

News From The Village

the children's
village

Summer 2013



“They helped me realize there was so much more that I could do with my one life.”

Eric was just a kid himself when he started taking care of his younger brothers and sisters. Sometimes he did things that were illegal to make sure they had basic things like food. Life has changed a lot for Eric. Now he's employed full-time and building a career.

Getting Out of the Street Life

Eric Artist lives in Yonkers and is the middle child of seven. His mother left them years ago. His father works hard, but is not much for raising young kids, so Eric has raised his younger siblings basically on his own.

“We were on food stamps and didn't have very much, so I did what I thought I had to do to survive.”

As a teenager, Eric began what he calls his street life. He got in with a rough crowd and started selling drugs so that his siblings would have basic things like clothes for school and food.

About a year ago, Eric skipped school and was hanging out in “the square” in downtown Yonkers when a group of older guys jumped him, beat him with sticks and rocks, and stole his cell-phone. It wasn't the first time something like this had happened, but it was the moment he knew he wanted things to change.

“Where I live you can get shot at just walking down the street. I was just counting the days until everyone I cared about was either dead or in jail,” Eric said. “I knew I needed to get out of the street life.”

Eric found out about CV's Education and Employment Center (EEC). “I went to a class at the EEC about job interviews, and it opened up a whole new world to me. I had no idea anything like this existed.”

Eric surprised the CV staff when he started showing up every single day the center was open and attending every workshop and class.

“At that point I had made a choice. I realized that what I was doing was pointless. I have little brothers who need me, and I need to be better for them.”



CV's Education and Employment Center not only helped Eric find a job, but it is helping him build a career.

Innovation Recognized

The Children's Village was awarded the Service Award at the Child Welfare League of America's annual conference in Washington DC. The award was given for “exemplary innovative service resulting in positive and successful outcomes for children”.

Dr. Jeremy Kohomban, who accepted the award, was quick to give the credit to his staff, “This award really goes to the staff at The Children's Village. Day in and day out, it is their hard work and commitment to children and families that drives our success.”



Jeremy Kohomban accepted the award for innovative service from Child Welfare League of America CFO Ray Bierria.

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About The Village

Founded in 1851, The Children's Village works in partnership with families to help society's most vulnerable children so that they become educationally proficient, economically productive, and socially responsible members of their communities.

Coming "Home" to Children's Village

An Alumnus Looks Back

Juan Carlos Lopez had two short stints in prison and kept getting into trouble. When he was sent to CV (in the 1990's) he admits he didn't want to stay. "But it didn't take me long to get it, to know that people actually cared for me here. I never had that before, and I realized that I loved it here."

Juan Carlos was proud to share with us the fact that he has a steady job as a truck driver for Steiner Foods and is attending school to get his Class A license. He recently became engaged and he and his fiance, Jessica, are hoping to start a family someday.



66 Years Ago at CV

Catherine Kauvkin was the House Mother of 24 boys in Rose Cottage in 1946. Last month, she visited CV with her daughter and reminisced with staff. She mentioned a pond for swimming that the boys loved, the \$10 she earned each month, and a party her boys received because they had no runaways for five months.



"When I left Children's Village, the boys ran outside and surrounded my car," she fondly remembered. "I was a better person because of this experience," Catherine said. "I loved it. It was the best job I ever had."

The Alumni Relations Department helps alumni stay connected with the Village and maintains a database of alumni. Our annual Alumni Picnic is a popular event, helping alum to stay connected with the campus and staff. If you were you part of the Village as either a student or staff member and would like more information, contact RoseAnn Magdaleno by email at rmagdaleno@childrensvillage.org or at 914-693-0600. Visit us online www.childrensvillage.org/alumni.

A Campaign for CV

High-end bath fixture manufacturer Franz Viegener has launched a campaign to donate \$20 to CV for every premium faucet sold through participating outlets. Local companies include Grande Central Showrooms of New York, Green Art Plumbing Supply, Cove Plumbing Supply, and Decoware.

"Strong relationships with the business world like this one help our young people grow into productive members of society who will someday enter the business world themselves," said President and CEO Jeremy Kohomban.



Director of Exports Christian Coleman kicked off the campaign by presenting a check to CV at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair at the Jacob Javits Center.

Social Impact - Graduation

Graduating from high school instead of dropping out changes a student's life. It is an important first step in breaking the cycle of poverty by providing a young person with the skills to enter the workforce successfully.

