

Request for Funding to

Improve the Lives of Maryland's Children

MARYLAND'S CHILDREN NEED YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT



We respectfully request \$2.5 million for renovations to our LEAP school and adjacent property on Greenspring Avenue in Baltimore to provide enhanced school capacity and services for Maryland's children with severe autism.

- ◆ In the FY2023 state budget, Maryland allocated \$2.5 million for us to begin the process of updating and expanding our LEAP school program. **THANK YOU!**
- ◆ We respectfully request an additional \$2.5 million to continue this work.
- ◆ Our goal is to renovate our existing school and campus on Greenspring Avenue in Baltimore to provide education and therapy services to more of Maryland's children with autism and other developmental disorders.



A Unique Educational Program

Kennedy Krieger's LEAP Program, one of our five special education schools, serves **public school students** 5 to 21 years old from 13 jurisdictions (and counting) across Maryland. Each student has a severe designated educational disability and has been referred to Kennedy Krieger School Programs by their local school system. (LEAP stands for Lifeskills and Education for Students with Autism and Other Pervasive Behavioral Challenges.)

Before LEAP was established, Maryland's students with complex disabilities were often separated from their families and sent out of state to residential facilities, at great expense to Maryland, and distress to their families. LEAP was established to allow these students to continue living with their families while attending school.

- ◆ Publicly funded and privately run, LEAP is accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education.
- ◆ Each of LEAP's students requires a highly structured environment that meets their academic, communication, social, behavioral and medical needs, with designated areas for individual and therapeutic instruction as well as sensory and behavioral breaks.
- ◆ LEAP's students also need a high level of individual instruction, and therefore a high staff-to-student ratio. A typical LEAP classroom serves only five to seven students, with just as many—if not more—adult staff members in the room.
- ◆ LEAP's buildings weren't designed for students with complex disabilities. The current LEAP space can be an obstacle to effective instruction and behavioral support.
- ◆ Many students were referred to the LEAP Program because of their challenging behaviors, including aggression and self-injury. LEAP allows students to be educated in an environment that's staffed to meet their needs while reducing disruption at their referring school.

Please provide continued funding for this important initiative so we can complete our plans and renovations to more effectively serve Maryland's students and their families, and our Maryland communities.



"By renovating and enhancing our LEAP school spaces, we will be able to serve more students, and by extension, their families and communities. We want to give our students every opportunity to pursue everything that's possible in their lives."

— Julie Kim, LEAP director

Our most vulnerable children and teens deserve your help and support.

We welcome your questions about our plans to reinvigorate Baltimore's Greenspring community while simultaneously creating a new school to enhance education and training for Maryland's most vulnerable youth.



Your support is crucial to making this facility a reality for Maryland's children.

To learn more, use this QR code or visit: KennedyKrieger.org/MarylandKids

Contact Emily Arneson at Arneson@KennedyKrieger.org if you have questions or would like a tour. **THANK YOU!**

About Kennedy Krieger

For nearly 90 years, Kennedy Krieger Institute, a Maryland-based, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, has provided a wide range of integrated medical, therapeutic, educational and community services for children, teens and young adults with neurological injuries, diseases and disorders.

The Institute is home to a team of researchers who contribute to the understanding of how disorders develop, while at the same time pioneering new interventions and methods of early diagnosis, prevention and treatment.

To watch a short video about the Institute, use this QR code or visit: KennedyKrieger.org/Anthem

