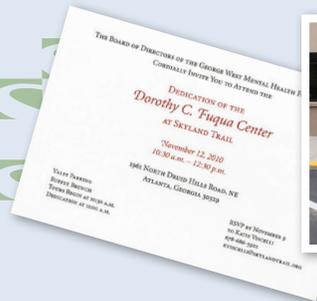
1999

Health and Education Center opens

2000

Onsite primary care clinic opens

2006



Dorothy C. Fuqua Center opens

2010

Charles B. West Campus dedicated

2014



Glenn Family Wellness Clinic opens

2015

Rollins Campus for young adults opens

2016



J. Rex Fuqua Campus for adolescents opens

2019



Skyland Trail Benefits from Race Across America

Powell Brown, a friend of Skyland Trail participating in the 2019 Race Across America, raised more than \$1 million for Skyland Trail. This is the largest gift Skyland Trail has received to-date through an individual fundraising effort.

See page 18 for details!



Chief Medical Officer Honored by APA

In May 2019, Skyland Trail Charles B. West Chief Medical Officer Raymond J. Kotwicki, MD, MPH, was conferred as a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) at the APA Annual Meeting in San Francisco. This prestigious distinction is the highest membership award given by the APA.

Skyland Trail Gardens Receive Recognition

The Metamorphosis Garden at Skyland Trail, an area where clients can observe the transformation of caterpillars to butterflies, received recognition from the North American Butterfly Association as a Certified Monarch Garden and Certified Butterfly Garden in addition to being certified as a Monarch Waystation by Monarch Watch. Another garden, the woodland-inspired Garden of Grace, was designated as a Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

Clay Jackson Elected Board Chair

Clay Jackson was elected chair of the board of directors in January 2019.

Jackson has served Skyland Trail in a board capacity for more than 13 years.



Adolescent Residential Treatment Program Now Open

We are excited to announce the opening of our new short-term residential program for adolescents ages 14 to 17 with mood disorders, anxiety disorders and OCD. Our approach combines the best evidence-based mental health care with a curriculum focused on coping skills and healthy habits that provides teens and their families with a roadmap to succeed in life long after treatment.

Learn more: www.skylandtrail.org/adolescent



Via Twitter

Powell Brown and Team FSHD @SkylandTrail have completed the 2019 Race Across America, crossing the finish line in Annapolis, MD early Saturday morning! Thanks to the generous support he received, Powell raised more than \$1M for Skyland Trail! #BBThePowerOfWE #RAAM2019 @B_BInsurance

ICYMI: Former Deputy AG @SallyQYates, who became a lawyer like her father, shared the story of his suicide at the 2019 Dorothy C. Fuqua Lecture presented by @SkylandTrail & @GradyHealth System on Wed. in Atlanta @DailyReport

Via Facebook

"Our grandson was trained in tools to deal with depression and anxiety. Thanks to Skyland he is prepared for a successful future."
– Betty & Bill Mackey

"It's been a couple years since I was a patient at Skyland Trail, but the campus is very beautiful. Just about every person there was very kind and helpful, but they also knew when to make you work, so to speak. I seriously hated it on Day 1 and then didn't ever want to leave when my treatment was over."
– Bethany Kates

New Website Launched

Skyland Trail recently launched a new website. The website includes information about the new adolescent program and improves the user experience for visitors to the site, especially those using mobile devices.



Life on My Own Terms: Melissa's Journey

When I walked through the doors of Skyland Trail, I had been struggling with mental health challenges for eight years and had been in multiple psychiatric hospitals and day programs, a few of which were the results of serious suicide attempts. I had a chart over an inch thick from a variety of mental health professionals, starting with my initial diagnosis at age 13.

When I was 19 years old, during one of my inpatient stays, the treatment team encouraged my parents to have me apply for disability and to put me in a group home because I couldn't be stabilized and they feared I wouldn't have much of a future. My mother's response was, "absolutely not."



FORTUNATELY, my family had been attending a weekly peer support group. My mother called one of the group leaders who told my mother her own personal story: she had gone to a residential program, which had really helped her. My mother researched and found Skyland Trail.

When I arrived, I was such a zombie! I was on four or five medications and I couldn't focus. I had lived my life under this fog of illness, interpreting every thought/feeling/emotion as a symptom. I said, "I'm sick of being sick. This isn't how I want to live and something's got to change." From day one, I put 110 percent into getting well.

Skyland Trail saw me as a person instead of a diagnosis. And they helped me see myself as a person too.

I learned that a lot of the trauma I had to heal from was from the traditional mental health system trying to help me. Previous treatment had focused on fixing what they saw as a "broken brain." Their goal was to help me manage symptoms and be stable. But I wanted to thrive and grow! I wanted to succeed and challenge myself!

Skyland Trail taught me that mental health treatment is a whole body experience and to view my life holistically. It's not just therapy and taking psychiatric medications to stay out of the hospital.

One of the first things my Skyland Trail psychiatrist, Dr. Kotwicki, did was a thorough check of my physical health. He discovered that I was incredibly vitamin B

and vitamin D deficient, and I started receiving supplements immediately.

I was enrolled in the dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) program and learned that if I experience an emotion or a sensation in my body that I don't like, or that makes me uncomfortable, I'm not helpless to it. DBT gave me the tools to live life in a way that makes me comfortable.

I spent almost every free minute outside of treatment hours in the art room. During my dark days, I lost my passion for creativity. Helen Goldberg and the art program helped me spark my creativity again and realize that crafting and making things can be part of me being well.

I was also part of the Healthy Challenge program, which really helped me experience the connection between what I eat, how my body feels, and how all of that affects my energy and mood.

Having a community, a group of "these are my people," was so important! I made genuine friendships, a few of which are still important to me today.

The environment at Skyland Trail, with spaces in nature for reflection, really helped my healing journey. Spending time in the greenhouse with Libba Shortridge, the horticultural therapist, was usually a daily occurrence. My favorite spot was "the grotto," a small pond with resident turtles and koi. I loved hanging out with those turtles, the calming feeling of the pond and nature encouraged my personal meditation practice. It was so

“Skyland Trail saw me as person instead of a diagnosis. And they helped me see myself as a person too.”

healing for me to sit with myself and my feelings, to figure out who I was, and to accept, forgive, and love... those moments were really vital to my recovery.

