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Media Contact: Kimberly Krautter
404-229-1073 | Kimberly.Krautter@FamiliesFirst.org

Arthur Blank helps Families First Break Single Night Fundraising Records Raising over \$650,000 at Annual Dining for a Difference

Event now ranks as one of the top 5 charity fundraisers in Atlanta as it heads to the benchmark 20th year

ATLANTA, GA (March 31, 2017) — Receipts from the 19th annual Dining for a Difference are now in, and the single night event raised a record-breaking \$652,000 for Families First, Inc., Georgia's oldest human services agency. Board Chair **Marybeth Leamer**, EVP of **Cox Enterprises** reports this is an increase of more than \$150,000 over funds raised at last year's event. Ms. Leamer credits 2017 Honorary Co-Chairs **Arthur and Angela Blank** for attracting more corporate donors, generating more table sales and for providing Atlanta Falcons signed memorabilia and ticket packages that garnered increased auction sales.

"On the heels of the Falcons' NFC Championship win and the debut of Atlanta United to establish professional soccer in our city, the generosity of **Arthur and Angela Blank** as our honorary co-chairs added a level of excitement that allowed us to far surpass our already aggressive fundraising goals," said Ms. Leamer. "We could not be more thankful to Arthur and the Atlanta community,"

Held on Thursday, March 23, this year at **Georgia Aquarium**, the annual Dining for a Difference produces funds used to operate Families First's programming that serve more than 37,000 people throughout Georgia through 11 core strategies that connect, strengthen, and sustain Georgia's children and families. Each year, the event also celebrates the achievements of Families First clients who have overcome challenging circumstances to succeed as students, parents, and citizens giving back to their communities. A highlight of the evening was the presentation of scholarships to five youth who have participated in Families First programs. These awards, ranging from \$4,000 to \$7,500, support tuition or expenses related to college or vocational training. In a surprise occurrence, **AETNA** Southeast Market Head Brian Schenkemeyer and Southeast Regional Director of Community Relations Laurel Levy presented an additional \$1,000 check to each of the scholarship recipients to help them achieve their academic and career pursuits.

Making her final appearance as the Families First CEO, Kim Anderson said this year was a chance to reaffirm the agency's commitment to helping stem the tide of poverty wherever it occurs in the state. "Poverty is rising faster in the suburbs than the city, impacting families and children throughout the region," said Ms. Anderson. "Fortunately, Families First has offices in eight



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regional centers around Georgia. The overwhelming success of this year's Dining for a Difference will allow us to do even more to support families wherever they live." After eight years at the helm, Ms. Anderson is stepping down as CEO of Families First on May 1.

Charles Wilson, Director of Strategy and Business with **The Home Depot** and his wife Erica returned as Auction Chairs for this year's event, and they added a live auction element for the first time. "The level of excitement in the room was infectious," said Erica. "Professional charity auctioneer **Dean Crownover** kept the crowd engaged and highly entertained. We raised over \$60,000 in less than twenty minutes during the live auction. He really took us over the top."

The 2017 Dining for a Difference event was produced by **Pam Rosenthal** of **Meeting Street South** who has served as the event planner for more than ten years. **Ashley Vitez Uffner** of Families First managed the event development on behalf of the organization.

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ABOUT FAMILIES FIRST, INC.

Families First is Georgia's leading nonprofit, family-service agency, serving metro Atlanta for 127 years. The organization positively impacts more than 37,000 individuals each year through 11 core strategies that connect, strengthen, and sustain Georgia's children and families. For more information, please visit www.familiesfirst.org.



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Kimberly Krautter

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**Families First's Honorary Board Member, Lucy Carpenter Vance,
Named Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year**

*Award Issued by the Atlanta Chapter of the Association of Fundraising
Professionals in celebration of National Philanthropy Day*

ATLANTA – **Families First, Inc.** Atlanta's oldest, and one of the city's largest, non-profit organizations proudly congratulates former Board Member and current Honorary Board Member, **Lucy Carpenter Vance** for being awarded the **Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year** award, by the **Atlanta Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP)**. **The honor is sponsored by the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta.** Ms. Vance was nominated by both Families First and **The Junior League of Atlanta, Inc.** in recognition of her tireless philanthropic and fundraising efforts for a variety of charities and causes that support the health and wellbeing of the children of Metropolitan Atlanta.

Lucy Carpenter Vance has been a devoted volunteer and advocate for underserved children for many decades. Lucy has served Families First for more than 35 years, and her grandfather, James Comer Malone, served on the board of another organization that eventually merged with Families First creating a generational legacy of volunteer leadership. Ms. Vance is a past president of The Junior League of Atlanta, and she was also the co-founder with Jean Childs Young of the **Atlanta/Fulton Commission on Children and Youth**. In addition, she served as a trustee of **The Westminster School**, from which she graduated in 1961, and **Spelman College**, and she is a past member of the Executive Committee of **The United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta**.

