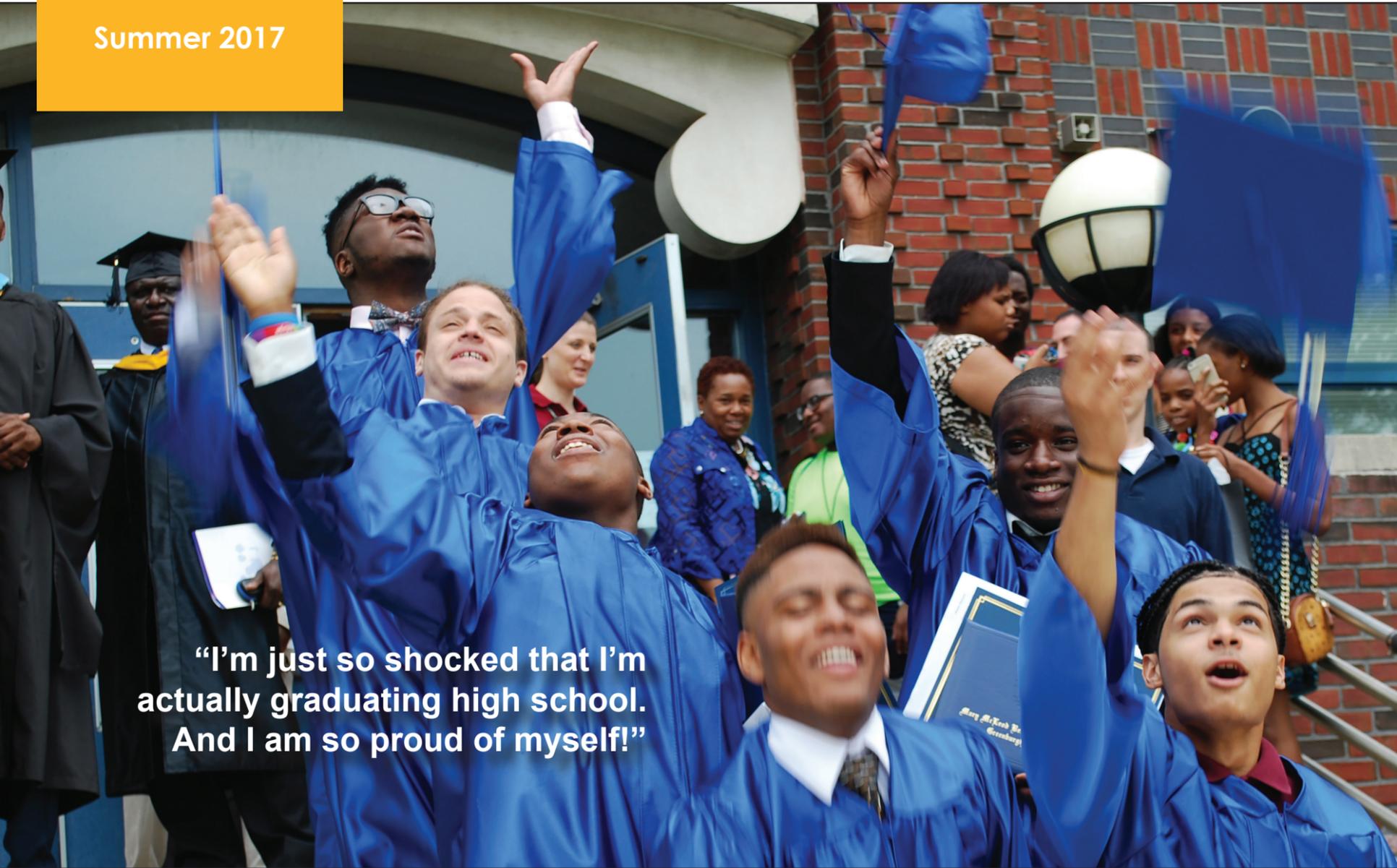


News from the Village



“I’m just so shocked that I’m actually graduating high school. And I am so proud of myself!”

“Everyone needs a plumber. . .”