Overall, Skyland Trail provided a “bubble of healing.” I forgot about the outside world for a few months, and that protective bubble allowed me to do the work I had to do to get well.

I was at Skyland Trail for four months before graduating and returning to the suburbs of Philadelphia where I grew up. Leaving Skyland I felt like I had been given a second chance at life: no more revolving hospital doors.

The transition from Skyland’s “bubble of healing” to the “real world” can be tough. I was living with my mom, who is my number one support, but the environment— the same places where I had previously isolated and attempted suicide —made me start to feel sick again. I knew I needed to get out of that physical space.

My dream job, and what I had been working towards prior to Skyland, was to work for a circus company. Coincidentally, that summer a children’s circus school was holding a one-week resident camp nearby. My younger cousin was one of the circus stars, and I attended a Circus of the Kids performance. I was so impressed! After the performance, I walked up to the director of the circus company, I shook his hand, and I said, “My name is Melissa, and I want to work for you.”

Two weeks later I was offered a job with their traveling education program, and I toured for a year living in the circus tour bus. It was incredible! I became a circus coach, among other many roles, and we went into schools and youth programs to teach kids circus arts. My therapist in Philadelphia agreed to biweekly phone sessions, I was able to call other supports on the phone regularly, and I had a three-month supply of the medications sent to me. I had a few people on tour who I shared my history and challenges with and who helped me maintain my wellness on the road. It was difficult, but it was definitely what I needed in terms of life experiences.

After a year and a few months, I started to feel the need for some stability—getting my own place and adopting a cat quickly became my next goal. I came home to Philadelphia, and I got a job as a therapeutic support staff for children with special needs in a local middle school.



For Melissa, maintaining wellness means baking with her mom and spending time with friends and family

I also enrolled in Penn State–Abington and started taking evening classes to complete a bachelor’s degree in Rehabilitation and Human Services. I will graduate in December 2019.

I loved working at the middle school, but I knew my passion for helping others with their own mental health challenges was in my future, so I decided to become a Certified Peer Specialist (CPS). At Skyland Trail, peer specialists like Wade Lee had helped me with my recovery.

In 2016 I was one of 20 participants selected in Montgomery County, PA, to take the Certified Peer Specialist training. Since becoming a CPS I have worked my way up to the Assistant Program Director of a peer support program which includes supervising a team of mobile CPS staff. I also run support groups for those who identify with hearing voices or sensing or seeing things that others do not as a part of the Montgomery County Hearing Voices Network. I also run support groups for people struggling with thoughts or feelings of suicide.

I love running support groups because I can be part of a peer community that helps folks find their own way to recovery. Peer support asks the question, “what does your recovery look like for you?”



Since becoming a Certified Peer Specialist I’ve also advanced my education in Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) which is a program I use daily to keep my recovery balanced. I’ve also taken advanced trainings in Intentional Peer Support and am now training others within my agency.

Before Skyland Trail, I was a mental health patient. Now I’m a successful adult. And I’m helping others find their own path to wellness. Recovery is always a possibility! Finding how, and why, and when, and all the little details is an individual process, but it’s always a possibility. I think it’s important for everyone—mental health professionals especially—to know that!

Today, I am a pretty typical 27-year-old, living my life with the awareness that what I do affects my mental health. I don’t have to constantly look through the lens of a diagnosis. I just have to be a little extra aware about how things affect me positively or negatively because of a diagnosis. I don’t pet my cat or go to a concert because they are wellness tools, I do those things now because I enjoy them and they make me happy.

I’ve continued to have my creativity and love for nature as vital parts of my life. I also continue some of the practices I started in Skyland such as DBT therapy and meditation. I couldn’t bring the Skyland trail community with me, but I come back to visit when I can and I built a recovery community for myself in Philly.

Like a houseplant, I know I need enough water and sunlight to survive. I make sure that I eat right, sleep well, and hydrate. I have to get outside and spend time with family and friends. I often volunteer on the weekends helping friends with disabilities get out of the house and do things meaningful to them in the community. I also volunteer with the Jewish Relief Agency once a month packing food boxes and delivering them to food insecure families in the area.

I’m now five years in recovery. I have had no hospitalizations, and for the last two years, I’ve been managing my challenges without medications. I live on my own and I have a full time job. I’m also about to graduate from college. I’ve worked hard to build the life I want, and those things weren’t a possibility before Skyland Trail.

What a complete shock to myself, my life today! If I had a crystal ball six years ago, I wouldn’t believe its forecast for my future. Before Skyland Trail, I had hopes and dreams, but they seemed impossible. What I learned at Skyland Trail was that there are options. I can do anything. Now I can do life on my terms.

After I graduate from Penn State in December, I’m not entirely sure what my future will be. I’m potentially interested in peer advocacy at a national level or further education focused on psychology of childhood trauma. There is definitely a fire and a passion within me for recovery-oriented mental health. ■

“I’m climbing up the stairs that can go anywhere. Who knows what’s next. But watch out world here I come.”



Our Families: Stories of Hope

“**OVER SIX YEARS**, our daughter Amanda received treatment at numerous programs as a result of mental health issues including six suicide attempts. We approached each new therapist or treatment with hope that it would help her heal. Each time, we were disappointed.

Finally our daughter told us about Skyland Trail, which she said was her last hope. We were afraid to tell her our doubts that this program would succeed where countless others had failed, or that we would struggle to afford Skyland Trail, even with our insurance coverage.

Our research assuaged our doubts about Skyland Trail's effectiveness. In October 2017, our daughter began residential treatment. Within two weeks, she and her amazing psychiatrist and treatment team began to report improvements in her condition. Just when Amanda started

to get better, our insurance company stopped covering her treatment.

Though we doubted our eligibility, the financial aid team at Skyland Trail encouraged us to apply and helped us through the process. We were thrilled the day we were approved.

About a month into her treatment, our daughter called us and proclaimed, “I don't have depression anymore”—the first time in five years she could say that! Today, she is the bright, self-confident young woman we knew her to be. She still struggles occasionally, but now she instinctively uses the tools and skills she acquired at Skyland Trail when she starts to feel symptoms coming on. Our daughter completed a year of college and recently began her second year. She joined a sorority and has developed strong friendships. She is even making career plans and talking of going to law school.



