



Hope for the future, power in the present.

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KEYWORDS



BOARD OF CHILD CARE
of The United Methodist Church, Inc.

Branching Out: BCC's Expansion into Southern Maryland Helps Keep Kids Close to Family and Community

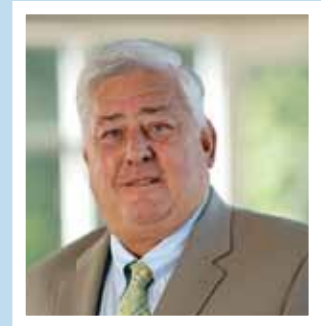
More than a year has passed since the Board of Child Care acquired Alternatives for Youth and Families (AFYF) and since that time the program has quickly become an integral part of the agency.

AFYF was a much smaller human service agency when BCC acquired the Southern Maryland-based program in August 2010, but BCC has since expanded AFYF with in-house services and has strengthened relationships with the local referring agencies in St. Mary's, Calvert and Charles counties, resulting in an increase in youth served.

With the Alternatives program now under our wing, BCC has a Treatment

Foster Care program that directly serves youth in the tri-county area and Prince Georges County, and for the first time operates Therapeutic Group Homes and an Independent Living program.

In the Therapeutic Group Home program, one home in Waldorf houses up to six girls ages 12 to 17, and the other home in Prince Frederick houses up to eight boys ages 12 to 17. These homes assist youth in overcoming severe behavioral and emotional problems at home, school or elsewhere in the community, while at the same time connecting them with supportive resources. *(continued on page 4)*



President's Message

Thirty years ago, a group of parents and citizens concerned about the lack of adequate services for youth in Southern Maryland founded Alternatives for Youth and Families (AFYF). They wanted to develop treatment programs for youth who were either underserved or sent out of the area to receive needed services.

Over the years, this small organization evolved from one 12-bed group home to an array of programs serving boys and girls through age 21 and embracing the philosophy of family reunification, family involvement and community-based treatment. AFYF created a solid name for itself

(continued on page 4)



Treatment Foster Care: Our Foster Parents: Hilda Mackall's Story

Hilda Mackall poses for a photo with one of her former foster youth at a party in 2010 celebrating her 20 years of service as a foster parent.



After 21 years as a foster parent, Hilda Mackall says she is still learning new things. "I'm still learning because each child is different and each generation is different," she says.

Ms. Mackall holds the distinction of being the longest serving foster parent out of all the foster parents who currently work with the Board of Child Care. A resident of Calvert County, she works for the Treatment Foster Care program run by BCC's Alternatives for Youth and Families program.

At age 72, Ms. Mackall has slowed down a bit and currently only takes children and youth on a respite foster care basis – an important service provided to full-time foster parents who need a break for as little as a couple days or as much as a couple weeks. Ms. Mackall has been a foster parent so long that she has forgotten exactly how many children have lived with her over the years. But the widower of 23 years—whose biological son also passed away six years ago - remembers all of her foster children as family members.

"I've gotten a lot out of being a foster parent," she says. "There've been ups and downs but when you find a child has reached his goal, that is rewarding to me."

Ms. Mackall says the qualities that have helped her succeed as a foster parent are being a people person, being patient and not giving up easily, and being able to see the good in every child.

"It is important to show the child that you care," she says. "I tell my kids all the time 'I'm here to help you, not to hurt you.'"

Matt Champion says the year he lived with Ms. Mackall in 1994 when he was just 16 helped him eventually reunite with his aunt and uncle, who had legal custody of him before he went into foster care. He had not been getting along with his uncle but Ms. Mackall helped him see things from his uncle's point of view.

"She's a sweet person. She's always trying to look out for people and that's what I liked about her," says Champion, who now lives in Georgia, makes car parts for a living, is getting ready to get married,

and still calls Ms. Mackall regularly.

Most of the foster children Ms. Mackall has helped over the years have been teenage boys, but she has had children as young as 7. She says the work hasn't always been easy but she first works to get the kids' behavior under control and find out what their immediate needs are. Then she works on helping them achieve certain goals, namely graduating from school, getting a driver's license and getting a job.

"I always tell them there is a real world out there. Don't look for hand-me-outs at all times. You have to go out there and get it yourself," she says.

Many of Ms. Mackall's former foster children, like Mr. Champion, have stayed in touch with her and periodically call and write her letters. One young man who she once fostered drove through harsh weather conditions during last year's blizzard to dig her out of the snow.

