



FIRST 3 YEARS

OUR IMPACT LASTS A LIFETIME

2023 Annual Report

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Our mission is to nurture early relational and mental health of infants and toddlers in Texas. Working in deep collaboration with caregivers, parents, and professionals statewide, we cultivate strong early childhood systems, educate our workforce, and advance best practices.

www.first3yearstx.org



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to donate

Dear First3Years Stakeholders,

Thank you for joining us on our 2023 journey! This expedition took us to new places that demanded new strategies, new partnerships, new approaches, and a renewed sense of purpose! Our 2023 journey began with the familiar and comfortable, but soon we realized that to get where we needed to go, we had to be ready to break from the norm, tackle new challenges, and forge a new path.

From the start of 2023 to the end, we had several board members roll off or resign due to personal circumstances. We addressed this by taking a new approach to board development through opportunities like the Board Lead initiative. These efforts produced new, eager board members who were excited to bring their expertise and their passion to support our work. With the new board in place, we had the engagement and expertise we needed to work alongside our community partners, stakeholders, clients, and staff to develop our 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. This plan outlines our updated mission/vision, our newly identified core values, and our strategic pillars to define milestones and an end goal for the First3Years journey.

This adventure wasn't all smooth sailing as we certainly faced some challenges along the way. We found our Marketing & Communications Director position hard to staff and retain. But, we didn't let this challenge get the better of us. Instead, we began partnering with the Jack Valenti School of Communication at the University of Houston to engage undergraduate interns to support these responsibilities and reduce expenses. In addition, our longtime colleague and COO, Ashley Borthick, left to pursue new professional and personal endeavors. While her departure was felt throughout the organization, we quickly identified ways to reassign key operations tasks while maintaining efficiency and expectations. This included signing a contract grant writer and revising the role of our PT administrative assistant.

Another challenge we continue to face is the long-term financial stability of the organization. While we secured adequate funding for our Awareness, Education, and Intervention programs in 2023, we are finding that the competition for grant funds is greater each year and much-needed unrestricted funding to cover overhead expenses is getting harder to come by. As a result, we thoroughly evaluated our systems, tools, and resources and took needed actions to achieve greater fiscal efficiency while minimizing negative impact on our programs and staff.

Despite the challenges we faced, we envisioned our programmatic goals and financial needs as opportunities to grow our network and engage new donors. We received funding from new philanthropic and corporate funders and hosted several new participants at our Top Golf event and annual Par-Tee for Babies Golf Tournament. In 2023, we hosted our Bubbles for Babies stewardship brunch in Houston for the first time, which allowed us to engage with new and familiar partners, stakeholders, and foundations. These renewed and strengthened relationships are already opening doors for us as we venture into 2024.

We hope you will continue on this journey with First3Years by supporting our efforts to nurture the early mental and relational health of infants and toddlers across Texas.



Kallie Benes
First3Years CEO

Our Board



Julie Kane
JPMorgan Chase
President



Nell Frame
KIPP Foundation
Secretary



Saranya Kumar
PWC
Treasurer

Abigail Sharp, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas

Amira Plascencia, Shell

Henry Yau, Children's Museum of Houston

Kendolyn Pope, Faith Schools

Meighan Girgus Vafa, Community Volunteer

Mission and History

First3Years nurtures early relational and mental health of infants and toddlers in Texas. Working in deep collaboration with caregivers, parents, and professionals statewide, we cultivate strong early childhood systems, educate our workforce, and advance best practices.

First3Years began in 1980 as a group of volunteers in the infant mental health field who were concerned about the quality of care for infants and toddlers both inside and outside the home. The founders wanted to create high-quality training and education opportunities for professionals whose work impacts the emotional development of infants, toddlers, and their families. In 1986, First3Years was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization, and over the past 40 years, we have trained and mentored thousands of professionals across the state on brain development, attachment, separation, trauma, self-regulation, cross-cultural awareness, and other issues related to infant mental health. We believe that supporting the social-emotional development of infants and toddlers is critical for helping the next generation become healthy, productive members of society.

Awareness

Community Systems

Babies in Baytown,
Help Me Grow Gulf Coast,
Houston Infant Toddler Coalition

Babies in Baytown

Babies in Baytown (BIB) is an early childhood collaborative made up of community organizations and families of Baytown who are working to develop community solutions that better support the mental health of very young children and their families.

Our vision is an integrated and coordinated community system where every family has an equitable voice, is supported, and can readily access quality resources and services for their young child.

