

HEROES OF HOPE

SPRING - SUMMER 2023

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The Child is the Center of it All.



From the CEO's Desk



It takes just one special person or one defining moment to truly make a difference in your life. It could have been one teacher or coach who saw your potential and helped you through a difficult time or that one song that brings back memories that make you smile when you're down. Whatever that is there is no denying its power to inspire you or lift you to greater heights.

I was blessed to have experiences that pulled me out of despair to a place where I was fortunate to lead great people all focused on making the child the center of it all. We know that some of the most impactful, lasting moments occur when we're young. No words can properly express my personal gratitude for your ongoing support in helping children and families shape their own futures.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Matthews".

Corporate Partnerships

We are grateful for our partnership with Walgreens and their impact for children!

Walgreens volunteers have provided priceless service. Their volunteer contributions include helping with Campus

Beautification, participating in our Trunk or Treat event, and providing a team of Santa's helpers at Holiday Shop.

Their goodwill has provided sponsorship for our Power of Possibilities (POP) breakfast in 2022 and 2023. Thank you, Walgreens, for your invaluable support!



CRISIS TO CONNECTION: **AN IMPERATIVE FOR OUR BLACK BOYS**

March 25th was a rainy Saturday morning, but the first Town Hall meeting for Crisis to Connection: An Imperative for Our Black Boys was an impactful beginning to the work towards *making Detroit the greatest city to raise a Black boy.*

Over 100 community members filed into the Focus:HOPE Conference Center to hear directly from the community on the issues around mental health services and supports for our Black boys.

Pictured left to right: Kelvin Brown (KB), TCC Program Manager for C2C; Andre Ash, Michigan Chronicle Digital Anchor and Town Hall Emcee; and Dr. J. Allen Lloyd, Assistant Professor, Wayne State University School of Social Work and Panel Moderator.



The Power of Possibilities

The 19th Annual Power of Possibilities event kicked off with a spectacular start thanks to our Table Captains who helped bring a broad range of attendees on May 9th. During this year's event, the theme was "The Power of One: Be the One to Change a Child's Life."

Our theme this year places emphasis on everyone having the ability to create something greater than themselves. The act of inspiring someone to make a positive change in their life begins with one individual. Whether it is a parent, a child, a friend or a stranger... You can transform a child or family's life by empowering them to envision, dream, and create the future they desire.

Several courageous clients shared their own testimonials during the event. Dante and Ashley enlightened the audience with their journey on foster care and adoption as a LGBTQ+ couple. They shared that adopting their girls has been one of the most rewarding and challenging experiences of their lives. That the best part of the process is being able to see their daughters be themselves, be kids, be who they are supposed to be. Dante and Ashley are not only making a difference in the lives of their daughters, but each day their girls challenge them and help them become the best parents they can be.

Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, Ford Motor Company, and the additional sponsors for partnering with us to create brighter futures for children and families facing mental health challenges and emotional trauma. If you were unable to join us at the event and would like to learn more about the work we do, schedule a tour today! YOU can be the One to change a child's life!

Summer Camp Success

The Children's Center Summer Camp is meant to provide a respite for families with children experiencing mental and emotional impairments. With your support, children enjoy the camp experiences of social activities, education, arts and crafts, games, sports, swimming, gardening, healthy nutrition, exercise, lunch, field trips and more. Campers also make friends, build self-esteem all while enjoying a safe, non-judgmental atmosphere.

Children like AJ can be nominated by their staff person to attend the 5 weeklong day camp here at the Children's Center and the impact is truly amazing to see. AJ had been diagnosed with autism disorder and was reported to have difficulties with his receptive and expressive language which significantly interferes with his social communication. Often, these difficulties lead other children to make inappropriate comments about the child with autism or dominate their conversations, in turn isolating the child that has been diagnosed

(Cont. p4.)

Summer Camp Success (cont.)

There was great progress made by not only AJ but the other children at this camp. Every day, upon entering camp he immediately found white sheets of paper and a pencil, drawing cartoon themes throughout the day. While keeping AJ on track with all the activities that were offered at camp, the staff and volunteers helped him explore other types of media for his artwork. The Sonic picture featured was drawn by AJ with permanent marker on a 4x4 inch tile and then coated with resin.

The turning point came when other campers witnessed AJ become agitated if his art materials were not immediately available after he participated in a camp activity. Staff noticed that when the groups changed rooms in camp, campers would make sure that AJ had his art supplies available, even carrying it along with them.

They started looking out for him and sought him out for interactions. As AJ's friendships grew, his need to create decreased as the camp progressed. Granted, the art did not go away, but it appeared as if his anxiety decreased, and his self-esteem and friendships flourished. Your support helps to make sure that more children like AJ have the opportunities to create friendships, build self-esteem and work on communication skills with other children their age.

If you would like to plan and set up an activity for the summer camp, be that music class, knitting, creative writing, etc.; please be sure to email Christine Hudson at chudson@thechildrenscenter.com.

If you'd like to volunteer to help out at the summer camp, please contact Adrienne Pumbo (apumbo@thechildrenscenter.com) by May 19th 2023.

