

hope news

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The Responsibility of Belonging



When you meet Keisha, the first thing you notice is her smile; a highly contagious smile that radiates warmth and happiness. She is quick to laugh; a lyrical chuckle that hints at her talent for song. Keisha is a woman who has been supported by Hope House Foundation since 2002. She loves living on her own, in her cozy and inviting apartment, but what she values most is her sense of belonging in the community.

Keisha's community is made up of an extensive network of family, membership in a variety of social groups and her many, many friends. For Keisha, a strong sense of belonging stirs an equally strong sense of responsibility.

“I enjoy my community, being a part of it and teaching people about the importance of breast health.”

area; they are a close-knit group; spending holidays, birthdays, and leisurely weekend afternoons together. Keisha's biological mother passed when she was 12, and as a result she moved into foster care. Her adopted mother, who continuously supports Keisha and encourages her to reach for her dreams, raised her and her three sisters: “My mom means the world to me!” On Sundays they go to mass together, her mother sitting in the front row listening as Keisha sings with the choir.

Keisha is active in her community: volunteering, spending time with her friends and family or traveling with her choir. She is also active in Young Life Capernaum, going to weekly meetings, participating in events and outings. As a Junior Leader

in the group, Keisha is the role model for her peers, setting the example by being involved in her community.

This past year Keisha joined Hope House's Breast Health Committee. She is a part of a team that teaches women about the importance of early detection and how to conduct self-exams. She became involved because of her belief in early detection and the knowledge that women with disabilities can often be overlooked when it comes to breast health and screenings.

Keisha became a breast health trainer by taking part in programs offered by Hope House under funds from the Tidewater Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure and in cooperation with the American Cancer Society. Her natural talent for leadership and her passion for advocacy make her both an ambassador and a role model.

This past October Keisha completed the Komen Race for the Cure 5K, in Virginia Beach. She joined her friends on Team Hope House, which included more than 30 people we serve and staff. Despite the cold and rainy weather, Keisha finished the race and cheered her teammates along the way.

For Keisha, life in the community and a sense of belonging are not static concepts, simple labels or obligations. Community is something you actively create, belonging is a two-way street — and both come with the responsibility to give back more than you take. “I enjoy my community, being a part of it and teaching people about the importance of breast health.”



In this issue Hope House Foundation explores the concept of BELONGING





Belonging in Ghent

by Lynne Seagle

Ghent is more than just the Norfolk neighborhood I live in. Ghent is my community. It is where I have lived for over three decades and though other neighborhoods in Hampton Roads are wonderful, I belong in Ghent.

I have worked, played, laughed and cried in this place. I have found and lost love in this neighborhood and I have watched it change from a funky, causal place dominated by college students to an upscale urban environment with a diversity of friends and neighbors.

With all the changes in the neighborhood,



Lynne Seagle

restaurants coming and going, businesses popping up along the borders and the seemingly constant renovation of the old homes and buildings, the familiar still remains for me.

I guess that's what belonging is— knowing the soul of a place so well because you are not separate from it.

This familiarity is not just attached to the shared history I have with this community, but more importantly the sense that living any other place would create a gap that could not be filled. I know my neighbors, walk to friends' homes and see my doctor, my mechanic, and my hair stylist all within a few blocks. I know these streets and recognize subtle changes even in the trees. I have a favorite seat at the NARO and when I am in town I rarely go out to eat anywhere other than here in Ghent. This is my place and from

the first day of living here I knew I was welcomed.

I travel quite often for work, so I am not here as much as I would prefer. Though I am out of Ghent, Ghent is never really out of me. I guess that's what belonging is; knowing the soul of a place so well because you are not separate from it.

This is what Hope House Foundation dreams of achieving more than anything else: supporting people with disabilities in communities where they too, truly belong. Where they are so woven into the fabric of the community that without their presence, something essential would be missing.

My friends in neighboring cities and towns often chide me for rarely going outside of my zip code. Though I laugh along with the ribbing, deep down I know this place I call home anchors me and has shaped who I am in ways that have moved my heart and strengthened my character. There is no greater gift than the gift of belonging.

Dear Lynne,

Although a difficult one, I have made the decision to return to my hometown. From someone that has worked for various agencies, I can say without question that the people supported by Hope House are given a unique opportunity to LIVE and learn in the 'real' world. Employees are afforded the opportunity to think differently and are given their voice. The Leadership has stepped outside of unfavorable systems to forge one of the most natural environments for those supported to pursue their hopes, dreams, and wishes. Thank you for the opportunity to learn, grow and contribute to an organization whose values hold so much meaning.

