

**Summer at the Villa!**



St. Joseph's Villa never stops, even in the summer and even with oppressive heat! Some of the Villa's summer activities include (clockwise from top left): watching the melons grow at the Sarah Dooley Center for Autism, HEROES Training Camp students rock climbing at Peak Experiences, Dooley Elementary School students in bumper boats on one of their field trips, two students in the Villa gymnasium, summer school at Brook Road Academy, Water Day at Lewis Children's Center and (center) LCC's Fourth of July parade.

Below (left to right): LCC parade participants, a Dooley Elementary student on a field trip to a horse farm, and one of the Villa's Day Support children playing football at U-Turn Sports.





No children have had a busier summer than the children in the Villa's Day Support program, if field trips are any indication. Recent trips include excursions to the Science Museum of Virginia (above and right), Sam Ash Music (below right) and to U-Turn Performance Academy (below left). In addition, the students have been on field trips to North Richmond YMCA, Master Cho's Taekwondo, Bow Tie Cinemas and Glen Allen Golf. Wow!



And what could be more fun after so many field trips than making a cool dessert? Jacob and his friends at Day Support whipped up a batch of Cool Whip mixed with Oreo cookies one hot afternoon as a fun way to beat the heat. Yum!



Students at the Villa's Day Treatment program have also had a wonderful summer. The Day Treatment program operates all-day, Monday through Friday, helping children develop better behaviors. One of their incentive trips this summer was an outing to the go-kart track, and it looks like they had a lot of fun!



Students at the Sarah Dooley Center for Autism go shopping each week to gather items for their weekly cooking class. The outings also are a great way for the students to develop stronger social skills.



In addition to cooking classes, students at the Sarah Dooley Center also take weekly classes in art and music. At a recent class, Ashley led Destiny and George in music-making as Tiffany danced. It is such fun to see the students enjoying themselves so much through music!

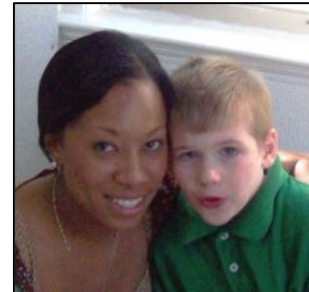


In our recent reader survey, some respondents asked for more information on specific programs. As a result, we are beginning a new “Spotlight Series” which will provide more detailed information about the Villa’s programs, the people we serve and our partnerships with other service providers. Please let us know what you think about this new series!

### **Spotlight On: The Sarah Dooley Center for Autism An In-Depth Look at a St. Joseph’s Villa Service**

The Sarah Dooley Center for Autism is one of five specialized education schools at St. Joseph’s Villa. The Sarah Dooley Center provides academic, behavioral, social and life skills education to students from 6 to 22 years old who have been diagnosed with autism or another profound developmental disability. Approximately 20 students attend Sarah Dooley each day, and the school operates year-round.

Students are referred to the Sarah Dooley Center by the student’s local school system; some school systems do not have the resources to develop and run programs to address the needs of students with special needs. In cases where the school cannot address the student’s needs in a local school or program, the school system may send the student to a “private provider” like the Sarah Dooley Center.



Each student who attends the Sarah Dooley Center has an Individualized Educational Plan, or IEP, which identifies the goals for the coming year. The school system develops the plan with input from the student, parents, teachers and private providers. The IEP defines a variety of goals: academic, behavioral, and social skills, as well as strategies to help students acquire skills which will help them post-graduation.



Many students who come to the Sarah Dooley Center need to develop better communication skills. Approximately 65% of the students are non-verbal, and for them, finding a way to communicate their wants or needs is the first step in their educational program. Assistive technology, including picture books which include pictures of things that a student might want, can provide the gateway toward real learning.

Like most Villa programs, the Sarah Dooley Center rewards positive behaviors with “incentives.” As soon as a student comes to the Sarah Dooley Center, specialists work to discover what types of things a student likes and wants more of. For instance, one student might like to play video games, while another might like to hold a favorite stuffed animal. Once the incentive is discovered, plans can be developed to reward a student with their incentive.

The Sarah Dooley Center uses Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) to encourage positive behaviors. ABA is a method of breaking big goals into little pieces, teaching the student to master each of the pieces and to put them together to achieve the goal. Learning progress is closely monitored and reported to determine how much a student has learned. Education teams and treatment teams monitor progress and make modifications, if necessary, to make sure each student is making progress on the IEP goals.