Building on existing community assets, **our mission** is to develop and sustain a connected, cross-sector system of care for all families with children ages 0-3 that addresses their individual needs.



34 ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS



1,245 MEETING AND EVENT ATTENDEES



THRIVE: Tool for Health and Resilience in Vulnerable Environments

BIB uses the THRIVE framework to identify strengths and assets, prioritize concerns, and develop an action plan for making effective investments that increase resilience, improve community conditions, and expand opportunities, thereby enhancing health and safety outcomes for all.

Houston Infant Toddler Coalition

Houston Infant Toddler Coalition (HITC) is a collective effort made up of public and private community partners and families of young children that seeks to develop and implement strategies for systems-wide change that will better support the healthy development of infants and toddlers in Houston.



49 ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS



189,892 INFANTS & TODDLERS IMPACTED



Help Me Grow Gulf Coast

The Help Me Grow (HMG) System Model helps communities leverage existing resources. The model is made up of four core components that work together to promote optimal child development. With the model, communities can:

- Identify vulnerable children;
- Link families to community-based services; and
- Empower families to support their child's optimal development.

Help Me Grow Gulf Coast represents an ongoing partnership between DePelchin Children's Services, First3Years/HITC, and United Way of Greater Houston/211.



479 PEOPLE REACHED THROUGH EVENTS PROMOTING HELP ME GROW



71 FAMILIES SERVED IN Q4 2023



Awareness

Baby Day

Celebrate and Support Babies

Baby Day is a day to acknowledge and celebrate the incredible growth that occurs in infants and toddlers. The program encourages families to be active participants in their child's healthy development by providing engaging activities that support strong family bonds, emotional connections, and early brain development. Baby Day is inspired and informed by the understanding that everyday interactions, along with responsive, nurturing care, can build healthy brains and provide a strong start for all children.

Hosted by First3Years and community partners, Baby Day 2023 attendees were invited to participate in a variety of in-person, live-streamed, and on-demand activities that promoted caregiver/child interaction. While the Baby Day celebration is once a year, the spirit and impact of Baby Day continues year-round through our website and newsletter which offer useful information and practical resources to parents and caregivers.



**ATTENDEES JOINED US FROM
106 TEXAS CITIES AND 9 DIFFERENT STATES**



3446 ADULTS AND CHILDREN REGISTERED



**10 STATEWIDE SPONSORS
571 VOLUNTEER HOURS**



109 COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Bright By Text

Helpful tips, activities and events,
based on your child's age and your location, texted to you

Bright by Text (BBT) is a nationwide text messaging service that helps parents and caregivers of children (prenatal to age eight) make the most of everyday interactions. Through free tips, information, games, and resources, BBT is proven to build nurturing caregiver-child relationships, strengthen families, promote healthy child development, and improve school readiness.



**1474 NEW SUBSCRIBERS IN HARRIS, MONTGOMERY,
AND CHAMBERS COUNTIES**

Education

Training & Memberships

Webinars, Custom Trainings, Conference, Professional & Parent Memberships



260,640 children were impacted by First3Years through 1464 unduplicated trained professionals.



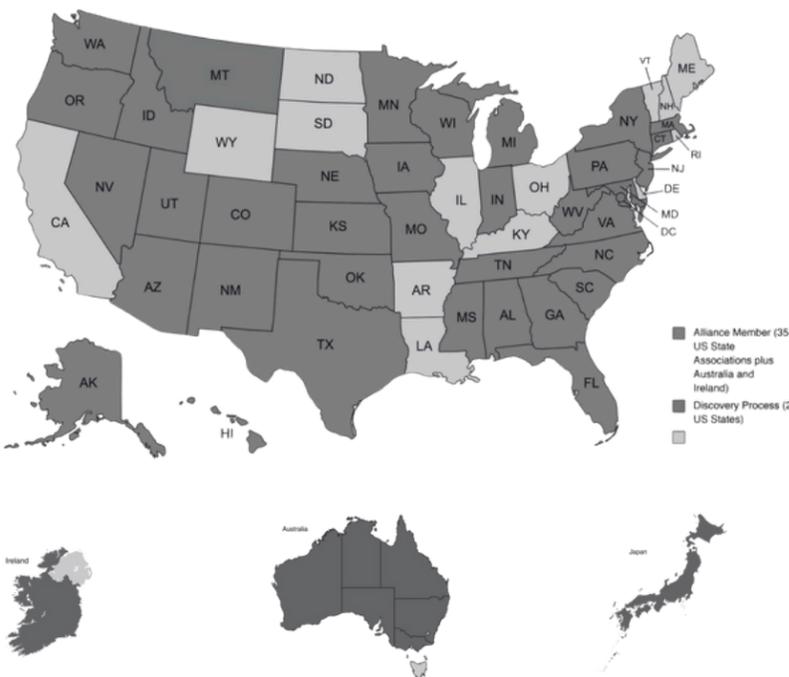
2549 continuing education credits were given to professionals across the state.