Deb Wilcher, (Team leader of Enfield Team and full time employee for over 4 years)

Dear Lynne,

The Thrift Store employees are the best! The experience here at the Hope House Thrift Store is nothing less than amazing. The thrift selections are always great. The staff are a pleasure to be around and are always helpful when needed. We love knowing the store is here for us all.

Veronica Vaughn and Gilbert Davis, Loyal Thrift Store customers

What Belonging means to me:

“Belonging means being a part of something – a marriage, a family, an organization, a team. Just being able to say, “I fit in somewhere” and “this includes ME!”

—Amy Morrison, Harbor Gallery

Paying It Forward

The following is an excerpt from a letter sent by Leslye Miller, a community volunteer, to the Hope House Thrift Store Manager, Marina Owens. Ms. Miller expresses appreciation for the Thrift Store's donations to organizations in our community. These donations occur weekly as the store sorts incoming merchandise and rotates its' stock on the sales floor. We are grateful for every donation and work to ensure every item finds a home! If you would like to donate items to our Thrift Store, we are located at 1800 Monticello Avenue or you may call the store at 625-7493 to request our furniture pick-up service.

Dear Marina and the Hope House Staff,

Again in 2009, many people and animals were helped by the clothing and linens donated by the Hope House Thrift Store. Churches, organizations and individuals received your items and gave aid to those in need. Several churches in Norfolk and Portsmouth help those in need all year long and thousands of pounds of your clothing support their work. Two women in Chesapeake established 'Newborns In Need' to provide clothing to babies of needy parents. This year I met a William & Mary student that took your clothes to children in Honduras, and I also met a family collecting clothes to help people in Iraq. Animal shelters and rescue organizations from Norfolk to Hopewell have gratefully received your donations of linens, pillows and stuffed animals. These items give real comfort to dogs, cats, and other animals. In 2009, with the help of my friends Linda and Roberta and all of you, we distributed over *22,500 lbs of shirts, sweaters, pants, jackets and other clothing, blankets, stuffed animals, and linens. **Here are some of the organizations that benefited from your kindness and generosity:**

Norfolk SPCA and Norfolk Animal Care Center
 St. Columbia Homeless Center
 Park Place Methodist Church
 Barrett Transitional Home
 First United Penticoastal Church Portsmouth, Dan & Reba Shepard (helps area needy)
 Chesapeake Animal Control and Portsmouth Humane Society
 New Living Sacrifice Church Norfolk
 Broad Street United Methodist Church Portsmouth
 Va. Beach SPCA and Va. Beach Animal Control
 Hopewell Animal Shelter and Web of Life Animal Outreach For Kids

The comfort from your donations has been felt far and wide. Many thanks to all of you! I look forward to working with you in 2010. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Sincerely, Leslye Miller



Mayor Paul Fraim (far left) and Willie Barnes, Norfolk Environmental Commission Chair (far right) congratulate Kim Rose and Joe Parham at the Award Ceremony.

Joe wins Clean City Hero Award!

We shared a story with you in our Spring 2009 issue introducing you to Joe who worked to clean Barruad Park for Keep Norfolk Beautiful Day. We are pleased to report that Joe, and his Hope House teammate Kim, have since won a Clean City Hero Award. At the award ceremony they each received a Golden Trash Grabber by Mayor Paul Fraim and Willie Barnes, Norfolk Environmental Commission Chair. Since his award, Joe has taken on some smaller cleanup and recycling projects, and is looking forward to nice spring weather to get back to his passion—trash collection on a big scale. We think Joe is a big hero, on any scale!

IN MEMORIAM: Joe Parham Dec. 8, 1952–Jan. 1, 2010

On New Year's Day, long-time friend and Hope House member Joe Parham passed away. The sudden sadness of this news is in stark contrast to Joe's last year of life. To greet Joe was to receive not just a happy 'Hello', but a huge smile, his head tilting back, making his smile seem brighter, and with a steady, open-hand wave. Joe said hello with his whole being. This last year he also lived his life with his entire being. 2009 marked a new era for Joe; he began truly building his life in his community. His life hadn't always been that way. Joe had a reputation for being afraid to try new things; he preferred to do things on his own, refusing to go out with staff or make friends. That's why this past year was so amazing: Joe was the happiest he'd ever been.

