

The Emily K Center and Immaculate Conception Parish:

Our History, Founding, and Partnership

Founded on the idea that the Immaculate Conception Parish needed additional gym space for Immaculata Catholic School athletics and physical education classes and that there was also a broader need for educational and recreational opportunities for all children in Durham, a committed group of parishioners led by Fr. David McBriar and Coach Mike Krzyzewski began planning in 1999 for what would become the Emily K Center.

The group determined that the Center would be a separate and distinct nonprofit, governed by a community-based Board with continued representation from the parish. The original plans for a gym grew into a larger 29,000 square-foot multipurpose building with two gym areas, locker rooms, a stage, classrooms, and offices. The Center would assume costs for the construction of the original \$7M facility and the ongoing operational responsibilities going forward. The Diocese agreed to lease the Center land for the project at \$1 a year until at least 2103 and provided an initial loan of \$2M to expedite the construction timeline. Legal agreements stating how shared gym usage, a physical education teacher office, special event planning, campus parking, and maintenance and expenses would be coordinated between the Center and Parish were agreed to in 2005.

Through the dedicated efforts of the Parish and Diocese, the Krzyzewski family, and countless individuals, partners, and donors, the Emily K Center, now a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, opened as a community and campus resource in 2006. Over the years, the Center has evolved its educational programming to focus on college access and career readiness for traditionally underserved students and expanded the facility itself through a capital project.

The Emily K Center continues to deliver significant impact for young people and the Durham community through direct programming and facility partnerships. At the same time, it also meets critical facilities needs for Immaculata Catholic School and the Parish through the provision of gymnasium space.

Immaculate Conception, a multicultural parish, prioritizes social justice within its mission and seeks to lift up those who are marginalized, serve the wider community of Durham, and pursue the common good. As one of the founding partners of the Center, the Parish engages with it and other community impact organizations in their work.

The Emily K Center and the Immaculate Conception Parish, including Immaculata Catholic School, practice active and positive collaboration and coordination, guided by the operational commitments outlined at the Center's founding.

Emily K Center and Immaculate Conception Parish

A Chronology of Collaboration

- Spring 1999** Father David McBriar, Pastor of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church at the time, approaches Coach Michael Krzyzewski, celebrated Duke Men's Basketball coach and parishioner, with the idea to build a gym for Immaculata Catholic school and the broader community. Coach K proposes that a community center with a larger gym be built instead.
- Fall 1999** An early-stage core team composed predominantly of Immaculate Conception parishioners convenes, including Fr. McBriar and Coach K, and the first donation is received.
- 2000** A campaign is designed and launched to raise funds for the facility.
- Dec 2000** The Burch Avenue Center is formed as a North Carolina Nonprofit Corporation.
- Mar 2001** The first recorded meeting of the Board of Directors is held. The agenda includes change of the Center's name, fundraising, soil clean up, architectural designs, bylaws, and programming.
- Oct 2001** The name of the Center is changed to The Emily Krzyzewski Family Life Center, Inc. on the Secretary of State records.
- 2002** Additional community members are recruited to the Board, including representatives from Durham Housing Authority, Durham Technical Community College, Duke University, and El Centro Hispano.
- 2003** The Center applies for tax-exempt status and qualifies as a 501(c)(3) public charity under the Internal Revenue Code.
- Aug 2003** A groundbreaking ceremony is held.
- 2003** Environmental remediation of the property begins.
- Jan 2005** A Ground Lease is signed between the Center and the Diocese; construction begins.
- Jan 2005** A Joint Operating Agreement is signed between the Center, the Diocese, and Parish.
- Jan 2005** The Board of Directors conducts a community needs assessment, and the Center's mission, vision and programmatic focus on children and educational opportunity is adopted.
- Feb 2006** Construction is completed. In its first year of operation, the Center launches its first academic program and partners with more than twenty facility partners. Immaculate Conception Parish begins utilization of the gymnasium for regular and event programming as the Center's campus partner.
- 2006 - now** The Emily K Center and the Immaculate Conception Parish, including Immaculata Catholic School, practice active and positive collaboration and coordination, guided by the operational commitments outlined at the Center's founding.