



“A young man who was once a runaway is playing the lead role of one of the most famous runaways in literature.”

Gary Francis (right) discovered his love of acting while at The Children's Village residential school. Now he's a star with Westchester Broadway Theatre. Read more on page 2.

“There's a lot I Want to Do with My Life.”

“Teens don't miss job interviews because they don't know how to get up on time, get dressed, and catch the train,” says Carl Johnson. “They miss them because of fear—fear of the unknown, fear of failing.”

Mr. Johnson is a counselor in the WAY Home Program where he helps prepare older teens who have grown up in the state system transition into life beyond foster care. Mr. Johnson does much of this work in CV's new Transitions cottage. This program fills a critical gap for many teens who otherwise age out of the foster care system into a world with little or no support system--at risk of being unemployed, homeless, incarcerated, or worse.

“It's all about becoming successful.” That's how Jacob C. describes the Transitions program. Jacob, at 18, is ambitious and positive. As the newest member of the Transitions cottage, he attends school full-time and works two part-time jobs while he learns what living independently really means. “Transitions helps because it's about getting ready for the future.”



CV Counselor works with Jacob (r) to help him prepare to live on his own.

To support teens like Jacob, Mr. Johnson, an Andrus Foundation Certified Transitions Coach, focuses on the emotional barriers to successful transition.

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Strategy Counts! at Children's Village



The Children's Village is one of 14 organizations nationwide selected to receive a \$100,000 grant from the Alliance for Children and Families to implement a pilot project called Strategy Counts! The project, funded by the Kresge Foundation, is designed to help organizations "explore, test, and gain understanding" of the elevation of strategy in human service organizations.

"We are delighted to have been chosen for this award," said Dr. Jeremy Kohomban, CV President and CEO. "For 160 years, we have been a leader in residential programming for at-risk youth. Today, 80% of the children and families we serve are part of our community programs. Strategy Counts! will help us take the next steps in ensuring that our operations, culture and image reflect this important shift, and we are delighted to have been chosen to be a pilot site."

The Children's Village will use the grant to work with New York-based Management Solutions for Nonprofit Organizations to develop a strategic transformation that will include the trustees, stakeholders, and all levels of the organization.

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About The Village

Founded in 1851, the mission of The Children's Village is to work in partnership with families to help society's most vulnerable children so that they become educationally proficient, economically productive, and socially responsible members of their communities.

Practice Makes Perfect



"Shawn and his dad were successful because they worked at it every day," said MST Therapist Desiree Polanish (r). Her supervisor, Jackie Ramirez, agrees.

Eighty three percent of youth who return home from juvenile detention are re-incarcerated for committing a felony offense within three years. One father was determined not to let that happen to his son, Shawn.

After spending time in a youth detention center upstate, Shawn was

back at home trying to stay on track, but things were not going well. Shawn's anger problem had gotten him in trouble before and was threatening to derail him again. In fact, things were so bad that the only time Shawn and his dad communicated was during practices for the Eagles baseball team his dad coached. Shawn's dad wanted to help his son, but he did not know how, so he reached out to CV's Multisystemic Therapy Program (MST).

When MST Therapist Desiree Polanish met the family, she saw that the desire and motivation to make things better already existed, but the tools were missing. Desiree worked closely with the family to teach them practical

skills, which they put into practice every day at home and on the field. Within just a few weeks, Desiree saw a noticeable improvement, which she attributes to the pair's consistent work together. "The big reason they were successful was that they worked at it every day. And sharing baseball definitely made a difference."

"It's wonderful to see a success story such as Shawn come along," said Keith Fitzpatrick, Shawn's Case Manager from NY State. "It happens when a family motivated to change meets a therapist who is equally motivated and capable of helping them make the transition."

The Eagles won the championship last season, something no one had predicted. While getting that championship was a struggle, it was nothing compared to the work that dad and son did to forge a sense of teamwork off the field. Today, Shawn is doing well in a vocational program, is staying out of trouble, and he and his dad are getting along better than ever.

