



For Immediate Release  
December 7, 2018

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## **Making a Difference: Healthy Start Awards Community Partners Working Towards Healthy Babies**

Last year in Orange County, 1700 babies were born prematurely, 1500 babies were born low birth weight and 121 babies did not live to celebrate their first birthday. Florida's Healthy Start was created to help prevent these bad outcomes from happening, especially the tragic loss of a baby. During the Healthy Start Coalition's Annual Meeting on December 7, 2018, OB (obstetric) providers, birthing facilities and community partners that make great contributions toward giving every baby a *healthy start* were recognized:

- Prime OB/GYN received the *Outstanding Prenatal Screening Award*
- Community Health Centers-Apopka and Pine Hills and the Florida Department of Health-Orange, received the *Outstanding Community-Based Prenatal Screening Award*
- Florida Hospital for Women, Winnie Palmer Hospital for Women & Babies and Winter Park Memorial Hospital received the *Outstanding Postnatal Screening Award*
- Ines Dee from True Health, Edith Perez from OB/GYN Specialists of Central Florida and Wilma Searcy from Physician Associates Water's Edge received the *Most Valuable Player Award*.

Also recognized was the Disney Blanketeers who received a *Community Partner Award* for their donations of more than 1,000 knitted items for families with babies in the hospital intensive care unit. Grover Corlew received this award as well for hosting a month-long diaper drive, collecting nearly 100 packages of items to benefit Healthy Start families.

Jessica Galo from Florida Hospital (Advent Health) was elected to the Board of Directors.

Ray Larsen, Vice President for Collective Impact for Heart of Florida United Way, concluded the meeting with a presentation on the ALICE Report (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) which describes the reality of hardworking residents who struggle with little to no savings and are one emergency away from poverty.

The Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County, a not-for-profit 501c3 organization, has been working since 1992 to improve birth outcomes in Orange County. By bringing quality services to women and infants as well as developing community partnerships, we embody the belief that "*every baby deserves a healthy start*".

To learn more about the Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County, visit [www.healthystartorange.org](http://www.healthystartorange.org)

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