“There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish.”

Philippians 1:6
At this time last year, we never could have imagined what 2020 would hold. In March as COVID-19 brought so much of life to an abrupt halt in our city, nation, and the world at large, we faced new realities as a community that stretched us unlike ever before. We know you were stretched, too.

The unforeseen challenges of the following months offered opportunities to cultivate partnerships across Richmond, implement new strategies, and trust God in greater ways. Our staff amazed us with their flexibility and perseverance, quickly adapting to meet needs and prioritize the well-being of our neighbors. And through it all, our students demonstrated tenacity and fortitude as they pressed forward in the midst of significant uncertainty and loss.

You’ll read more throughout this report about the coronavirus’ impact on our work and its implications for the school year ahead. But we hope you’ll also share our sense of joy as we celebrate the achievements of the remarkable young people we serve. We’re grateful for how God has kept us so far, and we’re confident He’ll sustain us in the days to come.
OUR MISSION
We serve the youth of Richmond’s East End and equip them to make life-transforming decisions.

CHAT invests in young people from our community through education, vocational training, after-school enrichment activities, and local partnerships. As students discover their sense of agency and develop vision for the future, we work to ensure they have the best possible opportunities to thrive and experience the full life God intends for them.

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Dear friends,

2020 has been a crucible of a year. We've seen the worst pandemic in a century and the deepest economic downturn since the Great Depression. Across the country, and here in Richmond, we find ourselves wrestling with both the historical and present realities of racial injustice.

Despite all of this, I couldn't be prouder to be a part of the CHAT community. This year, we've seen the incredible resilience and promise of our students and families. We've seen the unrelenting dedication of our staff, who've done whatever it takes to serve our students and stand in solidarity against injustice. And we've seen your amazing generosity as volunteers and donors. During this difficult season, we're so grateful you've chosen to make a difference for young people in Richmond's East End.

We've seen the fulfillment of God's promise to complete the good work He started in us as efforts we began years ago bore new fruit in this season. At Church Hill Academy, our successful push for accreditation gave us the strength to lean into the challenge of virtual learning. Our After School Program's investment in volunteer mobilization and community partnerships served thousands of families this spring as we helped Richmond Public Schools coordinate 7,000+ volunteers, who distributed over 1.5 million meals. All of this, and everything else you'll read in the following pages, was made possible through your support.

Like many others, we've also had to make tough choices. On page 15, you'll read about our prayerful decision (just before COVID-19 hit) to end our early childhood program in order to focus efforts in our other three programs. More recently, we decided to temporarily close Front Porch Cafe so we can develop a more sustainable operating model that will continue to prepare young people for the workforce. (Don't worry—it'll be back in early 2021!)

But the work continues. As I write this, our programs are serving students both online and in person, and we're doing all we can to keep everyone healthy and safe. Each day brings fresh challenges, and we're adapting to meet them, trusting God for new mercies every morning. I draw strength from His promise and presence, from the perseverance of our students and families, and from your faithful, heartfelt partnership. And as I think of everyone who comes together to make this work possible, I'm reminded of Tennyson's words: ...that which we are, we are, / One equal temper of heroic hearts, / Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will / To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Thank you for standing with us!

Jonathan Chan, Executive Director
OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE

By March 16 our facilities may have been largely empty, but our work continued in new, creative ways. We leveraged our size and organizational capacity to respond to changing circumstances as nimbly as possible. And while COVID-19 altered nearly every aspect of what we do, our commitment to East End students and families remained as strong as ever.

CHURCH HILL ACADEMY

The Academy immediately launched online learning. All 42 students continued their classes and coursework on school-issued laptops, and faculty created new lesson plans with interactive, digital learning platforms and met virtually with students. Students developed their independent learning skills and persevered to finish the school year strong.

Staff and volunteers made and delivered 2,000 meals to the homes of students and families in need.

