

# COMING HOME

CHS NEWSLETTER VOLUME 2 | MAY 2018



## THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS

**CHS IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE FIRST "GRADUATE" OF THE POSSIBILITIES PROJECT!**

Terrance is one of the youth in [The Possibilities Project \(TPP\)](#) who has made amazing progress during his two years in the program! During that time, Terrance has been so successful in accomplishing his life plan goals – including vocational training, life skills and saving money – that he is ready to enjoy the independence he's worked diligently to achieve! Like all TPP participants, after aging out of foster care Terrance had struggled on his own. He needed life-skills and lacked supports, and struggled to find stable employment and adequate housing. After joining TPP, Terrance has thrived.



In TPP, Terrance received the supports he needed to pursue his dream of a career in law enforcement. With the help of TPP's Case Manager and Life Coach, Terrance enrolled in professional security classes. He successfully earned multiple certifications and was offered a security guard position. He has maintained steady full-time employment, improved his overall health and established a positive support network of friends, mentors, and co-workers. Terrance is considering joining the Army in the near future with hopes of becoming a member of the military police.

With guidance from the program, Terrance has also become financially savvy. Understanding the importance of saving money, he adheres to his budget, has savings accounts and good credit, which will allow him to move into his own apartment this summer.

Terrance's growth, diligence, and willingness to accept the guidance offered to him through The Possibilities Project has set him on a path to continued success and achievement. Please join Children's Home Society of VA and Better Housing Coalition as we celebrate our first graduate of The Possibilities Project. Congratulations Terrance!

## CHS 2018 ANNUAL LEGACY EVENT: THE POWER OF FAMILY, DELIVERED AS PROMISED

**APRIL 12, 2018 | THE JEPSON ALUMNI CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND**

The impassioned theme of this year's annual fundraising gala, "The Power of Family," was evident in two key-note speakers, our guests, ["The Power of Family" video developed just for the event](#), and even in the decorations. Ultimately, however, the Power of Family was demonstrated by the incredible support of our donors, which allowed us to surpass our initial goal by over 50%. For that, all of us at CHS wish to thank our supporters, sponsors, volunteers and of course our CHS adoptive families, all of whom celebrated and contributed to the Power of Family on a beautiful April 12th evening at the University of Richmond campus.



*CHS adoptive family with patron and rug raffle-winning couple at the Legacy Event*

Our guest speakers were two remarkable men who have integrated the Power of Family into their personal and professional lives. Mike Rhoades has been the coach for the VCU basketball program since 2017, and spoke of the importance of treating teammates and other collegial relationships as family, in order to facilitate the mutual respect and trust required for success. He was followed by Carl Price, a childhood trauma survivor and mentor who relayed his own experiences and the notion that family comes in many forms and should never be taken for granted.

### THANKS TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS:



Our four programs were represented in booths that were eagerly visited by guests hoping to win a valuable hand-crafted rug donated by W. Hirsch Oriental Rugs. In the spirit of the night, the winning couple donated their prize to one of our attending adoptive families!

[Please visit the Legacy Event page on our website to watch the Power of Family video and, if you missed the event, consider making a donation to support our life changing programs and families. \(chsva.org/events/legacy2018\)](#)

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Wendy's Wonderful Kids Summit

May 22-24, 2018, Columbus, Ohio  
– Lauren Weidner and Sara Buckheit will be presenting; Laura Pitts and Krista Watson will be attending

## CHS Annual Board Meeting

May 24, 2018, 9:00 – 10:30 am  
– Thanks to Memorial Health Foundation for hosting!

## Legacy Society Cocktail Party

May 31, 6:00 – 8:00 pm  
– Willow Oaks Country Club  
– A reception to express our thanks to our generous Legacy Society Members

## Positive Vibe Café CHS Night

June 7, 2018, 4:00 pm to closing  
– 15% of all proceeds donated to CHS  
– [Positive Vibe Cafe](#) is located in the Stratford Hills Shopping Center  
– Featuring [Cary Street Ramblers](#) band

## Second Annual End of School Year Party

June 15, 2018, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
– Staff and Junior Board to host our adoptive families and their children  
– [Please RSVP by June 5th...click here!](#)

## KID'S CLUBS \*

### 'Start of Summer' RVA Kid's Club

June 15, 2018, 12:00 – 4:00 pm  
– Three Lakes Park in Richmond VA  
– Special half-day event precedes End of School Year Party