Joe's 2009 experiences included reuniting with his sister, Carolyn, and with his father; coordinating community park cleanups and receiving the Clean City Hero award (as celebrated in the article above). Previously shy Joe began going to community parties; he became good friends with several guys and joined them for movies, coffee or to play games. He rode a tandem bike at the beach, stayed the whole time at the Annual Dinner, and independently got haircuts & shaves at a local barber shop. He led the recycling program at the apartment complex where he lived, celebrated his birthday with people in his apartment (a personal triumph), spent Thanksgiving with an old friend, Ms. Helen, and actually dressed up for Halloween! He ended the year, and his life, buying and delivering gifts to those he loved, and celebrating Christmas with his newly reunited family. Joe Parham lived to his fullest in 2009 and will be remembered for his kindness, dedication to ecology, and most of all for being a bright spot in many people's days.



Hope House Foundation— proud to be a partner.



Working at Hope House: More than a job, it is a community

By *Christie Sumner*

I have been working with Hope House Foundation for just over two years. I started as a recent college graduate, back in the day when there were still a few jobs to be found. As a Political Science major, I thought I had an informed opinion of just about everything – which was why I was intrigued by Hope House Foundation’s philosophy: that everyone, regardless of ability has the right to lead a life of their own choosing.

I had never before contemplated how people with disabilities should be served in the community. I mistakenly thought institutions were a thing of the past and had no idea that person-centered services was a movement, not simply the norm. When I was doing my research in preparation for my interview, I was blown away

by what Hope House Foundation was doing for the Hampton Roads community. I knew I wanted to be a part of such a noble, yet fundamental cause. Armed with young enthusiasm and an uncalloused spirit, plus the need for a steady paycheck, I joined the Hope House team hoping to change my world.

I serve as the Human Resource Manager at Hope House Foundation. I have a job description but thoroughly enjoy expanding beyond it on a daily basis. Two years into the daily grind, I have to say that I still love every minute of it. Sure, some tasks are begrudging, but they are balanced out by co-workers who stop by my desk and offer unsolicited help, or thank me for something I expected to go unnoticed. What makes working at Hope House more than a job is the sense of belonging I have with the people we serve, the mission, and my coworkers.

We really are a team, instilling in each other a sense of belonging through appreciation of each other’s work and gifts. Belonging is not just something we preach, or only exemplify on visible levels. It exists in the way we provide independent, community living for adults with intellectual disabilities; it exists in the relationships between support staff and the people we serve; and it exists in the camaraderie of coworkers.

I do believe I am changing the world, every day I do something to make it better. Tomorrow I will wake up, like every day before, with the goal to improve the status quo. Because I belong to the best administrative team in the nonprofit world, I know that my world will continue to improve. That is what a sense of belonging empowers us all to do.



Worker Bees: An Interview with Willie Mebane

HAVE YOU HEARD THE BUZZ?

People supported by Hope House have recently begun producing their own newsletter, *The Buzz*. It’s available for download through the Hope House website (hope-house.org) and is also available on audio CD for those who cannot see or read. Below is a reprint of one article from the most recent issue of *The Buzz*. It interviews Willie Mebane about his job. Willie is an extraordinary man who has received support from Hope House for over 25 years.

Willie Mebane works at the Norfolk Naval Base as an Identifier. This means that he identifies packages that come in, unloads them and makes sure that the codes are correct. He has been working there full time for twenty years.

What advice do you have for job seekers in preparing for an interview? Write a resume, dress for the job and be honest when they ask you questions.

How do you get to work? Does your transportation run on time? I take the public bus to work and it runs on time.

What is your favorite part of your job? I like to help other people when they need it. I also like my coworkers.

What is your least favorite part of your job? Nothing. I don’t have any complaints.

If you could have any job in the world what would it be and why? I would probably be a professional football athlete. I could work on Sundays. I like to watch football; Penn State is my favorite college team and the Oakland Raiders are my favorite professional team. I’ve been a fan for a long time.

What are your career goals? My goal is to finish out my civil service. I probably have another thirteen years or so. After that I’ll probably work part time because I’d get bored otherwise.

Hope House Foundation Board of Directors



Left to Right: Tom Moss, III, John Redding, Mathew Fine (President), Joyce Schmidt (Vice President), Joshua Harris (Treasurer), Richard Mapp, III, Janet Davis, Pete Leddy, Grey Persons (Secretary), Pam Katrancha, Gloria Elgin, Caron Crouse, Dorothy Clark, Kathy Powell *Not pictured:* Jeff Parker and John Baiocco

The Eyes of Hope

A Look at Recent Hope House Events



What Belonging means to me:
 “Strong sense of connectedness to everyone and everything.”

—Mayor Krasnoff, Mayor of Chesapeake



Holiday Happenings

Many celebrations took place throughout Hope House over the

course of the holidays. *Top:* Rachel Archer enjoys holiday decorations; *Pictured Above:* Pearly Johnson proudly stands next to his decorated Christmas tree in his apartment; *Pictured Left:* Marina Heights Team Leader Christie Mahoney (on right) bakes cookies with Kendra Sulfaro as her son Kamin looks on.