Patrick and Tracey M. made their first gift to Skyland Trail as a Grateful Family in 2019

“Skyland Trail changed my life and turned me into the person I always dreamed of being,” says Amanda. “Skyland gave me the strength and the skills to be my best self, my life has completely turned around. I am so thankful for the opportunity I was given by Skyland's generous donors. I couldn't have done it without them.”

Skyland's financial aid program made all this possible. Financial aid helped our daughter stay in treatment until she was ready for her new life and all that we know she will achieve in her future.

“Skyland gave me the strength and skills to be my best self. My life has completely turned around. I am so thankful for the opportunity I was given by Skyland's generous donors, I couldn't have done this without them.” —Amanda M.

“I’m thankful and grateful every day. We saw where he was prior, and we see where he’s at now. It’s truly changing the trajectory of someone’s life, and it’s brought us closer together as a family.” –Nita W.

“ALL OF A SUDDEN, I could tell. I know when he isn’t himself,” says Angie about her younger brother. “He wanted to stay home. He stopped coming to family outings and to his cousin’s ball games. He would talk to himself and about himself in the third-person,” Angie adds.

While her brother had been managing his previously diagnosed schizophrenia well—attending college out-of-state, taking his medications, being active in relationships with family—the loss of a close family member seemed to be a turning point in his mental health. When he was admitted to a short-term inpatient facility for self-harming, his family knew it was time to do more.

“You never know what could happen. I wanted him to be able to live without falling into depression. My goal was getting him some serious help without waiting for something to happen,” says Angie.

Her brother began treatment at Skyland Trail. After hard work individually and as a family, and a change to a more manageable medication schedule, he graduated from Skyland Trail after completing four months of treatment. His stay at Skyland Trail was made possible

through financial aid donations, which covered his family’s remaining out-of-pocket costs after insurance.

“It’s a blessing,” says Nita, his mother. “I had been praying for that door to open up, and it was nothing but God that led us in this direction. Not everyone is in a financial situation where they can afford treatment, but that doesn’t mean that they shouldn’t get the help they need. Everyone should have the opportunity.”

Since graduating from Skyland Trail, their brother and son has begun to take more responsibility for his recovery and independence, whether it’s getting to work, paying bills, or adhering to his medication schedule. The family, touched by the generosity of Skyland Trail donors and the compassionate staff that helped their son and brother, has begun to be more open about mental health not only with their family but with others in their community.

“It’s important that you share your story because you never know what someone else may be going through,” says Angie. “You’re letting people know that it’s okay, and that they can seek help and get the assistance they may need.”

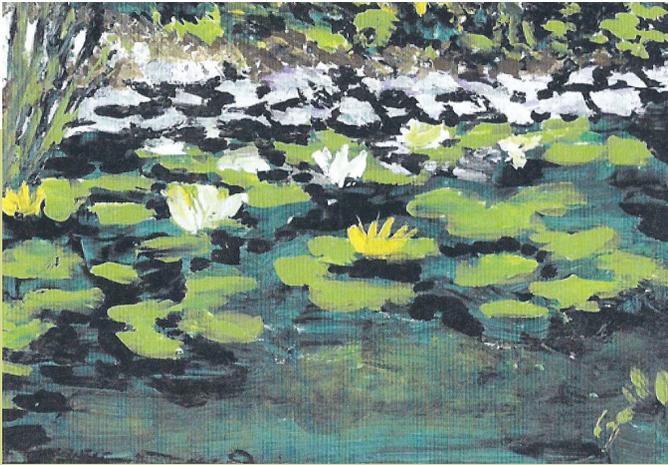


Nita and Angie W.

Nita and Angie’s family received financial aid, made possible through charitable donations, that covered their remaining out-of-pocket treatment costs after insurance.

30

Skyland Trail has evolved significantly in 30 years – with newer facilities and expanded programming. But the heart of Skyland Trail has remained constant – our clients. *A few clients who entered treatment in the early days became a part of the history of Skyland Trail.*



Artwork by 1998 Skyland Trail alumna, Sally Faletti

A FEW CLIENTS who entered treatment in the early days became a part of the history of Skyland Trail. One of our first clients expressed a desire to grow collard greens, and efforts to meet that therapeutic need launched our horticultural therapy program, a well-loved component of our whole person treatment program today.

Many early clients remained involved in the Skyland Trail community for years, continuing to both receive and give support and shape our story.

One of those clients was Sally. Sally’s family – her brother, Paul, and sister-in-law, Judy, continue to support Skyland Trail through their charitable giving today as a Grateful Family.

Sally, who dealt with schizophrenia, came to Skyland Trail in 1998, when long-term residential psychiatric treatment options in Atlanta were few and far between. Known for her quick wit and charming personality, Sally was an incredible artist.

Paintings, drawings, ceramics, and many more items that Sally created during her time in treatment still adorn the walls of staff offices, hallways, and other areas of campus. Even after she completed the treatment program, every spring, she created works for Arts in the Garden, and every fall she was thrilled to participate in the Georgia Artists with Disabilities exhibit.

“Sally loved her art classes at Skyland Trail and her instructors,” said Paul, Sally’s brother who served as her caregiver with his wife, Judy. “It gave her a sense of family. It made Sally realize that she was not alone. It helped instill a sense of confidence in her.”

When Sally passed away in 2013 at the age of 71, Skyland Trail hosted a celebration of life event to honor her life and legacy, which included heartfelt words from counselors and staff who were privileged to have known her.

“It was lovely, and meant so very much to our entire family,” says Judy. “It was beautiful.”

For Paul and Judy, choosing to give back to Skyland Trail just made sense. “We believe in what Skyland Trail is doing for their clients and their families,” says Paul.

