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The Cade illuminates new learning pathways with Head Start

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GAINESVILLE, FLA., January 20, 2022—The Cade Museum for Creativity and Invention and Episcopal Children’s Services are teaming up to make a difference in the lives of toddlers and young children.

The Cade is on a mission to build bridges and create new spaces for fun and learning inside and outside the museum’s iconic copper-and-glass building, sparking a curiosity for all things science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM).

A new pilot program with Episcopal Children’s Services (ECS) will bring the Cade’s unique STEAM education to Head Start participants at two ECS sites, Northwood and Nanny’s Loving Arms. Head Start is a comprehensive early learning program that ensures readiness for school in its young participants (ages 3-5) and works to increase parental knowledge in children’s growth and development.

“We are thrilled to be working with Episcopal Children’s Services on Head Start,” says Jody Farmer, Senior Director of Outreach for the Cade Museum. “It’s never too early to build a foundation of STEAM learning and have fun while doing it! Reaching the youngest children in our community is vital for setting them up for success later in life.”

A relationship long in the making, the Cade has worked with the Head Start program since the museum opened in 2018. Initially led by the Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County, Head Start has co-hosted an annual breakfast with the Cade every December and ongoing programming in the museum.

The Cade will pilot its new outreach initiative with Episcopal Children’s Services by conducting site visits to lead fun activities that spark young imaginations. The learning program works from *Black and White Rabbit’s ABC Book* by Alan Baker, presenting activities related to preschoolers’ affinity for colors, shapes, ABCs and 1,2,3s. Through the Cade-ECS Head Start programs, young participants can engage with the Baker-inspired rabbit tales through hands-on activities like building their own bunny ears. A take-home component allows families to share in the learning. Additionally, the Cade will offer continued learning opportunities through free museum memberships for participants and their families.

“Our goal is to slowly expand our offerings,” explained Patty Lipka, the Cade’s Director of Experiential Education. “This is a short program, just two months of weekly programming at two ECS sites, but we are hoping to take these activities and curriculum to two more sites, and then another two. Our goal is to have offered this programming at all ECS sites by the end of 2022.”

This pilot program bolsters ECS in its mission to help Northeast and Central Florida families by building a solid foundation for educational success. Working with children from birth to age 5, the most critical years for cognitive development, the organization employs dedicated instructors and



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staff who teach from curriculums based on the latest research and best practices to help ensure school readiness.

“This partnership allows our children and families to be immersed in the creative world of the arts and sciences and provides enriching hands-on opportunities that they may not otherwise be afforded,” said Chief Executive Officer Connie Stophel. “We are grateful for partners like the Cade Museum for Creativity and Invention who help us provide our children a head start in life.”

About Episcopal Children’s Services

Episcopal Children’s Services serves more than 25,000 children and their families in 14 counties in Florida. ECS offers School Readiness, Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Marion, Dixie, Gilchrist, Lake, Levy, Citrus and Alachua counties.

ECS uses research and best practices to help families ensure their children enter school ready to learn. Talented, dedicated teachers and staff work proactively with children from birth to age five and their families to build a strong educational foundation.

Visit www.ecs4kids.org/programs/head-start/ for more information.

About the Cade Museum

The Cade Museum for Creativity and Invention, a museum in Gainesville, Florida is committed to transforming communities by inspiring and equipping future inventors, entrepreneurs, and visionaries. Since opening in 2018, more than 100,000 visitors have experienced the Cade’s unique hands-on programming for children designed to spark imagination and inspire creativity. The Cade’s programs also help to build bridges to the innovation economy for those without access, low-income families, underserved communities, and those needing assistance to access education and start on the career paths available to them to fulfill their dreams. To learn more about the Cade Museum’s mission, visit cademuseum.org. Located at 811 S Main Street, Gainesville, Florida. Hours of operation: Thursday-Friday, noon to 5 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday from 10 a.m - 5 p.m.

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