"There are not enough accolades that can be bestowed on Lucy Vance," said Families First CEO Kim Anderson. "Many are called to volunteer, many even excel and do great work, but Lucy is truly in a class by herself. We are so pleased that AFP and the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta has given Lucy this well-deserved recognition."

Last year, Ms. Vance served as the co-chair of Families First's \$13.2 million *Family Matters* capital campaign which made the agency's recent move back to the Westside possible. Now Families First's main office is located one mile from where the organization was founded 126 years ago on, what is now, the campus of Spelman College.

Her passion for volunteerism began at the **Atlanta Speech School** where she helped hearing impaired children. She was later recruited to serve on that organization's board, a position she held for 20 years and to which she was elected chairman during her tenure. Ms. Vance also served as a trustee of **The Jesse Parker Williams Foundation** for 18 years.



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"Lucy Vance embodies the mission of our organization," stated Junior League of Atlanta President, **Deanna Anderson**. "Her commitment to volunteerism and dedication to improving the lives of women and children exemplify a proven legacy of leadership and we are delighted by the recognition of this exceptional civic leader."

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Families First Announces Inaugural Young Professionals Board

Twenty of Atlanta's "Best in Class" will partner with top Atlanta executive mentors

ATLANTA – Today Families First, one of Atlanta's oldest and largest non-profit organizations, announced the formation of its inaugural **Young Professionals Board** as a means of developing the region's next generation of community stewards. The twenty individuals were carefully screened and selected after the organization received over seventy responses to its call for applicants.

"Corporations and non-profits alike are governed by senior professionals, but we wanted to tap into the vast creativity that is springing forth from millennials and young professionals," said Families First CEO Kim Anderson. "By giving young people direct experience in the guidance and governance of a non-profit service organization, we hope to cultivate the next generation of Atlanta leaders and benefactors."

Over the summer of 2016, dozens of people under the age of forty competed for the chance to be individually paired with members of the Families First board of directors. Over the next year, they will serve as a shadow board, working side-by-side with their mentors to drive the organization's strategic initiatives, implement best practices, and create sustainable financial outcomes for the agency and its clients.

For the past 126 years, Families First has been Georgia's leading provider of services that help break intergenerational cycles of poverty. Founded in 1890 as the Leonard Street Orphan's home on Spelman Campus, it later became the state's first fully-licensed adoption and foster care agency. For more than a century, Families First has expanded its service profile to meet the changing needs of the region. It now serves more than 37,000 children and families each year.

Families First formed its first board of directors 119 years ago. Since then, the organization has been consistently lauded for its high integrity and mission delivery. The new Young Professionals Board initiative will bring in new talent each year as Families First strives to serve 200,000 by 2020.

"The individuals we have invited to join our Young Professionals Board truly are the best in class that Atlanta has to offer," said Ms. Anderson. "I fully anticipate that our seasoned board members will gain as much from the mentoring experience as will those under their tutelage."

Biographies and photos of each new member of the Families First Young Professionals Board can be found at this link: <http://www.familiesfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/YPB-Roster.pdf>.

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ATLANTA BASED NONPROFIT FAMILIES FIRST PARTNERS WITH LAUREUS SPORT FOR GOOD FOUNDATION USA

The two organizations partner to empower Atlanta's Westside through sport for good, powered by Mercedes Benz USA

ATLANTA – July 8, 2016 - [Families First](#), an Atlanta-based organization that has been providing support for children and families for 125 years, is collaborating with [Laureus Sport for Good Foundation USA](#) (Laureus USA), through the support of Mercedes-Benz USA, to engage Atlanta's Westside community through the power of sport. The organizations will focus on delivering after-school youth sports programs to the English Avenue, Vine City and Washington Park neighborhoods and a longer-term initiative to explore how sports can help strengthen families and children in this community. With the new Mercedes-Benz Stadium on the horizon of the Westside as a reminder of the power of community and sport, Families First and Laureus USA will be working to extend that power and energy to the neighborhood.

"We are proud of our partnership with Laureus Sport for Good Foundation USA," said Kim Anderson, CEO of Families First. "We know from Laureus' work around the world that sport is a tool to positively impact underserved communities. As we look for innovative ways to be a positive contributor and good neighbor on the Westside, collaborating with the community to design programs that will bring about social, health and education outcomes for the youth is the smart solution. We are glad that Laureus understands the importance of Westside residents informing their plans at the onset, which is the core of our strategic plan priority to engage and galvanize community to create a shared responsibility for all children."

Families First has served Atlanta's Westside neighborhoods since 1890 creating sustainable solutions that connect, sustain and strengthen children and families. Families First will use their existing relationships with community leaders and residents to help Laureus USA identify community needs and deliver meaningful sports programming.

"We're honored to be working alongside an organization like Families First to contribute to the city of Atlanta," said Benita Fitzgerald Mosley, CEO of Laureus USA. "Just as we made accomplishments with the Laureus Initiative in New Orleans, we know implementing sustainable sports programming on the Westside will strengthen not only the youth, but the community as a whole."

