

Winter 2025



Able and Joshua from CV join New York State Senator Rober Jackson in celebrating new foster care programs.

Supporting Children and Families Through Community Partnership



Hardworking volunteers from Pleasantville Presbyterian Church

As the holiday season approached, staff at The Children's Village prepared for what has become one of the community's most meaningful traditions—delivering food baskets to families who need extra support.

This year, that effort received a major boost thanks to many generous donors. We received major support from Whole Foods Market, Peter and Jen Ciezko and family, Concord Road Elementary School, President Contracting, and Temple Beth Shalom. We are also so grateful to Pleasantville Presbyterian Church, and Temple Emanu-El.

The funding arrived at a critical time. With food costs rising and many families still facing financial instability, requests

for assistance grew significantly. The Children's Village quickly put the donations to work, assembling more than 1,000 food baskets and turkeys for distribution across the New York metropolitan area.

For many families, the baskets meant more than groceries; they meant relief, dignity, and the chance to enjoy a holiday meal without worry.

"Every year we see more families struggling to make ends meet, and this support couldn't have come at a better time," said Leydi Rodriguez, Director of Community Engagement at The Children's Village. "Thanks to Whole Foods Market and our other donors, we were able to bring not just food, but comfort and a sense of joy to families who truly needed it. It's a reminder that our community cares, and that no one has to face the holidays alone."

These valuable partnerships reflect a shared commitment to nurturing healthier, stronger communities. By supporting The Children's Village, they directly impacted the well-being of hundreds of children and their caregivers.

Thanks to this collaboration, hundreds of dinner tables were filled—and countless families were reminded that hope and support are never far away.



Thank you to our corporate volunteers at Lockton for their hard work in sorting and boxing holiday meals. Our volunteers help us make the holiday magic.

The Field Library and CV are bringing a state-of-the-art library to the people of Peekskill!

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CV Leaders Join Partners in Puerto Rico for the 2025 SOMOS Conference

This November, members of The Children's Village Senior Leadership Team spent an inspiring few days in San Juan, Puerto Rico, for the 2025 SOMOS Conference. The annual gathering brings together New York elected officials, nonprofit leaders, and advocates committed to improving the lives of Puerto Rican and Puerto Rican-American communities. Beyond its policy discussions, SOMOS is a unique space where collaboration, community, and shared purpose take center stage.

Throughout the conference, our leaders met with many collaborators to discuss emerging needs for young people and families across New York. Chief Program Officer David Collins reflected on the experience, noting, "We enjoyed a busy and impactful four days ... meeting with elected officials, human services colleagues, advocates, and other key advisors."

A highlight of the trip was the Day of Service in Jayuya, where volunteers traveled to La Pica, a former youth prison now being transformed into a vibrant, community-centered campus. CV is a proud member of Sembrando Semillas (Sowing Seeds – <http://sembrandosemillas.org>), the coalition leading this redevelopment focused on agricultural revitalization, social services, affordable housing, and workforce training. This year, the coalition was honored with a Service Award at SOMOS's Cultural Celebration!

As CV continues supporting the La Pica Project and strengthening our ties with communities in Puerto Rico, we are reminded that meaningful change grows from collaboration and shared vision.

The CV Senior Leadership Team (top photo) traveled to the La Pica Prison (middle and bottom photos) to see how a once dismal youth prison is being changed into a new hub for community and togetherness.



A Fresh Chapter for Our Canine Center

We are excited to share an update from our newly renamed kennel program, Healing Paws Haven, where the heart of the work remains the same: transforming the lives of both youth and animals through compassion, structure, and hands-on learning.

Healing Paws Haven continues to offer free grooming services to the community, providing families and pet owners with high-quality care while giving our youth meaningful opportunities to build skills.

Today, eight youth interns work in the kennel through paid internships and the WAY Works program. Additional volunteers also lend their time, gaining real world experience in animal care, grooming, and kennel operations. Whether brushing and bathing a pup, practicing obedience training, or



Kennel Interns having a good time and some good puppy cuddles at the Paw-ty!

supporting day-to-day tasks, young people learn responsibility, communication, patience, and confidence — skills that stay with them long after their time in the program.

The manager of Healing Paws Haven, Ednishalis Sanchez, CV's Canine Rescue & Rehabilitation Coordinator, brings years of canine rescue experience and a lifelong passion for animal care. "This work is incredibly meaningful to me, because it brings together two things I care about deeply: helping animals and supporting youth," she shared. "Watching young people grow more confident and discover their strengths is truly rewarding."

To schedule a free grooming appointment, please visit our website at www.childrensvillage.org/groomingclinic or call the Grooming Clinic at (914) 693-0600 EXT 4968.

