



**St. Mary's**  
HOME FOR CHILDREN

*Healing Lives, Restoring Hope – Since 1877*

# The Doorway

*Volume Seventeen Issue One*

## *A Letter From The Executive Director*



*Photo courtesy of  
YWCA Rhode Island*

Dear Friends:

I'm happy to report that we continue to expand and strengthen our services in our Outpatient and Residential Programs. The Shepherd Program is growing its community-based programs. In addition to Enhanced Outpatient Services (EOS), we are expanding our Supporting Teens and Adults at Risk (STAAR) program, which provides clinical, case management and support services to youth and families impacted by, or at risk for, sexual exploitation. We are also launching a new program, Supporting Adoptive and Foster Families Everywhere (SAFFE), which provides clinical, support and case management services to children with histories of sexual abuse and their foster and/or adoptive families to ensure that the family unit remains together.

Our residential programs are continuing the implementation of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI). As we begin our journey, we are being asked to provide presentations through webinars and in person to others who are considering BBI. So far, we and our partners from the Parent Support Network, have presented to representatives in Louisiana, South Carolina, Texas and Pennsylvania. We are tracking the families that we serve in aftercare and are seeing positive results. As we begin year two of this initiative, we are initiating a partnership with Foster Forward to bring a Youth Mentor on board to assist with the creation of a true Youth Voice and Choice/Youth Guided Care environment at St. Mary's. Not only do we expect the youth that we serve to gain valuable leadership skills through this partnership, but also hope to reduce/eliminate the use of physical management at the agency.

Increased emphasis on performance and quality improvement and innovation has pushed us to new heights in program development and service delivery and a renewed focus on permanency for the youth we serve. Our two newest outpatient programs were designed to support both youth and their families with the intent of maintaining children in their homes. Our residential programs continue to work toward decreasing lengths of stay and ensuring a great deal of family contact while youth are in the residential intervention. The added aftercare component of our programming enables us to provide services for up to six months post reunification and monitoring for up to a year. The continuity of services has, so far, resulted in the youth and families we serve remaining together after discharge from the residential intervention. Within six months to one year after youth have been in residential treatment is a vulnerable time for families. The additional support during this time is meant to ensure permanency.

We are proud of the strides we've made and will continue to assess the effectiveness of our programs to help families heal and provide them hope for a brighter future.

Sincerely,

Carlene Casciano-McCann  
Executive Director

## Building Bridges Initiative Success Stories

In January, 2016, we became the first agency in the State to adopt the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI). With the financial support of CharterCARE Foundation, this transformational initiative has shown positive outcomes for children and families, which include decreased lengths of stay, increased school attendance and academic performance, improved well-being and permanency.

Our Building Bridges team, in partnership with Parent Support Network, is committed to supporting an entire family from admission to the residential intervention through the aftercare services we provide. Services take place on campus and in the community. The team's creativity and flexibility breaks down barriers that can impede the youth's connection to family and pushes through those obstacles to ensure that family is a full partner in treatment planning. Our team assists families to find resources in the community to help meet basic needs when families are struggling and arranges for or provides, transportation when that is an obstacle to family time

with their children. Our "Residential Without Walls" philosophy means that our doors are always open to family and the family's home is open to our team. Our BBI team ensures that the family's needs are met, not only the child receiving the residential intervention, so that the family becomes stronger together.

We are so happy to receive this feedback from our families:

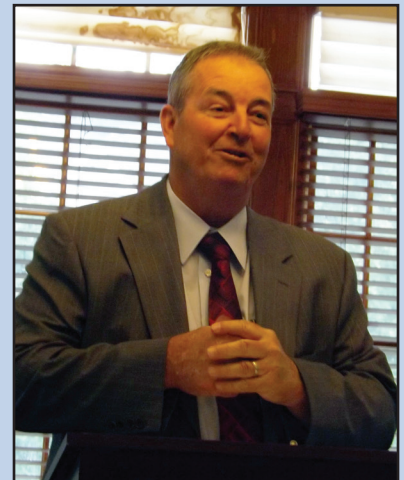
*"Thank you for your guidance throughout this heavy time for our family. We're so thankful to have our baby back home and we're so thankful for all the help we've received from you guys. Who would have known that our child's behaviors were this simple to manage, she's making such amazing progress! We all are!"*

*"I love coming here (the BBI office) because you guys always make me feel so welcome. I love that I have a place to come vent and meet with other parents going through similar struggles. I should just get my own name badge since I'm always here! You guys make me feel like I'm part of the BBI team too!"*



