

CHAMPION



OUR CHAMPION
KENYON

Embracing the
Chance to Dance



CALLING ALL CHAMPIONS!

The Future is Bright!

WE MADE AN EXCITING announcement this summer about the future of UMFS. For more than 100 years, UMFS has been an unwavering champion for high-risk children and families. Now we're moving forward with plans that will allow us to serve children and families for another century and beyond.

Our Richmond campus will be changing in both its appearance and reach over the next several years. We took the first step in our evolution in August when we finalized a long-term land lease deal with Spy Rock Real Estate Group. Spy Rock's plans for a mixed-use development on the 4.5 acres of UMFS property along Broad and Hamilton streets will help generate a portion of the funding needed to build a new Child & Family Healing Center, as well as an addition to Charterhouse School.

The new Child & Family Healing Center building will offer expanded residential treatment services and

upgrades to current accommodations for children statewide. For Charterhouse School, we'll add a new building next to the current school to meet the needs of our growing student body.

For UMFS to truly be an unwavering champion for high-risk children, it means we sometimes must take risks of our own. But with risk comes reward, and like the stories you'll read in this edition of the Champion, no reward is easy to come by.

We want to continue to be able to meet the needs of high-risk children, needs which are constantly changing. We're committed to ensuring that all of Virginia's children have a team of unwavering champions and tools for success to become resilient adults, for today and for the future.

We're positioning ourselves for longevity in a future that is very, very bright! Thank you.

Greg Peters, LCSW
President and CEO

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FALL 2018 CHAMPION

KENYON

Embracing the Chance to Dance



TWELVE-YEAR-OLD KENYON stands shoeless atop the sprawling padded mat that blankets the dance studio floor. He takes a breath, leans forward, places his hands on his knees and bends an ear toward his dance instructor, Justin Holloway. Kenyon's eyes are fixed on Justin.

Justin's eyes are fixed on the floor-to-ceiling mirrors that line the far wall of the studio. And while Justin needs no reminder as to why he established this dance camp, a reminder is exactly what the 19-year-old finds in the reflection of himself kneeling beside young Kenyon.



In 2015, when Justin was a junior in high school and a standout at Central Virginia Dance Academy (CVDA), he was looking for a way to share his love of dance with others. He was looking for a way to give back. That's when he learned of a grant through the Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond that would allow him to turn his dance moves into a dance movement.

"After he won the grant, he approached me about starting a dance camp for foster kids," said Anne Wash, owner of CVDA, where Justin has been a student since it opened in 2008. "He's always tried to reach

out to others." With the help of his mother and Anne, Justin identified UMFS as the organization he wanted to work with. The five-day summer camp has grown to accommodate not only foster children, but any child receiving services through UMFS. Dozens of children have benefited from the camp.

Collaboration multiplies impact. When donors and volunteers work together, it makes a real difference in the lives of high-risk children. Want to get involved? Visit UMFS.org/volunteer.

"Some kids want to dance but don't have the opportunity," Justin said. Kids like Kenyon, for instance. Kenyon is receiving counseling through UMFS Intensive Care Coordination (ICC), a program for children with behavioral, emotional,

or mental health needs who are currently in an out-of-home placement or at risk of placement. "Some people forget that those kids want to be a part of something," Justin added.

"Dance as a whole is therapeutic," Anne said. "You can express yourself through dance. It's a great outlet." And it's for reasons such as these that CVDA continues to host the camp even though the grant has expired. Experienced CVDA student volunteers lead the classes, and CVDA parents provide lunch each day.

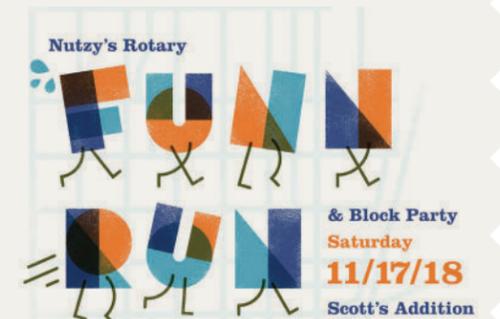
"If it wasn't for Anne's compassion and desire to make a difference in the community, specifically with our youth, we would not be able to provide this opportunity," said Tory Everson-Roots, Community Based Services Supervisor at UMFS, pictured on cover. "Anne has remained dedicated to continuing the legacy that Justin started."



It's the last day of camp. Kenyon has been working all week on his routine and is now moments away from performing for his peers, CVDA parents, and UMFS staff. Just like earlier in the week, Kenyon finds himself standing shoeless atop the sprawling padded mat that blankets the dance studio floor. Kenyon's mostly soft spoken, but an unassuming confidence takes over when he's center stage. He perks up when the music begins playing and points coolly toward Justin, who's off to the side smiling and cheering along with the rest of the room. Everyone's clapping, everyone's smiling, everyone's happy. When the routine ends, Kenyon gets a hug from Justin. He then takes a few moments to collect his thoughts and reflect on the week. "Thank you," Kenyon says. "I'll definitely be back next year." ✨

FUNN RUN to Benefit UMFS

We're excited to be a part of Nutzy's Rotary Funn Run & Block Party in Richmond's Scott's Addition neighborhood on November 17. Join UMFS, the Richmond Flying Squirrels and Rotary Club of West Richmond for a fun-filled, family-friendly event that benefits UMFS. Register today at NutzyRotaryFunnRun.com.



