

“She has love for her kids. She makes it her business to get these kids adopted or to have a good home.”

- Carmen Diaz  
Adoptive Mother



Three-year-old Chailyn could have languished in the foster care system, but thanks to the heads-up work of Vanessa Palma, CV Social Worker (shown above), and a loving couple, she is now part of a large extended family. In fact, she just became an aunt!

## When Birth Parents Are Not an Option...

Chailyn was born to a drug addicted mother who already had two children removed from her care, so staying with her mom was not possible. However, thanks to the efforts of CV adoption social worker Vanessa Palma and adoptive parents Carlos and Carmen Diaz, within three months Chailyn had a new family who loved her very much.

Chailyn is one of 20 children—babies to teens—whom Palma and her fellow adoption social worker placed with families last year. In fact, in the past two years, The Children's Village has found adoptive homes for 93% of the children freed for adoption in our family foster care program.

“Much of my job is to find people who have connections to the family, and often we find relatives or even acquaintances who are willing to take the children,” says Palma. “This city is busy and bustling in many ways, but also tightly knit and community minded. It's another way that New York is unique.”

That is exactly what happened with the Diaz's. Carlos Diaz is a security guard in the mother's apartment building, so he knew her situation and that she would be unable to keep her child. Since their children were grown, the Diaz's were willing to provide a loving home for Chailyn.

The Diaz family was so pleased with their experience that they nominated Palma for the AdoptUSKids Case Worker of the Month. “She has love for her kids,” Diaz said. “She makes it her business to get these kids adopted or to have a good home. This is the kind of person she is. She helped us, and she's still there for us.”

## CV Wins Innovative Practices Award



The Children's Village was selected by The Council on Accreditation as a recipient of its 2011 Innovative Practices Award for CV's Permanency for Teens initiative.

The goal of Permanency for Teens is to find families for older youth who are aging out of foster care. These are teens who have given up on finding a family and who otherwise would be leaving residential care with no connections. “That is a recipe for failure,” said President and CEO Jeremy Kohomban. “Everyone needs to belong to someone.”

Since its inception in 2004, the program has worked with 97 youth from our residential school with a success rate of 50 percent. Specifically, forty-eight troubled older youth were successfully matched with families and continue to live with or have a strong connection with those families. Many of these youth are now attending college or working in the community.

The COA Innovative Practices Award was created to acknowledge accredited organizations that implement new and forward thinking practices that enhance the quality of services provided to vulnerable children, youth, adults, and families.

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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.

## CV President Receives National Leadership Award



The Milwaukee-based Alliance for Children and Families presented its 2011 Samuel Gerson Nordlinger Child Welfare Leadership Award to The Children's Village President and CEO Jeremy Kohomban on April 7 at a national child welfare conference in Seattle.

"During his seven years at The Children's Village, Kohomban can be credited with sound fiscal management, superior programming, and instituting long-term strategic planning," the Alliance said in a statement announcing the award. "But these sound practices only scratch the surface of the impact he has made on The Children's Village, child welfare and juvenile justice in New York, and other children and family issues in New York and around the country."

## Annual Dinner is Magic for CV

CV raised more than \$500,000 at its annual *Circle of Friends* fundraising dinner on Thursday, April 28 at The Lighthouse at Chelsea Piers. The theme of the evening was *A Magical Evening* and featured Mark Mitton, a world-renowned magician and comedian, who performed for the crowd of close to 500 guests.

Mr. Mitton, who was honored at the event for his commitment to CV and his international charity work, discovered The Children's Village through a connection with Educated Canines Assisting with Disabilities (ECAD), an organization that works with CV youth to train dogs for disabled adults and children.

The *Corporate Award* was presented to JVKellyGroup, Inc. and CEO Jim Kelly for being a loyal friend and partner in our mission to help children and families.



Tom Martin (center), a CV Trustee, greets Michael Schaenen (l), Vice Chair of the CV Board of Trustees and Principal at Somerset Capital Advisors, LLC, and Barbara Jackson.

After the dinner, the fun kept going as the CV Junior Board hosted *An Evening of Illusion* After Party where guests enjoyed music, cocktails, and magic. Through a generous gift by Pat Lanza, funds raised at both events were matched dollar for dollar.



Jim Kelly, CEO of JVKellyGroup, Inc. (r), accepts the Corporate Award from President and CEO Jeremy C. Kohomban.