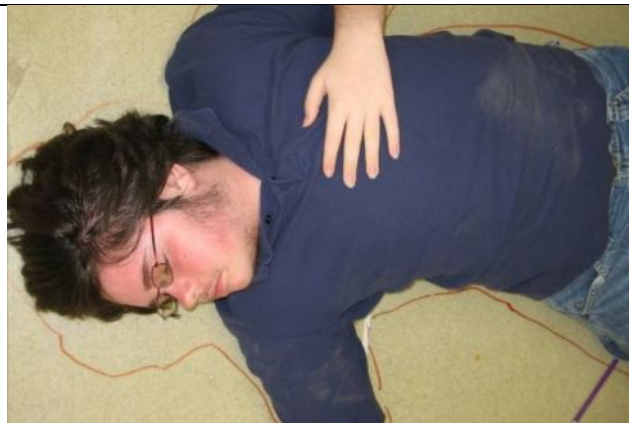
Each day, students spend the morning (at least) on academic work. In addition, students have weekly art, music and cooking classes. Many students go off-campus for activities such as visiting the Science Museum, shopping at Walmart or visiting the Nature Center at Maymont. These activities help students build their social skills through interactions in the community.

As with any educational program, the Sarah Dooley Center exists to prepare students for life after school. For years, the Sarah Dooley Center has provided life skills education, so students can lead more independent lives as adults. Work training programs with community partners such as Positive Vibe Café and Old Navy have provided excellent opportunities for Sarah Dooley students.



More recently, students at the Sarah Dooley Center have participated in the Villa's Career and Transition Services (CATS) program, which teaches students both "hard" and "soft" job skills. Students in the program develop job skills in classroom settings and later through on-site work across the Villa campus. The Villa has CATS programs at its Donation Center and in Culinary Services, as well as campus-wide programs for recycling, vehicle maintenance, and environmental services. All of these programs work to teach students skills that they may use after graduation to lead more meaningful lives as adults.

For more information about the Sarah Dooley Center, please contact Hattie Porter, Admissions Coordinator at St. Joseph's Villa, at 553-3241.



Students at Dooley Prep, the Villa's program for students with Asperger's Syndrome, have been busy this summer with field trips and academic work, but one recent science class had the rest of campus perplexed: the class explored forensics "CSI-style" with a fake crime scene that allowed them plenty of opportunities to gather and analyze fingerprints and other forensic data. What a fun way to learn!

Campers at LCC's HEROES Training Camp had a dream of going to King's Dominion as a group. The problem? No money. The solution? Several fund raising events, including a cookout and a car wash. The result? More than \$500 in earned income, more than enough for a trip. Congratulations, HEROES!!! Have fun at King's Dominion – You earned it!!



Here are a couple of other photos from the HEROES Training Camp excursion to Peak Experiences. The children had fun climbing the rock wall!



Construction is moving along, in spite of the heat! Work has begun on the new Pedestrian Avenue in front of Brook Road Academy.

This great work is being accomplished through donations to the *Believing is Seeing* Campaign. To learn more, please visit the Villa website, <http://www.neverstopbelieving.org/bis.htm>



St. Joseph's Villa is glad to welcome Dana Hawes as the new Head of the Dooley School for Alternative Education. Dana served as principal, assistant principal and instructional leader in both Henrico County and the Capital City Program in partnership with Richmond Public Schools. He holds a Post Graduate Professional License with an endorsement in Administration and Leadership and is currently pursuing a doctoral program in Higher Education and Adult Learning and a graduate certification program in Non-Profit Organizational Management. He has a strong commitment to helping at-risk youth, and we look forward to his working at St. Joseph's Villa!



Villa staff and children gathered on Monday, August 1 to celebrate Kathleen Burke Barrett's fifth anniversary as Chief Executive Officer at St. Joseph's Villa. During that time, the Villa has celebrated its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, embarked on its *Believing is Seeing* Campaign and begun work to restore the Villa campus to a safer and more therapeutic environment for future generations. Congratulations, Kathleen!

### **Poetry Makes a Difference to Ms. Joy's Class A Shining Star Story by Camille Rudney**

The members of Counselor Ms. Joy's class in After School Day Treatment recently completed a special project that qualifies as a Shining Star story in anyone's book!

The young people (ages 11-14) had been struggling to get along. Ms. Joy and Treatment Specialist Ms. Camille (shown at right) wanted to help them find a way to explore their commonalities and support each other, instead of tearing each other down.



Ms. Camille brought in copies of the dessert menu at River City Diner and offered to take the class for desserts all together if they could work as a team to create a group poem about their collective struggles and strengths.

The project was directed by the youth themselves. They started by having conversations about why they were in the Day Treatment program. They found that many of them had difficulty with anger management and with building healthy relationships with kids their own age. The members of the group also learned that they all struggled with missing family members who were not involved in their lives, and that this experience was the root for a lot of anger and loneliness for them.