Paul & Judy Faletti have been contributing to Skyland Trail as Grateful Family members since 2002

“Mental illness can be a lonely disease that’s difficult to understand. Skyland Trail offers love, hope, and compassion. Skyland Trail helped Sally and our family so much that we continue to support them through charitable giving.” –Paul Faletti



Introducing Our Adolescent Treatment Program Serving Teens Ages 14-to-17

THE NEWLY OPENED J. REX FUQUA CAMPUS FOR ADOLESCENT TREATMENT



How Our Adolescent Program Works

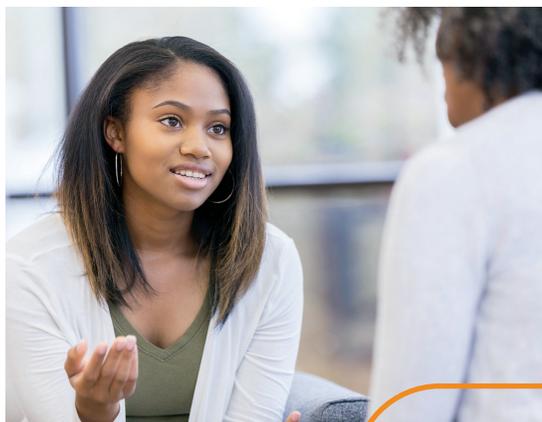
The Skyland Trail adolescent program addresses the whole ecosystem surrounding a teen who is struggling with a mood or anxiety disorder or OCD.

Comprehensive programming engages the family, the school, and other key support systems.

This approach ensures that, as the adolescent begins to make progress through evidence-based treatment, the people and systems surrounding the teen adjust to help the young person continue to grow.

Individualized treatment meets the specific needs of each adolescent based on diagnoses, symptoms, history, background, and identified struggles in school or relationships. Treatment begins with a robust diagnostic assessment to clarify the psychiatric diagnoses as well as to identify strengths that can be leveraged as part of the treatment process.

Our length of stay gives adolescents and families time to heal and focus on developing a new path forward. Structured daily schedules and integrated wellness programming helps adolescents understand their diagnoses and learn how to effectively care for themselves while pursuing their goals and dreams.



Skyland Trail's new adolescent program provides individualized, multidisciplinary support for teens ages 14-to-17.





You can help support the adolescent program:

Paving the Path to Resilience

Engraving a paver is a great way to honor a loved one, celebrate recovery, share a memory, or inspire hope. Your engraved paver at the J. Rex Fuqua Campus for adolescents will demonstrate your support for mental health treatment, clients, families, and Skyland Trail.

As visitors arrive on campus, they will pass through the Edwina and Tom Johnson Entry Garden, which will feature personalized pavers with names and messages of Skyland Trail's friends and donors. Every day, clients, parents, and loved ones will take crucial steps in their journey to recovery by way of this special place as they enter the building.

Proceeds from purchased pavers will directly benefit the new Skyland Trail adolescent mental health program. Your gift is completely tax deductible.

CONTACT: Sarah Buckley, Development Officer, 678-686-5949 or sbuckley@skylandtrail.org.

KEY COMPONENTS:



Building Resilience

Teens learn healthy coping skills to manage stress and navigate school as well as peer and family relationships.



Evidence-based Care

After comprehensive diagnostic assessments, adolescents are matched with a specialized treatment plan based on their diagnoses, symptoms, strengths, & goals.



Multidisciplinary Expertise

The treatment team includes psychiatrists, psychologists, masters level therapists, registered nurses and nurse practitioners, and experts in experiential therapies including art, music, nature, & creative movement therapies.



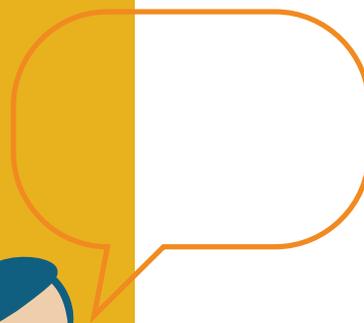
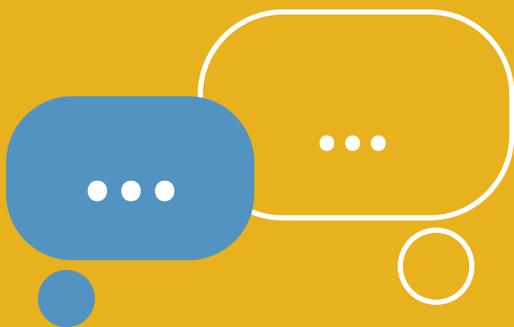
Coordination with Schools

Onsite education director and tutors partner with schools to help clients stay current with their courses.



Engaging the Family

Parents participate in family therapy sessions and psychoeducation classes to help them make important changes in family dynamics to support long-term health.



Meet the Adolescent Treatment Team

How We Started

In late 2015, Rex Fuqua and Dr. Ed Craighead approached me with their vision to build an adolescent treatment program in Atlanta. I was full time faculty at Emory University, Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at the time. It felt like a perfect match for me: I had 35 years of experience in the Atlanta nonprofit community, had previously developed youth programs, and had a passion for increasing access to mental health treatment, particularly for adolescents.

Rex and Ed described their concept: create the premiere evidence-based, holistic adolescent mental health residential program for treatment of teens with mood, anxiety and obsessive compulsive disorders, to help them develop the resilience and life skills needed to have productive, healthy futures. How could I say no? What a wonderful opportunity to provide critically needed adolescent mental health care in our community.

I began dedicating time to the project in the summer of 2016, visited model programs across the country, searched Atlanta for property, interviewed architects, met with key leaders in our community, and developed the core of the program. We were thrilled to officially team up with Skyland Trail, and it has been

simply amazing. There is such respect for the organization in the community, and it has been a pleasure to work with such dedicated experts.

The community response to our capital campaign was beyond my expectations. Nearly every person we met with responded with, “When will you open? How soon can you make this happen?”

Assembling our brilliant adolescent treatment team has been one of the most rewarding parts of developing the program. We selected talented professionals who have a passion for working with adolescents and families and share the core values of the program. Putting together and being a part of this team has been one of the highlights of my career.

I am honored to have been a part of the Skyland Trail adolescent program from the beginning, and I simply cannot wait to share the impact of our work moving forward.