99% of training attendees reported that training met or exceeded their expectations.

Our aim is to empower a community that is prepared to care for and nurture children. We work to ensure that all professionals and engaged stakeholder systems are provided with access to current research and best practices. We equip early childhood professionals with effective tools and strategies to improve programming for the population they serve.

Endorsement



Endorsement is an internationally recognized credential that supports and recognizes the development and proficiency of professionals who work with or on behalf of infants, toddlers, and their families. This process is based upon a comprehensive set of competencies which help define best practice and guide an organized system of culturally sensitive, relationship-based professional growth. Endorsement applicants must meet requirements matching one of four levels that most closely fits their line of work in order to achieve the Infant Mental Health Endorsed mark (IMH-E®).



In 2023, 11 professionals across the state received their Infant Mental Health Endorsement.

Intervention

Safe Babies

A program that supports infants and toddlers in the child welfare system to reduce trauma and reunite families.



Across Texas, Safe Babies served 59 children 0-36 months as well as an additional 132 family members!



With 98 hours of volunteer help, we were able to transform 4 visitation rooms into infant/toddler-focused spaces by adding murals, floor mats, and manipulatives. These Safe Babies-sponsored rooms support approximately 150 visitations weekly!



With our Safe Babies Training series (6 sessions) and our Cross Site Learning Summit, we served 621 professionals across Texas!



The length of time children remained in care was significantly shorter for infants and toddlers participating in Safe Babies. In addition, Safe Babies participants returned home to their parents in 46% of cases versus 27% for a non-Safe Babies comparison group!



Impact

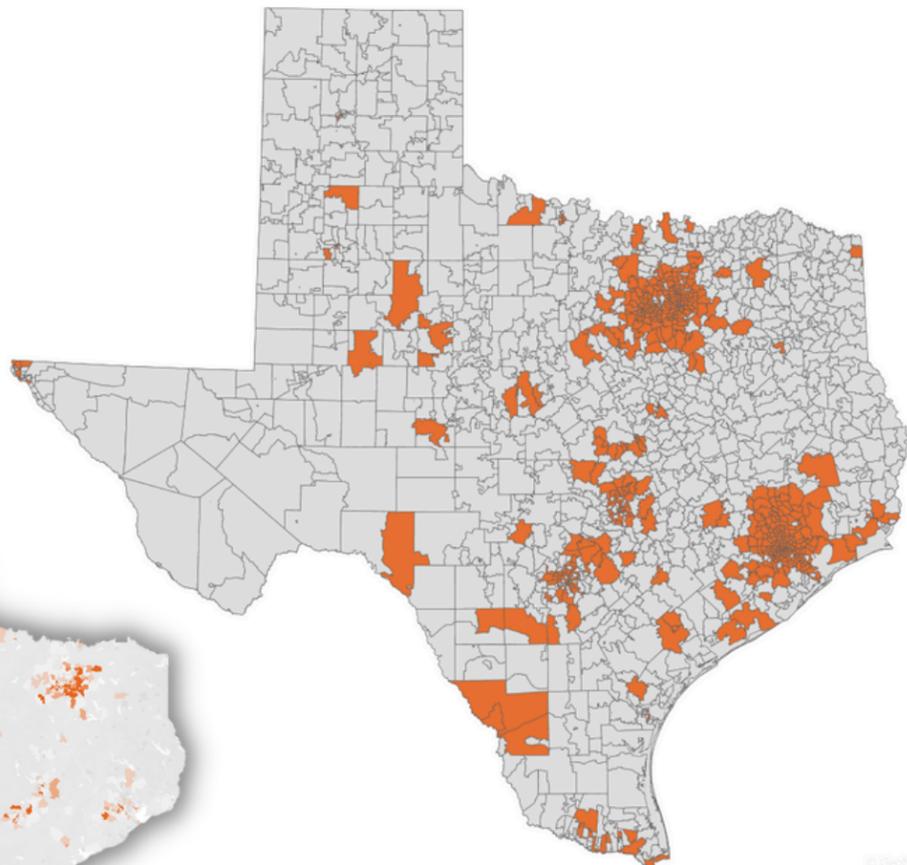
WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR ALL OF OUR PARTNERS, SUPPORTERS, AND PARTICIPANTS ACROSS THE GREAT STATE OF TEXAS.

