



# VILLA VIEWS

FALL 2017

The Newsletter  
of St. Joseph's Villa



## INSPIRED FUTURE AHEAD

**Keimon discovers a new tomorrow with Career and Transition Services**

*Career and Transition Specialist Garland Guion (right) has worked with Keimon (left) for over a year.*

**K**eimon is a kind and caring student who knows about making good choices—but before coming to St. Joseph's Villa, he had a hard time going against peer pressure. He often felt unheard, misunderstood, and isolated. His built-up frustrations led to outbursts that affected academics and strained relationships.

At the Villa, Keimon found a place to be himself by participating in Career and Transition Services (CATS). While exploring vocational possibilities, he joined a snack preparation and delivery program serving Villa students with autism, and interned with Villa athletic operations. Keimon also toured local

colleges and worked with college student mentors on a variety of skill-building projects.

Keimon says CATS helped him build self-esteem. He now feels confident stepping out from the crowd to become his own individual. He even performed in a live play through the University of Richmond's Jepson Shakespeare Project—something he never pictured himself doing.

Now Keimon is dreaming big for his future.

**“I want to be a counselor one day, because I like how the counselors here treat me,” said Keimon.**

The positive relationships Keimon formed with Villa staff and college mentors also inspired him to mentor an elementary student in the Villa's Dooley School. He enjoys imparting the lessons he learned at the Villa, and feels that serving as a mentor is a great way to prepare for a career in counseling.

“CATS changed me a lot,” said Keimon. I'm a whole different person.”

CATS partners with businesses and colleges to provide networking opportunities and experience in real-world environments. With the support of Arbonne, Capital One and Midas of Richmond, 132 Villa students gained employment skills in the past year.

## Andrew gains independence with Mental Health Skill Building Services

Andrew had a hard time connecting with the community after high school. He fell out of contact with his friends, and without a driver's license or job, lived at home with his mother. He rarely left the house, leading to depression. One day he found himself asking, "What am I doing with my life?"

Andrew never received mental health services before participating in the Villa's Mental Health Skill Building (MHSB). His goals were to get healthy, to be part of the community, and have things to look forward to in the future. Villa clinician Jason Brown helped Andrew overcome his social anxiety by identifying his interests and using them to build relationships.

When Andrew revealed he enjoyed the game Dungeons & Dragons, Jason connected him with a group that plays at One Eyed Jacques in Carytown. Andrew was nervous at first, but quickly made friends. He now leads weekly games as the group's "Dungeon Master."

"It was a big breakthrough. His social skills skyrocketed," said Jason.

The year before receiving help from MHSB, Andrew only left the house twelve times. Now he's getting out three or four times a week. Jason also helped Andrew prepare for his learner's permit test, on which he got a perfect score. Andrew is moving toward independence, and is looking into getting his own apartment.

"Things have gotten a lot better," said Andrew. "I used to lose track of the days because I was so secluded from everything. St. Joseph's Villa has helped me feel more confident and more able to take control of my life."

## Villa briefs Congress on rapid re-housing progress

On September 18, Villa CEO Kathleen Burke Barrett and Director of Housing & Homeless Services Kimberly Tucker joined the National Alliance to End Homelessness at a Congressional Briefing in the U.S. Capitol. The briefing updated Congressional staff on progress that has been made nationally toward ending homelessness through rapid re-housing, and what we need to build on it. Outcomes at local levels were highlighted, and Congress was asked to support the successful housing model with leadership and resources.



*Kathleen Burke Barrett (right) and Kimberly Tucker prepare to meet with Congress at the U.S. Capitol.*

"Housing individuals and families stimulates the economy through occupancy, employment and sales taxes, which in turn has a multiplier effect on the community," said Barrett. "The Villa's housing services would not be possible without the philanthropic support of individuals and community partners, or the federal grants we receive."

Flagler Housing & Homeless Services housed 653 people in Richmond and the Tri-Cities last year. More than 85% are remaining housed 12 months after exiting the program.

Other organizations represented at the briefing included the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, based in D.C., and Clark County Social Services in Las Vegas. The briefing was sponsored by Congressman Emanuel Cleaver (D-Missouri), Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine), and Senator Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island).

# Center for Autism students aid children fighting cancer



Above: Center for Autism students took turns working the stand, helping pour lemonade and manage donations.

Right: Crisis Counselor Kirsten Ellis helps a student deliver lemonade to customers.