Laureus USA Chairman, Edwin Moses, is no stranger to the importance of sports for youth on the Westside. As a young man, Moses trained for the 1976 Olympic trials while a student at Morehouse College using the public high school facilities in the community because there was no track at Morehouse. "As a graduate of Morehouse College, I know first-hand that Atlanta's Westside is in need of long-lasting support," says Moses.

Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, a long-standing partner of Mercedes-Benz, has a 16-year history of investing in sport development programs and advancing the movement to use sport as a vehicle for social change across the globe.



Here in the States, Laureus USA is supported by Mercedes-Benz USA, and since 2012 the two have impacted over 400,000 at-risk youth in 58 cities across the nation by providing safe and healthy environments through in-school and after-school programming.

On June 16, ESPN announced that Mercedes-Benz USA, in partnership with Laureus USA, is a finalist for the [ESPN Humanitarian Corporate Community Impact Award](#) for their collaboration on the Laureus Model City Initiative in New Orleans. The initiative is an innovative way to create collective impact, and brings together 20 community organizations in New Orleans to work together to increase access to quality youth sports programming. Thus far, the Laureus Model City Initiative has benefited over 25,000 youth in New Orleans.

Families First and the Laureus Sports for Good Foundation, USA are excited about the future and the strides they will make, *together*, on the Westside.

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ABOUT FAMILIES FIRST:

Families First is Georgia's leading nonprofit, family-service agency, serving metro Atlanta for 125 years. Our mission is to ensure the success of children in jeopardy by empowering families. We impact more than 37,000 of Georgia's children and families each year through our 11 core program strategies. Families First fosters strong communities by delivering comprehensive and sustainable solutions for children and families -- solutions that improve child well-being and family self-sufficiency to break generational cycles of poverty. For more information, please visit www.familiesfirst.org.

ABOUT LAUREUS SPORT FOR GOOD FOUNDATION USA:

Laureus Sport for Good Foundation USA (Laureus USA) is a public charity whose mission is to change the lives of youth and strengthen communities through the power of sport. Laureus USA achieves this by supporting organizations in their delivery of quality, sustainable programming that leads to positive social, health, education and employment outcomes for youth in underserved communities. Laureus USA is part of an international network, which includes the global Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, the Laureus World Sports Academy, and the Laureus World Sports Awards. For more information, please visit www.laureususa.com.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Kimberly Krautter

Direct: 404-229-1073

kimberly.krautter@familiesfirst.org

Legislative Contact:

Zach Nikonovich-Kahn

Direct: 404-428-9847

zach@familiesfirst.org

Families First Responds To Georgia Governor Nathan Deal's State of the State Address

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

ATLANTA, GA (Jan. 13, 2016) — Families First is one of Georgia's oldest and largest statewide non-profit, multi-service agencies serving more than 37,000 children and parents by helping to break cycles of poverty and strengthen our state's most vulnerable families. In response to Governor Nathan Deal's annual State of the State address, **Families First CEO Kim Anderson** has issued the following statements regarding specific points the Governor included in his speech:

PAY INCREASE FOR STATE WORKERS

"Families First applauds Governor Deal for asking lawmakers to approve a 3% pay increase for state workers. Last year, Georgia suffered an 18% turnover rate among state employees which is a significant deterrent to critical departments like DFCS (Division of Family and Children Services) and DBHDD (Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities). Employee instability in these agencies seriously affects the safety of our communities' children and families as well as our ability to provide much needed services and supports. A pay increase will help DFCS and DBHDD recruit and retain the best possible employees, and resources, so that we can collectively deliver the necessary services and innovative programs that ensure effective and exceptional continuum of care for Georgia's families."

HEALTHCARE:

"We are disappointed that Governor Deal continues to refuse to take the opportunity offered by the Affordable Care Act to expand Medicaid and in turn ensure that 300,000 additional



Georgians receive much needed health care. By turning down the billions of federal dollars our state could receive by closing the coverage gap, it is more likely that additional hospitals, particularly in rural communities, will close, and our state will lose the tens of thousands of jobs that expansion would create or sustain.”

EDUCATION:

“Families First applauds Governor Deal for embracing the Education Reform Commission’s recommendation that QBE be replaced with a system that considers the unique characteristics of students—especially poverty—given that one in four Georgia children (27%), live with severe economic instability. It is well established that a child born into poverty is ten times more likely to remain in the lower socio-economic end of the scale. This is a cycle that must be broken. We look forward to informing state lawmakers about the unique needs of children in Georgia who suffer and live without access to basic needs.”

CRIMINAL and JUVENILE JUSTICE:

“The success of accountability courts and diversion programs have afforded more Georgians access to rehabilitation and the opportunity to and achieve more stable home lives and workplace skills, or as the Governor said, ‘turn inmates into taxpayers.’ Families First looks forward to working with the Governor and lawmakers on the recommendations from the Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform.”

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