

Published for the Friends and Families of Presbyterian Children's Village

## New Beginnings for Victor and Jamiyah and their Parents for Life



Stunned, excited, nervous, scared, blessed. Michelle had a rainbow of adjectives to describe her emotions as she and husband Reynaldo became parents-for-life to Jamiyah (4) and Victor (2), on July 24, 2009. This was the date a court proceeding finalized their adoption of the two children who had lived with them since they were only a few months old.

As foster parents for Presbyterian Children's Village, Michelle and Reynaldo have cared for more than 15 children during the last five years. With no biological children of their own, the couple on several occasions hoped to adopt children who had been entrusted to their care.

"Fortunately for the children's parents, but unfortunately for us" is the way Michelle summed up the fact that none of the previous relationships ended

*(continued on page 2)*

### 2009-2010 Board of Directors

**Christopher Campbell, Chair**

Barbara Barnhart  
 Leroy Brown  
 Milton T. Cole, Ph.D.

Alice Crowell  
 Judy Davies  
 David Elwell

**Elizabeth S. Gadsden, Vice Chair**

Ann Gill

**Thomas Hiscott, Esq., Treasurer**

Rev. Mindy Huffstetler  
 Meg Johnson  
 Eric C. Jones

**Scott Latimer, Asst. Treasurer**

Carol MacGregor  
 Peggy MacGregor  
 Marcia Martin, Ph.D.

**Joan Mount, Secretary**

Andrew Nehrbas  
 Maris Ogg  
 Maura Romano, Esq.

Natasha Strother  
 William Thygeson  
 Robert Trumbull

Calvin Tucker  
 Melanie Wright

**Darlene Hewett, President & CEO**

Presbyterian Children's Village 

Administrative Offices  
 452 South Roberts Road  
 Rosemont, PA 19010  
[www.pcv.org](http://www.pcv.org)

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Wayne, PA  
 Permit No. 197

(continued from page 1)

## New Beginnings for Victor and Jamiyah and their Parents for Life

in adoption, as children were able to be reunited with their parents or other relatives. Nevertheless, the couple has sustained their love for these foster children through strong relationships with the families they helped. They became godparents for two girls and two boys, continue to welcome the children for weekend stays in their home, and enjoy family gatherings with these families.

**“Taking care of other people’s children is not easy,” says Michelle. “You have to open your heart to the children and to their parents. You can’t look down on the parents; you need to be strong for them and be a mentor.” Michelle points out that most people don’t choose to be bad parents. “We all make mistakes,” she reminds us.**

PCV Foster Care and Adoption Supervisor Emily Braham has high praise for Michelle and Reynaldo. “They are wonderful people! They are patient, kind and flexible. They do whatever their kids need.”

Michelle is working on her associate’s degree in early childhood development and hopes to continue on for her bachelor’s and master’s in the field. She currently provides daycare services in her home to children up to age three. Reynaldo is a materials manager for the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. They find support in a strong faith tradition and in their extended family that includes Reynaldo’s mother, who lives nearby and helps out the way grandmothers do. ■

**facebook**

**Find fun Village photos on FACEBOOK**

**Go to Facebook; search for Presbyterian Children’s Village, and become a “fan.” You will start receiving all of our Facebook updates!**

## MaryBeth begins her senior year with new goals, new skills



Being on her own was not a choice, but coming to the Village was.

With no family to help her navigate the difficult teen years, further complicated by severe depression and other behavioral disorders, MaryBeth (not her real name) has had a rough time growing up. She came to the Village’s Residential Treatment Program in July 2007 at age 16.

Once she reached her goals in the Residential Program, which included attendance in the accredited Village School, MaryBeth was ready to move to a less restrictive setting. She decided to move just across the Rosemont campus into one of the Supervised Independent Living (SIL) apartments. This enabled her to maintain treatments and supportive services with PCV while also continuing to work toward her high school diploma at the Delaware County Alternative High School.

According to Pat Oleskey, supervisor of the SIL program, “MaryBeth has shown tremendous growth and increased maturity during her stay with us. She’s learning to make her own decisions now.”

MaryBeth garnered a number of special awards this past year in academics and her vocational area of cosmetology with commendations for her leadership in helping others. All of her hard work was rewarded with the Union League of Philadelphia Good Citizenship Award in May 2009. The Union League’s day-long events included a mock trial at the Federal Courthouse, with MaryBeth taking on the role of prosecutor.

