



2023 Outstanding State Innovation of the Year Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning

Bright from the Start: Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), in partnership with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), has received the Outstanding State Innovation of the Year award.

The TCSG's Office of Adult Education and DECAL have been awarded the Aspen Institute's Ascend grant. This grant utilizes the "two-generation (2Gen) approach," which builds family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives. This project focuses on developing an understanding of the issues and challenges that impact educational attainment for single mothers and student parents, as well as opening new pathways for these adult learners to succeed.

Cayanna Good, a member of the TCSG, states, "The most impactful portion of the grant was the creation of a student-parent council. The council members were a combination of adult education and post-secondary education parents. The council provided insight and potential solutions to various barriers and challenges that impeded them from completing their education."

Bright from the Start has helped dismantle the childcare barrier that faces student parents by allowing those who had been denied childcare opportunities previously to reapply as priority group participants. In addition, they have given adult education programs access to all state-funded assistance programs so that adult students can be served by those working in adult education and receive a more streamlined process.

Bright from the Start is responsible for meeting the child-care and early-education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child-care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages Quality Rated, Georgia's community powered child-care rating system.*

*<https://www.linkedin.com/company/bright-from-the-start/about/>