Whenever she does hear from her former kids, she says, "My heart rejoices. I feel I really said or did something that helped them get along in the world."

Jasmine's Story

With the help of BCC's residential and treatment foster care programs, Jasmine is now happily reunited with her father.



Eleven-year-old Jasmine has spent much of her young life yearning to be with her father. At the same time, her father has spent much of his time trying to get her back into his care. The Board of Child Care finally helped them reunite through the agency's Residential program and Treatment Foster Care program.

When Jasmine arrived at BCC's Baltimore campus, her behavior was out of control. Her father, Bryan Johnson, admits he was forced to give her up to the social services system because of her behavior. As a single dad to Jasmine and her two sisters, Mr. Johnson had struggled for years to hold on to his daughters due to his serious health issues. At one point, the girls had to live with relatives and then in foster care. When Mr. Johnson finally regained custody of all three, Jasmine was with him just six months before he realized she was too much for him to handle. "You couldn't leave Jasmine alone," Mr. Johnson says of his daughter's behavioral issues at that time. "She needed a lot of attention, around the clock."

At BCC, Jasmine was first placed in the residential program where she lived in a cottage with other girls close to her age and was constantly supervised by BCC's social workers, therapists and medical staff. All the while, she maintained contact with her father.

After nearly a year in residential care, which helped stabilize her behavior and provide her with specialized therapeutic attention, Jasmine was placed in BCC's Treatment Foster Care program and introduced to foster mom Delphene Bailey.

Even though Jasmine was still working on her behavior issues, her BCC social worker, Lindsey Yurow, says, "Being in a foster care setting helped her learn how to live with a family again while also getting the extra therapeutic services she needed."

Ms. Bailey said Jasmine was a "handful" at first but she always teaches the

children in her home to have respect for themselves and to work hard in school. Jasmine eventually accomplished this while living with her.

Ms. Bailey helped Jasmine get into a specialized school program that better met her needs, and at home she kept Jasmine on a routine while at the same time engaging her in fun activities like hiking, biking, swimming and traveling. She also taught Jasmine simple things like how to properly maintain her hair and how to dress appropriately for her age.

After just a few months in the Treatment Foster Care program, Ms. Yurow says, "Jasmine was a completely different person, she was ready to do the work. It helped Jasmine to know we were all working together so that she could get home."

Earlier this year, Jasmine finally reunited with her father. "She's the little girl that I lost five years ago," Mr. Johnson says. "Behavior wise, now I trust her." He also appreciates the special attention Ms. Bailey gave his daughter and the bond they developed.

Jasmine recently asked Ms. Bailey to be her godmother and the two plan to visit regularly. Ms. Bailey says, "I told her, my door and phone are open, just call me. I'm still here for you, until the Lord takes me away."

Thinking About Becoming a Foster Parent?

The Board of Child Care's foster care programs periodically hold orientation sessions for people interested in becoming licensed foster parents with our agency. The sessions for the Baltimore Treatment Foster Care program are held on BCC's Baltimore campus, and the sessions for the Treatment Foster Care program through the Alternatives for Youth and Families program are held

in St. Mary's County. The DC Foster Care program holds orientation sessions at its office in the District.

If foster parenting is not for you, you can help us spread the word about our programs by distributing recruitment fliers or inviting a member of BCC's staff to talk to your church congregation, organization or community group.

To contact us about attending an orientation session or obtaining recruitment materials, call 410-922-2100, ext. 5462, or 443-677-2210, for the Baltimore or Southern Maryland programs. Call 202-291-3330, ext. 107, for the DC program. Information is also available at www.boardofchildcare.org/foster/index.php.

President's Message

(continued from page 1)

and served hundreds of youth. But as the needs within the community continued to grow, AFYF's staff and Board of Directors realized they needed to grow with this demand, but lacked the financial resources.

This is when they turned to BCC for help. Last year we acquired AFYF, helping to keep this vital program alive. Even before we acquired the program, we began managing and pouring financial and staff resources into AFYF once we determined the program fit and furthered our mission to serve children and families within the communities where they live.

In this issue of *Keywords*, we share with you more details about AFYF's unique array of services and how they have helped expand BCC's reach into Southern Maryland. In acquiring AFYF, we've been fortunate to also acquire a group of experienced foster parents who have worked with the program for years and continue to work with AFYF under our leadership.

