



Northern Virginia
Family Service

Fall 2013

Family Focus

A publication for the friends, partners and supporters of Northern Virginia Family Service

NVFS Recognized for Excellence in Board Leadership

Northern Virginia Family Service was recognized by the Center for Nonprofit Advancement (the Center) as the 2013 winner of its Board Leadership Award. The award recognizes the role that boards play in building and sustaining successful organizations - ensuring that they are well led, well supported and responsive to the people and communities they serve.

"Critical community and family needs demand that non-profits deliver effective services and increase their capacity to do more," said Douglas Koelemay, vice chairman of the NVFS board. "The strong performance of NVFS over decades both attracts great board members and challenges us professionally and personally to respond. We hope having that effort recognized will inspire others to great boardmanship everywhere."



Billy Tidwell, Center for Nonprofit Advancement

Celebrating Excellence: BoardSource Director of Training Andy Davis, CohnReznick LLP Principal Anne E. Schrantz, NVFS Chief Operating Officer Cheri Villa, Board Chair Hugo Aguas, President and CEO Mary Agee, Senior VP Malinda Langford, Senior VP Stephanie Berkowitz and Center for Nonprofit Advancement CEO Glen O'Gilvie.

"Vital work in support of our communities is made possible by excellence in board leadership," said Center CEO Glen O'Gilvie. "We are proud to acknowledge

Northern Virginia Family Service as a 2013 Award Winner."

Finalists were selected through a three-step judging process, including a comprehensive nomination form; in-person interview with board members and the executive director; and a site visit attended by board members, the executive director and representatives from the community served.

NVFS was recognized for its best practices, including board participation and engagement, its handling of

mergers and acquisitions, and volunteer recruitment. In addition to the honor, NVFS received a cash award and training opportunities with the Center for Non-profit Advancement.

Fighting Homelessness, One Family at a Time

"When people look at me, they would never know I was homeless."

Karen (pictured, right), who manages the activity center desk at a Lifetime Fitness in Northern Virginia, puts Casual Friday to shame. Dressed in a suit and heels, she expertly greets members, provides customer service, and answers the phone with a smile that even the caller will feel.

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Donors, Volunteers Support NVFS Back to School Drive

NVFS volunteers assembled a record 1,800 backpacks for our school-age clients, giving them the necessary tools for a successful beginning to the new school year.

From high school students who helped every day to corporate and civic groups who volunteered in teams, more than 190 volunteers donated over 790 hours to this program. The tremendous community effort is valued at more than \$19,000 in volunteer time alone.

William, whose work hours had been cut recently, was worried how he would help his daughter, a junior, prepare for her "most important year of high school" and expressed his gratitude for the program. Cassandra, a mother of three elementary school-aged children, added her thanks, saying: "It means a lot to people who don't have anything."



NVFS volunteers, including a team from Serco (above, left), organized donations and stuffed backpacks according to grade and gender of the recipient. Many individuals, groups and companies held supply drives, including a team from Dominion Virginia Power, who collected donations from shoppers in Chantilly this summer. More than 1,100 backpacks were distributed at SERVE, where clients who came to the Food Distribution Center signed up for the program.



Entrepreneurs Honored



The NVFS Hispanic Entrepreneurship Program held its Annual Business Plan Competition to help individuals launch their companies. Congratulations to Roberto Lopez, third place winner; Gabriela Febres, second place winner; and Rosalba Llenas, first place winner.

Become a Foster Parent Change a Life



**Next three-part training session meets on
Saturday, November 16, 23 and December 7**



Families who can take teens are needed. Contact Ginny Snaider, LCSW, for more information or to register, at gснаider@nvfs.org or 571.748.2557.

www.nvfs.org/fostercare

Hope, Hard Work Conquer Homelessness

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This picture of professionalism is only part of the story: when she separated from her husband, she was left to provide for her four kids, ages 8 to 20, on her single income. After losing her apartment, she moved her family further out to Stafford – but soon was overcome by the commute.

Thanks to NVFS, Karen was able to move into SERVE's family shelter, stabilize her situation and within three months moved into a Transitional Housing option.

