

# News From The Village



## Special Edition: Donor Impact

### The Teachable Moment--Thanks to You

by Richard Larson, Director of WAY Home



The teachable moment--it's that time when the light bulb goes off and what didn't make any sense suddenly does.

Growing up most of us had those moments that were significant at the time, but the lessons are now so long learned that we don't even remember. It's the time you first took the train by yourself, the time you bought something with your own money, the day you ordered in a restaurant for yourself for the first time.

When we think of the experiences our youth at CV have missed, we often concentrate on the big problems with family, neighborhoods, or schools. What we often forget is that the instability in their lives leads to them having missed out on the small moments that make a functioning adult.

This week the WAY Home program is taking a dozen of our older kids to a winter coat sale in Midtown. They have to travel by themselves to meet us there, they have to bring twenty dollars and we have to agree on what coat they are going to buy. We do it this way looking for the teachable moments. Undoubtedly, someone will miss the train, someone will go east instead of west, someone will want to buy the expensive brand name instead of the pea coat that can be worn for a job interview.

It's exactly what we want. These small challenges lead to key conversations on how our youth plan, how they make choices and how they overcome challenges. They'll learn from the experiences and will be more prepared the next time around.

Without the support of donors, though, opportunities for these small changes would be lost. The WAY-Home program is entirely funded with private dollars and has been since its inception in 1994. We dedicate a lot of time and energy toward maintaining this program because we know that it is the little things which can lead a young person to success in the long-term. On behalf of all the young people who have experienced these small changes, thank you.

### Dear Friends,

I hope you enjoy this special edition of our newsletter, which is designed to give you a glimpse into the impact your support of The Children's Village has.

Thanks to you, this has been a good year at CV. Ninety-two percent of foster care children in our Westchester after-care program remained successfully at home. More than 90% of seniors from our campus school graduated and 6 are now in college. And not a single teen in our New York City prevention program was removed from his or her family despite the fact that every single one of them was at risk of removal.

Helping children and teens find a place of permanent love and belonging is our untiring focus. Thank you for helping us achieve what so many still believe is an elusive goal.

Whether you made a financial donation, provided gifts for the children, or gave of your time, your contribution matters to us and to the families we serve.



Thank you, and best wishes for a happy and healthy new year.

*Jeremy*

### Can you spread the word about The Children's Village?

**Thank you for all that you do for CV. Even with the generous gifts that you give to the children and families of The Children's Village, many of you continue to ask what else you can do to help. What you can do is tell a friend, family member, or colleague about what you do for CV and, more importantly, WHY you do it. Consider sharing this newsletter with your friends and family and spread the word about the good work that you so generously support.**

## Meet One of CV's Donors



Paul Murature has been involved with CV for more than 20 years through both volunteering and monthly contributions. Like most friends of

The Village, Paul does not write checks for millions of dollars, but he has made an incredible contribution through his consistent, compassionate support. We asked him why he is involved with CV.

### How did you first connect to CV?

I've worked with kids in need my whole life, and I was looking for an opportunity to volunteer. My sister-in-law lived nearby and was familiar with The Village. She suggested I check it out. I started as an individual volunteer a long time ago and came back with my church group.

### Why did you first start giving?

I started my own family and decided that I wouldn't have the same amount of time to volunteer, but that I could give financially. It was important to me to continue to stay connected.

I started out by giving to the cottage where I had relationships—it was my way to continue to support the staff who worked so hard for the boys. I wanted to make sure that the staff had what they needed to do their work really well.

A few years later I was given a monetary gift recognizing my 20th year of service to my company. I took that money and gave that to CV too.

### Have you introduced friends?

After the 20th anniversary gift, the owner of the company where I work got involved and also made several

generous donations. I have connected other people to CV because the work is so important.

### Why not just volunteer?

Because I am able to do more. I have been blessed with the means to help out those less fortunate, and I want to do my part.

### What would you say to others?

If it's your passion, support it. It's unfortunate that so many kids have the kind of needs that kids at CV have. CV can't do it all alone. If someone of means can help out, then more kids will be able to be helped.

I've learned as much from the boys as they have from me. It's been a wonderful experience. The boys are our future, and we need to show them that.

## Legacy Society Grows

The Children's Village Legacy Society is growing substantially, with nine new members in just the last two months. Members include trustees, long-time donors, volunteers, and senior staff members, all of whom have made a commitment to helping ensure that the work of The Children's Village will continue into the future.

On January 11, we are having our first Legacy Society breakfast and dedication of the Legacy Wall in Wetmore Hall on our Dobbs Ferry campus (pictured).

Membership in the Legacy Society is open to anyone who has included CV in his or her estate plans or made a planned gift. One of the most popular planned gifts is a charitable gift annuity (CGA). A CGA is quick and easy to do, and it provides you with guaranteed income for life at attractive rates, a tax deduction, and the knowledge that your investment is providing funds for CV's future.

For information on estate plans, the Legacy Society or charitable gift annuities, contact Linda Stutz, Vice Presi-

dent for Advancement at 914-648-3319 or [Lstutz@childrensvillage.org](mailto:Lstutz@childrensvillage.org).