MaryBeth enjoyed a recent Career Night presentation at the Village from a fashion design professional, and she continues to consider this as a career option. She likes to draw and write poetry and would particularly like to learn to use a sewing machine. Next year’s academic goals present some more big steps for MaryBeth. She plans to move to a less restrictive group living setting, complete her senior year in high school, and explore some college options. She knows she will still need lots of support to achieve her goals, and she knows she can achieve them. ■

**You can now donate online at [www.pcv.org](http://www.pcv.org). Click on Donate Now to make a general donation or to direct your gift to a specific project.**

## Red Alert! Child welfare services in danger!

The woes of the State of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia go on and on. Any report on the status and the impact on PCV would be outdated by the time we get this newsletter to you.

The PCV Advocacy Committee, chaired by Marcia Martin, stays abreast of critical child welfare issues and initiates emails when we think our elected officials need to hear from us. If you would like to receive these notices, let us know by way of email. We will add you to our advocacy alert list. Send an email to [development@pcv.org](mailto:development@pcv.org). Note in the subject line "advocacy email." Thank you for caring! ■

## Lois Clayton: the Best EPIC Stakeholder Coordinator for 2009



Striving to make a difference in the lives of those around her, Southwest EPIC (Equal Partners in Change) Stakeholders Coordinator Lois Clayton's role is to bring together concerned citizens from the neighborhood through team building programs, education, and access to local resources. In all, there are 10 EPIC Stakeholders groups in inner city areas of Philadelphia, formed under the auspices of the Department of Human Services (DHS) to address serious issues and empower residents to play a leadership role in their communities.

The Village EPIC group in Southwest Philadelphia, under Lois's leadership, includes residents, community activists, law enforcement officials, business people, and others. Many of their activities focus on youth. Community forums or meetings are held each month for the general community and always are well attended.

Each year, the EPIC Stakeholders coordinators throughout the city nominate one of their own for the best coordinator award. In June 2009, Lois was selected for this award. Her plaque reads "Selected by EPIC Coordinator Peers for demonstrating unselfish support to others and serving as a role model to all." ■

**Designate your United Way Gift to the Village with #1867.**

# Village All-Stars: Appl



*Under the leadership of foster parent **Francis McCarthy**, a score of Main Line **Keller Williams** realtors converged on the Rosemont campus to trim, weed, rake, and more as part of their nationwide day of community service.*



*Writing about what they did last summer will have a philanthropic bent for a group of boys from **Welsh Valley Middle School** boys (plus a couple of friends and siblings). Organized by "supermom" Jennifer Cole, TJ and his friends orchestrated their own week-long community service project that brought them to the Preheim Center to deliver backpacks for children in the area. Preheim Center staff talked to them about the ways the Village helps children and families.*

# use, Please! All Stars



**Jason Braham**, coordinator of Information Technology services for the Village's complex systems, helped out with Career Day.



Children from Village Prevention Programs at Catharine, Mitchell, and Harrity elementary schools demonstrated their considerable entrepreneurial skills as part of the 4th Community Celebration, held May 29 at the Preheim Center. The children donated the proceeds to a charitable cause in their own community. To view lots of great photos from the event, go to our Village Facebook page at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com). Search for Presbyterian Children's Village and scroll down to our photo album of the event.



**4670 years of giving!** 467 donors who have faithfully contributed to the Village for 10 or more years are now part of the **Robinson Society**, named for Samuel Robinson who donated the Rosemont campus to the Village for the purpose of assisting children. These 10-year donors were present at the May 3 donor appreciation reception. Others who weren't present will receive their mementoes and a special invitation in the coming weeks. All 10-year donors will receive a special designation in the Annual Report. Left to right, front row: Chris Campbell, Margaret Sanders, Susan Casazza, Joyce Malott, Darlene Hewett. Middle: Barbara Albright, Phil Albright, Jean Elliott, Carol Pendergrass. Back: Yardly Jenkins, David Redner.



Advisory Board member **Donna Henry** was one of several professionals who visited Harrity and Mitchell elementary schools in Southwest Philadelphia for Career Day. Donna is executive director of the Southwest Philadelphia Community Development Corporation.