Our Sarah Dooley Center for Autism joined hundreds of area families, businesses and community organizations raising funds for childhood cancer research this July. With the help of their teachers, students set up an Anthem LemonAid stand on the Villa campus and visited staff to request support. In two days they met their goal of \$200!

Donations through Anthem LemonAid benefited the Hematology and Oncology Clinic at Children’s Hospital of Richmond at VCU—meanwhile Center students benefited by developing communication skills and building confidence from their success.

Our Center for Autism contributed to a total of \$106,392 raised across Richmond.



## Community partners fill 341 book bags for Villa students

Every Villa student in need started the school year with a new book bag full of hope and promise, thanks to our partners who gathered supplies and assembled them in our Donation Center.

Many of our students would not have access to the supplies they need for a successful school year without the support of our community.

We thank all organizations and individuals who gave our students a strong foundation to start the year:

- Allianz
- Bank of America
- Boy Scout Troop 777
- Dr. and Mrs. Robert Campbell
- Mrs. Christine Carrow
- Colortree
- Fox and Hound
- Lula and Deborah Fleming
- Mason and Hanger
- Linda and David Huffine
- Luck Family Trust
- Park Sterling Bank
- VA Dept. Game and Inland Fisheries
- Verus Underwriting Managers

- Wyndham Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center
- YMCA Leaders in Training – Tuckahoe & Shady Grove



Park Sterling Bank held the “StuffThe Bus” school supplies drive for Villa students in need.

## Providing for a future of opportunity

Kathy Duke's reasons for giving back to the community, and to the Villa, are many. They began at a young age as she watched her parents go out of their way to help less fortunate people. While raising five kids, they took in a brother of a friend with a mental illness, and provided a loving home. They also founded a school swim team—Kathy recalls her father taking one especially struggling child under his wing.

“With that inspiration, I’ll always help people, no question,” said Kathy.

Having a nephew with intellectual disabilities and behaviors on the autism spectrum, Kathy takes the Villa’s mission to heart. Kathy first became involved with St. Joseph’s Villa in 2004 when she joined the board of trustees. Since then she has remained actively engaged as a donor and volunteer. She says she continues to support the Villa because she trusts the vision and people behind it.



***“Year after year, I’ve been so impressed with the organization and employees. I know their dedication and passion for the mission. When you choose your charity wisely, you can be comfortable making contributions.”***

Beyond her current giving, Kathy has provided for the Villa in her will, making her one of the newest members of our Archway Society. She says she has been blessed with many opportunities in life given by many different people, to be healthy, open a business, and raise a family. Through her planned gift, Kathy hopes to continue to give opportunities to children who need help overcoming their own obstacles—much like her parents did.

“Children are the most vulnerable in our society,” said Kathy. “Giving disadvantaged children a hand up in life is so important for our future.”



By making a gift in your will 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 how easy it is to give a gift and make an impact that can last forever.

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

## Toothbeary Pediatric Dentistry teaches dental hygiene to Center for Autism students

Brushing your teeth is one of those things most people take for granted, but it can be a huge challenge for a child with autism and their parents. The main goal of our Center for Autism is to help students live as independently as possible, and community partners like

Toothbeary Pediatric are instrumental in equipping them with essential life skills.

Toothbeary presented dental hygiene practices to students of all grade levels with fun and interactive activities. Students also received new toothbrushes so they could practice what they learned at home. We are so appreciative of our volunteers who help students make a successful transition to adulthood.



*Toothbeary presents to our Center for Autism middle school class.*

## Mayor Stoney encourages Villa students in transition



*Mayor Stoney greets students during his visit to the Villa campus.*

Students from our Brook Road Academy, Dooley School, Dooley Center for Alternative Education and Sarah Dooley Center for Autism enjoyed a visit from Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney on May 16. Mayor Stoney shared his personal journey and vision for the City of Richmond with a crowd of more than 150 students and staff at the Villa. He also offered encouraging words:

“Always shoot for excellence,” he told students. “Outsmart your obstacles. Go over that mountain, around that mountain, through that mountain, underneath that mountain, any which way to succeed.”

Following his remarks, Mayor Stoney personally met with students and answered their questions. The visit concluded with a tour of Villa programs, which serve Richmond and more than 30 localities throughout Central Virginia.

