



# VILLA VIEWS

SPRING 2015

The Newsletter of St. Joseph's Villa



## JOYFUL REUNION

**Former Flagler Home resident returns to the Villa campus where she lived 20 years ago.**

*Cheryl Thompkins remembers how the programs of St. Joseph's Villa gave her a foundation for success.*

**C**heryl recalled, "My sons used to play under that magnolia tree," as she approached the cottage that until two years ago served as Flagler Home, an on-campus shelter for homeless women and children. Today she lives in Delaware, but during a recent trip to Richmond, Cheryl made it a point to revisit St. Joseph's Villa—a place she says helped her through a defining period in her life. She had the opportunity to reunite with Flagler Operations Coordinator Carolyn Seay, who provided child care to her two boys 20 years ago.

Flagler completed its transition to the community-based model of rapid re-housing in 2013, today helping families of all compositions obtain permanent housing as quickly as possible. Many of the support services that helped Cheryl gain independence are still available through this new model based on need.

Having grown up in a dysfunctional family, Cheryl sought a fresh start after having her own children. She and her sons Christian (3 months old) and Wynton (6 years) relocated across state lines to live with a friend in Richmond. When plans

fell through after she arrived, she and her children were left in a new city with no family or resources.

Cheryl learned about Flagler Home while staying at the Salvation Army emergency shelter. She applied to Flagler Home and was accepted as her time at the emergency shelter was coming to an end. "St. Joseph's Villa gave me my foundation," she said. "The counseling services were invaluable." She remembers working with her counselor to develop a concrete plan for becoming self-sufficient, which included credit repair, budgeting, education

*Continued on next page.*

## JOYFUL REUNION

*(continued from front)*

and employment skills. She also worked as an assistant at the Villa's Hollybrook Apartments and in the administrative offices to gain hands-on job experience. Cheryl believes her faith in God kept her steadfast and focused. Her Pastor (Lance Watson) shared some words in a sermon that she remembers to this day: "Plan your work, and work your plan." Cheryl did exactly that. She ultimately earned her Master's Degree in Administration of Human Services, and has maintained a successful career and stable housing for her family since the year-and-a-half she lived at Flagler Home. Her experience at the Villa has inspired her dream to one day start a nonprofit to help other families experiencing homelessness.

"I wouldn't trade my journey for anything," said Cheryl. "St. Joseph's Villa enabled me to get my footing and position myself so that I can give back."

Under the rapid re-housing model, Flagler Housing & Homeless Services help 300 families (approximately 800 individuals) in the Greater Richmond and Tri-Cities regions each year—triple the number of families served by Flagler Home's model. By addressing people's first and foremost need of having a place to call home, rapid re-housing has proven highly successful in helping others like Cheryl achieve 180-degree turns in their lives.

### AS SEEN ON TV!

## New Weatherbug camera live on campus

For 180 years, St. Joseph's Villa has been looking out for the children and families of this community. Now a newly installed Weatherbug camera will too! NBC12's Andrew Freiden unveiled the camera during his morning forecast in December 2014. "What a great vantage point to catch incoming weather to share

*Weatherbug camera mounted above campus.*



with our viewers on air and online," said Freiden. "It's one of my favorite sites to show on our broadcasts. And we at NBC12 are happy to help spread the word about the Villa!"

## Zach finds his voice at the Sarah Dooley Center for Austim

Zach loves going to school. Unlike many kids his age, he is not praying for a snow day that will keep him from riding the bus and seeing his teachers and friends. But as a child with autism, school was not always such a happy place for Zach. His mother Jessica used to face a battle every morning to get him out of the door. As Zach's meltdowns and self-injuries became more frequent and severe, she realized his needs could not be met by his public elementary school.

### Zach's life made a 180-degree turn when Jessica found the St. Joseph's Villa Sarah Dooley Center for Autism (SDCA).

SDCA focuses on equipping students with communication and social and life skills to help them engage with their community and live as independently as possible. At SDCA Zach has learned to communicate effectively at school and at home through a mobile tablet. He also uses it to learn the meaning of new words and phrases and ask for what he needs. Meltdowns and self-injuries happen far less often now that he has a means to express himself.

Jessica went from feeling frustrated and hopeless about Zach's education to feeling optimistic about his future. She attributes Zach's turnaround to the connection he shares with his teachers and peers.

"My experience with SDCA has been nothing short of exceptional," said Jessica. The staff sincerely love Zach. They have helped him come a long way."



*Zach's tablet helps him learn and communicate.*

Learn more about the programs of SDCA at [SarahDooleyCenter.org](http://SarahDooleyCenter.org).