2023 Program Impact Areas

At First3Years, we are always working to expand our reach across the state!

- In 2023, our **Awareness** programs reached 380 zip codes across Texas.
- In 2023, our **Education** opportunities reached professionals representing 515 zip codes across Texas, 23 other states, and 2 other countries.
- In 2023, our **Intervention** program, Safe Babies, reached infants and toddlers in the child welfare system from 28 zip codes in Texas.

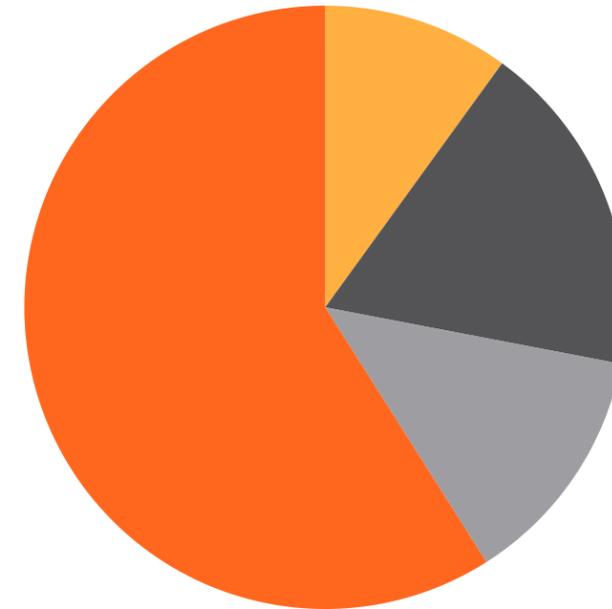
Chart Title



2022 Program Impact Areas

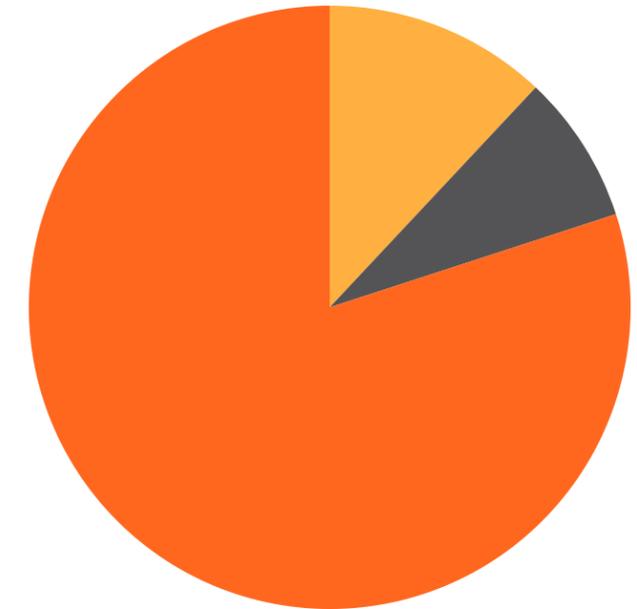
Financials

2023 Revenue



- Grants (59%)
- Contributions (10%)
- Government (18%)
- Program Revenue (13%)

2023 Expenses



- Programs (80%)
- Management (12%)
- Fundraising (8%)



In 2023, First3Years earned Candid's Platinum Seal of Transparency. You can support our work with trust and confidence by viewing our non-profit profile on www.GuideStar.org.

Events

BUBBLES FOR BABIES BRUNCH 2023

This awards program honors organizations, foundations and/or individuals whose support is instrumental in furthering the efforts of First3Years to nurture the early mental and relational health of infants and toddlers across Texas and support the communities we serve.

DFPS VISITATION ROOM SPONSORSHIPS 2023

The collaborative effort between the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and First3Years has resulted in the establishment and maintenance of Visitation Rooms designed to facilitate crucial weekly family time for parents and children. First3Years has taken proactive measures to ensure that these spaces remain welcoming, safe, and tailored to the appropriate age groups, thus fostering an atmosphere of comfort and care for all visitors.