The name of the child has been changed for privacy.



Foster Parent Perspective

By James S.

I grew up in a family that welcomed foster children into our home. During my childhood, these children became some of my closest friends. In my early adult years, I was only able to realize the importance of what my family did for these children. We provided them with a home when they did not have one. We became their support system, whether it was for a few days or months on end. In the same way that my parents opened their doors, I decided to open mine.

Becoming a foster parent at The Children's Center is one of the greatest things I have ever done. Throughout my foster parent journey, something amazing I have witnessed is when a child realizes my home is a safe space. They let their personalities shine through the trauma they face and can be their genuine selves. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to foster care, each child is unique and has different needs. I know that it takes one person to make an impact on a child's life. As these children come through my doors, I hope I am able to guide them to a successful life.



Pictured: Members of the Tau Beta Association with the Easter Bunny in the Family Success Center

The Easter Bunny Visits TCC!

During a recent Readers and Creators event hosted by the Tau Beta Family Success Center the Easter Bunny made an appearance! Families and children of all ages gathered in building 90 on the lower level in The Hub to hear the Easter Bunny read a special story. It was a joyous occasion for the community to take pictures with the Easter Bunny, and receive Easter baskets filled with goodies. As part of the Easter celebration, each family was also given an Easter book, Pete the Cat and the Easter Bunny. By organizing this successful event, we celebrated Easter with our clients and made this a day to remember!



Kid's Corner

The Children's Center is a great way for children and families to explore their feelings and emotions. Art therapy provides a safe space for the children in the community to grow and heal. Each project is related to a specific theme. Through this project, each child is able to express the qualities they want to have as they get older and envision who they want to be in the future.



YAC Life

The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) has been selected to participate in the Neutral Zone's Youth Driven Spaces Project (YDS). This is an opportunity for YAC to become more youth focused, empowered, and youth led. Projects will be led by youth members, such as the movie and discussion night that was held on March 15th. YAC will also attend the youth leadership conference at EMU in April as well as a youth summit in Ann Arbor in September.

Consumer Current

As a mother of five - two boys and three girls- Deniqua is not only a leader in her home, but her community. Having joined The Children's Center as a general member of the Consumer Council first in 2017 and now serving as co-chair, Deniqua is a powerhouse; not just at TCC, but she also serves as the Wayne County Systems of Care Advisory Council Adult Chair lending her voice to the boarder community outside of TCC.

She credits her dynamic and dedicated character to being a parent. "Life changes when God blesses you with children and you love them," she said, referring to her tireless effort to advocate for not only her children but all children in her orbit. Because of her passion to help us acheive our mission, Deniqua has been elected a consumer member of our Board of Directors for 2023.



Volunteer Spotlight

Homework Help volunteers provide weekly tutoring sessions at TCC. Here are a few examples of their dedication:

- **Lily Petz**, a high school student: Even though her family was going on vacation, Lily managed to arrange for a virtual tutoring session for Jaida while she was out of town.
- **Michael Escobar**, a medical student: Michael made special arrangements to tutor beyond business hours on Sunday nights to ensure he and Devin could continue to work together.
- **Travis Taylor**, a marketing professional: Travis joins Eden on campus every week. Eden had trouble focusing and was uninterested in school. Eden has a renewed interest in his studies since they paired up and enjoys his weekly sessions.

Volunteer with us! Contact Adrienne Polumbo (apolumbo@thechildrenscenter.com) for more details!



A Tax-Savvy Way to Support Our Work

This spring, all of us at The Children's Center are reflecting on our milestones over the past year. Our work to bring Detroit together by developing strong individuals early in life is only possible with your support. Together, we're excited to have made it through another milestone: tax season!

It's the season when saving is on all of our minds, so we want to highlight a resource that allows you to learn more about a tax-savvy way to give today: FreeWill's secure stock donation platform.

FreeWill helps you give your appreciated stock to The Children's Center in just 10 minutes and provides general information about the many tax benefits.

Donating stock is a smart start to your 2023 tax season and helps you support our work without dipping into your cash! Here's why:

- If you own appreciated stock and you sell it, you generally have to pay a capital gains tax on that value increase. But if you donate the stock to The Children's Center, you can skip paying this type of tax.
- If you've owned the appreciated stock for more than one year and you itemize deductions on your tax return, you may be able to take a charitable deduction for the full fair market value of the stock.





The Children's Center | 79 Alexandrine West, Detroit, MI 48201 | 313.831.5535 | TheChildrensCenter.com

Upcoming Events

June 2023

Faces of Trauma

6/01/2023

6 pm to 8 pm

@ Durfee Innovation Society

2470 Collingwood St, Detroit, MI 48206

Retirement Celebration for Debora Matthews

06/06/2023

7pm to 9 pm

@ Huntington Bank HQ, Downtown Detroit

Fatherhood Forum

06/22/2023

9am to 5 pm

@ Greater Grace Temple Detroit, MI



Events are subject to change. Please visit thechildrenscenter.com/events for updates and more information.



79 Alexandrine West
Detroit, MI 48201