Although every high school graduation is special, the sense of accomplishment displayed by the young men was extraordinary at this year’s commencement ceremony for our campus school, Greenburgh Eleven.

Five of the graduates addressed the packed audience, each one offering insights into his personal journey and the struggles he had to overcome to achieve this milestone. The graduates spoke of academic difficulties, self-doubt, and waning motivation. Quameek said it best: “I’m just so shocked that I’m actually graduating high school. And I am so proud of myself!”

But what they focused on most was gratitude for the individuals who had encouraged them to keep working toward graduation—teachers, staff, volunteers, and family members who never gave up on them.

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The graduates also spoke of next steps. While some are going on to college, that path is not right for everyone. And that’s just fine with them. Jonathan enthusiastically shared his plans to follow his uncle into the plumbing field. As he said, “Everyone needs a plumber at some point!”



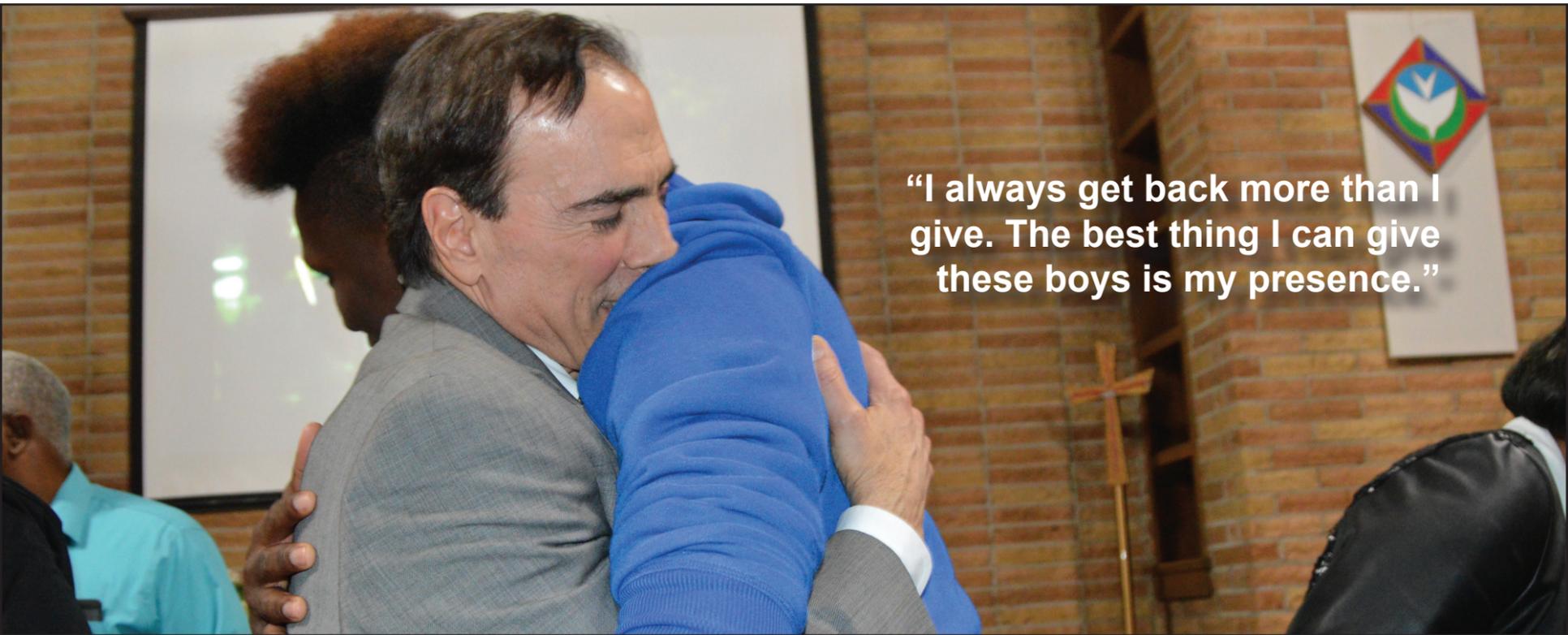
CV President Co-Chairs National Foster Care Campaign

Foster parents are game-changers for children—for most children in foster care, they are the most important adults in their lives. A new initiative, Children Need Amazing Parents (CHAMPS), aims to focus money and energy on improving the existing network of foster homes so that children achieve better outcomes in health, development, education, and connecting with a permanent family.