BBI Team Members:  
Dana Freeman, Nikki Lawrence,  
Carlota Burgo, Brenda Alejo

We were honored to have Chief Judge Michael Forte of Rhode Island Family Court as keynote speaker at our 138th Annual Meeting. A graduate of the University of Rhode Island and University of New Hampshire, he was appointed Chief Judge by Governor Raimondo in June, 2016. Judge Forte served in Family Court since 1987 after previously serving in private practice and as a member of the State Senate. Judge Forte explained that the role of Family Court is assuring that all children get the care they deserve and noted that he appreciates how the mission and strategic plan of St. Mary's compliments that of Family Court. He found the work St. Mary's does to be remarkable and is impressed by the history, campus and progress from our simple origins to the agency we are now and the programs we offer for the evolving needs of children and families. We should expect to see Family Court providing more support for early intervention for young families, crisis intervention, establishment of family foster homes to serve both mothers and their families, programming at the Training School, human trafficking and more women's services. Judge Forte is committed to children and their families in our state and looks forward to working with us and our partners in the future. The Judge was presented with an engraved clock as a token of appreciation from St. Mary's.



Chief Judge Michael Forte

# Children's Friendship Award

In recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, we annually hold an event to honor an individual or company that has displayed unending dedication to the well being of children and has demonstrated kind acts of philanthropy and volunteerism to honor the mission of St. Mary's.

Honored this year were Mayor Scott Avedisian who has been a long time supporter and former member of the Board of Directors of St. Mary's. He continues in his role as an Honorary Vice-President and is an advocate for children. CharterCARE Foundation provides assistance to many organizations in our area and provides funding to assist our residential programs.

Co-chairs of the event were Trisha Lynch and Kelly Drolet. Representative Deborah Ruggiero served as Emcee of the event. Danielle North of WPRI and Daniel Koppen, formerly with the New England Patriots were special event guests. Due to the generosity of all, over \$56,000 was raised! We want to thank everyone who contributed to this successful event as well as the following sponsors:



*Mayor Charles Lombardi  
and Mayor Scott Avedisian*

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*Donald McQueen and Paula Iacono,  
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## AWARD DESIGN

Paul King Foundry    Buccacio Sculpture



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*Are you a former resident wanting to connect  
with old friends or a friend of St. Mary's wanting to  
show your support?*

***Signing up is easy.***

Once you have established an account at  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) simply type in  
St. Mary's Home for Children and join our group.

Notices of events, reunions and news will be  
posted.

If you have any questions please call us:  
**Susan R. DeRita at 401-353-3900x262**

## Staff Milestones

We are so proud of our staff and the hard work they do on a daily basis in our residential, clinical, school, administrative or support departments.

### OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Adeana Dunston    Jessica Franco  
Linda Mobriant

### CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

Melissa Cashman-Smith



### AWARDS FOR YEARS OF SERVICE AT ST. MARY'S HOME FOR CHILDREN

#### 5 Years of Service

Benvinda Alves  
Greg Anderson  
Anthony DelVicario III  
Erin Gutauskas  
Louis Jarrett

#### 10 Years of Service

Lisa Casavecchia  
Sharron Costello  
Lynn Maceroni  
David Mulligan  
Steven Wood

#### 15 Years of Service

Wendy Brown  
Adeana Dunston

#### 20 Years of Service

Barbara Andriole  
Joyce Zanni

#### 25 Years of Service

Hope Gibbons  
Patty Olney-Murphy

#### 30 Years of Service

Rita Higgins

#### 35 Years of Service

Joanne Shuman

#### 40 Years of Service

Lynn Rogers

## If you want a child's mind to grow, you must first plant a seed -(unknown)

The children love to work in our garden during the summer but during the non-growing season, they were treated to centerpiece design and the planting of drought tolerant plants. The Perennial Planters has been working with our children for over a decade making holiday centerpieces that are placed in common areas of local nursing homes. The children



*FloralCoLab*



*The Perennial Planters*

planted paperwhite bulbs that they take to their rooms, waiting in anticipation for them to bloom. FloralCoLab is a design collective of talented area florists who donated their time, talent and materials to show the children how to plant a variety of succulents that needed little care and could be maintained in their living space.

## Our Special First Responders



*North Providence Fire Department and Santa*

Police Department serves lunch to the children. It is nice for the children to visit with these professionals in a non-emergency situation when they can have an opportunity to get to know each other on an informal basis.



*North Providence Police Department*



**ST. MARY'S HOME FOR CHILDREN**  
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*Employees at Macy's in Warwick Mall all became elves this holiday season by sponsoring a giving tree and providing many gifts for the children.*



*For over 25 years, the Shriners of Rhode Island Charities Trust has generously been supporting our mission and programs.*

*Thank You!*  
*Thank You!*



*Michael Sabitoni of Rhode Island Construction and Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) played on our behalf at the annual Twin River Casino Holiday Charity Blackjack Tournament winning \$1,000 for our agency*



*Brooke Sommers of Strategic Conference and Events and Evan Chapman worked with staff from Stratus Technologies while they held their regional meeting in Providence to make welcome bags for the children that held a stuffed animal and other goodies.*