

Children's Home News

Children's
Home Society
of West Virginia

*All Hands
on Deck*

*Working & Supporting
West Virginia's Children*

Children's Home Society of West Virginia

On behalf of the Children's Home Society's Board of Directors and staff we hope you enjoy this spring edition of the Children's Home News. West Virginia is an amazing state where its citizens work hard to help each other all throughout our communities. The Children's Home Society always takes an "all hands-on deck approach". It is not one or a few of us, it is all of us each day fulfilling our mission and vision while embracing our values. All hands on deck can best be explained by understanding that together we are stronger, together we accomplish more and together we get things done. Our most vulnerable children depend on us, we must fill the gaps, each doing more, so more can be accomplished. We do not wait for others to do what is needed, we step up and put all our hands-on deck.

Mary A. White

Chief Executive Officer

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."

- Henry Ford

Children's Home Society Announces Ruth Eden Bailey Adoption Advocacy Award Winner

The Children's Home Society of West Virginia (CHSWV) hosted its Annual Conference on November 9, 2023 at the Holiday Inn & Suites in Charleston, WV. To open the conference, Marie Keaton was named the winner of the 3rd Annual Ruth Eden Bailey Adoption Advocacy Award.



Marie Keaton

Marie is a tenured employee of CHSWV, having worked for the agency for 14 years. She relentlessly reaches out to various leadership in the Department of Health and Human Resources, West Virginia Court System, and various lawyers to ensure the children she works with get adopted without barriers. Marie has spent countless hours on the phone educating others on the adoption process and how things 'should be done' according to law. Because of her efforts, Adoption Attorney, Bob Noone, is offering a public training to child welfare employees, lawyers, and other officials on adoption. He is also training CHSWV Foster Families on this same subject, to ensure families know how to advocate for their children. Marie enlisted other CHSWV staff to aide in her tenacious efforts. She continues to strengthen relationships with advocates like Bob Noone, who are passionate about families and adoption. Marie is working hard daily to eliminate the barriers and interruptions in the adoption process, to ensure each child finds their forever family.

About our Honoree



Ruth Bailey

Ruth Eden Bailey dedicated her life to helping children find lifetime families. She was a determined advocate and worked tirelessly to find foster and adoptive homes. Ruth loved working with her families and the children that came into care, she was mission driven and her passion inspired many.

Ruth began her journey with Children's Home Society in 1993 and spent the following three decades changing the lives of hundreds of West Virginia's children. Ruth was always looking for ways to help support foster and adoptive families and thus she initiated the first CHSWV Foster Family Support Group. The foster family support group became significant in that it brought families together to share experiences, to be supportive during struggles and most importantly to celebrate with each other. Today CHSWV foster family support groups are organized across the state thanks to a special woman that was creative, passionate and enthusiastic. Ruth left a legacy of encouragement, love and kindness.

Children's Home Society Announces Nancy Stuart-Tonkin Advocacy Award Winner

Nancy Stuart Tonkin was an amazing advocate, she mobilized, she rallied the troops and she united a force in her efforts to make a difference in the lives of children.

The Children's Home Society of West Virginia hosted its Annual Board Meeting/Dinner on November 9, 2023 at the Holiday Inn & Suites in Charleston, WV. During the meeting, Maxin Bauer was named the winner of the 6th Annual Nancy Stuart-Tonkin Advocacy Award.



Maxin Bauer

When Maxin began school, he began to struggle with reading and in the second grade it was apparent he was not on target with his peers. His adoptive parents reached out to CHSWV for guidance on resources for Dyslexia and they were connected to another foster/adoptive parents who had a daughter that had been diagnosed and had experience in getting testing out of state and working with the school system. It was not an easy process to obtain testing or to get services in place at the school so that Maxin's needs were met.

During the 2023 legislative session, a teacher who had heard Maxin's story invited Maxin to tell his story to the legislators to try and implement changes in West Virginia's school testing process for Dyslexia. Maxin's moms told him that it was up to him but that she would be his driver. Maxin responded with he didn't want kids to have to go through what he did and he wanted to go tell other's his story.

Maxin spent several days at the Capitol speaking to Delegates and Senator's about his story and encouraging them to pass a bill to help other children going through what he did. He discussed the importance of early screenings so that youth could receive services earlier to improve outcomes. As Maxin stated it isn't a disability but a different ability. In addition to a presence in the legislature, Maxin also participated in educating others and bringing awareness through the media. He participated in several interviews for TV, newspaper, as well as Social Media.

Maxin's advocacy led to the passing of House Bill 3035 which passed unanimously. This bill requires that all youth in grade Kindergarten through third grade be screened for Dyslexia twice a year. If indications of Dyslexia are found then the youth can receive proper interventions. Additionally, the bill requires teachers in grades Kindergarten through third grade be trained in Dyslexia. This bill will benefit all children in West Virginia and allow for those with Dyslexia to be identified sooner and interventions started.

Maxin accepting his award with Children's Home Society's Director of Permanency Services, Carna Metheney-White.