One of these people is Hilda Mackall. If we had the ability to

(continued on page 6)

Branching Out *(continued from page 1)*

The Independent Living program based in St. Mary's County serves youth ages 17 to 21 who reside with a roommate in apartments operated by BCC. Independent Living Program staff provide on-site, round-the-clock support with independent living skills training, individual therapy and psychiatric care. The youth are required to pursue educational goals, maintain employment, do community service and participate in independent living skills training.

Monte Ephraim serves as the Assistant Executive Director of the AFYF program. The following are questions she recently answered for *Keywords* readers:

Since acquiring Alternatives, how have we expanded and strengthened the services of the program?

"The services offered by AFYF serve the same geographical area but are now more indicative of the traditional, quality care provided by the Board of Child Care. Our programs have in-house clinicians and a psychiatrist, and we also handle our own case management, which AFYF had previously outsourced. As a result, AFYF's quality of care, community collaboration and program resources have naturally expanded."

How is the TFC program the same/different from our Baltimore TFC program and how has it grown under our direction?

"The AFYF Treatment Foster Care program mirrors the Treatment Foster Care program in Baltimore. It has grown qualitatively under our direction. We are now receiving more referrals and more local parents and families are expressing



interest in foster parenting and becoming certified. The treatment foster care parents who previously worked under AFYF and who have remained with us have also proven to be excellent resources for us."

How are we helping youth through the Therapeutic Group Home program?

"The Therapeutic Group Home program is a unique opportunity to provide a continuum of care for our youth. We can step youth down to our Treatment Foster Care program or provide this step-down service for youth coming from a more restrictive setting. The Therapeutic Group Homes also serve as a transitional program for youth moving home or into our Independent Living program or another independent living program."

How are we helping youth through the Independent Living Program?

"Youth in the Independent Living Program are assessed, supported and go through a curriculum that builds on their strengths and needs. While in the program they prepare to become self-sufficient by securing housing, employment and access to community resources. They also strengthen and identify relationships with family."

BCC Welcomes New Vice President of Operations

The Board of Child Care is pleased to welcome Mary Rode to the staff as the new Vice President of Operations and Chief Strategy Officer. Ms. Rode comes to BCC from Catholic Charities and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in child welfare to the agency.

Ms. Rode's first task at hand has been to move the Baltimore residential program toward becoming more short-term, family-focused and community-integrated to meet new Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) regulations under the Place Matters initiative.



"The groundwork is there. The Board of Child Care has wonderful, committed staff who are responsible for implementing this change. It is just a matter of moving us there, and it is all moving very rapidly," Ms. Rode says.

The changes include ensuring the cottages and housing units better meet the individual needs of the residents.

A new training program for staff and an overall management restructure for the residential program are also being developed.

Among other changes, Ms. Rode is overseeing the implementation of a modified version of the Strawbridge School discipline system into the residential program, and better engaging the Treatment Foster Care program to recruit and connect foster families for the youth in the residential program.

Ms. Rode worked 23 years at Catholic Charities, the last 10 as Administrator of the Child and Family Services Division of the St. Vincent's Center and Villa Maria Residential Treatment Program. She is also Co-Chair of the Maryland Department of Human Resources Provider Council and a member of the State Board of Child Care Administrators.



Pictured at last year's reunion: Jim Mathis (left) and Joseph Maynard hold a photo of the original Strawbridge boys, including Maynard.

Attention All Former Strawbridge "Boys"

The next reunion for the Strawbridge Home for Boys Alumni and their families is Saturday, June 4, 2011, at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Sykesville, Md.

Attendance is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. Registration begins at noon, followed by the invocation and plenty of good food provided by the St. Paul's United Methodist Women at 1 p.m. A brief business meeting will take place after lunch.

Contact Jim Mathis at 410-795-3810, or cts jimmy@aol.com, or Don Smyth at 410-785-2888, or waldon46@comcast.net, for more information.



President's Message

(continued from page 4)

clone Ms. Mackall we would. She is an example of the type of person who has the patience, desire and dedication to provide love and care to youth coping with serious emotional and behavioral issues.

Another outstanding foster parent is Delphene Bailey, who works with our Baltimore Treatment Foster Care program and recently helped one young girl reunite with her biological father. We share her story in this issue as well.

We hope our readers will be inspired when they read about the life-long impact Ms. Mackall and Ms. Bailey have made on young lives. Again, we are in constant need of more people like them who are willing to become foster parents. We ask all of BCC's supporters to help us spread the word about this need and to consider becoming foster parents, because there is no greater way to help create permanent, lifelong connections for children, all of whom deserve a safe and happy life.

