

A group of diverse women are seated around a large wooden conference table in a modern meeting room. Several laptops are open on the table, and a white paper sculpture resembling a stylized tree or a cluster of bags is positioned in the background. The room features large windows and a mounted television. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter, and green triangular accents are visible in the top right and bottom left corners.

# ASPIRE TO INSPIRE

## *Impact Report 2022 - 2025*



**When we invest in the wisdom of those who have walked the path before us, we create a lasting legacy that strengthens not just individuals, but the very fabric of humanity— benefiting all generations to come.**

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# LETTER FROM SHERILYNN

On behalf of The Kimble Group, LLC, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Mentors, Mentees and program partners who participated in “Aspire to Inspire STARS” for your commitment, dedication, expertise, and unwavering support in guiding early childhood and childcare programs toward achieving STAR 2.

Your commitment to implementing a customized approach to quality improvement strategies has made a profound impact on the children, families, and educators we serve in our respective communities. We especially would like to acknowledge First Up Champions for Early Education, our fiscal sponsor.

Our collective efforts has been instrumental in strengthening program quality, fostering professional growth, and ensuring that the programs we serve, provide young learners enriching early childhood experiences. Through collaboration, patience, and a shared vision for excellence, we have empowered educators and childcare providers an opportunity to enhance their practices and create nurturing, high-quality learning environments.

This achievement is a testament to the power of teamwork, and I recognize the invaluable role each of you has played in this journey. Thank you for your passion, leadership, and dedication to shaping brighter futures for young children. I celebrate this success with you and look forward to continuing this important work together.

With deep appreciation,

***Sherilynn Johnson Kimble***  
***The Kimble Group, LLC***



## “I Aspire to Inspire Before I Expire.”



# EMPOWERING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS FOR LASTING IMPACT

In 2016, Mrs. Sherilynn Kimble recognized a critical need to support a group of dedicated childcare providers in Philadelphia, PA. These educators, deeply committed to the children they served, faced challenging barriers in advancing the quality of care they offered families, particularly those frustrated at STAR Level 1 in the state's early learning system, Keystone STARS. While they had the passion and desire to improve, the environment lacked the continuous, personalized support and resources needed to reach their full potential. Mrs. Kimble having successfully led as Executive Director of The Caring Center, one of the cities first NAEYC Nationally Accredited childcare centers for over 20 years, understood that true transformation comes from tailored guidance and sustained relationships.

Driven by this vision and in partnership with a team of collaborative consultants, along with the generous support of The William Penn Foundation, Mrs. Kimble launched the Aspire to Inspire STARS Initiative—a transformative program designed to empower childcare providers with the tools, personalized mentorship, and ongoing support needed to elevate the quality of care, advance to higher STAR levels, and create lasting impact. This initiative has since become a catalyst for change, driving higher quality standards, improved outcomes for children, and a more robust, sustainable early childhood education system across Philadelphia, PA.