### 'Start of Summer' Kid's Club – Fredericksburg

June 19, 2018, 8:30 – 4:00 pm  
– Kings Dominion

### July RVA Kid's Club

July 10, 8:30 am–4:00 pm  
– Kings Dominion

### July Kid's Club – Fredericksburg

July 17, 8:30 am–4:00 pm  
– Wilderness Adventure Park

### August Kid's Club – Fredericksburg

August 2, 8:30 am–4:00 pm  
– Splashdown Water Park

### August RVA Kid's Club

August 14, 8:30 am–4:00 pm  
– Teen Takeover – Challenge Course

\* *Registration is required and space is limited. [Click here for Richmond](#) and [here for Fredericksburg](#) forms. Please email Sara Buckheit at [sara@chsva.org](mailto:sara@chsva.org) for more information.*

# FOSTER CARE ADOPTION

## SOCIAL WORKER AND FRIEND OF CHS TAPPED FOR BRIGHT YOUNG MAN

15-year-old Josh had been in foster care for about a year and a half when he first met Tammy, who was helping on his case. Around the same time, Josh began to work with Krista Watson, the CHS Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter, who helps find families for waiting foster youth. Josh shared with Krista that he would love to be part of a large, active family. Krista approached Tammy, who agreed that she, her husband Kevin and their blended family might be just the right fit for Josh.



Josh began visits with Kevin and Tammy and almost immediately told Krista that “she didn’t need to keep looking for a family.” Josh moved in around the holidays in 2016. Almost one year later, Kevin and Tammy adopted Josh during a court celebration. They wrote vows to Josh, promising to love him as their son, to listen, to tell the truth, and to always be there, in good times and bad. Today, Josh is a confident 16-year-old with a bright future ahead. He will tell you that he knows he will be fine because he has a really strong and committed family behind him—a family who is an addition to his life, not a replacement for his past. Tammy and Kevin support Josh’s desire to stay connected with his birth family and they are involved in every aspect of his life, ensuring he feels supported, loved, and happy.

# WOW! THE THIRD ANNUAL CWGA INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2018 | BIRKDALE GOLF CLUB

Once again this year, a good time was had by all. The day could not have been more perfect...a beautiful breezy April day! The enthusiastic, philanthropic, Capital Women's Golf Association with tournament sponsor Royal Oak Underwriters, Inc. and over 85 golfers turned out in support of The Possibilities Project. With the tournament sponsorships, the skill contests, shot gun start, raffle tickets and silent auction, the boxed lunch and catered dinner, the donations, all the planning and organization on behalf of Children's Home Society, this was a truly inspiring and generous event! Children's Home Society of Virginia staff, and the Board of Directors are grateful for the sponsors and volunteers of CWGA for hosting this wonderful tournament. Over \$25,000 was raised that will directly benefit the youth enrolled in The Possibilities Project.



**THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:** Royal Oak Underwriters, Debbie and Dinka Daniel, Ogletree, Paymerang, Sylvia Carreras, CapTech, State Farm/Jonna Wooten, MaconIT, Barb Zubowsky, Pilc & Moseley, Hauni Richmond, and Salon 33.

# POST ADOPTION

## FAMILY COUNSELING ADDRESSES TRAUMA HEAD ON

Alexa started in foster care at six after her parents were arrested for domestic violence and drug abuse. A lack of pre-natal care resulted in permanent physical and behavioral challenges. During one of many foster placements, Alexa was sexually abused, adding to her trauma and loss. She was diagnosed with depression, oppositional defiant disorder, and self-harm. Her anger was often too much for foster families to handle. By age 12, Alexa had endured 16 placements and a four-month psychiatric hospitalization. She felt hopeless for the future.

Using best practice family recruitment methods, CHS found Alexa's adoptive family. They started weekend visits and phone calls because adjusting to being part of a healthy family was challenging. Alexa struggled to learn how to trust caregivers and continued to have outbursts. But CHS was there to provide guidance and support.

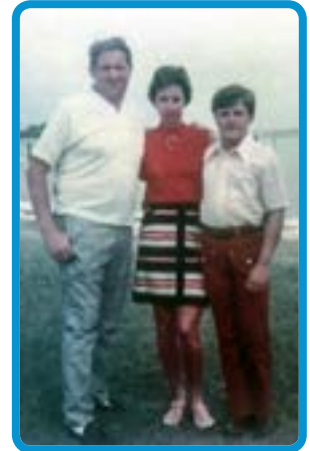


Working with the CHS Post Adoption Social Worker, the adoptive couple learned about parenting strategies for children, like Alexa, with painful pasts. CHS's worker consulted with them on discipline, Alexa's transition into their family, locating an afterschool stress-release program, and a trauma-informed therapist. Alexa also attended [CHS Kid's Clubs](#) to meet other youth adopted from foster care.

Last fall Alexa's parents, with the help of the CHS post adoption worker determined that they were ready for adoption. At Christmas they told her they would like no other gift than to have her as a permanent member of their family...and she said yes! Alexa's adoptive parents are grateful for the CHS Post Adoption Program, which helped build the skills and supports to be Alexa's forever family.