MST is an intensive short-term intervention that helps families with youth transitioning back to the community from juvenile detention. Last year MST helped 86% of youth in the program avoid re-arrest.

CV Alum Stars in Big River

Former CV resident Gary Francis (stage name Fatye) is starring as Jim in "Big River", a Huck Fin-based play that opened on February 2 for a month-long run at the Westchester Broadway Theatre. Gary got his start in theatre when he was cast in his first lead in the musical "Guys and Dolls" at CV's campus school. He was just a freshman, but played Sky Masterson with heart and the kind of presence that foretold his current success. With his amazing voice, Gary frequently entertained at CV events, such as the Annual Dinner and Masquerade Gala.



Gary Francis, as Jim in "Big River" at Westchester Broadway Theatre

Gary came to CV's residential school when he was 16 after running away, living on the streets, and missing more than a year of school. "I can only imagine how many stairwells I slept in," he said. When he was ready to leave the campus, he had no family to return to. To prepare him to live on his own, CV placed him in a supervised apartment where he attended school, worked part time, and learned skills like budgeting and cooking.

Gary, who later became Fatye, began to study acting and singing and earned a scholarship to the Broadway Training Center. He worked hard and appeared in a number of local productions. "Big River" is his first commercial starring role. All of us at CV are proud of the young man who was once a runaway playing the lead role of one of the most famous runaways in literature. Break a leg!

Outcome Corner - Assistance Dog Training Program

Information compiled by Chloe Goldstein, CV Volunteer and Adelphi University PhD Candidate

We know that the Assistance Dog Training Program reaches kids in ways no other program can. The teens get unconditional love from the dogs and the opportunity to help people with disabilities. But, as part of our ongoing effort to ensure that all programs have documented outcomes, we wanted to quantify the impact working with this program has had on the students.

"If you need love you can go there because everyone is nice to each other and the animals will always show you love."

- Marcus

Last summer, we conducted a survey of students who had been in the program for at least three months and spent at least ten hours per week. The results more than confirmed what we already knew--canines are great therapists!



	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have gained confidence in my ability to perform tasks successfully			63%	38%
I learned how to better cooperate with others			50%	50%
My ability to be patient with others has increased	13%	13%	25%	50%
I have learned to take accountability for my actions			75%	25%
I feel more confident in myself			50%	50%
My grades have improved			50%	50%

You Created a Very Happy Holiday This Year

There is a saying, “When times are tough, the tough go shopping”. That’s what you did this holiday season. Thanks to the generosity of donors too numerous to mention, contributing gifts too numerous to count, we were able to make the holidays special for hundreds of children and families we serve throughout the region.

Many of our corporate sponsors such as Ambac Financial Group, Better Homes/Rand Realty, MasterCard, Morgan Stanley/Smith Barney, Pepsi, and Teamworx kept The Children’s Village on their “to do” list again this year. The employees of Tudor Investments Corp. donated more than 260 gifts, specially picked from the boys’ wish lists.

But the holidays weren’t just about gifts. All our programs held special parties for children and families, and boys on our campus who couldn’t go home went to the Winter Wonderland Science Camp, bowling, ice skating, snow boarding, and a visit to the Strange World of Reptiles – all funded by generous donors.

MasterCard Prepares Thanksgiving Baskets



Every Thanksgiving, volunteers from MasterCard Worldwide box food for our families. This year, they were joined by Kim Savvides (left), who volunteers with our Immigration program. MasterCard volunteers second from left to right: Mary McSheffrey, Michael Flinn, Maura Strahley, Mark Muse and Michele Grossman.

CV’s Leadership Council Hits the Slopes with CV Kids



Ten members of CV’s Leadership Council treated ten CV youth to a day of snowboarding in February, and Leadership Council members learned that CV kids sure can snowboard. Not even the unseasonable 60 degrees could stop the boys from racing Council members up and down Belleayre Mountain all day. The trip was topped off with a meal in the lodge and the always popular stories of who fell and how hard. Pictured above, Council member and Volunteer Committee Co-Chair Brendan Kereiakes and Romero pause for a photo op before racing to the bottom.