**Personalized Coaching and Mentorship for Growth**



**Ongoing Community Support and Networking**



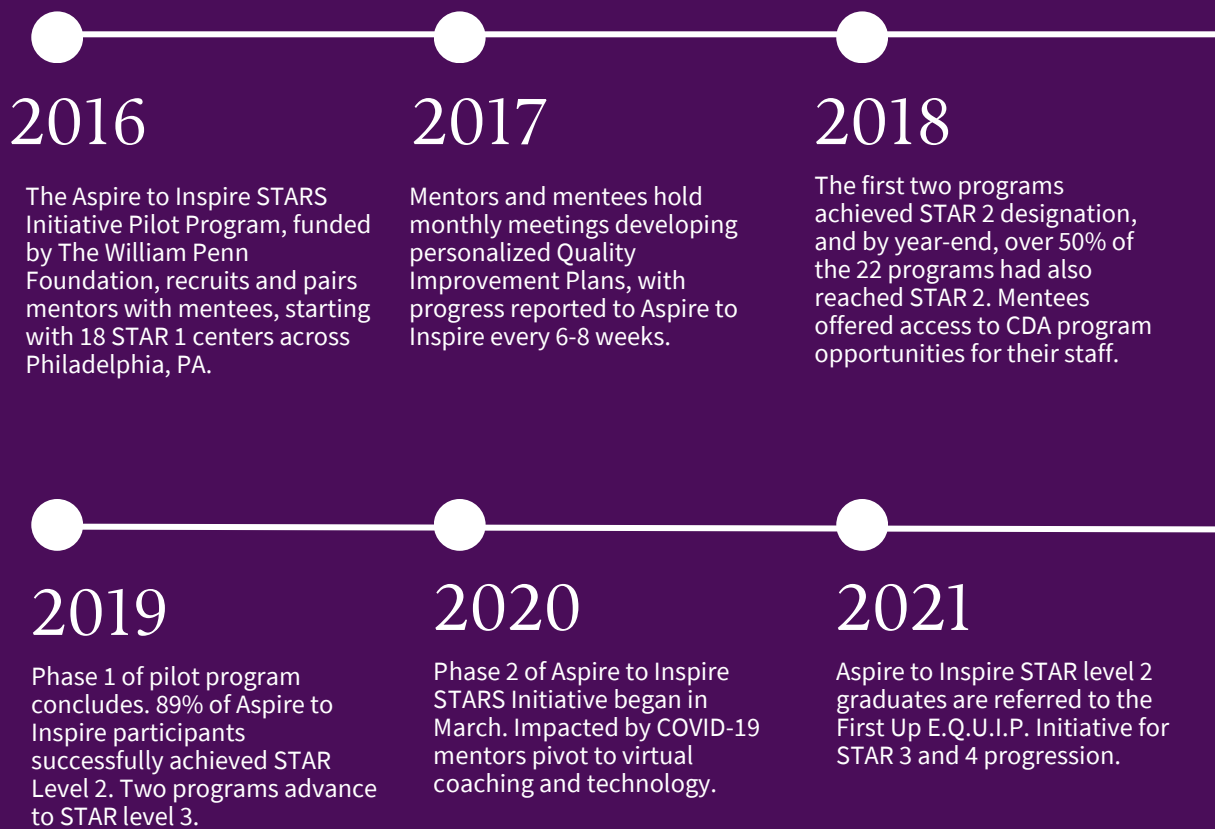
**Expert Technical Support and Solutions**



**Innovative Learning and Development Opportunities**

# HISTORICAL TIMELINE

## ASPIRE TO INSPIRE STARS INITIATIVE



### 2016 (PHASE 1 PILOT PROGRAM LAUNCH)

In 2016, the Pennsylvania Keystone STARS system underwent a statewide revision, encouraging programs to focus on quality improvement. The Aspire to Inspire STARS initiative connected mentors with STAR 1 program directors, with the goal of helping at least 80% of these Philadelphia based programs advance to STAR 2 through tailored support and guidance.

### 2017

In 2017, Aspire to Inspire STARS recruited a diverse group of mentors, including current and former directors, PQAS certified trainers, technical assistants, professors, and early intervention specialists. Eighteen mentees, consisting of STAR 1 center directors and group/family providers, were recruited through mentor referrals, recommendations from quality improvement programs like Success by Six, First Up, and AFEL, and advertisements. Monthly group meetings fostered trust and knowledge sharing, leading to onsite visits, emails, and phone calls. Mentors used Keystone STARS performance standards to tailor support and create personalized Quality Improvement Plans, with progress reports submitted to Aspire to Inspire every 6-8 weeks.

### 2018

In 2018, The first two programs achieved STAR 2 designation, and over 50% of the 22 participating programs advanced to STAR 2 by the end of the year. Mentees were provided with a comprehensive binder, 16 hours of PQAS training, and access to CDA program opportunities for their staff.