Previous winners of the Nancy Stuart-Tonkin Award are: Carna Metheney-White (2018), Beth Cook (2019), Julia Kesler and Marilyn Pearce-Hall (2020), Janet Richmond (2021), and Becky Brown and Yolanda Smith (2022).



About our Honoree

The Children's Home Society of West Virginia Board of Directors established the Nancy Stuart-Tonkin Advocacy Award beginning in 2018 to annually honor an outstanding advocate who has successfully promoted the well-being of children and families in West Virginia.

In the 1970's Nancy Tonkin helped organize the first Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) effort in West Virginia and after that successfully worked to make the MDT's part of the child welfare law. She also helped make the role of guardian ad litem part of public policy. Later she was a leader in getting per diem rates for private agency foster care increased from \$35 to \$55.



Nancy Tonkin

Other child welfare initiatives that Nancy championed included; family resource networks, infant screenings, home visitation and efforts around child abuse prevention. For 40 years Nancy worked to ensure that child welfare laws were designed to protect children and preserve families.

Nancy was a trusted advisor to the Children's Home Society in all public policy matters. She was one of our strongest advocates for our permanency and child well-being efforts.

Children's Home Society Announces AI Wade Storytelling Award Winners

The Children's Home Society of West Virginia met on February 13, 2024 to announce the 2023 AI Wade Storytelling Award winners.

Annually CHSWV staff can submit a special story to the AI Wade Storytelling committee. The review committee then selects the winner or winners for the annual award. Each of the 2023 award winners received a monetary award along with a framed certificate. The committee had great stories to select from and it was a difficult decision to narrow down the winners.

The winners are a few examples of how CHSWV staff navigate challenging circumstances together.

And the winners were: Kimberly Conrad, Michelle Pritchett, and Lisa Weaver.



Kimberly Conrad,
Permanency Social
Worker, Parkersburg



Michelle Pritchett,
Transitional Living Social
Worker, Parkersburg



Lisa Weaver,
Family Support Center
Director, Parkersburg

We would like to thank the following Children's Home Society staff for their wonderful entries: Skylar Bennett, Kelly Franklin, Diana Lucas, Anthony Pettry, and Amanda Runyon. We look forward to many more years of great stories.

About our Honoree

Prior to his retirement, when AI told a story he captivated the audience, he could make a strong individual cry or fill a room with laughter, with words alone. AI was genuine in his storytelling and in his own way and words he spoke with heartfelt compassion. The stories that AI Wade has told over the decades will always remind each of us that we too should have stories to tell, those stories about how a child's life was made better by our own efforts. The stories of struggles and challenges, and most importantly the stories that left children with wonderful memories.



AI Wade

Children's Home Society Opening New Children's Home

On March 12, 2024, the Children's Home Society of West Virginia broke ground in Shady Spring, West Virginia to build a new Children's Home. The Matthew Pack Children's Home event marks the official commencement of construction for this iconic facility. The new children's home will replace the existing CHSWV's Southern West Virginia Exceptional Youth Emergency Child Shelter with a more modern, larger 12-bed home.

For 40 years, the Children's Home Society has been helping children in the Raleigh County community. The Cherry Hill Shelter opened in 1982 on C&O Dam Road in Daniels, WV, serving eight children ages 7 through 17. In 2004, the shelter

became the Southern West Virginia Exceptional Youth Emergency Shelter (SWVEYES) with a 5-bed capacity. The shelter focused on meeting the needs of autistic children and children with developmental delays. At the time, it was the only shelter of its kind. SWVEYES continues to remain the only emergency child shelter in West Virginia that holds a criteria for children with exceptionalities which include; an IQ below 70, Axis II Diagnosis or Autism. The SWVEYES staff help children learn communication skills, coping skills and how to become independent.

The new Children's Home should be open and assisting children by the first quarter of 2025.



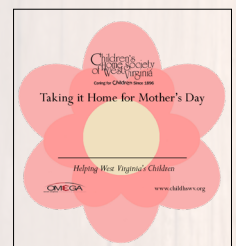
Rendering of the new Matthew Pack Children's Home



2024 Mother's Day Campaign

The WV Oil Marketers and Grocers Association members are united together in a full effort, everyone of them to the rescue, helping children when every hand is needed across the state.

The Children's Home Society has partnered with the West Virginia Oil Marketers and Grocers Association for 14 years to promote Children's Home Society's statewide Mother's Day Campaign. Flowers could be purchased in honor of Mother's Day at participating OMEGA stores throughout West Virginia. We would like to thank the following OMEGA members who participated in the 2024 campaign: DeFazio Oil, Little General, Go-Mart, Par Mar, BFS, ROCS, and City Ice & Fuel.





ALL HANDS

When a ship is at sea, and a crisis arises, the Captain call's for "all hands on deck". It is an all hands on deck approach at the Children's Home Society. Regardless of the day or time, it is the significant collective action and unity of staff, Board Members, Director Emeritus, volunteers, families, donors & supporters that saves the day.



"Coming together is a beginning; staying together is progress; working together is success."

- Edward Everett Hale





ON DECK

"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team."