Dorothy Jordan, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC,
PMHCNS-BC, FAAN
Executive Director
Skyland Trail Adolescent Program



Les Cole, D.Min., LPC, CPCS, NBCC
Vice President of Adolescent Clinical Services

Les Cole's career has focused on working with adolescents and their families in a myriad of settings including Cobb County's Juvenile Court, Department of Family and Children Services, and School System in addition to adolescent residential facilities, private practice, and community-based therapy. Les received his bachelor's degree from Texas Tech University, a master's degree from Phillips University, and a doctorate degree from Columbia Theological Seminary. He completed his clinical psychology internship and practicums through the Center for Pastoral Care at Emory University. Les also taught as Adjunct Faculty at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University and Columbia Theological Seminary.



Allison Nitsche, MD, MPH
Medical Director of Adolescent Services

A native of New Orleans, Dr. Allison Nitsche completed her adult psychiatry residency training at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and her child psychiatry and community psychiatry fellowship training at Emory University in Atlanta. In Atlanta, she also received her Master of Public Health degree with a focus on Health Policy and Management. For over a decade, Allison has provided mental health care to children, adolescents, and adults in both inpatient and outpatient settings in the community. Prior to joining Skyland Trail, she was an Assistant Professor in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Utah, worked with children and their families in the hospital setting at UNI, and taught trainees not only about child psychiatry but also the other systems that interface with mental health including child welfare, juvenile justice, primary care, and education.

Treatment Team Q&A



Jenni Caruso, M.Ed.,LPC, CPCS
Director of Clinical and Residential Services

What unique pressures/stressors do you think today's teens are dealing with?

Just the very fact of being an adolescent who is experiencing so many emotional and physical changes in a short period of time is, naturally, a huge stressor for any person. In addition to adolescent development, teens face increasing pressures from school, social media, peers, family, and extracurricular involvement.



Ashley Lanier-Pszczola, M.S., LAMFT
Family Therapist

Why do you enjoy working with adolescents?

Adolescents are often so authentic and genuine, and not afraid to say what they do and don't like. We are living in a time where teens have more of a voice than ever before, and I love to see them use it.



Katrina Goines, Ph.D.
Lead Mood Track and Research Psychologist

What impact can effective psychiatric treatment have on a teen's life?

Adolescence is an intense period characterized by rapid changes, not just socially and academically, but also in terms of brain development. Significant psychological problems during this time period can cause the teen to miss out on important developmental tasks. Therapeutic intervention during this time can change the trajectory of a teen's life.



Kerry York, M.Ed.
Education Director

What about this program most excites you?

Mental health and academic performance are positively correlated. I am excited to see successful transitions back into the community as a result of the work done by the clients as well as the staff.



Shanee Toledano, Ph.D.
Lead Anxiety/OCD Track Psychologist

Why do you enjoy working with adolescents?

Adolescents are uniquely situated to make rapid and sustained changes through therapy, and it is incredibly rewarding to join them in that process. Teens are capable of engaging in the critical thinking and insightful self-reflection that therapy requires, and they inevitably bring unique interests, talents, and personal styles that enrich and enliven the therapeutic environment.



Elise Roche, M.S., ATRP, LAPC
Creative Arts Therapist

What about this program most excites you?

I feel most excited about the collaboration between all the different wellness programs (physical health, mental health, academic advancement, adjunctive therapies, etc.). Using all of these approaches cohesively will make a world of difference in adolescent wellness.



Racing for Mental Health: Powell Brown

Through generous donations from 331 individuals and organizations, Brown raised more than \$1.15M, the largest gift Skyland Trail has ever received through an individual fundraising effort.



Photo: James Dvorak

Every summer, as part of Race Across America, thousands of cyclists ride coast-to-coast in support of causes and organizations. In 2019, Skyland Trail was one of those organizations thanks to Powell Brown, a first-time participant who promised to ride two years ago after his longtime friend George completed the race.

“We talked a lot about it afterward, and I made the commitment to ride,” said Brown, President and CEO of Brown & Brown, Inc., an insurance brokerage firm. “Between then and now, several

people I know were affected by suicide. That’s why I wanted to raise money for Skyland Trail during this year’s race.”

Powell joined George and six others to create Team FSHD Skyland Trail, which aimed to raise awareness and donations for two nonprofit organizations: Skyland Trail and the FSH Society, a nonprofit focused on facioscapulohumeral muscular dystrophy (FSHD).

Through generous donations from 331 individuals and organizations, Brown raised more than \$1.15 million,

the largest gift Skyland Trail has ever received through an individual fundraising effort. Funds raised by Brown will directly support comprehensive programs at Skyland Trail’s new J. Rex Fuqua Campus for adolescents ages 14 to 17.

“The hope is that people who suffer from mental illness can get help before they go to college or experience an event that may be triggered by leaving home for the first time and experiencing new stresses in their lives,” Brown said. “Mental health challenges reach

BY THE NUMBERS



RACE TIME

Six days,
13 hours,
and 11 minutes



DISTANCE

3,069.8 miles
through
12 states



RATE

450
miles
per day



ENSURING OUR FUTURE

Meeting the Needs of Future Generations

Individuals who support Skyland Trail through a planned giving commitment become members of The Cypress Society.