Noah Simon of Alliance Bernstein, Chair of The Children's Village Junior Board, and Natalia Izzo of Bloomberg, Co-Chair of the Junior Board Volunteer Committee, explain how guests can help send youth from CV's Polo Grounds Community Center in Harlem to summer camp.

## CV Alumnus: College Grad, Iraqi War Vet, Law School Student

*Email from a CV alumnus to Mike Garcia, CV's Vice President for Residential Services:*

I hope this email finds you in good health and spirits. I'm not quite sure when we spoke last so I will fill you in on the last few years.

After wrapping up my BA at the U. of Colorado in 2007, I returned to the Marine Corps as an Infantry Officer. My daughter Lidia was born in 2008 and I deployed to Iraq as a Platoon Commander with the 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (1st LAR) shortly after her birth. I applied to become a Judge Advocate in 2010. I was selected and started law school at Vermont Law School in August 2010. I will graduate in May 2013.

My family and I are enjoying life in Vermont; we are enjoying the peace and quiet. I will be working this summer in a JAG office, but I will return to Vermont for law school in the fall.

If I could share one thing with the boys now it's this: I was at the Children's Village during the most tumultuous time in my life. I think I was there right as I reached the proverbial fork in the road. The Children's Village was

critical to my decision to take the path less traveled. I think the turning point was simply experience. Before the Children's Village all I knew was Queens. I knew the Q54 bus, the M train. I knew the block. At CV I learned about animals with the Boy Scouts, I played the steel drums, I tap danced, I wrote at the newspaper and, perhaps most importantly, I saw a more rural life. I wanted to find that rural, peaceful life. Living at CV wasn't always easy, but in retrospect I know it was a catalyst, propelling me toward the future."



CV Alumnus First Lieutenant Richard Sala and his family.

## CV Salutes All Its Volunteers at Annual Volunteer Recognition Picnic

Volunteers, alumni, friends and neighbors came together on June 7 for the 2011 Volunteer Recognition Picnic and Neighbor Night. The event included a performance by the boys and volunteers in the School-Based Mentoring Program, dinner prepared by the student chefs, a plant sale by the greenhouse workers, an art show, and even an opportunity to see student barbers at work in the new barber shop. The main event was, of course, recognition of our volunteers. The 2011 awards were presented to the following individuals and organizations:



School-Based Mentors Adam Asher and Danielle Schoen really connected with the boys and had fun doing it. Adam even brought his guitar and let the boys try it out.



Wendy and Tom Gardner like mentoring so much that they are now working with their third youth, Karon. They still keep in touch with the other mentees by phone and email, a connection that is important to the boys.

## NYU Trip Inspires College Dreams

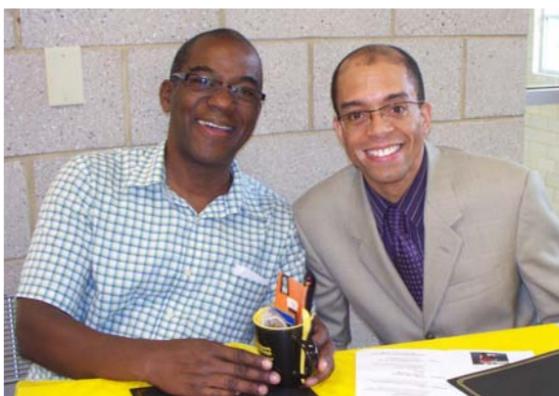
In December, 16 boys visited New York University and had an opportunity to see first-hand what a college campus is all about. The boys toured the campus, met a few current student athletes, and were treated to the NYU vs. Brandeis Men's Basketball game.

The boys were impressed with all they saw, and one resident exclaimed on the ride home, "I'm doing my homework when I get home. I want to go to NYU!"

The trip was coordinated by Kyle Lazarus, CV Junior Board member and NYU alumnus.



Sara B. & Jude W., NYU student athletes, giving a short talk to CV boys about the benefits of being a student athlete and the importance of staying on track in the classroom.



Youth Mission of Life, represented at the picnic by Steven Nisbett (l) and Oshon Temple, visit Bradish Cottage and organize fun events every Saturday.



Tusaret Elvi (l) receives her award from Candida Fitts, Dir. of Volunteers. Tusaret mentored Donte, who recently went home, and now is waiting for a second child.



Parents Theresa Byrd (l) and Julia MacMillan are founding members of CV's Parent Council. They also volunteer, helping parents with supervised visits.



Mentor Marsha Maddox is a constant presence in Kalil's life. Staff comment on how well he is doing since he started meeting with his dedicated mentor.