Thank you We are fortunate to be blessed with so many caring and loving individuals who played Santa to the youth in our care.



Every year, CV holds a gala party for foster families with lots of food and gifts donated by you! Danielle Gaffney, Director of Adoption/Foster Care (above), is particularly grateful that she can put smiles on so many little faces.

Aunts and Uncles from Pepsi Beverage

Sometimes aunts and uncles are just the ticket to “spoil” kids--or at least provide them with some extra special love and attention. That’s what the Mosaic Group from Pepsi Beverage Company does for the boys in Johnson Cottage on our Dobbs Ferry campus.

Just like aunts and uncles, they visit every month, celebrate every boy’s birthday, plan special celebrations for holidays, and much more. They even get serious with the boys’ futures by providing workshops on interview techniques, provide career counseling, and invite them to product tastings.

As part of his connection to this group, former PepsiCo executive Victor Crawford provided 200 tickets for youth from CV programs across the region to see “Red Tails”, the inspirational story of the Black pilots of the Tuskegee Airmen who flew in WW II.



CV boys learn what goes into marketing a new product at Pepsi’s headquarters in Somers.

Just Called to Say...

*“Just calling to say hello. I know it’s been a long time, a couple years. All is well. I just wanted to say thank you again for everything you did--the, help, the patience, the kindness you had for me and my children, everything you did for me and my kids. You taught me a lot. Thank you.”
A Grateful Parent*

Sometimes we never know what happens when a child leaves us or a family is no longer a client. A message like the one above that was left for one of our social workers just makes our day!

Are Women Donors More Strategic Than Men?

They are, according to a study presented at a breakfast on Women in Philanthropy hosted by The Children’s Village at Discovery Times Square. The study also found that in 90% of high net worth households, women are either the sole decision maker or an equal contributor. The study was sponsored by Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

The breakfast was part of The Children’s Support Foundation, an organization founded by CV and Inwood House to help donors make lasting charitable gifts through planned giving.

The overflow crowd of more than a hundred individuals, financial advisors, and foundations were treated to a viewing of the Dead Sea Scrolls after the breakfast.



Shelly Banjo of the Wall Street Journal (r) led the panel discussion on the role of women in philanthropy. Panelists l to r: Children’s Support Fdn President Jeff Sobel, CEO Jeremy Kohomban, CV Trustee Janet Benton, and Inwood House Exec Linda L. Bryant.

Pace U. and CV -- a Little Friendly Competition



CV students challenge their Pace University tutors to basketball at a party hosted by the University.

Each semester, 50 CV students get to spend one night a week with a “cool” college student as part of a collaboration with Pace University. What started as a one-semester experiment is now a 14-year tradition with two classes each semester, both of which fill up fast.

“The boys really look forward to their Pace night,” says Candi Fitts, Director of Volunteers and Academic Services. “The Pace students are required to spend most of the time tutoring, but we do fit in some fun.”

Some of that fun came as an end-of-semester party at the University’s Pleasantville Campus with some pizza, cake, and friendly competition on the basketball court. It was a great way to end the semester.

Annual Volunteer Picnic
May 15, 2012
Lanza Activities Center on the
Dobbs Ferry Campus
For more information email
krose@childrensvillage.org or call
call 914-693-0600 ext. 1587