### LOOKING FOR EVENT SPACE?

## Historic Villa amenities available to rent

WEDDINGS • ATHLETICS • SYMPOSIUMS  
FAIRS • SOCIAL GATHERINGS • AND MORE

Recognized on the Virginia Historic Landmarks Register, the buildings of St. Joseph's Villa are characterized by artfully handcrafted details unlike any other in Richmond and set on a serene 82-acre campus filled with gardens and

## Meet LaShana West, Director, Villa Crisis Stabilization Unit



LaShana West

*“The services of St. Joseph’s Villa were compassionate, professional, and not like an institution. I only have praise for the Crisis Stabilization Unit staff.”*

—Parent

LaShana West comes to St. Joseph’s Villa with more than 10 years’ experience providing mental health services to children and families. She previously served at Father Flanagan Girls and Boys Town from 2005 to 2014 in positions that include youth care worker, intensive in-home clinician, case manager and program director. “I am honored to join the Villa’s continuum of care,” said West.

West spent the early years of her career working directly with individuals with developmental disabilities, which she says taught her the importance of having true compassion and engaging in servant leadership.

“Meeting families where they are and using an individualized approach enables them to flourish and meet their goals effectively,” said West. “There’s no right or wrong way, as we are all different.”

West holds a Bachelor’s of Science in Human Service and Social Service Administration and a Master’s of Science in Clinical Counseling.

In partnership with Richmond Behavioral Health Authority and the Region IV Community Service Boards, the Villa’s six-bed Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) has diverted 90% of children served from hospitalization. The CSU is the first facility of its kind in Central Virginia and enables families to keep their children experiencing mental health crisis in their communities.

tree-lined pedestrian avenues. Our chapel, renovated gymnasium and outdoor spaces are available to rent year-round with proceeds benefiting our mission. Learn more about how the Villa can serve as the venue for your next event at [NeverStopBelieving.org](http://NeverStopBelieving.org).

**Weddings:** contact Beth Harper at 804-553-3215.

**Gym and field rentals:** contact Craig Hedley at 804-553-3226.



Villa chapel interior with vaulted ceilings and arched stained glass windows.

**Inside:**

**JOYFUL REUNION**

**Former Flagler Home resident returns 20 years later.**

**MEET OUR NEW  
CSU DIRECTOR**

**LaShana West joins our Crisis Stabilization Unit team.**

**STUDENT SUCCESS**

**How our students facing autism and mental illness are making 180's.**

We never stop believing in children and their families.

**St. Joseph's Villa  
Board of Trustees**

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**Bon Secours partners with  
Villa for healthy snack program**

**Mental and physical health begin with nutrition**

Obstacles in cost and accessibility put healthy eating out of reach for many children and families the Villa serves. This spring we are delighted to partner with the Bon Secours Class-A-Roll to provide Villa students with hands-on nutrition education and experience in healthy food preparation. The Class-A-Roll is a mobile interactive kitchen that links families to fresh, affordable produce in their own communities.

Each week our students learn to prepare a healthy snack with fruits and vegetables, then they prepare it for 80 of their classmates to enjoy

the following week. The Class-A-Roll recently came to the Villa campus and taught our students how to make veggie rolls. Many of them have tried—and enjoyed—fresh ingredients for the first time.



Bon Secours Class-A-Roll visits the Villa.



See what else is happening at St. Joseph's Villa:  
Visit our website at [www.NeverStopBelieving.org](http://www.NeverStopBelieving.org).

Paperwork today shapes tomorrow.



It's easier than you think.

Since 1834, St. Joseph's Villa has helped children like Jennifer overcome seemingly impossible challenges and grow into healthy, productive adults. Jennifer benefits from your generosity today, but what about the countless others who will rely on Villa programs in years to come?

By making a bequest to St. Joseph's Villa today, you are ensuring that children and families of future generations will have access to groundbreaking services that help them reach their full potential. All it takes to get started is a conversation—you may be surprised at the difference your bequest can make.



**Contact us to learn more about establishing your legacy at St. Joseph's Villa:  
[www.NeverStopBelieving.org/Foundation](http://www.NeverStopBelieving.org/Foundation) | 804-553-3220**

*Pictured: Villa student with CEO Kathleen Burke Barrett.*

# David Huffine, Villa VP for Advancement, receives international fundraising award

David Huffine, CFRE, who has helped raise an estimated \$750 million in charitable funds over his career, was celebrated by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) as this year's *Outstanding Fundraising Professional*. This is the highest honor that AFP bestows upon its members recognizing effective, creative and stimulating leadership as well as the practice and promotion of ethical fundraising. Huffine received the award on March 28, 2015 at AFP's International Fundraising Conference in Baltimore.



*Villa staff and friends celebrate David Huffine (center) at the AFP International Fundraising Conference.*

“David has earned the admiration and respect of all those he works with by making consistent choices that are honorable, compassionate and selfless,” said Kathleen Burke Barrett, CEO of St. Joseph’s Villa. “His integrity is above reproach. While he has experienced many successes throughout his career that would make any fundraiser proud, perhaps most important of all is that he really does things right.” Barrett co-nominated Huffine for the award with Alan Hutson, Principal and Managing Partner of The Monument Group.