The initiative, which is co-chaired by CV’s President and CEO Jeremy Kohomban and Jennifer Rodriguez, Executive Director of the LA Youth Law Center, will focus on making parents more involved in decision making, instilling accountability measures, and prioritizing foster parenting as the best option for children who are removed from their parents.

Learn more at www.fosteringchamps.org or #fosteringCHAMPS on social media.

CV's Longest-Running Mentor



“I always get back more than I give. The best thing I can give these boys is my presence.”

In 1977, twenty-six-year-old Lou Codella showed up at CV and asked if he could help the children. In his quiet way, he became a presence in the children’s lives, someone they knew they could count on.

Forty years later, he is still helping kids and has no plans to slow down. Lou attends chapel with the kids every Sunday, drives them to Young Life sleepaway camp every summer, takes them to a homeless shelter to serve Thanksgiving dinner every year, and visits every Christmas Day. The recurring theme is “every.”

All of our children have known loss and abandonment, and Lou knows that if he promises something, he must deliver. And he does.

On May 10, staff, former colleagues, family members, and “Lou’s kids” gathered to honor this special anniversary with a service and reception at the chapel. Reverend Holby, who has worked with

Lou for the full 40 years, led the service. Many of the guests in attendance spoke about Lou, sharing stories and offering heartfelt appreciation for his work.

In his quiet way, he became a presence in the children’s lives, someone they knew they could count on.

The best way to describe the feeling of the event and what Lou means to the boys is to share some of their heartfelt comments:

Luis: “He made me see a brighter future. Helped me get back on my feet.”

Hasani: “I never had a father figure, but

Lou became that for me. His constant efforts made me want to change my life.”

Anthony: “Growing up in foster care, there are not many adults who invest themselves in the life of a child. Lou did.”

Vincent: “Lou is one of the best things that ever happened to me.”

Malik: “Lou filled a big hole in my life. Like a stepfather.”

One of the boys’ mothers added her thanks: “Words could not express what you have done for our kids. You don’t judge them.”

Lou ended the celebration in his typically quiet style, protesting, “I always get back more than I give. The best thing I can give these boys is my presence.”

Thank you, Lou, and every one of our volunteers who are so special to our children and teens.

Eyes on the Skies

If you ask most teenage boys what interests them most, “the weather” likely wouldn’t be high on the list. But that’s exactly what CV resident Devion is most passionate about. He’s been fascinated by the weather since he was 8 years old, and hopes to turn that fascination into a profession. He graduated from Greenburgh Eleven, CV’s campus school, in June and will be studying environmental science at Westchester Community College this fall.

A fan—and critic—of weather forecasters, Devion had the experience of a lifetime on June 6 when he got a personal tour of WNBC-TV’s studios from “Today in New York” meteorologist Chris Cimino. The visit, which began before daybreak and lasted several hours, gave Devion a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the workings of a television studio and the technology that Cimino and his team use to forecast our weather. They also



discussed the educational background—and luck—needed to become a meteorologist. Devion even got to practice his weather forecasting skills behind the camera, which he said was his “absolute, most favorite part” of the visit.

Devion toured the studio with his mentor, Paul Graham. The pair was matched as part of Connections, a mentoring program within our Volunteer Department

that matches committed adults with teens who will be leaving residential care. The teens in the program typically have no other stable adult in their lives to provide guidance as they transition to independent living and navigate the world of employment, education, and financial responsibility. Connections sponsor SAG-AFTRA arranged for Devion’s NBC tour. To learn more about Connections, visit childrensvillage.org/connections.

“Even though I’m young, I’m doing the best I can.”