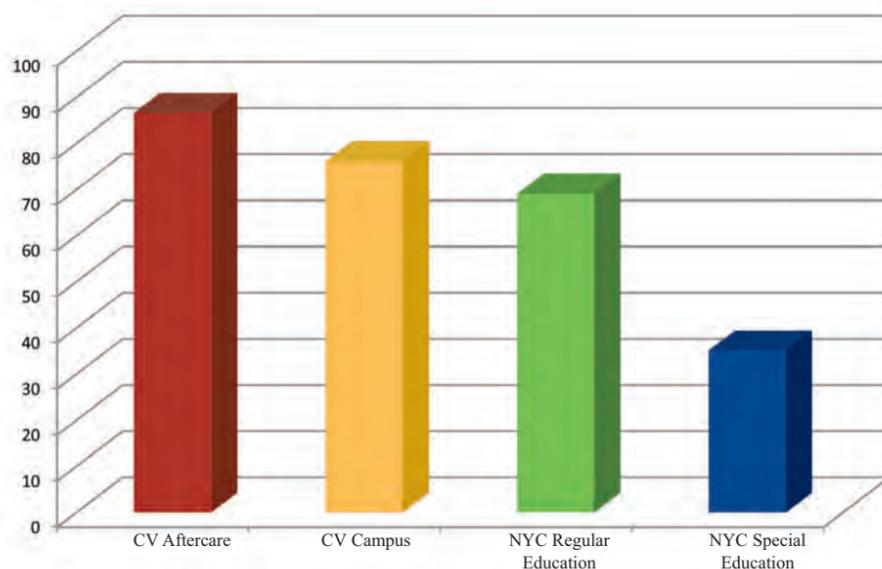
According to Northwestern University, high school graduates earn nearly double what their counterparts do over the course of a lifetime.

In addition, those who do not earn a high school diploma are likely to place a large burden on public services. Columbia University estimates that each black male high school graduate saves the public nearly \$200,000 in taxes

paid and reductions in spending on health care, incarceration, and public assistance.

This year, 83% of seniors in our aftercare program (The WAY Home) and 72% of seniors in our residential school graduated or are expected to graduate this summer. CV's students outperformed students in New York City where only 65% of all students and 31% of special ed students graduated. Every one of our graduates came to us with a history of juvenile crime, severe behavioral and/or emotional problems, almost all were several years behind in their education, and most are classified as special education.

Graduation Rates



Westchester County and Bronxville High Seniors Partner to Help CV

When Bronxville High School was looking for a place for seniors to give back, County Executive Rob Astorino suggested The Children's Village. His staff and that of Westchester County's Department of Social Services and Bronxville High School made it happen.

On June 4, almost 100 students cleared trails, washed service dogs, and planted flowers. They also spent time in the classrooms with the boys playing music together, making cultural flags, and learning about each others' lives. All agreed that we should do it again next year!



Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino talked with the seniors from Bronxville High about the importance of volunteering. He said, "Government is important, but it can't do everything. We need you to make strong communities."

CV Kids at Cirque du Soleil

In June, eight lucky CV children and their families attended a Cirque du Soleil performance in Philadelphia. The group left Harlem at 10 am and returned tired but happy at 11 that night, after not only being in the big top for the first time, but also visiting the historic sites and seeing the Liberty Bell.



"In my 23 years of doing this work, this was the best family event I have ever run," said Parent Educator Donald Somerville. "The parents became parents to all the kids and everyone had a fabulous time." The trip was sponsored by CV's long-time supporter French-American Aid for Children.

Honoring Our Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart of the CV Community. They are mentors to teens without parents, tutors for kids struggling in school, honorary aunts and uncles to cottages, and much more.

This year, we celebrated their stories at our Volunteer Recognition Night. Nearly 100 volunteers, joined by the CV boys they volunteer with, had dinner prepared by our Culinary Arts students. The annual event is a small way to say thank you to the hundreds of individuals who are changing lives at CV every day.



Volunteers from PepsiCo (l to r) Rachelle Colas, Davon Roberts, and Lanice Byfield are part of a group that adopted Johnson Cottage.



Mentor Elizabeth Fabian and mentee Azaryah Y.



School-based Mentor Suyash Bhatt and his parents. Suyash volunteered in our program for two years. He's going off to college in the fall.