In local AFP chapters, David has served as president, treasurer, program chair, National Philanthropy Day chair and mentoring chair. He has also been a board member of the Virginia Association of Fundraising Executives (VAFRE), which in 2014 recognized him with the *Nina Abady Award* for outstanding professionalism in fundraising.

Huffine’s professional and volunteer efforts focus on equipping children, youth and young adults for brighter futures. He says working with amazing teams for inspiring causes is the secret of his success.

## GENEROSITY BY THE BOOK

### **Eighth grade volunteer holds huge book drive for Villa kids**

Looking for a way to give back to her community, eighth grader Alissa took the initiative to hold a book drive for the children of St. Joseph’s Villa. In just 2 weeks she rallied her classmates and even spoke on the school announcements to fill boxes full of

books. We are grateful for her amazing and much-needed gift.

Alissa’s mother, Natasha, volunteered at the Villa about ten years earlier. Her positive experience as a volunteer helped inspire Alissa to get involved.

To learn more about current Donation Center needs and how you can help, visit [NeverStopBelieving.org](http://NeverStopBelieving.org) or call Kathy Perun, Director of Community Engagement at 804-521-5577.



*Alissa (right) with Natasha, mother (left).*

# What happened to Isaac's anger?

Isaac had a hard time controlling his anger since kindergarten. When classroom outbursts, school suspensions and hospital visits became routine, his mother Lachelle had no choice but to stop working and care for him full time.



Isaac's aggression came from a diagnosed mental illness. Lachelle had worked for years in the medical field as a triage nurse, but had no idea of where to turn to get her son the treatment he needed. Henrico County Mental Health and Developmental Services then referred Isaac to the Therapeutic Day Treatment program at St. Joseph's Villa. After about a year in the program, Lachelle saw a huge turnaround in Isaac's behavior.

"There's no comparing the past to the present," she said. "The program taught him constructive ways to deal with frustration and keep from lashing out—things I never would've thought to do."

Therapeutic Day Treatment is based on a positive behavioral management system. Every child has his or her own goals tailored to individual needs. Program staff involved Lachelle in developing Isaac's learning plan and provided guidelines for working with him at home. Isaac attended Day Treatment after school and every summer through sixth grade.

Today Isaac is doing well academically and can participate in class without any outbursts. Lachelle is back to working full time. Isaac occasionally returns to the Villa to visit his counselors and friends.

"The Villa helped me a lot," said Isaac. "They took the anger out of me."

*"St. Joseph's Villa is the kind of place you want to take your child. They make you feel safe. You can tell they care about your whole family."*

- Lachelle, Isaac's mother

# 82,000

children in Virginia live with serious mental health conditions according to the National Alliance on Mental Health.

180 YEARS OF 180° TURNS

180

ST. JOSEPH'S VILLA

1834-2014

# Tees to ties:

## Q&A with Dave Redmond, Villa Foundation Chair

*Dave Redmond is a 30-year donor and volunteer of St. Joseph's Villa with leadership roles that have included Board of Trustees chair, Believing Is Seeing capital campaign chair, and his current position as chair of the Villa Foundation. He is a member of our Archway Society, recognizing those who have made a place for the Villa in their estate plans. In a recent interview with us, Redmond reflected on his sustained ties to the Villa mission, as well as why and how others might consider helping:*

**Q: What inspired you to get involved with St. Joseph's Villa?**

**A:** I first connected with the Villa when I was asked to serve on its golf committee. The annual golf tournament provides vital support to the Villa's developmental disabilities programs. When I visited the Villa campus and saw first-hand the impact these programs were making on the lives of children and families, I was compelled to continue my support

**Q: Why do you think philanthropic support is important?**

**A:** In this day and time, organizations must have a broad base of support outside of governmental channels. This is what has enabled the Villa to endure through tough financial times and deliver transformational services over the course of 180 years.

**Q: Why is St. Joseph's Villa worthy of donors' philanthropic support?**

**A:** The Villa's stability puts it in a position to render services for years to come. The organization has stuck close to its mission and done wonderful things for families. I'm totally impressed with the staff, leadership and volunteers, and what they do on a daily basis. The Villa is the complete package. It is important for the Richmond community to have a place like St. Joseph's Villa.

**Q: What would you say to someone considering a planned gift to the Villa?**

**A:** Come out and visit St. Joseph's Villa. We're more than willing to introduce you to our programs. The services speak for themselves when you see them with your own eyes. It's what made a believer out of me.

**Q: The Villa Foundation has established named Funds for Excellence as a planned giving opportunity—why might this be of interest to donors?**

**A:** The Funds for Excellence provide an opportunity for individuals to make a significant gift to the Villa Foundation over time through different methods. Foundations are essential for organizations the size of St. Joseph's Villa. They fund operations, give stability and invigorate services. Funds for Excellence also provide a means for donors to forever preserve causes that they care about.

**Q: What are your hopes for the Villa's future?**

**A:** While I may not know now what the community needs of the future will be, I do know that the Villa will continue reacting effectively to address the biggest challenges facing children and families.



*Dave Redmond with Villa children.*