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# The *Rise* of HillRAP & the *Realization* of a Dream

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## Our Mission

We transform students with learning differences into confident, independent learners.

## Our Vision

All students with learning differences and attention challenges receive the instruction and support they need – regardless of where they attend school or whether they have a formal diagnosis.



## It All Started in a Yellow House

When Hill Learning Center opened in a yellow farmhouse in Durham in 1977, no other school or organization in North Carolina was providing a similar type of specialized support for students with learning differences.

Known at the time as the Learning Development Center, we served 13 students.

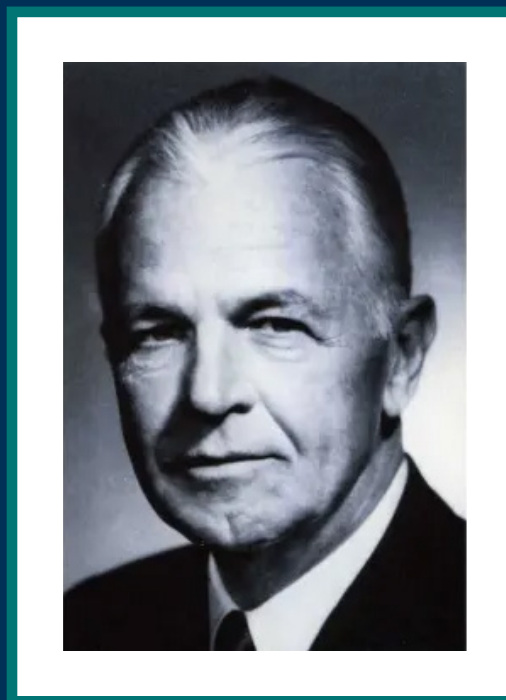
*Our dream was to serve many more.*



## On a Mission to Serve

In the years that followed, we consistently sought opportunities to expand our reach and help more students achieve success. We've done that by growing our school, summer, and tutoring programs locally, delivering presentations and workshops for parents and educators nationally, and providing training to thousands of public and private school teachers worldwide so they can put our proven methods into action.

Another innovative approach from Hill: developing training, curriculum, and technology to make the Hill Reading Achievement Program (HillRAP) available to students and teachers everywhere.



**“Launching the Learning Development Center has been one of the most rewarding things I’ve done in my life.”**

*Mr. George Watts Hill (1901-1993)  
North Carolina Business Leader and Philanthropist*



## The Birth of HillRAP

The Hill Reading Achievement Program (HillRAP) is a structured literacy program designed by teachers at Hill Learning Center and refined over more than four decades. It is based on the scientific understanding that for students who learn differently, reading must be taught systematically to effectively build their skills – and their confidence. For teachers, it provides them with the data and tools they need to target instruction to a student's specific needs and make effective use of limited instructional time. For years, this groundbreaking program was limited to the students that Hill could reach locally.

*Our goal: to provide teachers anywhere with a program proven to help students with persistent reading difficulties.*

While its roots and use in our school go back to our founding, "HillRAP" was born around 2000 when we started training teachers beyond Hill in our reading methodology. Our goal: to provide teachers anywhere with a program proven to help students with persistent reading difficulties, including dyslexia. Grants enabled us to pilot HillRAP in North Carolina public schools, engage researchers as evaluators, and develop an internationally accredited professional development program for teachers.

Independent research across multiple school districts has shown that HillRAP helps students improve at faster rates than "average" students. Just as important, teachers and students consistently report that HillRAP students grow more confident and engaged as they experience success.





## The Rise of HillRAP

HillRAP has grown exponentially. We've trained more than 4,000 teachers across America and around the world and developed partnerships with schools and school districts to make HillRAP a focal point of their approach to reading intervention.

*Along the way, with generous philanthropic support and countless collaborators, we've continued investing in HillRAP to make it easier to learn, use, and access.*

We launched an iPad app in 2015, placing HillRAP's content, data, and distinctive methodology at the fingertips of teachers and students. To accommodate the demand for remote learning during the pandemic, we transformed our training and instructional app to work remotely. Then we introduced a web-based application in 2022, making HillRAP available on all devices and ensuring any teacher or student with access to the internet can use the program.

