

## PRESS RELEASE

Helen R. Walton Children's Enrichment Center  
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### **Early Childhood Education Hub Plants New Roots**

*Helen R. Walton Children's Enrichment Center and the Early Childhood Initiatives Center to relocate to land adjacent to Crystal Bridges and the Scott Family Amazeum*

On September 17, 2015, the Helen R. Walton Children's Enrichment Center announced their latest plans to increase access to high quality early childhood services at the "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child" launch event. The plan includes building a model early childhood facility, and the expansion of the Early Childhood Initiatives Center.

The organization, which has served as a leading early childhood program for over 30 years, will move to the land on J Street sitting adjacent to Crystal Bridges and the Scott Family Amazeum. The new 35,000-square-foot facility will be designed to lay a strong foundation for children in their social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.

"Every aspect of the facility should be a learning opportunity for young children and early childhood professionals, alike. We want the facility to serve as a community model for our partners in the early childhood field. The facility, in combination with the Early Childhood Initiatives Center, should stimulate ideas and discussions that will support the movement toward high-quality early education," states Michelle Barnes, Executive Director of the Helen Walton Children's Enrichment Center and the Early Childhood Initiatives Center.

The new facility will be located on NE J Street in Bentonville, adjacent to Crystal Bridges Museum and south of Scott Family Amazeum. The new location will afford the organization to expand partnerships with the museums to benefit young children throughout the region. The capital campaign, named *It Takes a Village to Raise a Child*, will also expand the ECIC to serve as a place where all early childhood professionals can share knowledge, resources and best practices to benefit the growth and education of young children.

The ultimate goal of the Early Childhood Initiatives Center is for 100% of centers in Northwest Arkansas to become quality accredited through the State of Arkansas' Better Beginnings program, ensuring that every young child has the opportunity to have a high-quality early education.

The organization expects to have renderings of the building in the spring, and will break ground shortly thereafter. Investment opportunities are still available, ranging from as little as \$500 up to \$1 million plus on-going program support for naming rights of the Early Childhood Initiatives Center.

*For more information, contact Sunny Lane or Kristen Herbert at (479) 273-3552 or visit [ecicnwa.org](http://ecicnwa.org).*

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**About Helen R. Walton Children’s Enrichment Center**

Children are our first priority at the Helen R. Walton Children’s Enrichment Center; our doors opened in 1982. We are a trusted name in both the community and the early childhood industry. Our commitment is to provide families access to the highest quality early childhood education and care. The Center reaches beyond our families served and collaborates with early childhood programs throughout Northwest Arkansas. Visit [www.hwcec.org](http://www.hwcec.org) to learn more.

**About the Early Childhood Initiatives Center**

The ECIC collaborates with the nearly 500 early childhood programs in Northwest Arkansas, to ensure that every child, infant through pre-k, has access to the highest quality of early childhood education and care. High-quality early childhood education benefits the child, workforce and society through increased graduation rates, parental earnings and employee retention, and ensures a talent rich pipeline, leading to a \$9.21 return on investment for every dollar spent in early education. We rely on the generosity of volunteers, advocates and donors in our community. Visit [ecicnwa.org](http://ecicnwa.org) to learn more.