On June 12, we celebrated our 11 seniors with a special socially distant, drive-in graduation ceremony, aka “Carmmencement 2020.”
COMMUNITY SUPPORT
CHAT’s program teams checked in regularly with our students and families, shared resources, and helped connect them with essential services.

PARTNERSHIP WITH RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Our staff supported Richmond Public Schools’ meal distribution effort through volunteer coordination and recurring volunteer shifts. Over the span of five months, more than 7,000 volunteers came together from across our city to provide over 1,500,000 meals to students and families. (Read more on page 13.)
In January, Duane Brown joined us as our new director of workforce development, bringing more than 20 years of culinary industry experience as a chef, administrator, and business coach to this role. With his leadership, the program's small businesses—Legacy Farm, Front Porch Cafe, On Point Prints, and Nehemiah's Workshop—have continued to hone their strategy and craft.

Even while operating at reduced capacity and piloting new methods in response to COVID-19, the program's 20 teens and young adults rose to the challenge at every turn. Legacy Farm operated three sites in the neighborhood, established a regular farmer's market presence, and deepened relationships within our community. On Point Prints and Nehemiah's Workshop launched online stores and expanded their product lines. Front Porch Cafe served customers through curbside pickup with a daily breakfast/lunch menu and weekly Family Meals.

Steve Trivett transitioned into retirement after many years of servant leadership in Nehemiah's Workshop, and we welcomed Maddy Melchert as our new woodworking teacher. And we're laying the groundwork for growth throughout the program as we make new opportunities accessible to more young people.

We were proud to watch several young adults take exciting next steps this summer as they moved on to new jobs with local businesses. We know they're prepared to thrive in the workforce and beyond, and we're thrilled to celebrate their continued success.

**Quinton**

For someone who doesn't like coffee, Quinton Brown's resume would suggest otherwise. A Church Hill Academy Class of 2018 alumnus, Quinton began working at Front Porch Cafe shortly after graduation. He spent about two years as a cafe associate, and this summer he was offered a position at Blanchard's Coffee Roasting Co., a cafe partner.

He was surprised by the Blanchard's opportunity, but he put in the work to earn it. His job at Front Porch Cafe included everything from making espresso drinks, to preparing food, to serving customers. He learned how to be flexible and multitask, take responsibility for opening and closing, and show up on time.

"I'm a hard worker, but the Workforce Development Program helped sharpen my work ethic by giving me the structure that made me do better," Quinton says. "Even though I was already motivated, it helped with my discipline." He wouldn't hesitate to recommend the program to others. "It's like a small experience of what the real world is going to be. You get a good job, working with a good community, and it opens up new possibilities."

Now at Blanchard's roasting lab, Quinton's days are spent processing orders and seeing an entirely new side of coffee. "It's a pretty cool process," he says. "It's amazing how little dried beans can have all these different flavors." Even with a heavier workload, he's energized by the fast-paced environment. He's excited about the room to grow and is making the most of this chance to gain more valuable knowledge of the industry. Looking ahead, he hopes to continue achieving his personal goals for greater independence.

In the meantime, Quinton's the only one among his coworkers who doesn't actually enjoy the fruit of their labor. "How am I this person in the coffee business who doesn't even like coffee?" he laughs. "But here I am."
In what turned out to be an unconventional school year, the Academy truly shone. After more than a year of rigorous preparation, the school achieved full accreditation through the Virginia Association for Independent Schools in January—meeting Virginia’s highest standards of excellence for private education. Students invested in our community by volunteering with Church Hill’s historic Evergreen Cemetery, CHAT’s After School Program, Operation Christmas Child, Neighborhood Resource Center, and the Masonic Home of Virginia. Special events, field trips, and guest speakers offered opportunities for our students to grow academically and personally. The Phantoms basketball team finished with a winning record of 16–15, including CHA’s first homecoming game, and the team’s two seniors graduated and started college this fall. And despite the unexpected transition to virtual learning due to COVID-19, our students and staff forged ahead.