Thomas L. Curcio
President and CEO

Safe Haven Reopens

In April, BCC reopened Safe Haven, our former emergency shelter located in Pasadena, Md., as a new group home for up to five adolescent males.

The home provides a full array of services for youth transitioning from more restrictive placements to family placements, and is a unique collaboration between residential staff and licensed social workers from BCC's Treatment Foster Care program who are closely working with the youth during their transition. The program specifically offers short-term stabilization, community linkages for the youth and their families, and mentoring by licensed treatment foster parents.

New Eastern Shore Group Home Taking Shape



Earlier this spring the foundations were in, the wall up and the roofs about to be attached to five buildings—two homes, an activities building, a maintenance shed and a pump house—that will comprise BCC's new group home for boys on the Eastern Shore. BCC plans to begin admitting youth to the program by the fall.





**Board of Child Care
Sixth Annual Golf Tournament
Woodlands Golf Course | September 20, 2011**



Save the Date

The Board of Child Care's sixth Play Fore! Children golf tournament takes place Tuesday, September 20, 2011, at the Woodland's Golf Course in Baltimore County. Those interested in

playing or serving as a sponsor of the event to help raise funds for BCC programming are asked to contact Jim Buckey at 410-922-2100 or jbuckey@boardofchildcare.org.

Registration materials will be posted to www.boardofchildcare.org on the News and Resources page.

Former Kelso Home for Girls Slated for Demolition

BCC is sad to report that a physical part of our history is about to disappear. According to local news reports, the building that housed the former Kelso Home for Girls, one of three orphanages that eventually merged to become the Board of Child Care, is going to be demolished by year's end.

The Towson Family Center Y now owns the four-story Kelso Home, located near the western edge of downtown Towson. The Y of Central Maryland

plans to tear down the Kelso building to make way for a new \$12 million facility. According to the *Towson Times*, the Baltimore County Historical Trust listed Kelso Home as one of the area's most endangered buildings, but did

not nominate the home to become a Baltimore County Landmark.

BCC's Archive and Welcome Center, located on our Baltimore campus, currently houses many old photographs and artifacts from Kelso Home. Members of BCC's Board of Directors plan to visit the Kelso Home one final time to see if anything else can be salvaged for our Archive before the building is taken down.



Rewards for Our Youth Making the Grade

Achieving success in school is an important goal that is emphasized in all of BCC's residential programming. Many of our youth reached this goal this past school year and were recognized for their achievements.

On the Falling Waters campus in West Virginia last winter, 11 residents were recognized during an achievement ceremony and later treated to a special luncheon for achieving a 3.0 or higher GPA. On the Baltimore campus, 10 youth were recognized for achieving honor roll status (all A's and B's) and were invited to dine with Mr. Curcio at a local Italian restaurant in March.

License Renewal

Administratively, Falling Waters continues to score high during its regular licensing review and Medicaid review by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Children and Families.

Both reviews recently involved on-site visits that included facility inspections, interviews with residents and staff, reviews of agency policy and procedure manuals, quality improvement program data and reports, and personnel records, as well as a very comprehensive examination of clinical documentation and practices. The licensing review resulted in the agency receiving a two-year license renewal and the Medicaid review resulted in an overall organizational score of 98.67 percent.

News from the Falling Waters Campus in West Virginia

The residents of the Falling Waters campus enjoyed numerous recreational activities and trips off campus this past winter.

The residents with the top 10 recreation scores attended a snow-tubing trip to White Tail Ski resort in Pennsylvania. Thirty out of the 50 residents on campus also met the criteria for

attending the annual skating party at Galaxy Skate Way, sponsored by the Auxiliary. During spring break, a dozen boys visited Poorhouse Farm for a cookout and fishing, and a dozen girls enjoyed a trip to Smoke Hole

Caverns. Rev. Randy Reid, Spiritual Life Director for the Falling Waters campus, also organized a trip for some of the residents to the National Cathedral and the National Zoo in Washington, DC.



Calling All Volunteers in Southern Maryland— The Auxiliary Needs You!



The Annapolis-Southern Region held a successful Christmas party for the youth in the Alternatives for Youth and Families program last year, and is looking to recruit more volunteers to sponsor more activities in the future.