The next month Mayor Stoney graciously offered to host a group of Villa students in his office. Students were treated to a personal tour of City Hall and a more intimate Q&A session. It was a tremendous experience that helped our students set their sights high as they prepare for life after high school.

Thanks to Lewis Insurance Associates for sponsoring this newsletter.

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## Jonathan finds belonging at Brook Road Academy

*Testimonial from Jonathan's mother, Cassandra:*

Though intellectually gifted, our son was a square peg in a round hole in the public school system. His father and I watched helplessly as his early love of learning succumbed to the daily torture of trying to fit into the social scene. When his anxiety peaked, and his grades tanked in fifth grade, we tried homeschooling for a year and a half, but it seemed an imperfect solution for an exceedingly bright child who was missing the variety and stimulation a real school provides.



What a great day for our family when Jonathan and I walked through the doors of Brook Road Academy and met Principal Jeff Carretto and his amazing faculty! At Brook Road Academy, Jonathan has received a customized education that challenges him to soar academically while providing the extra guidance he needs to learn to work well with others. Once again he is earning straight A's, and, just as importantly, he has found the acceptance and belonging he craves as a member of a true community of learners.

We feel fortunate to have found Brook Road Academy as early as Jonathan's seventh grade year and are excited to see how Jonathan grows in the years to come.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Last year the Villa's Culinary Services provided more than **105,000 meals** to children, free of charge.

## Villa leadership visits Duke Center for Autism and Brain Development

CEO Kathleen Burke Barrett, COO Cindy Faison, and Sarah Dooley Center for Autism director Adam Dreyfus met with Dr. Geraldine Dawson and her team at Duke University in August to learn about their work serving individuals with autism and their families. Methodologies, ideas, and partnerships with the broader community were shared during an inspiring visit. The opportunity to collaborate with this innovative Center helps us refine our vision of service.



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Dominion Energy's Generation Accounting team volunteers in the Learning and Therapy Garden.

## Powering Brighter Futures

### PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:



The Villa continually evolves to meet the growing needs of our kids and our community in partnership with Dominion Energy. The Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation recently committed \$100,000 to our RiseUP campaign. It will support a future Center for Autism and campus-wide upgrades in technology and energy efficiency, and enables us to increase our capacity and enhance service delivery. This commitment represents the latest of many transformative changes to our campus which Dominion Energy has supported, to the benefit of children and families.

Dominion Energy made the largest

corporate gift in the Villa's history during our first-ever capital campaign, completed in 2012. The gift helped improve campus safety and accessibility, and made it a more therapeutic environment for those we serve. Dominion Energy also gave vital support in evolving our services for homeless families from a transitional housing approach to the rapid re-housing model, which has increased the number of homeless households served from 40 to more than 250 per year.

Beyond funding, Dominion Energy volunteers are often seen on the Villa campus with sleeves rolled up. A few years ago, Dominion Energy volunteers constructed an outdoor classroom as a key feature in our newly installed Learning and Therapy Garden. The outdoor classroom is being used by all Villa students and has been a vital tool and state-of-the-art resource for physical, mental and emotional health ever since.

Dominion Energy volunteers regularly return to maintain and enhance the outdoor classroom by adding new features that cultivate growth for children and youth with autism. Villa students also use the space for sensory stimulation, speech development, and to build social and job skills.

"Dominion Energy is pleased to be a longtime partner of St. Joseph's Villa, and to contribute to the Villa's community impact through financial and volunteer support," said Hunter A. Applewhite, president of the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation.

*Cindy Balderson, manager of Corporate Philanthropy and Community Partnerships for Dominion Energy, serves on the Villa's Board of Trustees, and actively nurtures and guides our partnership.*





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**MAYOR STONEY VISIT**

**Villa students tour City Hall with the  
mayor following his visit to campus**

We never stop believing in children and their families.

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**Villa honored with Making Kids Count  
Award by Voices for Virginia's Children**

**Voices for Virginia's Children, the only independent multi-issue child policy and advocacy organization in the state, honored St. Joseph's Villa with the 2017 Carol S. Fox Making Kids Count Award on October 4. The award recognizes long-term commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable or disadvantaged children while upholding the highest ethical standards.**

**St. Joseph's Villa is the longest serving nonprofit for children in the country, founded in 1834. Our programs impact more than 3,000 children and families each year facing mental illness, autism, homelessness and other challenges.**

*Members of the Villa team accept the award at the Hotel John Marshall.*

