

# CHS NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1 | MAY 2017



## THE POSSIBILITIES PROJECT: ONE YEAR YOUNG AND ALREADY A SUCCESS!

### MARCH MARKS THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE POSSIBILITIES PROJECT'S LAUNCH!

This time last year we celebrated with collaborative partner Better Housing Coalition, funders and the broader community as we moved the first four participants into this new program. The Possibilities Project serves young adults who have aged out of foster care at the age of 18. Since that time we have assessed nearly 30 candidates and provided housing to 11 young people.

Our Life Coach and Case Managers are providing intensive services around employment, education and daily life skills like nutrition and budgeting. In addition, the participants have been matched with mentors in the community, and participated in counseling.

Thanks to crucial support from various foundations, organizations and individuals, the Possibilities Project team has prepared these young adults to have the life skills, employment experience and support networks they need to thrive as independent successful adults.



## CHS 2017 ANNUAL LEGACY EVENT: A NIGHT TO CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENT AND PERMANENCY

MAY 2, 2017 | THE JEPSON ALUMNI CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

CHS adoptive families, friends and supporters celebrated the gift of family at the 2017 Annual Legacy Event. The evening featured highlights of CHS's continuum of services ranging from Infant Adoption to The Possibilities Project. Each CHS program was represented as guests interacted with staff to learn how CHS does its amazing work. After the reception, a short program included a poignant new video featuring families served by CHS, along with a Keynote address by Virginia's own Anne Holton. The program also featured a poem read by one of our recently adopted teens!

The goal of the Legacy Event was to collect donations to support CHS's Mission. All evening we highlighted CHS's mission of building strong permanent families and lifelong relationships for Virginia's at-risk children and youth by celebrating "Gotcha Day"—the day adoptive children are placed with their permanent families. Through generous support from our friends and supporters in attendance and those tuning in via a live streaming broadcast, we can create many more Gotcha Days—changing the lives of our most vulnerable young people.

Our guest speaker was the [Honorable Anne Holton](#), a Virginian lawyer and judge who served as the Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She is the wife of United States Senator and former Virginia Governor Tim Kaine, who was the vice-presidential running mate in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Holton was First Lady of Virginia from 2006 to 2010, and now serves on the Virginia Board of Education.

Please visit the [Legacy Event page on our website](#) to watch the special video and Anne Holton's speech, see more photos, and consider making a donation to support our amazing programs. ([chsva.org/events/legacy2017](http://chsva.org/events/legacy2017))



The Honorable Anne Holton  
with one of our adoptive families

THANKS TO OUR  
EVENT SPONSORS:

ESTES



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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Mosaic Fundraiser

June 28, 2017, 5:00 pm–close

- Proceeds on your purchase donated to CHS

## Strangeways Fundraiser

July 26, 2017, 4:00 pm–9:00 pm

- Proceeds on your purchase and earnings from a raffle donated to CHS

## Watermelon Festival Book Sale

Sunday, August 13

10:00 am - 6:00 pm

- W. Hirsch Oriental Rugs in Carytown  
3117 W Cary St
- Please donate gently used books to CHS or Hirsch (esp children's books)

## VCU Broad Street Mile Run

Saturday September 30, 2017

9:00 am to 12:00 pm

- Broad Street between Belvidere Street and Hermitage Road
- 5K & One-Mile Fun Runs (Choose between the Kids Mile, Doggy Dash and Spirit of Giving Mile)
- To register or donate please visit [vcubroadstreetmile.com](http://vcubroadstreetmile.com)

## KID'S CLUBS

### Family Fun Night

Friday, May 19th

6:00–9:00 pm

- Patriot Park Amphitheater  
Fredericksburg, VA
- FREE; snacks provided

### End of School Year Party

Friday, June 9th, 4:00–7:00pm

- CHS Office, Richmond, VA
- FREE; Games, prizes, popsicles and more!

### June Kid's Club – Fredericksburg

Thursday, June 22nd

8:30 am–4:00 pm

- Kings Dominion

### June Kid's Club – Richmond

Wednesday, June 28th

8:30 am–4:00 pm

- Kings Dominion

### July Kid's Club – Fredericksburg

Tuesday, July 11th, 8:30 am–4:00 pm

- Great Waves Water Park

### July Kid's Club – Richmond

Tuesday, July 25th, 8:30 am–4:00 pm

- Pocahontas State Park  
Aquatic Center

### Parent's Night Out

Friday, July 14th, 5:00–8:00 pm

- Kybecca Restaurant,  
Fredericksburg, VA

# FOSTER CARE ADOPTION: KRISTA'S 75 WENDY'S WONDERFUL KIDS

## WENDY'S WONDERFUL KIDS, A SIGNATURE PROGRAM OF THE DAVE THOMAS FOUNDATION FOR ADOPTION

Krista Watson has been recruiting adoptive families for children in foster care for eight years and recently celebrated her 75th adoption!! She loves the fact that our recruitment model focuses on the relationship she is able to establish with each youth, because that strengthens her ability to recruit the best family to meet each child's needs. This year, Krista was recognized as having one of the top three adoption stories in the nation!



Wendy's Wonderful Kids has 260 recruiters working for children waiting in foster care throughout the U.S. and Canada. The children served by the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program are typically those who have been waiting the longest for an adoptive family and home. Research shows children served by the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program are up to three times more likely to get adopted. Like The Dave Thomas Foundation, we believe "unadoptable" is unacceptable.

# FOOD AND FUN AT THE 2017 FAMILY PICNIC

SATURDAY, MAY 6 | CHILDREN'S FARM AT MAYMONT

We recently celebrated our CHS families with a picnic at the newly renovated Children's Farm at Maymont. Over 100 members of the CHS family gathered for fellowship and fun with games, face painting, food sponsored by Wegmans, corn-hole sponsored by Patient First, and baby goats (and lots of other animals) supplied by Maymont. CHS staff, Board members and families spent quality time together being thankful for the blessings of family and permanence.