"I didn't want my kids to fail," she said, "I could not let them wake up on the street." Even better, Karen's children have been able to stay in their schools

for an extended period, providing a greater opportunity for success. She currently is continuing her training and education to help her qualify for affordable housing. Each step of the way increases Karen's self-sufficiency. Karen works closely with her case manager at NVFS to set goals and then go after them.

"It's not a given that you'll get into a program or shelter like SERVE. It's a privilege." Karen cited the many ways residents respect what's been given to them, whether it's abiding by curfew rules, keeping the house clean, or paying the program fee. "SERVE helps people who want to help themselves," said Karen. "It gave me hope, even when I had none."

NVFS Holds Summer Commencement Ceremonies for School, Jobs Programs



Training Futures, NVFS' job development program, celebrated new beginnings for Cycle 22. These 42 graduates join more than 1600 alumni who have added qualified, entry-level talent for our local workforce. Congratulations!



Before receiving their diplomas in August, children from NVFS' **Head Start** program performed the songs "Do You Remember" and, fittingly, "Adios." These rising kindergartners each received a backpack full of supplies as part of NVFS' Back to School program, as well as a special scrapbook that was made by volunteers from Deloitte to capture their memories from Head Start.



New Leadership Joins NVFS

Northern Virginia Family Service recently rounded out its corporate leadership team with the addition of Laurie Tarpey and Jacqueline Dendievel.

Laurie Tarpey serves as Chief Financial Officer for NVFS, where she is responsible for



financial and operational management of the agency. Most recently, Laurie was vice president of finance for ENC Strategy in McLean.



Jacqueline Dendievel, SPHR, is NVFS' new vice president for human

resources. Jacqueline was a senior human resource manager at Leidos (formerly SAIC), part of a team that supported the company's national security sector.

Both Laurie and Jacqueline have volunteered for nonprofits. Laurie participated in pro bono work through Compass, where she worked with the board of directors at a DC-based agency on a board assessment and best practices. Jacqueline began her career in arts management and later volunteered for NVFS' Training Futures program, offering job preparation training for trainees.

NVFS Improves Health Of Hispanic Families

NVFS celebrated its highest turnout at its third Salsa Sabor y Salud workshop this summer. The eight-week health initiative seeks to help Hispanic families lead a healthier lifestyle, including increased physical activity and healthier food choices.

Marbella Lopez attended the program to learn as much as she could about health and well-being for her family. She was inspired to keep up with daily physical activity after seeing how easily aerobics could be incorporated into daily living without equipment or accessories.

Another program participant, Gilda de Fuentes, learned about the different purposes of fruits and vegetables. "It is important to eat healthier foods – more fruits and vegetables – and not just potatoes and rice, which are common in the Hispanic diet and can sometimes be too loaded in carbohydrates."

In addition to a nutrition workshop and physical activity, the program provided a separate educational workshop for the children that included short interactive lessons on nutrition, a physical activity and playtime.

The goal of the youth workshop was to show children that living a healthy lifestyle can be fun and easy. De Fuentes expressed her contentment with the children's workshops, saying that her three year old daughter, Camila, lit up with joy whenever it was time to attend and was very fond of the caregivers.



Summer Fun '13: Swimmers & Shoppers



Above: Fifty Bridlewaves Swim Team members of Gainesville swam 51 miles and raised more than \$1,600 for SERVE this summer. **Below:** A little rain could not deter Friends of SERVE at its SERVE-In Up Summer fundraiser, which has raised nearly \$2,500 for the shelter and food distribution center over the last two years.



Left: Mary Agee, NVFS president and CEO, thanks Steve Alloy, president of Stanley Martin Homes and Russell Rosenberger, HomeAid Northern Virginia president, for their leadership and support of one of NVFS' housing properties. Forty-seven trade partners gave materials and labor valued at \$140,000 to combat homelessness in our community.

Summer '13: New Thrift Store & Camp Fun



NVFS' new thrift store, Save 'N' Serve, is now open on Route 234 in Manassas (10360 Portsmouth Road). Thomas, Enid, Kristin, Linda, Gloria, Raul, Alex and Jamal welcomed shoppers on opening day, who lined up early for great bargains! The store joins the Clock Tower Thrift Shops in Centreville and Falls Church as an important source of revenue for NVFS programs and services. For more information about hours of operation, donating, or volunteering, please visit www.nvfs.org/thriftshops.