### Awardees Not Pictured:

Faith Mission Grace Baptist Church adopted Minturn Cottage. Their visits are eagerly awaited by the boys.

Denise Horton was one of our most creative art interns.

Kate Howe is a Books for Boys volunteer. She tutors, helps in the library and visits the boys in Minturn Cottage.

### With Great Sadness

It is with great sadness we announce the death of volunteer Andy Staal. Andy had been involved with CV for more than 20 years. As part of the Scarsdale Rotary Club, he took the boys to baseball games, on camping trips, celebrated the holidays, played chess, and much more. Even after a debilitating accident in 2000, he continued to visit every week.



## Commencement Speaker NYC Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott Praises the Determined Class of 2011



NYC Chancellor Dennis Walcott got close and personal with the graduates.

On June 10, fifteen very special students attended a high school graduation ceremony in an outdoor tent on the campus of The Children's Village. For these students, graduation was a very difficult journey and an incredible achievement. Their teachers, principal, and superintendent all characterized this class as "determined". Many of them came to CV two years or more behind in school, some entering the 10th grade at age 18, but, with the help of their teachers, they were determined to graduate.

The commencement speaker was the newly-appointed NYC Chancellor Dennis Walcott. He encouraged the graduates to try things—not to be afraid to fail. Walcott shared his personal experiences in trying new things such as skydiving to celebrate his 50th birthday, ballroom dancing, and his goal to run a marathon for his 60th birthday. Chancellor Walcott concluded

his remarks by encouraging the graduates to "make a commitment to enjoy life, to confront it and to make the world a better place." Walcott was encouraged by what these students have been able to achieve as he faces the challenge of the New York city schools, which have a low graduation rate for students with backgrounds similar to those at the Children's Village. So far, CV's graduation rate for this year's senior class is 60% but, as students continue to take tests over the summer, we are hopeful it will be 100%.

In his speech to the graduates, Valedictorian Jeffrey Knight said, "The road I was taking was a dead end. I made changes that got me to where I am today—a graduate!" He will be attending college in the fall along with six of his fellow graduates.



Proud graduate Juan R. with his even prouder mother.

## CV Trustees Help Youth Explore the World of Work

On Wednesday, April 13, with the help of Trustees Edward Gooding and Anthony Riotto, CV hosted a Career Awareness Day for high school students. More than 20 local companies were on hand to introduce the students to a variety of career opportunities. A highlight of the event was a guest appearances by former NBA Star and NY Knicks Legend John Starks, who talked to the boys about working hard to get a jump on their careers, whatever they choose.



CV Trustee Anthony Riotto (r) with Amos S., a future worker.

Students visited companies' exhibits and competed for prizes for completing questionnaires on topics such as job functions and education requirements.

Volunteer "Life Coaches" helped the students choose business tables to visit and are continuing to work with the students as part of a monthly Career Club. As part of this club, Life Coaches help the students identify interests, do research, and take real steps to prepare for a career.

The event is already having an impact. Anthony C., who works in our Assistance Dog Program, snagged an interview at the local animal hospital who participated, and Danny's Cycles is looking to hire one of the students. The event was planned and executed by CV's new Vocational Committee.



Students explore career opportunities, including the military, at Career Awareness Day.

## Sharing Their Hip Hop Skills



In April, the young men of CV's Hip Hop Dance program teamed up with The Urban Connection Dancers at The Masters School to put on a performance for the school's Spring Recital. Their hard work was rewarded with a thundering applause during the curtain call! The Urban Connection dancers enjoyed working with our boys so much that they hope to make this an annual joint appearance.

## 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](mailto:Lstutz@childrensvillage.org)

## Upcoming Events



**8th Annual Golf and Tennis Classic**  
at St. Andrew's Golf Club in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY  
Tuesday, September 13, 2011

Call 914-693-0600 ext. 1224 for more information



**Vote for The Children's Village on August 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Toyota 100 Cars for Good Program**

The Children's Village was one of 500 charities selected out of more than 5,000 applicants to compete for a brand new Toyota. On Tuesday, August 2, CV will compete with four other charities, and the organization with the most votes wins a new vehicle.

Visit our website ([www.childrensvillage.org](http://www.childrensvillage.org)) on August 2 for a link to the voting site or email [rmagdalen@childrensvillage.org](mailto:rmagdalen@childrensvillage.org) and we'll send you a reminder on voting day.

Your vote counts!