The Family Picnic was provided for our families free of charge as a service of our post-adoption program, which is supported by generous grants from Virginia Department of Social Services and the Altria Companies Employee Community Fund. We really enjoyed reconnecting with the wonderful people who make all that we do worthwhile—our extended CHS family.



EVENT SPONSORS:

*Wegmans*

**Patient First**

# POST ADOPTION EXPANDS INTO FREDERICKSBURG

The CHS Post Adoption program has been a growing source of pride since starting in 2011, having provided over 500 families with post-adoption support, advocacy, and parent coaching. Imagine our delight when in July 2016, CHSVA was awarded a grant through the Virginia Department of Social Services to expand our successful program to the Fredericksburg region.

As a result we are thrilled with the addition of Amy Waldbillig to our staff! Amy is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker experienced in working with adoptive families; her role is to develop and grow the program in this new service area. Remarkably, CHS is the only agency providing Post Adoption support to families in the Rappahannock region according to the state-funded list of programs. We work diligently to deliver on the expectations of our partners, donors and clients to serve needy populations by offering this crucial service to an expanded region of Virginia.

Already the Post Adoption Program in Fredericksburg has hosted two well-attended Kid's Club respite programs, as well as a movie screening for adoptive parents, and two trainings for parents in strategies to support children adopted out of foster care. We are proud—and excited—to continue to grow this impactful program and increasingly support more and more adoptive families.



# CHS PROUDLY REPRESENTS AT PROMINENT CONFERENCES IN 2017

**CHS AND OUR STAFF IS PROUD TO PRESENT AT THE FOLLOWING INDUSTRY CONFERENCES:**

## Child Welfare League of America

**March 29–30, 2017**

*"Parenting Through the ACE's: Improving Family Dynamics for Children of Trauma"*

Presented by Laura Ash-Brackley and Sara Buckheit

## Building Community Resilience Summit

**June 1–3, 2017**

*"Beyond Adverse Childhood Experiences: Building Community Resilience"*

Presented by Laura Ash-Brackley and Lauren Weidner

## North American Council on Adoptable Children

**July 20–22, 2017**

Presented by Laura Ash-Brackley and Lauren Weidner

## VALCPA Fall Conference

**(Virginia Association of Licensed Child Placing Agencies)**

**September 17–19, 2017**

Presented by Sara Buckheit and Lauren Weidner

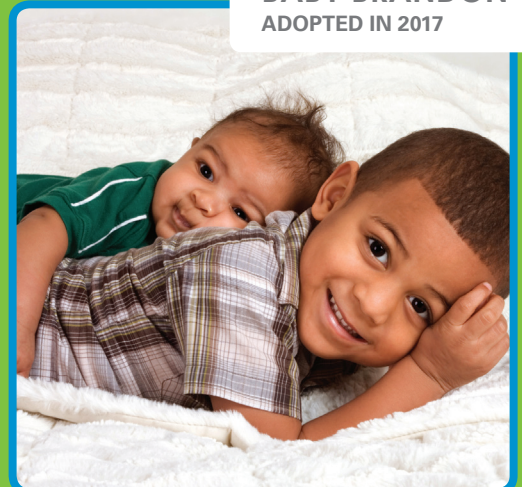
## SIBLINGS UNITED THANKS TO CHS INFANT ADOPTION

Brandon is a happy and healthy baby, now growing up with his brother in one of CHS's amazing adoptive families.

Brandon was born to a mother who was parenting one older child. After much counseling, she determined she was not in a position to take care of a new baby. In fact, with CHS's help, she had already placed another infant for adoption prior to giving birth to Brandon. CHS was heartened to learn that the birth mother came back to CHS because she had the confidence to use CHS services again. As before, we provided counseling and helped place her baby in a loving, permanent home.

Our immediate effort was to contact the adoptive family of the first child placed. Fortunately for Brandon, this loving couple decided that yes, they could indeed welcome the sibling of their adopted son. Brandon was placed in the family with his brother, and now they will share a childhood and enjoy life together.

**BABY BRANDON**  
ADOPTED IN 2017







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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### BEVERLY BAKER



When Beverly started her first day as a CHS employee, gas was .35 per gallon, the average house cost \$4,640 and a concert called Woodstock drew crowds of more than 350,000 youth. The year was 1969 and a then 19-year old Beverly Henshaw had no idea that working at CHS would ultimately become a life-impacting career that has spanned more than 48 years.

Beverly Baker first started working at CHS in October 1969 as a fund clerk, just one year after the agency moved to its office on Fitzhugh Avenue. Over the span of nearly five decades, Beverly has served in many roles, including as the CHS Secretary/Registrar, Executive Administrative Assistant and now as the Office Manager– but her work has always been compelling and rewarding.

“I have stayed during all these years because CHS has always focused on making sure children are loved and safe,” Beverly explains. “Our mission, our staff, great families, and all these sweet babies. There is no other job like this!”

Beverly will chuckle when she reflects back on how many things are different at CHS - from the 1960's building' décor to the use of technology that included Dictaphones and large printing presses. “The agency has experienced much change over all these years,” Beverly reflects, “But the bottom line has always been CHS's commitment to making sure children are in loving, nurturing families. It's been great being a part of helping to create healthy families!”

Beverly acknowledges that in many ways she “grew up” at CHS – while working here she got married, had a child, became a grandmother and is now looking forward to her granddaughter graduating from college. “I celebrated my 20th, 30th, 40th, 50th, and 65th birthday here at CHS...how many folks have experienced that many significant milestones at one workplace?”