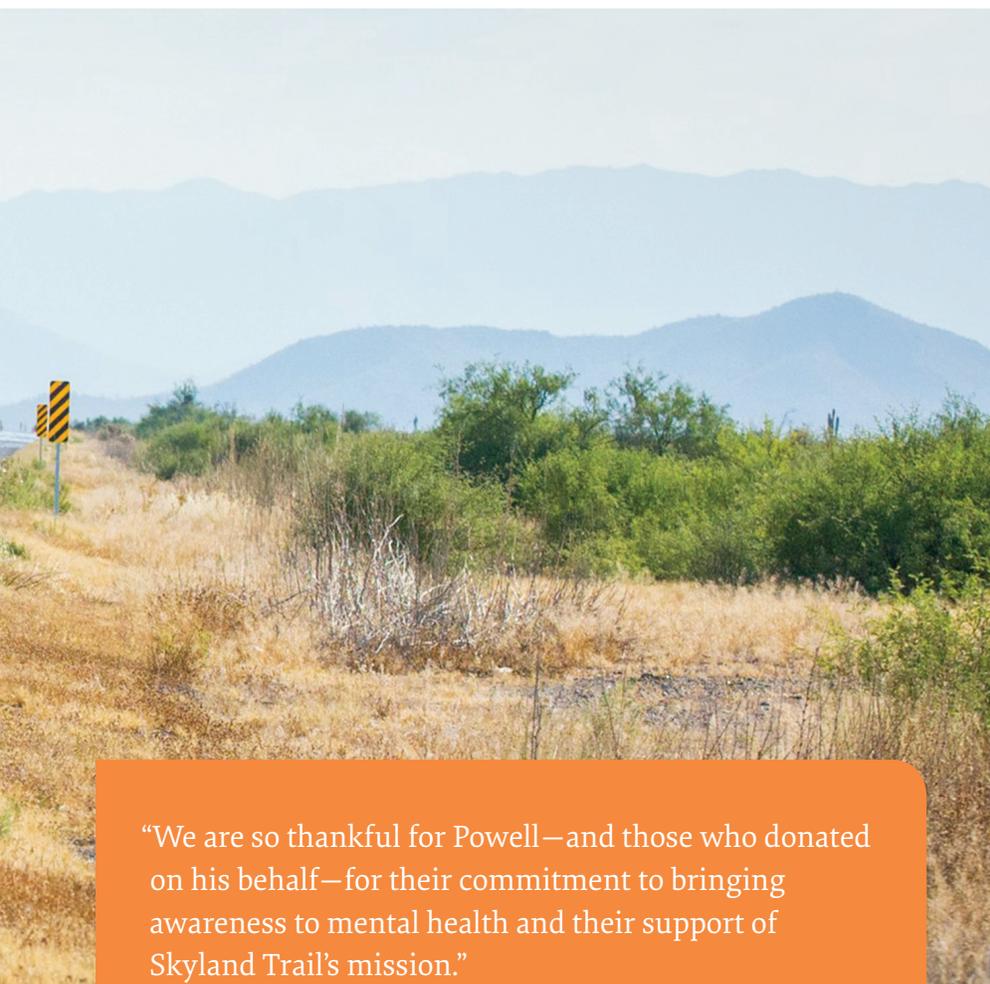
These legacy gifts ensure that Skyland Trail continues to meet the needs of future generations through state-of-the-art facilities and innovative, leading-edge treatment programs.

Contact: Elizabeth Alexander,
ealexander@skylandtrail.org
404-709-3172.

TOM AND ANITA ADAMS were neighbors of the West family, who were founders of Skyland Trail. When a young man whom Anita had taught as a child in their church struggled with mental illness, they witnessed the healing impact Skyland Trail made on his life. The experience underscored the importance of Skyland Trail's mission in the community. Now, as part of the Cypress Society, Tom and Anita allocate a portion of their insurance to Skyland Trail.



Tom and Anita Adams



“We are so thankful for Powell—and those who donated on his behalf—for their commitment to bringing awareness to mental health and their support of Skyland Trail’s mission.”

– Beth Finnerty, President and CEO, Skyland Trail

much further and deeper in our society than anyone has wanted to talk about. I also have four teenaged children, and the impact of technology—just seeing the social media and the things that occur—the pressure on young people today is unlike anything when I was growing up. We have to address this.”

The team traveled 3,069.80 miles in just about 6½ days and finished in fifth place in their category.



 **AMOUNT RAISED**
\$1.15 million

 **NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS**
331

How you can help: Events

EACH YEAR, SKYLAND TRAIL HOSTS several unique fundraising events. Each event offers a fun and distinct experience and an opportunity to support recovery for individuals with mental illness. We are honored by your participation and especially grateful to our volunteers and sponsors.

Associates Spring Luncheon and Fashion Show 2019

On March 22, 2019, Skyland Trail held its 12th annual Associates Spring Luncheon and Fashion Show at Piedmont Driving Club. Led by event co-chairs Suci Jackson and Denise Rezek, the event welcomed more than 300 guests and raised more than \$87,000. Guests enjoyed lunch, a fashion show by Neiman Marcus and a presentation from keynote speaker, Jacki Lyden. Jacki Lyden shared her personal experience with her mother's mental illness and discussed her book, *Daughter of the Queen of Sheba*.

Event Chair: Suci Jackson
Event Co-Chair: Denise Rezek



IMAGES: 1 Jessica Schroeder, Nancy See, Jenny Pruitt, Beth Finnerty, Jennifer Pino, Kim Wilkin 2 Jacki Lyden, Denise Rezek, Suci Jackson 3 Nola Stull, Nancy Bryant, Leigh Pollard 4 Caroline Tucker, Beth Park, Suci Jackson, Wendy Conrad Aronson, Anna Pare, Kim Marks, Kristin Howard 5 Elizabeth Bresnahan, Lori Chase, Amanda Smith, Ellen Marsh **Photos:** Kimberly Link

Southern Shindig 2019

On August 22, Skyland Trail hosted its ninth annual Southern Shindig at Steady Hand Beer Co. More than 200 young professionals attended the fundraising event, generating more than \$62,000 from ticket sales and a silent auction to support financial aid scholarships and unique therapeutic programs. Guests enjoyed music from Mark Grundhoefer while sampling Steady Hand brews and a Tex-Mex buffet.

Event Co-Chairs:
Caroline & Bill Weimar and
Fraser Parker

Auction Chair:
Robert Bairstow



IMAGES: 1 Fraser Parker and Bill & Caroline Weimar 2 Laura Parker Sykes and Sam Sykes with Mark Shaw 3 Erin Markey and Ryan Covert 4 Heather Teague, Asheton Akers, Mary-Kate Lamis 5 Allison Bradford, Elizabeth Adlich **Photos:** Lee Patterson

Founders' Day Ribbing Cutting for Board Chair Forest

Following our Founders' Day celebration in July, we dedicated the Board Chairs' Forest. In honor of former Board Chairs—and continuing in the future when a Chair's tenure is completed— a tree will serve as a tribute to their devotion to Skyland Trail's mission. Initial trees were dedicated to Charles B. West, Mark West, John C. Gordon, and Richard Parker.



Clay Jackson, Richard Parker, John C. Gordon, Mark West

Benefits of Laughter 2018

On October 18, 2018, Skyland Trail held its 21st annual Benefits of Laughter fundraising event at The St. Regis Atlanta. The event welcomed more than 500 guests and raised more than \$900,000 to support Skyland Trail clients and programs. As part of the program, Nikki J., a Skyland Trail graduate, shared his personal story. And, proving that laughter often is the best medicine, guests enjoyed a comedic performance by Roy Wood Jr.