Deutsche Bank at CV

Deutsche Bank joined us in a community service project on May 31. The group, led by CV Trustee Michael Woods, worked hard on landscaping projects across the campus. They topped their day off with a lethal game of softball against some of our more competitive residents who annihilated them! In spite of going home with sore backs, the Deutsche Bank volunteers vowed to return.



June Was Morgan Stanley Month

More than 60 Morgan Stanley volunteers came to CV in June in five separate groups. They blew up balloons and sorted prizes for our first Family Fun Day and created beautiful cottage gardens that our residents and staff will enjoy all summer.

In addition to participating in Morgan Stanley Month, a MS group has adopted our Butler Cottage boys. Twice a month, they play basketball and board games, barbeque, and just hang out.

Morgan Stanley has been a friend of CV for many years and we truly appreciate all they do for us.

What a Mentor teaches ...without knowing it.

Tom and Wendy Gardner have been mentors to Jeremy for six and a half years, continuing the relationship through some really difficult times. Below is an email Jeremy's social worker sent to the Gardners:

"Tom and Wendy—you may not see the impact your mentoring has had on Jeremy, but know that he sees the world through a different lens because of the time and energy you have provided to him. Most of what he has learned is not what you have purposely taught him, but what you taught him by just living your life naturally, things like...



Tom and Jeremy

- How to be on time for appointments and to call when you are running late
- How to be organized and keep things secure (by offering to keep his vital documents in your home)
- How to support the person you are in a relationship with
- How to work together as a couple/team
- How to love unconditionally
- How to disagree without becoming violent/aggressive
- How to keep money organized and spend appropriately.

Thank you for your work with him. I know that it will continue as long as he needs you.

Stephanie Gamzon, LMSW
Social Work Supervisor



The Gardners at the Circle of Friends Annual Dinner



News From The Village

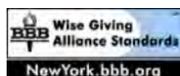
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Want to stay up-to-date on The Children's Village? Visit childrensvillage.org and click "Join our Mailing List".
Know someone who may be interested in our work? Pass along this newsletter to spread the word!

Learn More about CV's Leadership Council



We are young professionals working in the greater NYC area interested in supporting at-risk youth in the pursuit of success. While we grow and advance in our careers, we want to make a difference in the lives of children and families through our time and resources. Our next event is our 4th Annual Backpack Fundraiser on August 27 at the Frying Pan in Manhattan. The funds are used to buy school supplies for kids who live in the Polo Grounds Housing Development in Harlem.

www.childrensvillage.org/leadershipcouncil

Save the Dates! Fun Events with our Friends of the Village

- 8/27/2013 4th Annual Backpack Fundraiser for the Polo Grounds
The Frying Pan, New York NY
- 9/17/2013 10th Annual Golf and Tennis Classic
St. Andrew's Golf Club, Hastings-on-Hudson NY
- 10/23/2013 The "Sally" Paddle Tennis Tournament
Fox Meadow Tennis Club, Scarsdale NY
- 10/26/2013 Masquerade Gala
Historic Roosevelt Ballroom, Yonkers NY
- 5/08/2014 Circle of Friends Annual Dinner
Chelsea Piers – Lighthouse, New York NY
- 5/08/2014 Connect 4 A Cause After Party
Chelsea Piers – Lighthouse, New York NY

www.childrensvillage.org/events

EEC Cont.

Eric now has two jobs. For over a year, he has worked in a nursing home doing maintenance, coordinating deliveries, and working the overnight security shifts. A few months ago, he earned his Security Guard License through the EEC and picked up another job in loss prevention.

"This program changed me into someone I never thought I could be," Eric said of the EEC. "They helped me realize there was so much more that I could do with my one life."

CV Hosts Family Fun Day

Face painting, bouncy castles, Smooch-a-Pooch, Pepsi Next Taste Test, Knicks Groove Truck, food cooked by our culinary arts students, story time by our Little Village Day Care teachers... All were part of CV's first Family Fun Day at Waterfront Park in Dobbs Ferry.

Thank you to ECAD, The NY Knicks, The Garden of Dreams Foundation, PepsiCo., local businesses, volunteers, and performers for helping make this event a success. And a super thank you to the Village of Dobbs Ferry, a great partner. To see a full list of supporters and pictures from the event, visit

www.childrensvillage.org/family-fun-day