Team Hope House

Pictured at right: Lilli Prine, Susan Henderson and Kathie Grady, all Hope House staff, pose for a shot before the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure; *Below:* Hope House staff, volunteers and people we serve formed a team and participated in the Komen Race.



Fall Stockley

Top: Festival patrons enjoying the artwork; *Pictured Above:* Glass artist Tammy Stuart at work during the festival; *Pictured Left:* Matt Miller, performing with his band Graydon, during the Artist Award Party



Our Wish List

Operation RE-GIFT!

Are you trapped under a pile of gift cards from the holidays? Got a gift card to a store, website or restaurant you don't particularly care for? Does your New Year's resolution involve good karma and doing for others? Well look no further... **Hope House Foundation is accepting donation of gift cards for the people we support in Operation Re-gift.** Your donation gives the people we support financial freedom for life's necessities and the opportunity to have a little fun! From coffee at Starbucks, to a rug from Home Depot, or groceries at Wal-Mart – just pop your gift cards in the mail to *Julie Ambrosio, Hope House Foundation, 801 Boush Street, Suite 302, Norfolk, VA 23510. Please remember to include the amount of the gift card and your full name and address so we can thank you appropriately!*

PAGE BY PAGE

By Page Powell—Out and about in Hampton Roads



In the heart of Ghent there is an artsy and friendly coffee shop called Elliot's Fair Grounds. Known to the local people as 'Elliot's' or simply 'Fair Grounds', this coffee shop has a huge selection of different drinks and snacks. Elliot's Fair Grounds is a local supporter of Hope House Foundation and even has the Hope House 'Open Doors' CD for sale there.

On my 16th birthday I tried my very first cup of coffee; after the first sip I immediately spit it out and that was the last time I ever drank coffee. So for the menu I skipped the coffee and went with a wild berry smoothie, while my friend had the 'French Toast Frozen Latte'. Linder Lawrence (or

"Hollywood" as she likes to be called), is also supported by Hope House and she met me at the coffee house. Hollywood is a regular at Elliot's and knows everyone and everything about this popular Ghent gathering place. She drank a house blend decaf coffee. What I liked best was the food. Hollywood and I both had a Boca Burger. For all of you out there a Boca Burger is a very good veggie burger. We had it on pita bread. I enjoyed the burger but liked the chocolate white macadamia nut cookie the best. The food was all so filling I didn't need dinner later.

Hollywood shared with me that Elliot's is like a second home to her and that everyone there is like family. Hollywood, who was clearly well known at Elliot's, introduced me to some of her friends at the coffee shop. She called them her "soul brothers" and "soul sisters". Hollywood even gave me a history of the building and some helpful menu tips. Overall the food was good and the staff was very helpful and knowledgeable. This place was great. I would totally go there again.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Diane Beaman Fiscal Manager

Birthplace: Auburn, NY

Marital/Family Status: Married to Wayne for 35 years, with 4 children ranging in age from 32-17.

How long have you been with Hope House? Nine years.

Who has been your greatest teacher? I recall my 4th grade teacher, Mrs. McCartney, who helped me to believe in my abilities and that I could be successful (that was the first year I had made "honor roll" in school).

What is the most rewarding aspect of your work with Hope House? Although what I do is indirect, it is an essential function that allows the agency to do what it is designed to do.

What have people with intellectual and developmental disabilities taught you? That disabilities, whatever they may be, are only as limiting as you allow them to be and that they do not have to define who you are.

What would you like your legacy to be? I have always liked to quote the Golden Rule—"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Hopefully, I don't just quote the rule, but actually live it.

What gives you a sense of belonging? When others accept me for who I am—not who they think I should be. At the workplace, a sense of belonging occurs when we are all working together as a team striving for the same goal.

Favorite snack food: I recently discovered chocolate covered pomegranates – yum!!

OVERHEARD

Disability is not a medical problem. Disability is a social and political problem. It's not my medical status as a person with a disability that holds me back or gets in my way. It's my social and political status as a person with a disability that holds me back and gets in my way. The way I am treated by other people is a much bigger issue than my medical status.

— Sandy Lahmann, Disability Rights Activist

From
**BIG BANDS to
NIGHT STANDS**
and everything in between.

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THRIFT SHOP**
1800 Monticello Avenue • Norfolk
HopeHouseThriftShop.com

20% OFF ANY PURCHASE with this ad — Thru 4/20/10

Opportunities

CHECK OUT VBNIGHTLIFE.COM



For a complete list of events in Virginia Beach and Norfolk, including all Hope House events! Go to www.VBNightlife.com and "Know where to go!"