Over the next few weeks they worked on poems about their experiences and hopes for the future. They were able to encourage each other to stay on task and help each other keep writing when they felt blocked. The final project included poems about rising above anger, bullying, family hardship and overwhelming parental expectations. When they were done, Ms. Joy and Ms. Camille very proudly took them out for dessert.

The week of the outing was also the week before one of the young people moved away from Richmond and left the program. The group was able to joke around, dance to music from the jukebox, enjoy chocolate peanut butter milkshakes and celebrate their group accomplishment. They were also able to honor the departure of their friend, share memories, and talk about what they had learned from each other.

This group has a lot of creativity and talent, and it was a special experience to be able to share these moments with them. And many of the group members are still writing poetry to express themselves, even without dessert!

**Looking for a unique space? Check out St. Joseph's Villa!** Last year, the Villa earned more than \$25,000 in rental income for its gymnasium, athletic fields and chapel. If your group is interested in one of these types of spaces, please contact Craig Hedley at (804) 553-3226.

## **Volunteer and other needs at St. Joseph's Villa**

At press time, we learned that the son of one of our Villa staff members is facing a life-or-death situation. He is badly in need of a liver transplant, and without the transplant, he has little chance of survival. If you are interested in seeing whether you could be a donor to help this young man, please contact April Ashworth (RN, BSN) at (804) 828-9249. Thank you!

**Help The Villa's children get ready for school!!** St. Joseph's Villa provides school supplies to many of the children who live on campus or come to one of our schools. Many of our children do not have enough when that first day of school rolls around. But YOU can help!

From now until August 30<sup>th</sup>, St. Joseph's Villa will be collecting new school supplies for clients. Donations may be delivered to the Villa Donation Center Monday-Wednesday 11am-4pm. Here is a list of the most needed supplies:

Graph Paper	Scissors (children & adult sizes)
Preschool Pencils	Construction paper (all colors)
Colored pencils	Binders 1" & 3" w/inside pocket
Red Pens	Hand held Calculators (4 function)
Subject Dividers	Box of Tissues
Pocket size Dictionaries & Thesaurus	Hand Sanitizer
Ziploc bags (quart & gallon sizes)	Student planners

*First Capital Bank's*  
**Stuff the Bus**

In addition, St. Joseph's Villa will be part of **First Capital Bank's Stuff the Bus** program this summer. Please come see us and drop off your school supplies on

**Saturday, August 13 from 10 am to 1 pm at the Walmart on Forest Hills Avenue.**

**Please note that the Donation Center will be open ONLY for Season of Hope holiday gift donations from November 1 through January 1.** Please drop off all other donations before November 1. Thank you!

## Meet Fara Caldwell, Villa Volunteer

Fara Caldwell is one of the many people who help children in need by volunteering time. Fara has been at St. Joseph's Villa since late 2007, and she helps in the Donation Center and at Lewis Children's Center.



How did Fara get involved? "I'm in that 'in-between' time, an empty-nester," Fara says. I had worked with children for several years before I had my children, and when they went off to school, I wanted to give back. I called up [Villa Director of Volunteer and Community Resources] Catherine Stanley and I told her that I wanted to do something like holding babies. Catherine set me up at LCC."

In addition to holding babies at LCC, Fara has been organizing the LCC library and also books the Villa receives at its Donation Center. "So many good books come in. We are so fortunate to get so many." In addition to her work at the Villa, Fara also helps out at the Arthur Ashe Reading Room at the Children's Pavilion at the VCU Medical Center.

Thanks, Fara! You're really making a difference at the Villa!

*Summer HOT project!!*

Do you need a team or group project? We are currently looking for individuals and/or groups to help with painting and decorating our themed dining areas in our Culinary Arts building in preparation for the upcoming school year. Call today to find out how you can make lunch time great for a Villa child!

Check out our website at [www.neverstopbelieving.org](http://www.neverstopbelieving.org) for our campus volunteer opportunities or contact Catherine Stanley, 521-5577 or [cstanley@sjvmail.net](mailto:cstanley@sjvmail.net)

**Docent** positions are available in central administration building on campus for individuals who enjoy working with the public. Docents are responsible for answering the telephone, greeting guests and answering general questions about St. Joseph's Villa. Docents are provided training and access to the Internet during their volunteer shifts. Each shift is 4 hours and volunteers are asked to commit to one shift per week between now and September 2nd. Candidates with strong oral and communication skills are preferred. All candidates must complete a volunteer application to include a recent tuberculosis screening, criminal history and a background screen. \*\* Candidates between the ages of 16 & 17 may be considered for this position provided that they meet the stated requirements and provide parental consent in writing.

## Join Us in Helping!

The work of St. Joseph's Villa cannot take place without the support of individuals and organizations in the communities we serve. If you would like to contribute to the Villa's success, please visit [our website](#) Thank you!

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