Our senior class continued to raise the bar. In February, students completed and presented their senior thesis projects, representing a new level of academic performance at the Academy. Collectively, our Class of 2020 received more than $1,500,000 in grant and scholarship offers. Five graduates earned advanced studies diplomas, and all 11 are pursuing higher education.

Above all else, our students demonstrated their ability to overcome obstacles during the pandemic, use their voices, and integrate their faith as they thoughtfully navigate the world. We couldn't be prouder of who they're becoming.

**Patricia**

Seated inside her college dorm room, Patricia (Patty) Powell, a 2020 Church Hill Academy graduate, reflects on her high school experiences. Now a Radford University freshman, she fondly shares her six-year CHAT journey and how it helped her grow into who she is today.

When Patty was a sixth grader, word of mouth from a neighbor brought her to CHAT in 2014. She and her brother attended the After School Program back when tutoring took place at homes in Church Hill. “They named all the houses that had tutoring, and mine was the ‘20 Spot’ because we were on 20th Street,” she recalls with a smile. Little did she know, she’d remain connected with CHAT into her teenage years.

Patty enrolled at Church Hill Academy during her sophomore year to join several friends. When asked about her favorite memory, she had too many to count. From adventurous elective classes like “Explore Richmond,” to the festive Christmas party of 2019, Patty’s grateful for the fun times with friends and unforgettable lessons learned from caring staff. “They let me open up to who I was as a person. They allowed me to be who I was, instead of trying to be something I’m not.” Patty also expressed her delight in coordinating and leading the student body in an Operation Christmas Child gift drive during her senior year. “I felt like that was another example of Church Hill Academy letting us spread our wings.”

Patty is now a social work major enrolled in an accelerated five-year Master’s program. She’s settling into college life and joined a Bible study through CRU. After graduating, she plans to become a child welfare case worker and one day run an organization serving youth. Patty proudly affirms that the Academy helped prepare her for college and beyond. “I have no regrets about going there. I love Church Hill Academy.”
Over the past year, the After School Program built upon its commitment to foster equitable access for East End students to excellent resources. The program earned full fidelity to the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) process, a best-practice model for continuous improvement, for its second consecutive year. And our team increased its capacity to partner with families in our community, offering vital support when it was needed most.

Weekly programming expanded from two to three days per week, providing 53 students with a safe space to grow personally, socially, and spiritually. Our volunteer base grew from 45 to 86 trained, trusted adults. We also launched Community Connections, a rotating team of Black professionals, who engaged our students in special hands-on activities and learning.

When COVID-19 forced us to suspend regular programming, our team shifted its energy toward making sure families had access to essential services. Throughout the remainder of the school year, we stayed connected through meal distribution, care packages, virtual storytimes, and regular check-ins.

We’re honored to walk with these bright, determined students as they discover who God is creating them to be and imagine what’s possible for their future.

**Community Partnership**

When Virginia schools closed in March, the After School Program staff was on the ground from day one as our city rallied around students and families. Richmond Public Schools (RPS) launched a massive meal distribution program to support families in need during this crisis, and our team played a key leadership role over the next five months.

Within the first three weeks, After School Program Director Willis Weber began serving as Lead Volunteer Coordinator. He worked closely with RPS and For Richmond, a local network of churches, to support the 30 lead volunteers who managed daily volunteer teams across the school distribution sites and mobile delivery routes.

“Willis’ tireless work has helped ensure that Richmond’s children have equitable access to food, education, technology, and more,” said For Richmond in a May 4 Facebook post. He shares their sense of gratitude for the collaboration we experienced across our city: “Partnership produces trust and outcomes we can’t achieve on our own,” he says. “This opportunity to serve together strengthened CHAT’s relationships with RPS and local organizations, congregations, and community leaders.”