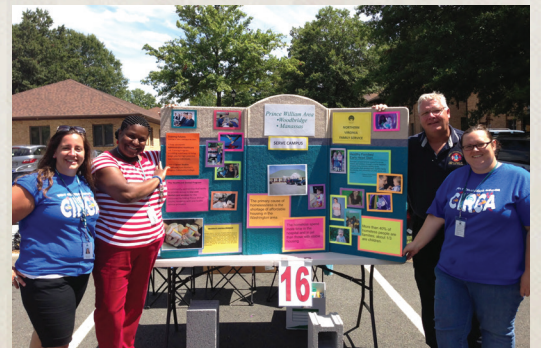
Above: Many thanks to the City of Manassas Park Department of Parks & Recreation, who, for the last four years, has provided scholarships and transportation to its summer camp for children staying at the SERVE shelter. Kids attended sports camp or weekly "themed" camps, including magic camp, cooking camp, and robotics camp! "We value the accessibility of our program, and giving kids the opportunity to swim, play and make new friends," said Anthony Thomas, recreation supervisor. Some campers, pictured above, are packed and ready for swim camp.

Healthy Families Includes Car Seat Safety

Healthy Families, Early Head Start, and Prince William County Department of Fire & Rescue helped kids stay safe this August! Staff and volunteers were able to distribute and install 73 new car seats via the Virginia Department of Health's Low-Income Safety Seat Distribution and Education Program. A big thank you to Bob Wall from Prince William County Fire & Rescue for his help with car seat installations and safety checks on both days of the event, and also to NVFS volunteers Melanie and Jonathon Stepney!

NVFS partners with the Virginia Department of Health to distribute free car seats to qualifying clients who attend a video and hands-on training. "For Healthy Families, safety of the children inside and outside the home is a priority," emphasized Milenka St. Clair, a Family Support Worker with Healthy Families Prince William. "We want to make sure that parents have the knowledge needed in order to make the right choices."

The Greater Prince William Community Health Center hosts this annual event as part of the National Health Center Week. Early Head Start and Healthy Families staff are trained to install the car seats distributed through the program, and two staff members are nationally certified to perform safety checks on any car seat.



Mandi Fisher, Rashanda Jenkins, Prince William County Department of Fire & Rescue's Bob Wall and Leigh Pandolfi educate the community about car seat safety.

Head Start Staff Go to the Head of the Class

While summer is a traditional “vacation” time for students, NVFS sent two of their staff back to class! Shereen Ali, Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) education and disability coordinator, and Rashanda Jenkins, MSW, Early Head Start home-based program supervisor, Prince William, were selected to participate in the Johnson & Johnson Head Start Management Fellows Program at UCLA. The two-week, intensive training session covers the topics of human resource management, organization design and development, finance, computers and information systems, and operations and marketing – all from a strategic planning perspective. Rashanda and Shereen reflected on their experience below.*

Q: Who participated in the Johnson & Johnson Management Fellows Program?

There were a total of 39 participants in the Management Fellowship Program representing Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) Programs from across the country, including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Rhode Island, Navajo Nation, Washington D.C., Arkansas, Texas and Williamsburg.

Q: Describe a typical day at the program.

Fellows began courses at 8:00 a.m. and concluded by 8:00 p.m., each day. Classes were designed to help prepare fellows to complete their Management Improvement Plans. Evening sessions were comprised of Learning Groups in which students worked closely with their Teaching Assistant to complete their Management Improvement Plans. TA's created an atmosphere where fellows could ask questions, gather feedback and share ideas.

Q: You had to prepare a “Management Improvement Plan” for NVFS. What are some highlights from that plan? Has anything been implemented to date?

We wanted our MIP to focus on improving observational skills of all of our EHS staff. Observations are key in being able to individualize care for infants and toddlers, to be able to talk to parents and to accurately inform child assessment on growth and development. So the MIP will address the acquisition improvement and documentation of observation skills. We will be implementing an evaluation process that measures acquisition of observational skills needed to get our children enrolled ready for school.