Every year, 17,000 teens in New York City become pregnant. These young parents, most coming from the poorest neighborhoods in the City from families that are already struggling to survive, face enormous challenges. They have difficulty completing their education, often lack the support and childcare they need to work, and all too many become homeless.

One of those teens is Deedee, who gave birth to her daughter Nasiyah last year. She and her newborn were sharing a small room with her mother when all three were evicted after the neighbors complained about Nasiyah’s crying. With nowhere else to go, Deedee and her daughter went to a teen homeless shelter. The shelter, which can only house residents for 30 days, referred Deedee to Victory House, where she can stay for 18 months while attending school, working part-time, and learning to care for Nasiyah.

“Victory House is helping me stay focused,” she said. “I’ve never had this kind of support before. They’re helping me to be a lot more independent—they’ve taught me that

I can get my diploma, work, and take care of my daughter. If I don’t do it, I know that no one’s going to do it for us.”

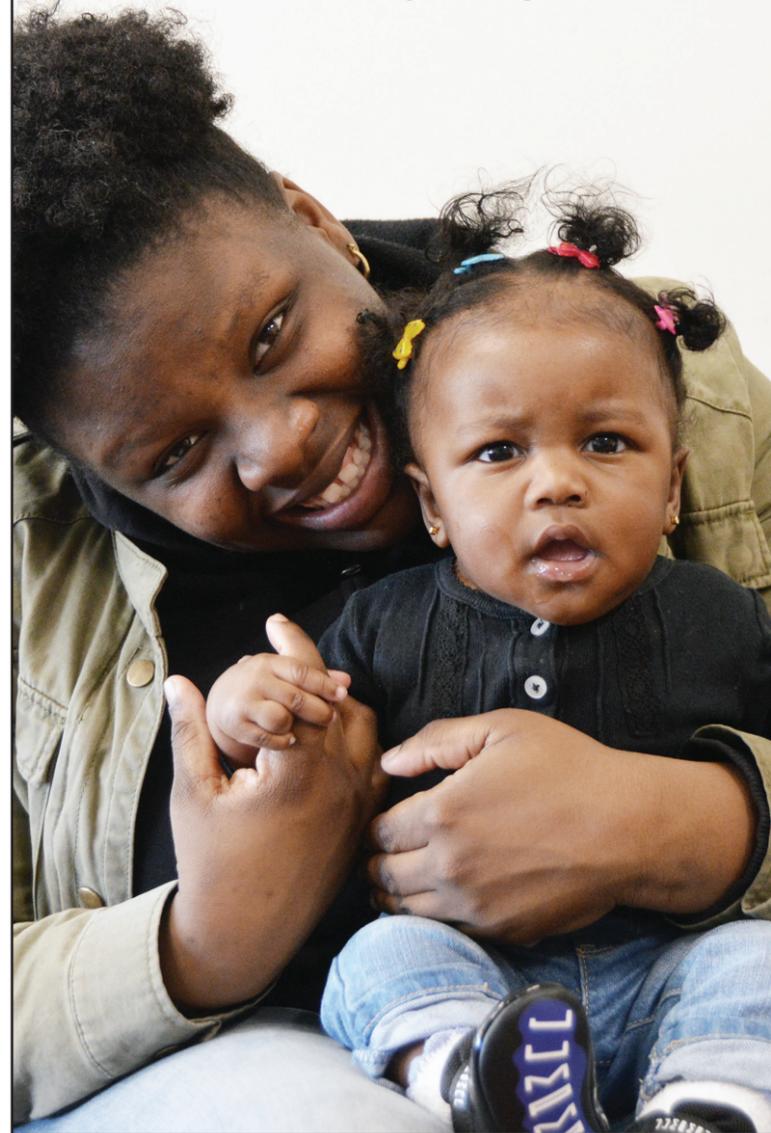
One of the things she’s most grateful for has been the parenting education. Program staff use video as a tool to show Deedee how her actions and words affect Nasiyah. At the end of the program, Deedee will get a video of her and her baby as a keepsake and remembrance of this special time together.