TEE OFF FOR TOTS @ TOPGOLF 2023

"Tee Off For Tots" presented an engaging evening that seamlessly merged golfing enthusiasm with charitable giving. This event provided an unforgettable experience filled with entertainment, networking, and an altruistic spirit.

KENDRA SCOTT FUNDRAISER 2023

Special fundraising events at several Kendra Scott retail locations offered an exclusive and purpose-driven shopping experience where attendees could immerse themselves in an evening of style, community, and philanthropy.

CROSS-SITE LEARNING SUMMIT 2023

The 3rd Annual Texas Cross-Site Learning Summit on Infants and Toddlers in Child Welfare was a pivotal gathering designed to facilitate collaboration and innovation among stakeholders invested in the well-being of infants and toddlers in the child welfare system. This statewide summit encourages participants to engage in open discussions and to share valuable insights, successes, and challenges experienced within their communities.

2023 PAR-TEE FOR BABIES GOLF TOURNAMENT

This event offered participants the opportunity to experience a delightful round of golf at the stunning Trophy Club Golf Course while contributing to a meaningful cause. Beyond the enjoyment of the game, the event tees up a fun-filled day of networking opportunities and philanthropic support for the healthy development of infants, toddlers, and their families.



Before

After

Thank you to our supporters!

Organizations/Companies

Amazon Smiles
Any Baby Can
Avance - North Texas
BCBS of Texas
Brighton Center
Center for Children and Families at UTD
Center for Life Resources
Center for Transforming Lives
Central Plains Center
Child Care Group
Children's Health
Collaborative for Children
Texas Department of Family & Protective Services
Family Violence Prevention Services, Inc.
Frisco ISD
GDS Investments
Harris County Early Childhood Impact Fund
H-E-B, LP
HHSC ECI
Junior League of Dallas
Kaplan Early Learning
Kendra Scott
Kids 'R' Kids- East Allen
Lakes Regional
Lumin Education
MHMR Tarrant County
Motivation Education & Training, Inc. (MET Inc.)
North Carolina Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Association

Plains Capital Bank
PNC Bank
PWC
Quilling, Selander, Lownds, Winslett & Moser, P.C.
Region 10 ESC
Safe Haven of Tarrant County
Seton Home
Social Current
Spindletop Center
St. Jude's Children's Ranch Texas
Texas Children's Health Plan
Texas General Contractors
Texas Mutual Insurance
Texas Panhandle Centers
The Warren Center
Toyota Motor Sales
Travis County Health and Human Services
UBS Financial Services, Inc.
United Way for Greater Austin
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, Inc.
United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County
United Way of the Coastal Bend
Vogel Alcove
West Texas Centers
WiNGS
Yield Giving

Charitable Organizations

Dallas Children's Charities
Elizabeth Toon Charities
Episcopal Health Foundation
Harold Simmons Foundation
Herman H. Fleishman Foundation
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
Kahn Foundation
Latina Giving Circle at Texas Women's Foundation
M. R. & Evelyn Hudson Foundation
Morris Foundation
Powell Foundation
R4 Foundation
Rainwater Charitable Foundation
Rees-Jones Foundation
Ronald McDonald House Charities
Sid Richardson Foundation



Individuals

Abigail Jordan
Abigail Sharp
Adrian J Reznik
Adrian Purdy
AJ & Valerie Dominguez
Alan Putter
Aleida Jaimes-Correa
Alex Schremmer
Alexandra Mylius
Alicia Fortson
Allison E Coburn
Amber L Rupert
Amira Plasencia
Amirah Saldivar Smith
Amy Boullion
Amy Lawson
Amy Zuniga
Andrea Rothenberg
Angela Proctor
Anh Nguyen
Ann Dei Gutierrez
Anne Calhoun Duffy
Anneliese Sheahan
Annette Williamson
Anthony Llano
Anto Mkrtychyan
April Birchfield
Ashlee T Bixby
Ashley DiFabio-Borthick
Ashley Funderburg
Ashley Harrell
Aysha Stephenson
Bailey Huddleston
Barbara & Ira Einsohn
Barbara Gaither
Barbara Lindsay
Benjie Esguerra
Beverley Lewin
Beverly Canady
Bill Warren
Bob Hassell
Bobette Mauck
Brad McGraw
Bradley Quirk
Brandon Marsh
Brandy L Koster
Brett & Kallie Benes
Brett Philips
Caleb Hart Dansky
Candice Hill
Cassandra Farias-Ybarra
Chantel Baucum
Cheryl S Tunnell
Christina Henriquez
Christina M Fitzgerald
Christy Serrano
Claire Hazlett
Clara L. Flores
Claudia Alexander
Courtney D Toombs
Damon Salisbury
Dana L Smith
Darcy Deno
Dave Agerton

