



**St. Mary's**  
HOME FOR CHILDREN  
*Healing Lives, Restoring Hope – Since 1877*

Volume Nineteen

# The Doorway

Issue Two

## A Letter From The Executive Director



*Photo courtesy of  
YWCA Rhode Island*

Dear Friends:

We have spent several months preparing for St. Mary's future. With input from stakeholders, community partners, donors, clients, our board of directors and agency staff members, we completed a new strategic plan. The 2019-2022 strategic plan challenges us to build upon the successes of the past few years and focuses us on continued residential transformation by transitioning our residential treatment center programs to psychiatric residential treatment facilities. This level of care does not currently exist in the state of Rhode Island. As with the Building Bridges Initiative, St. Mary's is the first agency in Rhode Island to implement transformational residential services.

Our Shepherd Program will expand its presence in the community and offer our expertise to youth, adults and families to prevent admissions to hospital level care or out of home placements. We are exploring opportunities to create and implement additional preventative services.

Our school is enhancing its offerings through continued implementation of social emotional learning and positive behavioral interventions and supports as well as introducing project-based learning to our students. Project-based learning allows students to acquire deeper knowledge through active exploration of real world challenges. This enables our students to develop stronger problem-solving skills and learn how to collaborate effectively; skills necessary for success in the workplace.


The results of the strategic planning surveys revealed that our stakeholders consistently noted the dedication and compassion of our staff and that our client's experience with us was overwhelmingly positive.

As we begin work on year one of our strategic plan, we are simultaneously preparing for our 2020 accreditation, an excellent opportunity to examine our practices in relation to the Council on Accreditation's national standards. As anyone who has been through an accreditation knows, it is a time-consuming and meaningful process. We are situated well for a successful self-study and site visit.

We've accomplished quite a bit in the last year. The bottom line is that we do our best to stay ahead of industry trends so that we can deliver the best possible service to the youth, adults and families we serve.

Strategic Planning and preparation for accreditation requires a lot from our team. We recognize our responsibility and privilege in the service of our clients. Because we want to be our best for them, we will not stand still. We will keep pushing, growing and learning so that those we serve have their best opportunities for success.

With Gratitude,

  
Carlene Casciano-McCann  
Executive Director

***As we approach the holiday season,  
I wish each and every one of you joy and peace!***

## IN MEMORY

*We recognize the passing of the following individuals who designated St. Mary's as the recipient of memorial funds, a bequest or were friends of the agency.*

*We are truly grateful for their friendship and commitment to SMHFC and we will forever miss them.*

GEORGE K. BAKER, SR.

DR. VITO BUONOMANO

DR. A. LOUIS MARIORENZI

DANIEL A. MURPHY

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## Children's Friendship Award

Join us for a festive evening including music, cocktails\* and hors d'oeuvres. \$90.00 per person \*cash bar

Wednesday

**April 29 2020**

CAFÉ NUOVO ROTUNDA PROVIDENCE, RI  
FROM 5:30-8:30P.M.



**St. Mary's**  
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St. Mary's is pleased to announce our partnership with Biker's Against Child Abuse (BACA). BACA has provided support to many children in our care. They are committed to creating a safer environment for children who have experienced abuse and empowering youth not to feel afraid of the world in which they live.

Currently, we are working together to support youth who have been victimized by human trafficking in a pilot project. Our Assistant Director of Outpatient Services, Jessica Clark, has provided BACA with training specific to the CSEC (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children) population so that the team can have a greater understanding of the challenges that CSEC victims face. We look forward to this exciting new opportunity!