With every innovation, Hill's trainers, teachers, and students led the way. And at every step, we benefited from the expertise and collaboration of other HillRAP users; development partners, including ITI Technologies, SAS Curriculum Pathways, Code the Dream, and The Farthest Pixel; and experts and researchers at Duke, UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Wilmington, Research Triangle Institute, the Friday Institute at NC State, and the Florida Center for Reading Research.



## Extending Our Reach

We have long recognized that HillRAP is a gem. Research shows it is remarkably effective at helping students meaningfully improve their reading skills, and there are an endless number of positive testimonials from teachers, students, and their parents singing the program's praises. Effective use of instructional time is more important than ever, especially for those students who are struggling and behind, and HillRAP enables just that.

But as a small nonprofit that first and foremost operates a school, there have always been limits on our capacity to grow HillRAP. To expand its reach, Hill sought a partner who shares our values and mission to help students who are struggling to read succeed.

We found the perfect match in 95 Percent Group, an established education company with a national reach. It has the resources and expertise to expand HillRAP to more schools and more students while investing in research and technology to make HillRAP even better.

*One of our dreams has always been to reach as many students as possible.*

With HillRAP now on the cusp of reaching its full potential, we are filled with pride. This partnership allows HillRAP to flourish nationally while we focus on working more locally with students and teachers.





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## Looking to the Future

*HillRAP will always be an integral piece of Hill Learning Center.*

It remains an essential part of our school, summer, and tutoring curriculum. We have a perpetual license to use HillRAP and will continue working with select schools and districts to help them access the best of what Hill has to offer. We'll also continue to share our experience and insight with 95 Percent Group as it invests in the ongoing innovation of HillRAP.

Today, Hill Learning Center is focusing our talent and energy on what we do best: working directly with students with learning differences and attention challenges and the educators who serve them. As we look to the future, we are eager and committed to deepening our mission and impact in North Carolina, and especially in the Triangle, while watching HillRAP improve and expand beyond our capabilities — and our wildest dreams.

*Thank you for being a part of our story as we continue to pursue all our dreams.*

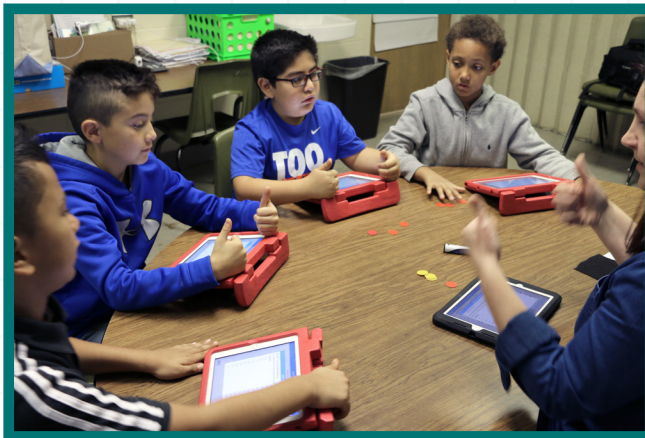




When I read the teacher tells me I am doing a good job and getting better. I used to mess up on my words, and I don't do that as much anymore.

Every time I miss a word, *I know I am going to get it correct one day!*

3rd grade HillRAP student,  
North Carolina public school



My HillRAP students are loving the program. They get the individualized attention they need to feel successful, and *their confidence soars*. Success leads to success!

HillRAP Teacher, Stanly County Public Schools

## Hill Learning Center

Founded in 1977, Hill Learning Center transforms students with learning differences into confident, independent learners. Named in honor of our founder George Watts Hill, Hill Learning Center began as a program of Durham Academy, becoming an independent nonprofit in 1998.

Hill Learning Center programs are accredited by:

cognia™




International  
DYSLEXIA  
Association®



SAIS





Every child can learn, but you have to teach them in a special way. We have differences in how children learn. Hill Learning Center learns about those differences and how to deal with those differences and how to teach those children to become successful in life. That is something very special that we ought to know about, *we ought to be proud of*, and we ought to support in every way we can.

*Jim Hunt, Former North Carolina Governor  
and Chair Emeritus, The Hunt Institute*



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