### 2019 (PHASE 1 PILOT PROGRAM CONCLUDES)

In 2019, initial goal is exceed with 89% of Aspire to Inspire participants successfully achieved STAR Level 2. A total of 35 programs began the Aspire to Inspire STARS Initiative (est 2016), with 28 completing the pilot program. Of those, 25 programs successfully advanced to STAR 2, and two programs advanced to STAR 3 as a result of their participation in Aspire to Inspire. Five programs enrolled their staff as Child Development Associate (CDA) student.

### 2020 (PHASE 2 BEGINS)

In 2020, as a result of COVID-19, Phase 2 of the initiative pivoted to leverage technology and virtual coaching, supporting a new cohort of early learning family, group, and center based programs in advancing from STAR 1 to STAR 2 and beyond.

### 2021

In 2021, The Aspire to Inspire graduates who have successfully achieved STAR level 2 are referred to the First Up E.Q.U.I.P. Initiative, a comprehensive support program specifically designed for individuals moving towards STAR levels 3 and 4..

# Aspire to Inspire Initiative Success 2022 - 2025



## Total Applications

41

↑ 15%



Integrating technology post COVID-19, Aspire to Inspire transitioned to a seamless digital application process, now accessible through the QR code, also via our website at [www.kimblegrp.com](http://www.kimblegrp.com)

## Programs moved to STAR 2

23

↓ 8%

## Programs moved to STAR 3

3

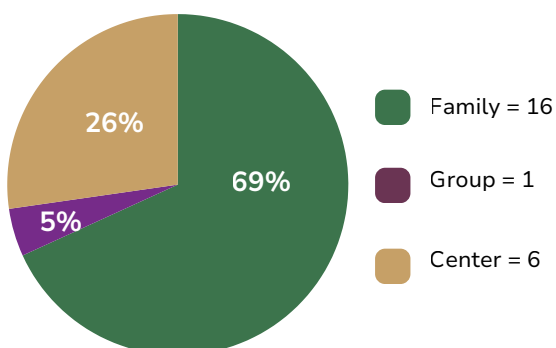
↑ 50%

## Programs moved to STAR 4

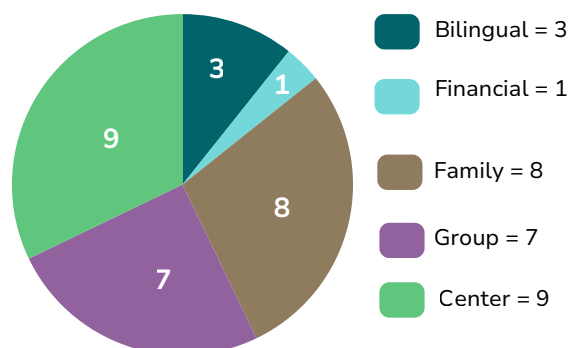
6

↑ 100%

## Mentees by Program Type



## Mentors by Specialty/Experience



\*Skillset overlaps

**Impact Data:**  
**Over 489 Children in Higher Quality Family, Group, and Center Based Care**

# CHALLENGES PROVIDERS FACED IN 2022 -2025

Early childhood programs often face a variety of challenges that can impact the quality of care and education provided. From limited resources and funding to high staff turnover and the need for ongoing professional development, these obstacles can make it difficult to consistently meet the needs of young children and their families. Additionally, navigating ever-evolving regulations and ensuring equitable access to quality care can stretch already strained programs. Despite these challenges, early childhood professionals remain committed to creating nurturing environments where children can thrive, yet the support they receive is critical in overcoming these barriers and achieving lasting success.



## Post Covid-19 Social Distancing

The inaugural Pathways to Brilliance Conference 2024 offered an opportunity to reconnect with colleagues, foster deeper connections, and engage in meaningful face-to-face discussions, especially in light of post COVID-19 and the rise of virtual meetings.



## ELRC Changes

The ELRC 18 underwent contract changes, leading to delays in subsidized payments for many programs. This disruption created financial strain on providers, impacting their ability to maintain services and support the families who rely on these essential resources.



