

Media Contact:

Malana Joseph Mitchell
Malana@thespearsgroup.com
504.559.0823

Kingsley House Announces Name Change Plans During 125th Anniversary Year

NEW ORLEANS (April 29, 2021) - Kingsley House program participants, staff, board, senior leadership, elected officials and community leaders gathered today to announce that the 125-year-old institution will change its name.

Since 1896, the state-certified and nationally accredited nonprofit has provided southeast Louisiana with life-transforming programs and services for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children, youth, parents, senior citizens, veterans, and medically-fragile adults.

In preparation for the 125th Anniversary year and in an effort to help the community recognize the totality of the work of Kingsley House, the organization began a brand refresh effort in fall 2020. While researching the organization's namesake, Charles Kingsley, a renowned British clergyman, author, and social reformer, staff uncovered published writings and sermons of Kingsley's racist viewpoints that proved to be completely inconsistent with the core values of the organization. Therefore, leadership has decided to retire the name "Kingsley House."

"When considering such a substantial change like the renaming of our treasured and historic organization, our team recognizes the need to retain the heartbeat of our work and keep the community we serve top of mind in our decision-making," said Kingsley House CEO Keith Liederman, Ph.D. "We are proud of the impact we've had in our first 125 years and believe our renaming decision is a testament to our ongoing commitment to advancing systemic change for our children, families and community."

"Once presented with the information about Charles Kingsley, the Board decided that keeping Kingsley's name was inconsistent with our mission," said Richard J. Roth, III, Kingsley House Board President. "We knew it would be a monumental effort, but as an organization rooted in equity and committed to providing access and opportunity to all people, there was never any doubt that we'd move away from the Kingsley name. We are confident that we'll establish a unifying name that will strengthen future generations."

The organization will continue to operate as Kingsley House until a new name is approved. A decision is expected by early fall.

With a mission of educating children, strengthening families and building community, Kingsley House has long been recognized for innovation.

-more-

Among its many trailblazing accomplishments, the organization was the first settlement house in the south; the first organized summer camp in New Orleans for children and youth, giving rise to NORD; the first free health clinic for women and children in the city; the first home of classes for sight impaired, giving rise to Louisiana's Lighthouse for the Blind; the first home of Tulane University School of Social Work, the 5th oldest school of social work in the country; the first publicly integrated playground and pool in the city; one of the first Head Start programs in the nation; and one of the first Adult Day Care programs in the state.

Today, Kingsley House operates the most diverse early childhood education model in the state, the largest adult day care program in the Greater New Orleans area, a career pathways workforce development program; and is a community and supportive services resource to residents of Columbia Parc at the Bayou District, Faubourg Lafitte, and Sacred Heart at St. Bernard neighborhood communities.

“Our organization will continue to collaborate with families as they reimagine their futures and support them in their journeys to achieve social and economic success. At the same time, we look forward to broadening our scope with bolder initiatives of equity, diversity, and inclusion so that we can continue to effectively serve our families and our community,” added Liederman.

For more information about the name change and the nonprofit's work, please visit www.KingsleyHouse.org.

###

About Kingsley House

At Kingsley House, we envision a city and region where all young children are ready to succeed, and all citizens are healthy and economically stable. Recognizing that vulnerable families are at risk of being caught in an intractable cycle of poverty, we are committed to ensuring that individuals and families have the support necessary to be successful at all stages of life. To accomplish our goals, we join forces with dedicated community partners. Collectively, we work with families to fuel economic growth and social change in our city, state, and region. Kingsley House was founded in 1896; the organization will celebrate its 125th anniversary in 2021-2022.