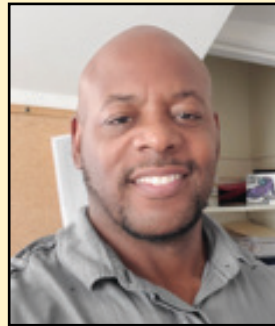


- It is difficult to imagine that a child may be apart from his or her family during the holiday season when the focus is on the gathering of family and friends.
- It is through your support that each child who is with our family at St. Mary's during the holidays has an array of gifts to open on Christmas morning and joyful memories to share when they recall their stay at SMHFC.
- There are many ways you can help the children. Instead of purchasing small gifts for friends or co-workers, consider a donation to St. Mary's. We will notify them of your generous gift!
- Age appropriate toys, craft supplies, games, gift cards, cash donations and tickets to local attractions are just a few suggested gifts for the children.
- For a more detailed wish list and additional suggestions, please contact **Kim Natareno** at [knatareno@smhfc.org](mailto:knatareno@smhfc.org), or 353-3900 x380.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



*Mike Burgess*



Mike Burgess, the Residential Program Manager, has been a resident of North Providence for the past ten years. He and his

beautiful wife Chris, just celebrated their first wedding anniversary. Mike has four children: Fatima, age 22; Michael-Mark, age 21; Elijah, age 19; and Paris, age 2 whom he and his wife Chris adopted. Mike attended Mount Pleasant High School (Go Kilties!) and then went on to earn his Bachelor's Degree in Business at Revans University in Boulder, CO.

Mike has worked at SMHFC for the past six years. He started as a per-diem staff member and worked his way through other positions including TA for the Horton House, Supervisor for the Hills House and then in 2016 was promoted to his current position. Mike was introduced to SMHFC by his twin brother, who worked at the agency for ten years.

Mike realizes the community at large struggles to understand the complexity of the trauma/abuse that our clients have suffered. Mike, along with others at SMHFC, have worked with the local Police and Fire Departments over the past few years, to help educate them on our client's behavioral issues and triggers, which has led to amazing results regarding how the Police & Fire respond to and interact with our kids. This has ultimately helped to foster more positive interactions.

While Mike faces challenges in his position regarding staff retention (which is common in the Human Service field), his best experiences are the times when he can sit down with a client and just talk about the daily issues of life. He also enjoys watching the progress of so many of our kids. Over-all, Mike feels that working at SMHFC has been a deeply rewarding job, no matter what position he has served in. Mike has witnessed many selfless staff who give 100 percent to ensure that our clients get the best care available.



# *We Are So Thankful To Our Amazing Donors & Volunteers!*

Without the support and commitment of generous donors, we would not be able to provide the essential support and services to those healing from various effects of sexual abuse, exploitation/trafficking, and other traumatic events, as well as providing a safe haven and home for our kids.



*Thank you to Charlie Gomes and Movement Mortgage for their continued support through their wildly successful Photos for Charity events!*



*Many thanks to Butler and Messier, Inc. for the generous donation from their employee "Jeans Day Friday" charitable campaign.*



*A huge thank you to Optum Healthcare for providing a crew of 50 volunteers for a major clean-up day on our campus.*

# Introducing Cali ...

CALI, an Australian labradoodle is a trained comfort therapy dog with The Cranston Police Department. Her role is to provide support to children who have experienced abuse, including sexual and physical abuse as they meet with law enforcement. Our agency has worked collaboratively with CALI and her handler Det. Michael Iacone to support families impacted by sexual abuse.

Through the agency's Risk Management Committee, which has created guidelines and the process for all therapy dogs, CALI has been given the approval to be on the St. Mary's Campus and working with our kids and families!



*CALI with Angelica Spirito, LMHC,  
CFTT Program Coordinator*



*Donors & Friends enjoying our Children's Friendship Award event held on April 11, 2019, which raised \$60k in support of treatment and services here at SMHFC.*



*Junior League of Rhode Island Members during their monthly gardening visits throughout the summer, helping to keep our campus beautiful!*

**ST. MARY'S HOME FOR CHILDREN**

420 FRUIT HILL AVENUE  
NORTH PROVIDENCE, RI 02911

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

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*If you did not receive a copy of our 2019 Annual Report  
and would like to read about our many accomplishments over the past year, please contact  
kbautista@smhfc.org or by phone, 353-3900 x380 to request a copy*