Mary Beth Allen, First Vice-President of the Annapolis-Southern Region, will never forget the looks on the faces of the youth served by the Board of Child Care's new program in Southern Maryland—Alternatives for Youth and Families (AFYF)—when her Auxiliary district organized a party and Christmas store for them last holiday season.

"They just looked like a happy bunch," Ms. Allen recalls. "We took so many beautiful gifts down there. It was just fabulous."

It was the first time the Auxiliary was able to organize an event for AFYF, which includes a Treatment Foster Care program, Therapeutic Group Homes and an Independent Living program. BCC acquired the St. Mary's County-based AFYF in August 2010.

The Annapolis-Southern Region wants to do much more for the AFYF program, including sponsoring trips and outings to restaurants for the youth, but more Auxiliary volunteers are needed in St. Mary's, Calvert and Charles counties, and more fundraising needs to be organized to pay for such activities.

"People have to be reminded that there is a need out there," says Ms. Allen.

Only about a handful of Auxiliary volunteers organized the Christmas events last year for AFYF. A local Red Hatters group and the volunteer auxiliary from a nearby nursing home also helped out.

Ms. Allen said she helped organize a successful fundraiser at her church, Mt. Harmony-Lower Marlboro UMC, last

year called a "stay-at home tea," in which all parishioners were given an envelope and tea bag with their Sunday bulletin and asked to contribute the amount of money they would have spent if they had attended a tea party. The event fundraiser was well received and raised \$400, Ms. Allen says. She encourages other churches within her district to try a similar fundraiser to benefit BCC's AFYF program.

To find out how you can join the Annapolis-Southern Region Auxiliary or volunteer your time in some way to benefit AFYF, contact Annapolis-Southern Region Auxiliary President Jeannette Thomas, 410-969-5818, or jeanettethomas1@verizon.net, or Mary Beth Allen at 410-257-1472.



Auxiliary Members Honored for Long-Time Service to BCC

The congregation of the Texas United Methodist Church in Cockeysville recently dedicated the transom window above its front doors to Mary Lynne Lloyd, a long-time Auxiliary member who passed away in 2008. Ms. Lloyd's niece and nephew, Susan and Adam Clark, and Dotty Smith, First Vice-President of the Baltimore Suburban District, attended the dedication.

"Because of her dedication to the children of Board of Child Care as a key person for many years, the window used the motif of a ring of children," said Texas UMC Pastor Jan Leith. "Mary will be remembered with thanksgiving for the work she did in missions and for empowering others to participate in the work she believed to be so important. She was a woman who followed the commandment of Jesus to 'let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven' (Matt. 5:16)."

Nannie O. Smith, long-time former key person for Eastern United Methodist Church in Baltimore City, recently visited BCC's Baltimore campus to see the leaf dedicated to her on the Auxiliary's Tree of Life. Ms. Smith is now a resident of Florida. Many leaves and acorns are still available on the Tree for purchase to raise funds for the Auxiliary. Pictured from left: Ernestine Smith, First Vice-President of the Baltimore Metropolitan District and Eastern UMC member, Nannie Smith, Irene M. Gillis, and Howard J. Gillis (Ms. Smith's nephew).



And an Additional Thank You Goes Out To...

This past Christmas season the generosity of the Board of Child Care Auxiliary members was overwhelming and we were very blessed to have churches take on many different projects. We apologize for neglecting to recognize the following churches in the previous *Keywords* for their contributions:

- Brooklyn UMC for making gift baskets;
- Gethsemane UMC for packaging items in gift bags;
- Catonsville UMC for filling holiday mugs with drinks and candy; and
- Chevy Chase UMC for making gift bags.

The churches of the Baltimore-Washington Conference and the Delaware area helped to make the holidays a success for the children. Many hands made light work of an overwhelming task.





BCC Event Receives Standing Ovation

Several hundred people attended the Board of Child Care's first benefit concert with the Handel Choir of Baltimore on April 3 at Goucher College.

The event featured the 50-member Handel Choir, an orchestra and a guest pianist that played a range of music, from Mozart and Beethoven, to a contemporary piece, *This House of Peace*, selected specifically because of the relevance of its lyrics to the work of BCC.

The audience included many supporters—BCC staff, Board of Directors, Auxiliary members, vendors, United Methodist church members and people from the general community who learned about BCC for the first time. The event concluded with a standing ovation.

BCC thanks the many individuals, organizations and companies who supported the event through their attendance, donations, sponsorships and advertisements. The concert sponsors were:

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