During the spring and summer, more than 7,000 volunteers (including staff from across our organization) prepared and distributed over 1,500,000 meals. Dozens of individuals and organizations provided thousands of PPE items, hygiene products, diapers, books, and other supplies along with RPS learning packets and technology.

“This care for families was essential, particularly for many in our East End community with longstanding food insecurity,” says Christine Bor, After School Program Coordinator and one of the long-term RPS lead volunteers. “Joining this effort was an easy yes for us because of our commitment to offer holistic support that centers students and families.”
2020 brought us to the difficult decision of closing Tiny Tykes, our early childhood program. Founded in 2012, Tiny Tykes’ mission was to meet a need for Christian, early childhood education in the East End that would set students on the path to academic success. Over time, the program grew from a single class to a fully licensed preschool with more than 30 students attending each year.

But with this rapid growth, we faced a number of challenges to maintain the original mission and vision of Tiny Tykes in a way that was financially sustainable (described in detail earlier this year at chatrichmond.org/tiny-tykes-closure). Tiny Tykes’ Co-Founder, Beth Whiting, returned as Interim Director last fall and worked closely with CHAT’s leadership to explore possible solutions to some of these issues.

Through this process, it became evident any path forward at Tiny Tykes would draw significant resources away from CHAT’s other programs. After extensive discussion and prayer, CHAT’s board discerned God was calling us to deepen our investment in the growth of those three programs and move on from Tiny Tykes. We began the work of transitioning it to potential partners more focused on early childhood education. While initially promising, COVID-19 disrupted those conversations, and in April the board voted unanimously to close the program.

After making families aware in February of the uncertainty surrounding Tiny Tykes’ future, our priority was to ensure our low-income families had access to early childhood education for the coming school year. We've helped them find other high-quality programs and are providing financial assistance so their students can attend at no personal cost.

Community members are dreaming together about opportunities to carry on the work Tiny Tykes began, and we’re eager to support these efforts. Whatever the future holds, we’re grateful for everyone who was a part of Tiny Tykes’ story and helped provide a space for our littlest neighbors to thrive.

“From the beginning, Isaiah 61:3 provided a beautiful picture of Tiny Tykes’ vision for the children in our community: “They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.” Our desire was to provide an environment in which students could become established, spiritually and academically, and have the best possible chance to succeed. Not only were students better prepared for grade school, but staff and families were enriched by the relationships that were forged. We personally appreciated how CHAT’s leaders took so much time to pray and seek God for this decision, and we love and champion His past, present, and future work through CHAT in our beloved community.”

—Beth Whiting & Taylor Winters, Tiny Tykes Co-Founders
1. The numbers presented here are unaudited, cash-based numbers. Our annual audit, which is still ongoing at the time of this report’s publication, will present accrual-based numbers. You can find audited financial statements from previous years on our website, and statements from this year will be posted as soon as they are available.

2. Ending Net Assets for FY 19–20 were approximately $1,872,000. This includes CHAT-owned buildings, land, vehicles, and cash on hand.


4. We received a Federal Paycheck Protection Program Loan in the total amount of $345,105 on 4/17/20. At the time of this report’s publication, we are still waiting on final loan forgiveness from the Small Business Administration. We believe the conditions of the loan have been substantially met to the amount of $333,949 and have recognized the income and liability accordingly.
SPECIAL THANKS TO SOUTH STATE BANK

We're so grateful to South State Bank for sponsoring this year's annual report. Their partnership and services have been essential to serving our students and families. Beyond the commercial banking and lending services they provide, South State helped us navigate the Paycheck Protection Program with speed and confidence this spring. Without them, we wouldn't have been able to maintain such a broad COVID-19 response, and we'd be entering this school year with many more challenges.

Gratitude

CHAT continues to thrive because of the generous donors and partners who make our work possible. We're so grateful for your prayers, advocacy, and financial support that are creating opportunities for young people to grow and flourish. Thank you for your investment in our community through your gifts over the past fiscal year (September 1, 2019–August 31, 2020).

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