RECEIVE HOPENEWS BY E-MAIL!

We're pleased to announce that we are now sending a link to the newsletter via email. If you have not yet subscribed and would like to begin receiving our online version, please log onto www.hope-house.org and hit the subscribe button!



Lori Shapiro (left) and Karen Fine on a salad bar spree.

A Lori Story

by Karen Fine

Lori and Me...

Lunch? Are you free?

Route 58, Silver Diner, The Corral?

Or maybe a Ruby Tuesday salad bar spree!

Sounds good to me...

As long as we finish with a dip at "Skinny".

Her cup runneth over with jokes o'plenty
"Don't do anything I wouldn't do" is her entry.
Singer, songwriter, Stockley Gardens performer,
Hope House Open Doors, and 'Our Voices'
informer.

Our friendship reminds me of what really matters,
A deep understanding of how we belong,
To community, the world, a humble human song.
My Lori stories always end with a Hug,
"See you next time" we declare oh so smug.

(Editor's note: Karen and Lori are friends who met as a result of the fact that Lori is supported by Hope House Foundation and Karen is the wife of Hope House Foundation Board President Matthew Fine.)

YOU CAN NOW SUBSCRIBE TO THE HOPE HOUSE RSS FEED!

We've made a lot of changes to our website, www.hope-house.org, and we want to hear your opinion. You can now subscribe to the Hope House RSS feed which covers Hope House news and the latest information in the disability field. Our home page will feature the latest articles posted or you can request the latest be delivered right to your online doorstep. To subscribe to the feed, or just to stop by for a virtual visit, go to www.hope-house.org

CLICK FOR HOPE



BE A HERO OF HOPE...DONATE ONLINE!

Want to make a donation to Hope House? Go to www.hope-house.org to donate through our website. You can donate by credit card on a secure page, and you can choose how you would like your donation spent. All donations are tax deductible, and improve the quality of life for the people we support!

BECOME OUR FRIEND

Follow us on Facebook, Myspace or Twitter and start spreading the Hope! Here's how to directly contact us on any of our social media sites:



My Space:

<http://www.myspace.com/hopehouse-foundation>



Facebook:

<http://tinyurl.com/nnqhlc>



Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/HopeHouseVA>

Stockley Gardens T's ON SALE!!!

Hope House now has Stockley Garden Arts Festival Tee Shirts, and other Hope House Merchandise, for sale on our website! Peruse all past festival tee shirts and find them for sale at incredible prices. Order from the assorted long sleeve, short sleeve, and tank tops, or choose a SGAF hat or our new *Open Doors* CD, all at the click of a button. Show your support for Hope House Foundation and log onto www.hope-house.org/shop/ *Supply is limited, so hurry and order yours now!*



In the next issue: of HopeNews, we will explore the issue of freedom



Please send us your thoughts and stories about the concept of 'freedom'. Independence, choice, self-determination. A life full of freedom. How important is freedom to a life well lived? **Please send your stories and thoughts to jambrosio@hope-house.org**



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winter 2010

hope news events

3/12/2010

St. Patrick's Day Block Party Proudly sponsored by BobFM, all proceeds benefit Hope House Foundation. Friday, March 12, 6pm to 10pm on Colley Ave. between Spotswood & Shirley Avenues. Celebration is free and open to the public. Music by The DeLoreans, the Tidewater Pipes and Drums, and more tba bands.

3/2010

Photographer Joe Lowery will be showing his work at Java Cup Coffee Shop located at 7943 Shore Drive in Norfolk. There will be more than 20 pieces of original work on display. Prints will be for sale and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to Hope House Foundation.

1/10-4/10

Hope House Thrift Shop Daily Sales For more information, call 625-7493.

Mondays:

Save 25% on music, videos, books, office supplies, stationary art, & frames.

Tuesdays:

Save 25% on clothes, jewelry, & mattresses. 10% Senior Citizen discount.

Wednesdays:

Save 25% on shoes, purses, belts, hats, wallets, underwear, makeup, & accessories. 10% off for Military & Students with ID.

Thursdays:

Save 25% on kitchenware, flowers, plants, knick-knacks, tools, small household appliances, & lamps.

Fridays:

Save 25% on toys, sporting goods, luggage, computers, & electronics.

Saturdays:

Save 25% on linens.

Third Thursday Thrift sale:

50% off selected items announced on the same day

Please visit our website at <http://hope-house-thrift-store.com> to sign up for coupons, special sale information and more!