- Phil Jackson



"The way to achieve your own success is to be willing to help somebody else get it first."

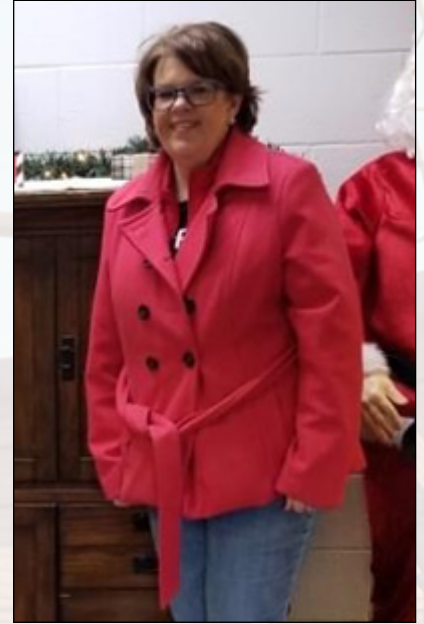
- Iyanla Vanzant



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Board of Director, Marie Long

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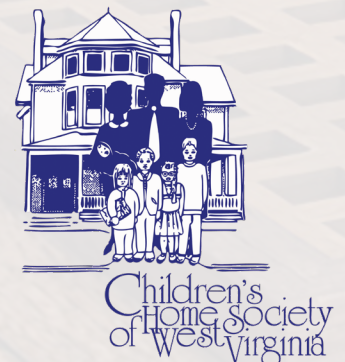
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* Deceased

Chief Executive Officer

Mary A. White



CHSWV LOCATIONS

Child and Family Services:

BECKLEY

P.O. Box 575
Daniels, WV 25832
Jenna Miller,
Permanency Supervisor
LaAmy'a Manley,
Independent Living
Program Supervisor
304.712.2903

CHARLESTON

1145 Greenbrier St.
Charleston, WV 25311
Amanda Williams,
Site Manager
304.345.3894

GLENVILLE

7 South Lewis St.
Glennville, WV 26351
Frank Witte,
Safe at Home
Wraparound Facilitator
304.804.7185

HUNTINGTON

203 6th Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
Diana Lucas,
Regional Director
681.378.2530

LEWISBURG

9579 Seneca Trail South
Lewisburg, WV 24901
Mary Carr,
Site Manager
304.647.3430

MARTINSBURG

100 South Queen St.
Martinsburg, WV 25401
Ami Sirbaugh,
Regional Director
304.264.4658

MORGANTOWN

11 Commerce Drive, Suite 102
Morgantown, WV 26501
Abby Miller,
Site Manager
304.284.0992

NORTHFORK

34149 Coal Heritage Rd.
Northfork, WV 24868
Becky Brown,
Volunteer Program Coordinator
304.862.4951

PARKERSBURG

1717 St. Marys Ave.
Parkersburg, WV 26102
Jodi Null,
Site Manager,
304.485.0650

PRINCETON

205 Center St.
Princeton, WV 24740
Jenna Miller,
Site Manager
304.431.2424

ROMNEY FOSTER CARE

301 East Main St.
Romney, WV 26757
Sally Johnson,
Regional Director
Bethany Chapell,
Permanency Supervisor
304.822.4652

SUMMERSVILLE

402 Church Street, Suite 1
Summersville, WV 26651
Stormy Murphy,
Site Manager
304.900.3620

WHEELING

1329 National Rd.
Wheeling, WV 26003
Kara Clevenger,
Site Manager
304.810.2460

Child Shelters:

ARTHUR N. GUSTKE CHILDREN'S HOME

1640 St. Marys Ave
Parkersburg, WV 26102
Kelsey Cline,
Shelter Supervisor
304.424.5244

DAVIS CHILD SHELTER

1145 Greenbrier St.
Charleston, WV 25311
Jamie Holmes,
Shelter Supervisor
304.345.3891

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA EXCEPTIONAL YOUTH EMERGENCY SHELTER

142 Cherry St.
P.O. Box 361
Daniels, WV 25832
LaAmy'a Manley,
Shelter Supervisor
304-255-0408

JUNE MONTGOMERY HARLESS CHILDREN'S HOME

1 June Harless Dr.
P.O. Box N
Holden, WV 25625
Amanda Runyon,
Shelter Supervisor
304.239.2470

HOVAH HALL UNDERWOOD CHILDREN'S HOME

2586 Grant Gardens Rd.
Ona, WV 25545
Aaron Benedict,
Shelter Supervisor
304.743.2345

KATHLEEN & JOHN FALTIS CHILDREN'S SHELTER

477 Scenic Highway
Summersville, WV 26651
Carl Hayes,
Shelter Supervisor
304.872.8190

GREENBRIER VALLEY CHILDREN'S HOME

331 Seventh Street
Rupert, WV 25984
Jennifer Sams,
Shelter Supervisor
304.645.1302

ROMNEY CHILD SHELTER

550 West Sioux Lane
Romney, WV 26757
John Rohrbaugh,
Shelter Supervisor
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1422 Kanawha Blvd., East
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