“I learned that Nasiyah learns from everything I do,” says Deedee. “I’m teaching her things even when I don’t realize it. The videos show me that I’m a good mom. Even though I’m young, I’m doing the best I can to take care of my daughter and take care of us. I’m really doing this.”

Part of Inwood House at The Children’s Village, Victory House offers housing and support to young women. While there, they receive life-skills training and health information, and work on plans to advance their education in meaningful ways, to prepare for a career, and to become independent.

To hear from Deedee in her own voice, visit childrensvillage.org/ourstories.

“I learned that Nasiyah learns from everything I do.”



Partnership Makes for a Unique and Special Annual Dinner

The crowd rose to their feet at honoree David Schwartz’s personal plea for the rights of children for a “stable family, a decent home, a rich and challenging education, and safety from violence.”



The Circle of Friends Annual Dinner this year had a special quality that was truly unique.

This was the first event after our merger with Inwood House—and in many ways it exemplified the value of that partnership. By the numbers, we raised almost twice as much as last year and sold 700 tickets (300 more than last year).

But the numbers are only part of the story. The excitement in the room was palpable. The crowd rose to their feet at honoree

David Schwartz’s personal plea for the rights of children for a “stable family, a decent home, a rich and challenging education, and safety from violence.”

There were tears of surprise and joy as a talented, formerly homeless young woman sang “To Dream the Impossible Dream.” And the crowd thundered its applause for our Inwood House honorees, Nick Adamo and Jim Blackley, who exhorted everyone to “get involved!”

At many fundraisers, attendees start calling for Ubers before the last speaker

is finished. But, while this year’s program ended promptly at 9:00, more than half of the crowd stayed much later. They joined our Leadership Council’s rousing After Party, mingling and enjoying the beautiful terrace on the water.

Thank you to our Dinner Committee, the Corporate Advisory Board, our honorees, and everyone who came and experienced the comradery of friends new and old.

We hope you’ll join us for next year’s dinner on April 26.

www.childrensvillage.org

To volunteer, donate, or get involved, visit our website or follow @childrensvllg on Twitter.



Know someone who may be interested in our work? Pass along this newsletter to spread the word!



**The Children's Village &
Inwood House
Golf and Tennis Classic**
Benefiting At-Risk Children and Teens
OCTOBER 2, 2017

Tamarack Country Club

Register online
childrensvillage.org/golfandtennis

Contact RoseAnn Magdaleno at
rmagdaleno@childrensvillage.org for information.

THE NEW "FACE" OF CV



Have you seen CV's new website? We just finished a complete redesign that incorporates big, beautiful pictures of the children and families we serve while making it easier for YOU to find what you're looking for.

Visit today at childrensvillage.org
and tell us what you think!

Beautiful and Affordable

The shortage of affordable housing in New York City has reached a crisis point. According to the U.S. Census, there are 2.3 "extremely low income" families in NYC for every affordable apartment. More than 50,000 New Yorkers sleep in homeless shelters and far too many struggle to pay unaffordable rent.

Thanks to our partnership with Harlem Dowling and a grant of vacant land from New York City, The Children's Village constructed a beautiful building in Harlem with office space for staff and rents that low-income families can truly afford. The building was officially dedicated on May 15 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The building's 60 apartments aren't just affordable—they're beautiful. They were designed with a modern sensibility that emphasizes clean lines and abundant natural light. Residents rave about the welcoming community spaces and terraces with stunning

city views that are perfect for entertaining. "Throughout the development process, our goal was to build apartments that we would be proud to call home," said Jeremy Kohomban. "We did not come here just to build affordable housing. We wanted to do something more."

Another goal for the building was to create home and community for young adults who age out of our public systems, into loneliness and often homelessness. (In 2015, across the United States, 23,000 children aged out of foster care.) The top two floors feature 12 studio apartments for these young people. With rents starting at just \$165 per month (including utilities), they're affordable even for young people trying to avoid dependence on social services.

The new building will not solve the problem of affordable housing in New York City, but it will solve it for 60 deserving families. We are proud to be their neighbors.