## Increase of Program Closures

Family/group providers often face challenges like balancing caregiving with business management and limited resources, while center providers struggle with staffing shortages, fluctuating enrollment, and maintaining consistent program quality.

The Aspire to Inspire Initiative is dedicated to supporting childcare programs by offering personalized mentoring and access to a strong, collaborative community. For family/group programs, our mentors provide crucial guidance in navigating financial, logistical, and emotional challenges, while connecting providers with resources that reduce isolation and build shared experiences. For centers, mentorship helps address staffing issues, improve program quality, and develop strategies to tackle operational obstacles. By fostering a supportive community, we empower childcare programs to thrive, offering valuable tools, best practices, and opportunities for collaboration that ensure long-term resilience and success in overcoming challenges.



The University of Penn welcomed The Kimble Group, LLC to its third cohort of the Social Impact Collaborative! The focus was creating evaluation tools for sustainability. Upon completion of the program The Kimble Group, LLC was awarded a \$5000 grant to support the implementation of our sustainability plans and goals!



## The Roadmap to High Quality



\*Photo: The Roadmap to High Quality was created as a result of participation in the Social Impact Collaborative.



# Workforce Development: Child Development Associate (CDA) Credentials

Parkway West High School

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Kimble Group, LLC proudly supports "**The Early Childhood Education Pathway**" program by providing resources, professional development, observation and employment referrals.

# BENEFITS OF CDA CREDENTIAL

" Many Child Development Associate (CDA) Candidates are returning to the classroom after a long period of absence. Participant ages range between 20 to 65 and some bring with them old-fashioned practices that reflect on how they were raised or educated. By the end of the 120 hours, CDA Candidates accept that children can actually learn through play and that teachers have a hand in children's next levels of success. Some enter the classroom with doubts about their ability to do the written assignments, balance work and home, and do oral presentations. These are areas of concern where students need positive affirmation, understanding, and support. It has been said that children do not come with a manual, however, the CDA Credentialing Program shows that knowledge of how young children grow and learn cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally from birth to age 5 reconstructs the notion that some may have about raising and educating young children. This program introduces the roadmap to increase higher levels of quality care in children's settings to include home and community.

There are many benefits to participating in a CDA Preparation Program: Instructors have the thrill of witnessing how the teaching materials come alive in the student's child care setting and in personal lives. Students comment that when certain practices have names, they realize they have been performing certain practices, but did not have a name for them. This awareness fits in with becoming an observer and linking child development theory to their practices. As classes progress, students become more informed and aware of their strengths and needs. They appear more confident and competent from the knowledge they have gained.

The CDA program provides peer networking opportunities where teachers encourage each other's progress and share resources. At the completion of all the requirements to include the portfolio, visit and online-exam, participants wait for credentialing results. When notified that they have received the credential, their peers are carbon copied (cc:) on the congratulations email message sent to the Child Development Associate from the instructor.

**"WHEN STUDENTS RECOGNIZE THAT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IS A PROFESSION THAT HAS CAREER PATHWAYS AND OPPORTUNITIES, SOME RECOGNIZE A NEED FOR HIGHER EDUCATION. AFTER BEING AN INSTRUCTOR SINCE 2002, THROUGHOUT THE YEARS, FORMER STUDENTS ARE ENCOUNTERED THAT HOLD ASSOCIATES, BACHELOR'S AND EVEN MASTER'S DEGREES AND ARE ACTIVE AS WELL-KNOWN COMMUNITY ADVOCATES, BOOK AUTHORS, ENTREPRENEURS, AND HAVE STARTED LOCAL CHILD CARE GROUPS."**



**PHOTO: MS. ANNETTE FREEMAN,**  
MENTOR/CDA INSTRUCTOR

This serves to motivate and remind other students to continue forward. When students recognize that Early Childhood Education is a profession that has career pathways and opportunities, some recognize a need for higher education. After being an instructor since 2002, throughout the years, former students are encountered that hold associates, bachelor's and even master's degrees and are active as well-known community advocates, book authors, entrepreneurs, and have started local child care groups. Being a CDA Instructor continues to nourish my desire to serve in capacities to enrich people's lives.'