## The Gift of Health

Your donations allow us to change lives every day. We don't often talk about how we help children medically, but these recent stories are examples of how medical care can change lives.

### I Don't Remember the Last Time it Didn't Hurt.

During a routine admission physical, our pediatrician discovered that a young boy had a mouth full of cavities

and was in chronic pain. She immediately sent him to our on-site dentist. After the procedure, the boy thanked the dentist and, with his hand on his cheek and a confused look on his face

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## Holiday Helpers



CV's Leadership Council enjoyed celebrating the holidays with boys in their adopted cottage. After they gave each boy a gift, they joined in a competitive game on the new foosball table they presented to the cottage.



The Masters School in Dobbs Ferry has a long history with CV. Students provide mentoring and tutoring, invite the children to events, and during the holidays, bring lots of wonderful gifts.

"Being part of our In-Kind group gives joy and meaning to this time of year," said M.J. Madigan (far right). The In-Kinders, who echoed M.J.'s sentiment, volunteer all year round, but really step up their game during the holidays. They pack gift bags for children to give to their families and select gifts for boys who can't go home.



Thanks to donations from both friends and staff, CV provided Thanksgiving baskets for 200 families (twice as many as last year). Volunteers, including those from MasterCard Worldwide and Morgan Stanley, spent hours packing the baskets.



NY Jet LaRon Landry's foundation, in partnership with Whole Foods Market NYC, provided 500 Thanksgiving meals to low-income residents living in the Polo Grounds Housing Development. CV's Polo Grounds staff and volunteers helped distribute turkeys and food baskets and some had a chance to dance the Electric Slide with the Jets Free Safety.

## A Special Holiday Experience

Every family has its special holiday traditions. For Janine Gibney and her family, it is bringing Christmas to The Children's Village. Each year Janine, a middle school teacher in Yorktown, rallies her colleagues to buy gifts for the young men in Williams Cottage or to contribute toward a gift for the cottage. The Gibneys wrap the gifts and bring them down to CV where they celebrate with the boys.

For eleven years the Gibneys have brought Christmas to CV, but this year Janine had a different idea.

"We wanted the boys to have a special Christmas experience. We wanted them to feel like royalty for a night," Janine said. Knowing that many of the boys would not be able to go home for the holidays, Ja-

**"Christmas will always come to our house, so our first step to bringing Christmas home is to bring it to The Children's Village."**

nine contacted Traditions 118, an upscale restaurant, and told them she had a great group of young men that she wanted to treat to dinner.

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## Families Reunited – Thanks to You



Angela is one of the moms who celebrated her graduation from CV's parenting class this year. Her ceremony was particularly special because her son Jeremy created and presented her graduation certificate. He was proud of

what she had accomplished and happy that her graduation (and the skills she had learned) meant they could finally live together as a family.

The motto of CV's parenting program, called Project IMPACT, is "You are lovable and capable and you can do it!" The program offers support groups, workshops, and special parenting events like "Daddy Days", which give parents the skills and tools to be the outstanding parents they want to be for the rest of their children's lives.

Project IMPACT is one of the critical CV programs that is totally supported by

private dollars. The program was started more than 40 years ago with funding from French American Aid for Children, an all-volunteer organization that provides grants to charities in the U.S. and France with the goal of both helping children and strengthening ties between our two nations.

The program has grown over the years with additional funding from donors like you. In the past year, 170 parents participated in programs and trips with the goal of becoming better parents and, in many cases, of getting their children back home. On behalf of all of them, thank you.

## The Gift of Health - cont.

said, "I don't remember the last time it didn't hurt." The dentist didn't remember the last time he was thanked!

### **The Miracle of Sound**

The ability to hear the world around us is an easy thing to take for granted, but not for one young child who was part of our immigration program. When he arrived at CV, staff were not sure how they were going to communicate with him because he was deaf, seemingly mute, and did not sign. He had never attended school and seemed lost

to the world around him. When Dr. Traci Gardner met him she thought something might be done. Dr. Gardner, who is on the Board of Directors at Westchester Institute of Human Development, arranged an appointment for a hearing assessment and the results were promising.

As the doctors were amplifying the sound in his ears the boy started smiling and he willed up. So did the doctor. For the first time in his life the boy could hear. He now has a hearing aid,



is learning to sign as an extra support, and is attending school.

## Holiday Experience - cont.

The restaurant owner was moved by Janine's relationship with the boys and offered to help.

"The owner gave us a huge discount on the night and said they would 'make it work' with whatever money was raised from the school staff." The night of the event they served the boys a special menu, spent time talking with the kids about the foods that were new to them like chicken

parmesan, and went out of their way to make it a fantastic night.

"It was incredible. Most of the boys had never been to a sit down restaurant in their lives. Janine and her family are so kind and made this a really special Christmas for us," said Abigail Murat, Williams staff member. Janine says this is just how her family starts the holidays.



The Gibney Family

"Christmas will always come to our house, so our first step to bringing Christmas home is to bring it to The Children's Village."