Event Chairs:
Donna & Stan Sands

Corporate Chair:
Robert Wynne

Patron Chairs:
Mary & Tom Watson



IMAGES: 1 Mary & Tom Watson, Donna & Stan Sands, Beth Finnerty, Karen & Richard Parker 2 Stan Sands, Roy Woods Jr, Donna Sands 3 Standing L to R: Richard and Lane Courts, Paige Honeycutt, Jennifer Foster, Zak Lee, Drew Thomas, Deanna Thomas, Ben Jackson, Hillary Jackson; Seated L to R: David Foster, Kimberly Ichter, Charles Honeycutt, and Ashley Preisinger 4 Robin Howell, Mary & John Brock 5 Scott & Betsy Akers, Michael Masters 6 Anne Sterchi, Shane Thomas, Michael Bishop, Rand Glenn Hagen 7 Front row: Sara & Cody Partin, Jill Campbell, George Bullock, Nancy & Charlie Rigby ; Back row: Larry & Debbie Aldrich, Jennie Blake **Photos:** Kimberly Link and Lee Patterson



Benefits of Laughter 2019

We are grateful to all who made Benefits of Laughter of 2019 on October 17 a success: volunteer event leadership, event sponsors, and attendees. See photos and an event summary online: www.skylandtrail.org/BOL

Event Chairs:

Kristin & Jim Howard

Patron Chairs:

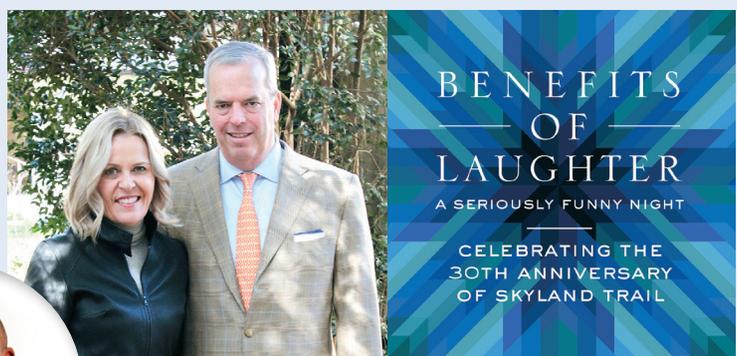
Anna & Richard Paré

Corporate Chair:

Michelle Sullivan

Comedic Guest:

Wayne Brady



IMAGES: Comedic guest Wayne Brady; Event Chairs Kristin & Jim Howard

LEADERSHIP

Volunteer Leadership 2019

Board of Directors

Clay Jackson, *Chair*
Mark Tipton, *Chair, Executive Committee*
Thomas D. Bell, Jr., *Treasurer*
Marjorie Wynne, *Secretary*

Rev. Joanna Adams
Brooks Barge
Cindy Ferguson
J. Rex Fuqua
Bernard Gray
Rand Glenn Hagen
Dana Halberg
Thomas D. Hills
James Howard
William E. Huger, III
Don Inman
Amy Rollins Kreisler
Kelly Loeffler
Betts Love
Melissa Lowe
Jay D. Mitchell
Jackie Montag
Jeff Muir
Patty Reid
Michelle Sullivan
Brooke Weinmann
Robby Wynne

Charles Wellborn
(Ex-Officio /Advisory Board Chair)

Emeritus Directors

Vivian DuBose, *Chair*
Richard Bryant
Cecil Conlee
John Gordon
Betty Ann Inman
Beth Jones
Mark C. West
Blanton C. Winship

Advisory Board Members

Charles Wellborn, *Chair*
Wendy Conrad Aronson
Emily Bleke
Wes Bradshaw
Denise DeAngelo ❖
Nan Easterlin
Jennifer Fuqua Fowler
Alan Hamilton
Susan Hannan ❖
Hill Hardman
Bo Heiner ❖
Allison Hill, JD, PhD
Keisha Hines
Mary Johnson
Catharine Kelly ❖
Carla Knobloch ❖
Dorian Lamis, PhD ❖
Carrie Lanier
Cara Isdell Lee
Colin McBurnette
Liz Means
Bob Mills
Michael Mock
Andrea Montag
Carla Neal-Haley
Katherine Ohlhausen ❖
Christine Ragland
Becky Riley
Tricia Rosenbaum
Daraka Satcher
Caryl Smith
Ty Smith
Lizeth Arizmendi Smithgall
Harrison Spry
Andy Stull
Paula Tkac
Mary Watson
Betsy West ❖
Leslie Wierman

Suci Jackson
(Ex-Officio /Associates President)
Sue McKinley
(Ex-Officio/ Past Associates President)

National Advisory Board

Charles B. Nemeroff, MD, PhD, *Chair*
University of Texas at Austin
Dell Medical School
Kathleen Brady, MD, PhD
Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)
Barbara Coffey, MD
University of Miami
Miller School of Medicine
W. Edward Craighead, PhD
Emory University School of Medicine
Philip D. Harvey, PhD
University of Miami
Miller School of Medicine
Ned H. Kalin, MD
University of Wisconsin
School of Medicine and Public Health
Clinton D. Kilts, PhD
University of Arkansas – Medical Sciences
Psychiatric Research Institute
Alan F. Schatzberg, MD
Stanford University School of Medicine
School of Medicine

❖ *New members in 2019*



New Advisory Board members:

(Left to right) Susan Hannan, Katherine Ohlhausen, Catharine Kelly, Bo Heiner
Not pictured: Denise DeAngelo, Carla Knobloch, Dorian Lamis, PhD; and Betsy West

Thanks to our event sponsors!

Support of Skyland Trail through event sponsorship helps our clients grow, recover, and reclaim their lives. We are pleased to recognize the organizations that sponsored 2019 events including Benefits of Laughter, the Associates Spring Luncheon & Fashion Show, and Southern Shindig.