**THE MISSION OF PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN'S VILLAGE IS TO PROMOTE THE HEALING OF THE SPIRITS OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES BROKEN BY VIOLENCE, ADDICTION, POVERTY, MENTAL ILLNESS, RACISM AND OTHER SERIOUS SOCIETAL PROBLEMS.**

# Village All-Stars: Applause, Please!



These three “Villagers” were part of the “first class” of volunteers to jump through all the hoops of clearances and trainings to be official Volunteers. Their orange lanyards designate their new status. **John Strain** (left) teaches weekly drumming classes to several residential clients. **Veronica Hoplamazian** (center) has done filing and donated landscaping services and will soon be working with youth. **Juan Carlos Lopez** tutored residential clients in math and French.



**Jane Beatty** was named **Main Line Volunteer of the Year** by Main Line Life. Read the full Jane Beatty story on the PCV website, [pcv.org](http://pcv.org). Jane has taken on so many roles at the Village with such enthusiasm, for so many years that it’s hard to single out her most memorable achievement. She is probably most satisfied with her role as tutor, mentor, and nurturer of scores of children.



**Danielle Owen**, a graduate student at Drexel University, volunteered her creative talents to provide a 6-week drama class for students in the Residential Treatment program. The experience culminated in a performance of the students’ original production, *Sunday Rain*.



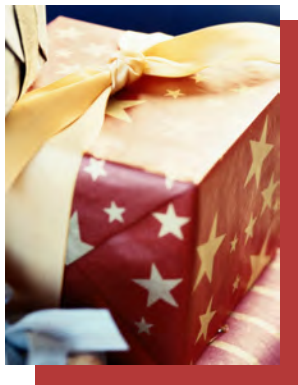
**Deloitte** professionals descended on the Rosemont campus on June 5 with a full day of activities involving all 60 residents. The morning took a serious look at resumes, interviewing, and career planning, while the afternoon turned to recreation and games. Students and staff gave the day two thumbs up. Several of our Deloitte volunteers commented, “I was really moved by the experience!”



## Before you know it, Christmas will be here!

Your gifts are especially meaningful during the holiday season. Here are some ways you can help. Wish Lists are available on the Village website, [www.pcv.org](http://www.pcv.org). Or call the Development Office and we'll mail you a list. 601.519.1657.

Choose the name of a particular child or shop from the general list of gift ideas. Or call the Development Office at 610.519.1657 and we will mail you a list. Always welcome: gifts of cash and gift cards for items our families need. ■



## WISH LIST

- \* **Mattes and frames for student artwork**
- \* **Microwave ovens for families**
- \* **Washers and dryers for Residential and Semi-Independent Living programs (we recommend a budget brand found at Lowe's – call for details)**
- \* **Used televisions in good working order, not more than 5 years old**
- \* **New posters and inspirational prints for residential cottages**
- \* **Yarn, yarn, yarn (our girls love to knit and crochet!)**
- \* **Tickets! Movies, museums, zoos, sports events, etc.**



*Wish Lists are available on the village website, [www.pcv.org](http://www.pcv.org).*

**Christmas gift delivery begins November 30.**

## Backpack Success!

**More than 300 donated to help Village families in Southwest Philly!**

"I think 'backpack-time' is my favorite thing PCV does for the kids. Having many foster kids in therapy I was able to watch the kids receive their backpacks this year and their reactions. Needless to say it was SO cute and heart warming. The individualized nature of each gift really made the children feel special. The supplies given went above and beyond the standard issue school supplies and included the kids' favorite cartoon characters and top of the line art supplies, book covers, etc. I think this sent a wonderful message to the kids that they are important, that they deserve good things, that school is important, and that despite what they've been through there are still benevolent forces looking out for them. I just wanted to pass along my personal thanks to those who made it possible."



*Beth Richey, Outpatient Therapist*

## Did you receive our new e-newsletter?

If you did not receive our new e-newsletter, it probably means that we have no email address on file for you. You can get on our list to receive timely, inspirational and economical news by sending an email to [info@pcv.org](mailto:info@pcv.org). Just put "Add me to the Village email list" in the Subject line. You can add as many email addresses as you like (home and work). We will never share your email information with anyone else! ■



Preheim Center  
6517 Chester Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19142  
**215.878.2480**

Administrative Offices &  
Residential Campus  
452 South Roberts Road  
Rosemont, PA 19010  
**610.525.5400**

[www.pcv.org](http://www.pcv.org) 

**Don't forget our United Way Donor number is 1867.**