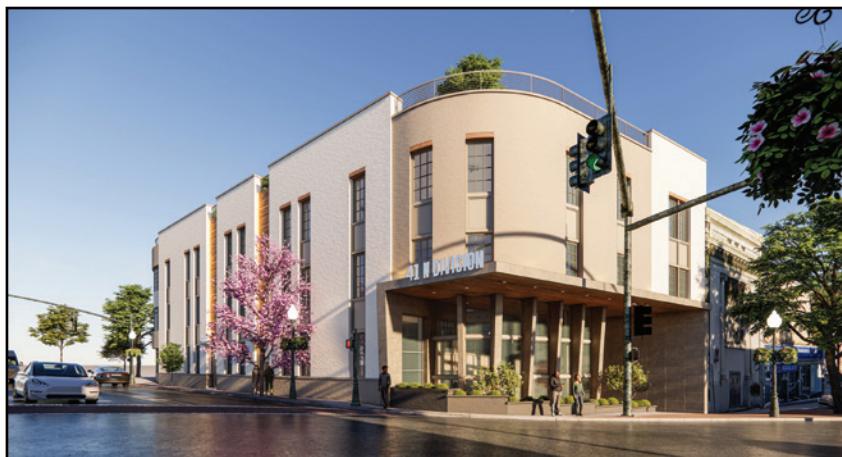


Not everyone had a good time at the Paw-ty, but Shai did receive a very good grooming.



In 2026, The Children's Village will be 175 Years Old! Be on the lookout for announcements and special events as we celebrate this milestone anniversary.

The Children's Village and The Field Library Announce Exciting Downtown Project



Exterior of historic Peekskill building to feature 22 new affordable homes.

In early December, The Children's Village (CV) and The Field Library announced an exciting partnership to create a new, state-of-the-art public library at 41 North Division Street in Downtown Peekskill. The new library—operated by the same trusted Field Library team—will replace the current location and anchor CV's transformation of the historic "Worker's Comp Building" into a vibrant mixed-use community hub featuring 22 affordable homes and 11,000 square feet of commercial space.

Set to begin construction next year, the modern facility will expand educational, cultural, and enrichment opportunities for residents of the new housing development and the entire Peekskill community.

"This project brings learning, creativity, and community together under one roof," said Jamie Marley, Chair of The Children's Village Board of Trustees. Dana Hysell, Director of The Field Library, added that the collaboration will create "a vital community hub where learning and access to resources are made available to everyone."

Local leaders praised the project's promise for Peekskill's future. Media coverage included many quotes and attributes for the new housing plan.

The Peekskill library project continues CV's broader mission to pair new multi-use developments with affordable homes with high-quality learning environments. It follows on the heels of The Eliza in Inwood, Manhattan, a landmark development featuring deeply affordable apartments integrated with a new New York Public Library branch, early childhood classrooms, and a state-of-the-art Activities, Culture, and Training (ACTS) Center.

With strong collaborations and shared vision behind it, Peekskill's new library is poised to become a welcoming, dynamic resource for generations to come.



Schematic interior designs of the new Field Library in the Peekskill building.

There are plenty of smiles to go around – and you can still make a difference this holiday season!

There is still a chance to make a difference to the children and families at CV. Make a year end donation that will help build a future filled with promise and possibility for many.

Visit childrensvillage.org/donate or scan the QR code to donate securely online, or use the form below with the enclosed envelope.



I want to give holiday cheer to children and families in need!

Make your donation go twice as far. Please check to see if your company offers a matching gift program.

Enclosed is my gift of: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Please make checks payable to: The Children's Village
Credit card: AmEx Visa MasterCard Discover

number _____

exp. date _____

CVV _____

To volunteer, donate, or get involved, visit our website at www.childrensvillage.org or follow us on social media @ChildrensVllg.



Together we make a difference!

Your support is critical to our work, and together we make a difference! Read more about our impact in our annual report online at:

www.childrensvillage.org/annualreport



A City That Believes in the Future of Children in Foster Care

On a rainy November day in Inwood, NY, The Children's Village (CV) joined New York City Mayor Eric Adams, and NYC Administration for Children's Services Commissioner Jess Dannhauser to celebrate a milestone years in the making. Before them gathered young people, coaches, and advocates—many of whom knew firsthand what it meant to grow up in foster care.

The mayor revealed a \$163 million investment over five years to strengthen five proven programs — Fair Futures, College Choice, Career Choice, GirlsJustUs, and the Assertive Community Engagement & Success initiative. CV is a long-standing partner with Fair Futures, a youth-led movement advocating for all young people in New York City's foster care system to have access to long-term, comprehensive supports. Together, these five programs will now reach 8,000 young people, making New York City one of the strongest support systems in the nation for youth experiencing foster care.

At the heart of the story were the youth themselves. One young person, who had transitioned out of foster care, shared her story and talked about her experience working with her coach. Through Fair Futures, every young person in foster care, ages 11 to 26, has access to a dedicated coach who helps them navigate school, set goals, and stay on track. Additionally, two youth from CV were recognized by Commissioner Dannhauser and stood proudly with their coaches.

Jenisette Perez, Director of Youth Services in the Family Foster Care Division at CV, presented a brief overview of her career working with and supporting young people in foster care. She has seen firsthand the impact that programs like Fair Futures and College Choice have had on the young people transitioning to independent living.

"It has been nearly impossible for young people to focus on their studies while trying to stay financially afloat. Because of

College Choice, this is the largest number of young people in foster care that I have seen go to college in my twenty years of working with the agency. It has truly been a gamechanger, and my expectation is that we are going to see even more success with these programs."

As the event ended, the mood was joyful. The community was not just supporting its youth in foster care, it was believing in their futures, breaking down barriers, and giving them the tools to build the lives they deserved.



All together to help the city's young people.