Benefits of Laughter 2019

(as of August 15, 2019)

Corporate Support

PRESENTING SPONSOR

Isdell Family Foundation

DIAMOND SPONSOR

Cox Enterprises

Delta Air Lines

PLATINUM SPONSORS

Atlanta Fine Homes |

Sotheby's International Realty

Invesco

GOLD SPONSORS

Angel Oak Capital Advisors

Global Payments

Holder Construction Company

IBERIABANK

Intercontinental Exchange (ICE)

JetLinx

JP Morgan

MONTAG

Renasant Bank

ZWJ Investment Counsel

SILVER SPONSORS

Arnall Golden Gregory LLP

Atlantic American

BlueCross BlueShield of

South Carolina

BNY Mellon Wealth

Management

CBRE

Crawford Investment

Counsel, Inc.

Dorsey Alston

GPS Hospitality

Gray Television, Inc.

Greenberg Traurig

Houlihan Lokey

King & Spalding

New South Construction

PNC

Printpack

Regions Bank

Resurgens Technology Partners

Russell Reynolds Associates

BRONZE SPONSORS

Homrich Berg

Ironwood Insurance
Services, LLC

NAI Brannen Goddard, LLC

Roark Capital

USI Insurance Services

Wells Fargo

Southern Shindig 2019

PLATINUM SPONSORS

Sonny's BBQ

Ed and Betsy Holland

The Richard and Karen Parker

Family Charitable Fund

GOLD SPONSORS

Eagle Merchant Partners

Management, LLC

Fraser Parker and

Robert Bairstow

The Sands Family

Charitable Fund

Caroline and Bill Weimer

SILVER SPONSORS

Chicken Salad Chick

Haddow & Company

Julie and Bryan Jones

Betts Love

STEMTutorScott.com

BRONZE SPONSORS

Libby and Brooks Barge

Catherine and TJ Callaway

Katie and Taylor Dozier

Invesco

Catherine and Kenny Kraft

Louise and Charlie Loudermilk

Associates Luncheon 2019

Corporate Support

Leadership Sponsor

IBERIABANK

GOLD SPONSOR

Atlanta Fine Homes |

Sotheby's International Realty

SILVER SPONSORS

Anna Paré, M.D. -

Dermatology Consultants

JPMorgan Chase & Co.

VPI Design



We Proudly Support Benefits of Laughter

JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

© 2019 JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. Member FDIC. "Chase" is a marketing name for certain businesses of JPMorgan Chase & Co. and its subsidiaries (collectively, "JPMC"). 614933

Bank With the Best

You deserve a banker who knows you and your business. At Renasant Bank, we take the time to listen to your unique needs and the challenges you face.



Michael Mock
Senior Managing Director
 678.226.7545
 michael.mock@renasant.com
renasantbank.com



All loans or offers of credit are subject to underwriting approval. Other fees, conditions and restrictions may apply.

Making a difference.

We are proud to support **Benefits of Laughter** and celebrate the 30th Anniversary of **Skyland Trail**. Thanks for all you do in making a difference in the community.

troutman.com
 Troutman Sanders LLP



Angel Oak
 COMPANIES

When we laugh, we grow

Angel Oak is proud to support **Benefits of Laughter**

Asset Management | Mortgage Lending

angeloakcompanies.com

explore the globe together

When it comes to looking for growth, we look beyond borders for opportunities so no stone is left unturned when it comes to your clients' goals.

Let's invest in greater possibilities together.

invesco.com/together

Invesco Distributors, Inc.



For those with memories to make.



Only

Atlanta Fine
Homes

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

2042 W PACES FERRY ROAD, ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30327 | ATLANTAFINEHOMES.COM | 404.237.5000

Sotheby's International Realty Affiliates LLC. All rights reserved. Sotheby's International Realty® and the Sotheby's International Realty Logo are service marks licensed to Sotheby's International Realty Affiliates LLC and used with permission. Sotheby's International Realty Affiliates LLC fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act. Each franchise is independently owned and operated. Each franchise is Independently Owned and Operated.



HOLDER CONSTRUCTION
Proudly Supports
Benefits of Laughter

We are more than a company and a builder. We are a family of individuals with a passion to share our culture in ways that enhance and enrich the communities we serve.

Laughter is the best medicine.



IBERIABANK

is a proud supporter of Skyland Trail and their efforts in the Atlanta Community.

9 locations in Metro Atlanta to serve you.

www.iberiabank.com



Global Payments is honored to support Skyland Trail and their 2019 Benefits of Laughter.



globalpayments

globalpaymentsinc.com

Intercontinental Exchange®

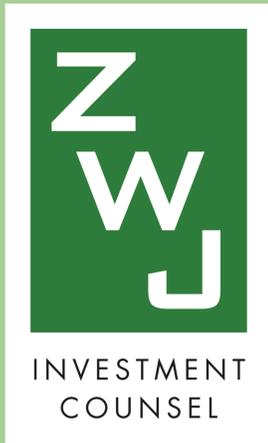
IS PROUD TO SUPPORT

Skyland Trail

Transforming global markets and supporting the communities where we live and work



ZWJ Investment Counsel
is proud to support
the life-changing mission
of Skyland Trail



gray.tv | NYSE: GTN

and



atlam.com | NASDAQ: AAME

are proud to support
Skyland Trail
2019

AAC MKT AD 5753

(7-19)

LOCAL JET CARD & AIRCRAFT MANAGEMENT



LOCAL SERVICE | GLOBAL REACH



JET LINX ATLANTA IS PROUD TO SUPPORT
BENEFITS OF LAUGHTER FIVE YEARS RUNNING!

JETLINXATLANTA.COM



MONTAG Individualized Portfolios | Investment Manager | Client Relations | Solutions-Based Focus | Fee-Based Services

MONTAG is always pleased to support the
efforts of the Skyland Trail community

montagwealthmanagement.com | 404 522 5774

INVESTING FOR GENERATIONS



1961 North Druid Hills Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30329

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Atlanta, GA
Permit No. 3536

Adolescent Residential Treatment Program Now Open

We are excited to announce the opening of our new short-term residential program for adolescents ages 14 to 17 with mood disorders, anxiety disorders and OCD. Our approach combines the best evidence-based mental health care with a curriculum focused on coping skills and healthy habits that provides teens and their families with a roadmap to succeed in life long after treatment.

Learn more: www.skylandtrail.org/adolescent



To learn more about Skyland Trail, visit skylandtrail.org or call 866-528-9593.