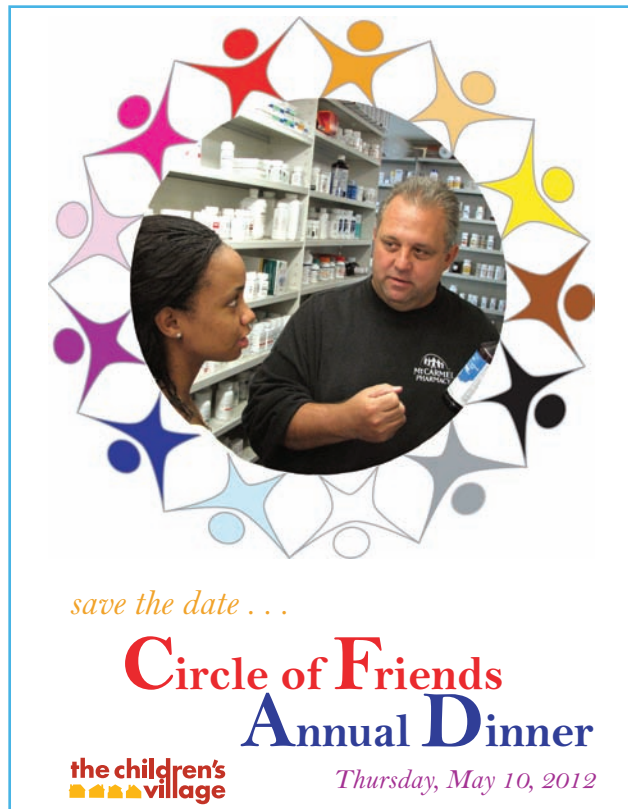
CV Re-Accredited



In the Fall of 2011, The Children's Village went through a rigorous on- and off-site reaccreditation process for all our programs.

Reviewers looked at both the administrative operations and services to children and families, measuring our work against national standards of best practice.

"While accreditation is voluntary," says Jeremy Kohomban, President and CEO, "we believe it is important to undergo this rigorous evaluation for our families and children, our funders, and our supporters. I am immensely proud of our staff members who ensure that the work we do meets the highest standards."



save the date . . .

Circle of Friends Annual Dinner

the children's village

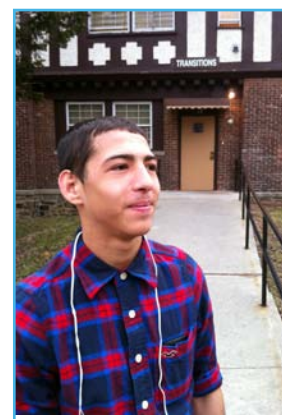
Thursday, May 10, 2012

WAY cont.

These teens have been learning independent living skills, but the process of transitioning is internal. They need to learn how to confront the unknown and the anxiety that comes with it," says Mr. Johnson. The new program gives these teens an opportunity to face the anxiety of change and to build confidence as independent young adults.

When asked what he thinks makes Transitions different, Jacob says, "The staff are helping me with life things. They've helped me learn how to be more patient, how to feel confident, and how to advocate for myself." Mr. Johnson would say that Jacob is learning to understand and manage his fears, emotions, and the stigmas placed on him as a foster kid.

"Transitions is great," said Jacob. "It can be tough, but I'm up for it. There's a lot I want to do with my life."



Jacob is part of CV's new Transitions Cottage for older youth.

News From The Village

The Children's Village
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Join our e-mail list for periodic updates on The Children's Village. Send an e-mail to Lstutz@childrensvillage.org



CV TRIATHLON - WILL YOU TRI-IT?

2012 is the year to get healthy and take on new challenges at The Children's Village. On August 2nd, just one week after the New York City Triathlon, kids, staff, and volunteers will have a chance to show what they're made of in the inaugural CV Triathlon.

Our student athletes and staff are already getting geared up for the swim, bike, and run. You will recognize the CV triathletes because they will be doing laps in the pool, rolling on mountain bikes, sprinting around the track, or wearing their "TRI-IT" shirts. Don't be surprised if they convince you to TRI-IT, too.

Thanks to our sponsors:

NEW YORK CITY TRIATHLON, an Olympic Distance race consisting of a 1500m swim, a 40k bike, and a 10k run. The organization partners with many local and national charities.

TOGA, New York's oldest and largest bike shop with over 45 years of serving cyclists. It boasts a sales and mechanical staff with a reputation for quality, professionalism and expertise.

SWIM FREE, a non-profit organization dedicated to the health improvement of children and adults through swim.



For more information on sponsorships or volunteer opportunities, contact Topher Nichols, Public Relations Specialist, at 914.693.0600 x1819 or cnichols@childrensvillage.org

the children's village