# CHS INSPIRES GENERATIONS OF GENEROSITY

## WE GRATEFULLY HIGHLIGHT A CHS FAMILY THAT HAS GROWN FROM CLIENT TO MAJOR SUPPORTER



After 10 years of marriage, Virginia Noel and Nae Hugh Pearson, Jr. brought Nae Hugh Pearson, III home to Lynchburg from Children's Home Society's Roanoke receiving home. While his father worked long hours in the family's drug store business, young Nae spent countless hours with his mother who was a great lover of music and played the piano. Nae began playing the family's small organ at a young age and singing in the church choir at Centenary Methodist Church on Rivermont Ave.

After being derailed from a medical career by organic chemistry, Nae found himself at the Peabody Conservatory where he studied organ and later received a Master's Degree in Sacred Music from Catholic University. He has led church choirs and played organ throughout the mid-Atlantic for over 30 years, leading those groups around Europe and carrying forward his mother's gift of music.

When Virginia passed away in December of 2017, she helped to carry forward another gift, the Gift of Family. By generously remembering CHS as a part of her estate she has made it possible for future generations to have the same opportunity for love, nurture and attachment her family enjoyed. We are extremely grateful for her gift.

*To learn more about how [you too can give forward the Gift of Family](#), contact Bruin Richardson, CHS Chief Advancement Officer, at 804-353-0191 or at [bruin@chsva.org](mailto:bruin@chsva.org).*

# CHS INFANT ADOPTION FOLLOWS THROUGH FOR MALLORY

**BABY MALLORY**  
ADOPTED IN 2017

By the time Baby Mallory was born, she had already overcome difficult odds. Her birth mother Candice was homeless, mentally ill and had no pre-natal care. As a child, Candice was placed in foster care at five years old after being sexually abused by her father. Now pregnant and 20, she had few friends and no family to assist her. Even the man she erroneously identified as the baby's father was incarcerated.

Fortunately, when Candice sought medical treatment near the end of her pregnancy, she found a caring hospital employee who agreed to adopt her child. Candice had developed a good relationship with the prospective adoptive mother and was confident her baby would be well taken care of with the mom she selected. CHS's infant social worker met with Candice, who reinforced how she knew that adoption would be best for the baby. At discharge from the hospital, Baby Mallory went home with the prospective adoptive mother - with Candice's consent. She wanted her baby to have a brighter future and recognized that she was not equipped to raise a child. Although born underweight, Mallory quickly responded to the nurturing she received from her adoptive mom.

There was more work to be done. CHS provided Candice counseling, guidance and supports. We filed a court petition to terminate the unknown birth father's rights. CHS also helped Candice transition to more stable living arrangement and to get additional support services. Ultimately CHS helped her identify the actual biological father, who also agreed that the best plan for Mallory was to be adopted. With compassionate guidance, patience and much unconditional love, Mallory's adoption was finalized. Mallory is now a thriving toddler—and Candice is with the birth father who is there for her.







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# CHS NEWSLETTER

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## OUR VOLUNTEER FAMILY



Boy Scout Jack McGum is honored for his Eagle Project—landscaping the front yard Children's Garden—and his continued upkeep of the garden.

In honor of Volunteer Recognition Day, CHS is pleased to introduce our Volunteer of the Year Donna Riedel! The sun always shines when Donna is at the front desk. She has volunteered over 460 hours so far this year and enthusiastically approaches every assigned task. She has photographed many of our events, tries to keep us organized and even solved a storage challenge, eliminating stacks of boxes in our offices. Besides a great attitude and cheerful greetings for staff and visitors, Donna has kept us well-supplied with donuts, bagels and candy. She truly goes above and beyond!

CHS is grateful for the many volunteers that contribute their time and loving care to enhance our programs and events. The mentors for the youth of The Possibilities Project, and the volunteers who help out at Kid's Club, Family Picnics and fundraising events all help CHS continue to provide needed services to the at-risk children and youth of Virginia. The truth is we could not do it without them!



Donna's bench presented to her in appreciation of Volunteer of the Year

## SHARE YOUR ADOPTION HISTORY WITH CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY

For 118 years CHS has worked to create a thriving family for every child. The thread of adoption weaves through the history of many families in Virginia. Children's Home Society is interested in preserving the personal stories of adoption and is working towards compiling a book about our history and the societal changes in adoption and foster care since its inception in 1900.

If you would like to share your experiences, memories and photographs for possible inclusion in our book, we will protect your anonymity should you choose to not include names and personal information. Your insight and experiences will contribute to the understanding of our unique history. Please contact Marny Hackley at [marny@chsva.org](mailto:marny@chsva.org), or 804 353-0191 ext.180, to submit your photos and stories or any questions.