David Crawford
David DiFabio
David Dye
David Egbert
David Nowicki
David Perez
Dawn Marshall
Debbie Locke
Debra Spencer
Dekescia Moss
Dena Yantz
Destiny R Waltermire
Diana Vasquez
Diane and Richard Evans
Donald Titcombe
Donna Porter
Doug Reid
Earline Willims
E. B. Crook
Elizabeth DeLeon
Erika Vargas Estrada
Eva Villarreal
Evern Speers
Fatena Fathelbab
Francisco Usero Gonzalez
Frank Star
Gary Swan
Gifty Aryeetey
Gina C Snyder
Hallie Clason
Hannah Brown
Heather Eastfern
Heather Pugh
Hemalatha Krishnamurti
Henry Yau
Holley A Makela
Holly Gurslin
Hulda T Sun
Irma Torres-Catanach
Jack Semler
Jack Wharton
Jaclyn Ruggiero
Jacqueline Campbell
Jacqueline Long
Jaletha A Smith
Jamie M Stash
Jeanna Bassett
Jeff Metrik
Jeff Williams
Jeffrey Ryan
Jen Menzel
Jerilyn Callen
Jessica C Bryant
Jessica N Andrade
Jessica Seidel
Jodi Shock
Joe Amberson
Jordan Sharp
Joshua Koder
Joy Campbell
Juan Munoz
Julie Kane
Kara Salton

Katherine R Cothorn
Katherine Staiger
Kathleen Juhl Ponter
Kathleen Marie Stanton
Kathleen Thompson
Kathy Ennes
Kay Benes
Kelley Nichols
Kenneth Ward
Kimberly Vaughn
Kristen B Speakes
Kristen Hahn
Kristin Mena
Kyri Allison Maher
Laci A Beezley
Laura Elpers Pierce
Laura L Minnigerode
Laura Mojica
Laura Shattuck
Laurel Hernandez
Lauren E Ware
Laylah Zurek
Leland Murphy
Lena Bermea
Leslie Gresham
Lily Johnson
Linda R Barnett
Lisa M McCormick
Lisa M Noll
Loby Glover
Londyn Miner
Longnecker Family Fund
Lucia Ciciolla
Lydia Pinero
Maggie Jaime
Maranda Deason
Margaret A Holland
Margaret Muller
Margaret Vadiee
Maria Aleman
Maria DeLeon
Mark Auten
Mark Edwards
Mark Frederiksen
Mark Lancaster
Mark Trail
Marlyn Kramer
Marsha Baumann
Martha Lopez
Mary Carroll
Matt Deso
Matthew Sobecki
Melissa Reyes
Merzhad Torky
Michelle Daly
Morgan R Weber
Nam Nguyen
Nancy Jaramillo (Erik Oritz)
Nancy S. Saenz
Nate Proctor
Nell Frame
Nicole Melles
Nicole Wallace
Noelle Delgado

Norma I. Baez
Olga Nikitina
Pagett Gosslee
Patricia Vargas
Pattie Schmidt
Patty Miller
Peggy Fry
Peggy H Kemp
Peter Hutt
Philip Young
Phillip Danze
Phillip Thomas Stepka
Rachel Bailey
Ramona B Williams
Rebecca D Babineaux
Rebecca Lara
Rebecca Liles
Rebecca Shaw
Richard Stinson
Robin Nelson
Rosemary Eldrige-Valerio
Ryan Less
Samantha Rieger
Sarah McElvain
Sarah McNamee
Saranya Kumar
Scott Jenkins
Seema Jacob
Shonticia Odom
Sierra Forney
Stacey Robinson Gardner
Stephanie Dotson
Stephanie Finch
Stephanie Madrigal
Stephen Johnson
Sue Hancock
Susan Brown
Sylvia Martin
Tammy Braddock
Tara Dakin Sauer
Tavia A Gibson
Thomas Naito
Tiffani Meyer
Tiffany Nicole Mays
Tish L. Dehart
Todd Beane
Todd Steudtner
Toni Hix
Tracy Troeger
Tricia F Erwin
Umber Darilek
Vedanti D Kumbhar
Vernon Muhamad
Victoria Henao
Victoria Sorensen
Villy Dardanes
Wendy Badgwell
William Keys