



Fernandez-Nations Family Awarded the Florida Head Start Association Beating the Odds Award

For Immediate Release

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TALLAHASSEE, FL – November 1, 2022 – Florida Head Start Association (FHSA) proudly announces that it has named parents Erica Fernandez and Dillion Nations recipients of the Beating the Odds award. In 2019, Ms. Fernandez and Mr. Nations joined the program after becoming unemployed and facing homelessness with their children. In just three years, the family is now well on the path to self-sufficiency.

Through hard work and additional support from the Head Start program, Ms. Fernandez and Mr. Nations have established stable careers and have plans to move into their own home. Mr. Nations completed certifications and is working as a full time transmission mechanic. Ms. Fernandez's experiences as a Head Start volunteer evolved into a career as an early education teacher. After earning her credentials, she was offered a position to teach with Head Start partner Child Care Program, the ABC Academy.

The Fernandez-Nations' goals center on creating a bright future for their children. They're dedicated parents who are hands-on with educational activities, including weekly lesson plans and attendance at parent meetings. Daughters Rhiannon and Joan have participated in Home-Based and Center-Based programs, and are both now thriving in their classes at the ABC Academy. Says Ms. Fernandez, "This program goes above and beyond not just with the students but with the families as well. They help with family goals, finances, job-finding, and so much more. The staff is great, so kind and caring."

The Head Start Grantee Recipient selects nominees and is evaluated by a panel of peers and chosen by the FHSA awards committee. Recipients will be honored during the FHSA annual awards luncheon at the Hard Rock Hotel in Daytona Beach, FL, on February 9, 2023. Full details about the event can be found at www.FLHeadStart.org.

About FHSA

The Florida Head Start Association is a nonprofit organization working on behalf of the 43,000 children and families in Florida. Head Start is an innovative federal-to-local program delivering services from school readiness, comprehensive health, and family support services. The Head Start Program Performance Standards drive programs to strengthen and improve the quality to ensure that all children start school ready to succeed. FHSA has been the voice for Florida's most vulnerable children and families since 1999 and is committed to enhancing and supporting the capability of local Head Start programs in the delivery of high-quality services for our children and families.

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