## QUOTE FROM CDA STUDENT

***"Just an update on my CDA's. I just want to give you my most thankful appreciation for the hard work you did to help me make it this far and for helping me reach one of my biggest goals . I'm so grateful and happy that I'm tears of happiness to see this certificate due to all the trials and tribulations being pregnant and so tired and still made it my business to get this done without giving up. I'm so happy I got to accomplish this with you so again thank you so so much Ms. Annette!"***



# IMPACTFUL STORIES

## My journey working with The Kimble Group, LLC:

“ Working with The Kimble Group, LLC and Kimrenee was an amazing and transformative experience. From the start, they provided incredible support, guidance, and resources that helped me reach new heights as a childcare leader, successfully achieved Keystone STARS 2 and STARS 4 with their coaching and expertise. Their hands-on approach, professionalism, and encouragement made all the difference in helping me believe in myself and the future of my program.”

”

The future is full of limitless possibilities. We are building a foundation of leaders and entrepreneurs within our program and community. Our vision includes expanding the quality of our services and broadening our impact. With passion, purpose, and the right support, we can accomplish anything we set our minds to.

**Photo:** Ms. Shante' Brown, Deputy Secretary of OCDEL, shares a hug of appreciation with Mrs. Minnette Taylor, Founder & CEO of Mini Montessori Academy, at The Kimble Group LLC's inaugural Pathways to Brilliance Conference, Fall 2024.

## CHUDNEY DAVIS

### How am I supporting staff in my new role?

“ I focus on leading by example and modeling best practices in my leadership role. Rather than just telling staff what to do, I guide them through observation, collaboration, and hands-on support. I provide ongoing resources, encouragement, and professional development, including enrolling them in CDA classes to advance their skills and credentials. My goal is to build a strong, empowered team that grows together.”





" I have had the opportunity of working with Mrs. Sherilynn Kimble during 2022 - to present day, providing Digital Support for the Aspire to Inspire program. During that time my partner and I were raising two children under three and it was difficult to find work that allowed for the flexibility to work remotely, nurture our young children, and maintain our hectic household. It was only through working with the Aspire to Inspire program that I gained greater balance as a new millennial mom in this fast paced world and a greater awareness of what Early Childhood Education is actually about. Helping me to gain a greater appreciation for the esteemed profession of Early Childhood Educators, learn, and share with local parents at library and playground outings about supports for families with young children throughout the metro Philadelphia area. Such as:

- PHLPreK: Free Quality Childcare for Philadelphia children ages 3 -5 funded by the Beverage Tax Credit.
- Children's First PA
- A Day Without Childcare
- First Up Champions for Early Education
- Drexel's Natural Academy of Science
- Maternity Care Coalition
- PHMC
- Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, which through the Drexel/BCDI sponsorship was able to complete 120 hour CDA hours.
- NBCDI
- NAEYC
- OCDEL
- William Penn Foundation
- Smith Playground

## PARENTS EMPOWERED FOR CHANGE: A JOURNEY OF GROWTH, BALANCE, AND DIGITAL INNOVATION



Photo: Christina Coleman and family.  
The Kimble Group, LLC Digital Support Team Member

With a background in Business Administration from Morgan State University and a natural interest in the digital world since high school, I was able to incorporate digital tools into an already successful, relationship-driven program. This allowed us to build a foundation for integrating AI and automation to improve organizational efficiency, sustainability, and innovation. Mrs. Kimble introduced me to the Diverse Force Game Changers 12-Week Tech Accelerator, where I learned more about AI/Prompting, UX/UI design, Project Management, and Digital Marketing. This opportunity allowed us to achieve the following:

- Digitized the paper form of the Aspire to Inspire application post-COVID-19
- Implemented automation marketing tool Mailchimp and welcomed 133 new email subscribers
- Automated 17 email marketing campaigns with a 69.7% open rate, providing valuable data analytics for audience engagement and user experience
- Increased social media presence, boosting the Instagram page to over 200 followers
- Improved organizational efficiency by creating templates for recurring presentations
- Collaborated with organizations such as The Education Institute for Early Intervention (EIEI), providing video edits for online content recorded during The Kimble Group's inaugural Pathways to Brilliance 2024 Conference. (AI Video Editor: [Choppity](#))
- Supported ECE providers with administrative tasks

Mrs. Kimble's approach—hiring a new mom to work remotely/hybrid, providing opportunities for her family to learn about the ECE landscape, seeking feedback on childcare quality as a parent, and contributing to organizational improvements—has the potential to be a game-changer. It connects parents with young children to flexible work opportunities, supports organizations in need of remote/hybrid work assistance, and fosters ECE/community ambassadors.

This path has, unexpectedly, greatly improved my confidence as a mother by better understanding early brain neural connections, domains of early childhood development, and the importance of a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment. It has led me to work with young children on the autism spectrum as a Behavior Technician.

With the rise of Automation and AI coupled with an innate curiosity with the digital world/business, I look forward to continuing to support Mrs. Kimble, The Kimble Group, LLC and the Aspire to Inspire program with digital support. I am forever grateful for Mrs. Kimble and for this learning and working opportunity ,which came at a time when life felt overwhelming, isolating, and I was struggling to adjust as a new mom of two. This experience has been truly transformative. "

# SUCCESS AND GRATITUDE



POST SHARED ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2024  
BY THEKIMBLEGROUPLLC



"As a new provider in the field of Early Childhood Education, I am pleased to say that I have received in these three years, so many resources from Aspire to Inspire and ELRC. This has allowed my program to grow in quality, and to reach the STAR 4 level in quality. I cannot express my gratitude enough for the support I received, these programs has allowed my transition from teacher to provider, very easy. Thank you."

**Lakeya Edwards**  
**Whiz Kidz Academy**



POST SHARED ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2024  
BY THEKIMBLEGROUPLLC

"It has been a pleasure and incredibly rewarding working with Aspire to Inspire. Through this program, I had the opportunity to mentor and support childcare providers in moving their childcare program to Keystone Star 2. Childcare Providers strengthened their quality standards and practices with strategic guidance. It has been an honor to contribute to this organization and to the success of childcare programs in my community. As a childcare owner myself, Aspire to Inspire is a blessing for us all. I look forward to continuing to be a part of the mentor program in this organization."

**Laverne Cheeseboro**  
**Mentor**



# Thank you Mentors and Quality Coaches



At the heart of our work are relationships. Mentors provide expertise in education, strategic planning, and financial/business development, pairing with program directors and their teams to guide them on a journey of continuous improvement. This collaboration benefits the entire program and, most importantly, the children and families they serve.

Thank you mentors and quality coaches for your immense dedication and impact through the years!



15  
Mentors

3  
ELRC-18  
Quality  
Coaches

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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The Kimble Group, LLC, founded in 2016 by Mrs. Sherilynn Kimble, is a forward-thinking organization dedicated to transforming early childhood education through community support, personalized mentorship, and professional development.

# THANK YOU!

Connect with us on Social Media

@TheKimbleGroupLLC



# PARTNERSHIPS

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



### The Racial & Equity Provider Council

The success of our work is made possible through the unwavering support and collaboration of our dedicated partners. We especially would like to acknowledge First Up Champions for Early Education, our fiscal sponsor. By combining resources, expertise, and a shared commitment to driving meaningful change, we are able to expand our reach and deepen our impact. From funding and strategic guidance to community engagement and professional development, each partnership plays a critical role in advancing our mission. Together, we are creating lasting opportunities, empowering individuals, and fostering stronger, more resilient communities. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who stand with us in this journey of transformation and growth.