Congratulations Shereen and Rashanda, who represented NVFS at this year's Johnson & Johnson Head Start Management Fellows Program at UCLA this summer.

Q: What were some take-aways from the program?

Rashanda: For me, the program was by far the best educational and professional development experience of my life. We worked closely with professors who believed in the benefits of Early Head Start and Head Start Programs and the impact that it has on children across the nation. I learned about my leadership style, how to make decisions as a leader and be comfortable in my decision making. I learned about effective communication, including marketing my program and designing charts for data analysis. It was an honor to sit in a room full of individuals invested in the mission and purpose of EHS and HS.

Shereen: I concur with Rashanda – the program introduced us to other HS programs in the country and we met several individuals whose contributions to Head Start are extremely motivating. We now are part of the listserv for all J&J participants, and it is a great resource to be able to connect with similar minds.

*Head Start at NVFS is a year-round program.



You Are Part of the Solution!

Volunteer • Donate • Get Involved



Walk the Dog, Read a Book, Do the Wave...and Help the Homeless

Visit our YouTube page or follow the link from our home page for creative and fun ways you can help the homeless! With this year's "virtual walk," you only need to make a donation to this year's event, and Fannie Mae will do the rest, providing organizations with a \$5,000 incentive for registering 500 walkers. Registration is \$30 (\$20 for youth 25 and under), and must be made by October 31. Special thanks to Borderline and their team for their fantastic video production!

BORDERLINE a media company



Join Us! Upcoming NVFS Events

Empty Bowls

The Chapel Springs Assembly of God (11500 New Life Way, Bristow, Va. - formerly Manassas Assembly of God) will host Empty Bowls, with all proceeds raised to benefit SERVE on Friday, Oct. 11, 5-8 p.m. Participants will receive a handcrafted bowl and share in soup, bread and dessert. www.nvfs.org/emptybowls

New BB&T 5K

NVFS is the beneficiary of a new 5K run and walk on Sunday, Oct. 13 at Fairfax Corner. Kids can run with Abe of the Washington Nationals Racing Presidents! To register, go to www.bbt5k.com.

New Scavenger Hunt!

Teams of five adults will work together to solve a variety of clues around Old Town Manassas on Saturday, Oct. 26, to benefit SERVE. With Halloween just five days later, teams will be rewarded for their creatively-themed costumes. Participants are invited to Malones after the event for appetizers and drink specials.

Please visit www.nvfs.org/scavengerhunt for registration information, or contact Samantha Hunter, shunter@nvfs.org, with questions.



CARE Awards

Join NVFS in honoring companies in Northern Virginia who are leaders in providing innovative and supportive family-friendly policies, programs and services. The breakfast ceremony will be held Thursday, Nov. 14, 7:30 a.m., at the Waterford Fair Oaks. www.careawards.net



Northern Virginia Family Service

Holiday Initiatives



Operation Turkey

Gift cards (\$10 increments)
Non-perishable food donations

Manassas Adventist Prep School
8225 Barrett Drive • Manassas, VA

	Drop-off
Sat. Nov 9	10am-3pm
Thurs. Nov 14	10am-5pm
Fri. Nov 15	10am-5pm



Gifting for Families

Gift cards (\$25 Wal-Mart or Target)
Toy donations (esp. ages 0-7 & teen)

13926 Metrotech Drive • Chantilly, VA

	Drop-off
Fri. Dec 13	1pm-5pm
Sat. Dec 14	1pm-4pm
Mon. Dec 16	9am-5pm
Tues. Dec 17	10am-6pm

Or simply donate online! For more information, visit nvfs.org/holidayprograms

About Us



Northern Virginia
Family Service

Northern Virginia Family Service is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to helping vulnerable families and children. Each year, NVFS helps more than 36,000 people through our continuum of programs in:

- Early Childhood Services
- Child Placement Services
- Health & Mental Health Services
- Legal Services
- Housing Services
- Intervention & Prevention Services
- Workforce Development Services



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