DONOR CHAMPION

BARBARA SADLER

Home Away From Home



BARBARA SADLER was just 8 years old in 1945 when she made the 113-mile journey east from her home in Lynchburg. “I remember the day that my mother and her sister took us to Richmond on the train,” Barbara said. “It was exciting and fun because we had never been on a train before. We were too young to know what was happening.”

Barbara Sadler, pictured bottom row center, said the Virginia Conference Orphanage of the Methodist Church taught her to work hard, live harmoniously, and take care of others.



Barbara and her two youngest brothers were moving to the Virginia Conference Orphanage of the Methodist Church, an earlier iteration of UMFS. It was a relocation predicated on necessity. “She was raising five young children all by herself,” Barbara said of her mother, who worked as a waitress at the time. “My father was not in the picture.” Barbara’s two teenaged brothers remained at home. At the time, the orphanage didn’t admit children older than 10.

Barbara ultimately thrived at UMFS during her 12-year residence. She

graduated high school, attended college, gave her life to Christ, and was introduced to Alex, who she’d later marry. “UMFS changed my life for the better,” she said.

And though Barbara physically left UMFS in 1957, her heart remained. She and Alex wed in 1960 and became deeply invested in the agency, giving both their time and money. They opened their home to UMFS residents, and Barbara served many years with the UMFS Auxiliary, a support group whose members belong to local United Methodist churches. Barbara and Alex were longtime members of Beulah UMC in Chesterfield.

Bruce Sadler, the middle of Barbara and Alex’s three children, said his mom speaks often about UMFS. “From the very beginning of my memory, it was always clear that mom grew up there and it was very important to her,” he said. Added Barbara: “My children know I am proud of my story growing up at the orphanage.”

As children, Brian, Bruce, and Jennifer all spent time volunteering alongside their parents at UMFS and other non-profits. As adults, they’ve followed their parents’ philanthropic footsteps and for many years have provided unwavering support to UMFS.

“My mom would say there are so many people that help you get to where you are that you’ve got to give back,” Bruce said. “I hope we have given back, and in some way repaid some of the cost of what my mom was the beneficiary of.” And Barbara says she and her family were beneficiaries of much. “The miracle is that we are a very close family today,” Barbara said, “closer than many families who grow up in the same house together.”

UMFS provided services that helped Barbara’s family become whole again. She and her family now contribute generously to UMFS. Join them in supporting UMFS by donating today at UMFS.org/donate.

Barbara is now 81. She moved to Atlanta after her husband passed away in 2012. Brian and Jennifer live nearby. Bruce lives in Richmond, where he’s Partner and Business Director at Brockenbrough, the same engineering and consulting firm where his father was Partner for more than 30 years. Bruce also serves on the UMFS Board, just as his father did. “I’m very proud to say that,” he affirmed.

Mom’s proud, too. “It really means a lot that Bruce chose to serve UMFS,” she said. ✨

Overcoming Adversity Through Coordinated Care

THE FRUSTRATION OF BEING both autistic and nonverbal is sometimes more than Elliot can tolerate. The teen once became so angry that he hurled a drinking glass and busted the inner pane of the bay window in the kitchen of his family's Northern Virginia home. A few months later, he shattered the outer pane with his elbow. "There was a lot of blood," recalled his mother, Angela.

Angela and her husband had done all they could to help Elliot manage his outbursts. Elliot's older brother had done his part, too. But the situation had now grown critical.

"Behavior couldn't be maintained in the classroom. Same thing at home," explained Lisa Batres, UMFS Intensive Care Coordinator (ICC). "He'd become aggressive. He was pulling mom's hair."

For more than a year, Lisa has been leading the family's Intensive Care Coordination, a program that works to prevent out-of-home placements for children with behavioral, emotional, or mental health conditions. Lisa meets with the family monthly to review resources and identify needs. She also ensures that the various services Elliot receives are aligned into a single integrated Plan of Care. "We do not want Elliot to be in a situation where he can't remain in the home," Lisa said.

The ultimate goal is to improve Elliot's quality of life, which can be

done by focusing first on short-term goals. Replacing the broken window with tempered glass, for example, was a costly but necessary fix from a safety standpoint, Lisa said. Angela and her husband needed financial assistance with the repairs, and Lisa helped them find relief through UMFS funding.

The family has been working to build a brighter future since they moved to the United States from Eastern Europe in 2007. Dad works 60 hours a week to cover the family's many expenses. He also takes night classes twice a week. Elliot's older brother graduated high school with honors in June and is now a full-time college student. He lives at home and wants to pick up a part-time job to help with education costs.

Then there's mom. Angela is the maestro. She manages the household and oversees Elliot's day-to-day. From scheduling appointments, to coordinating care, to record-keeping, to getting Elliot up, out the door, and on the bus each morning after sometimes sleepless nights, Angela handles it all with grace and patience.

"She's so strong," said Sonnja Brown, a UMFS Family Support Partner (FSP) who works with Angela as part of ICC. FSPs are uniquely equipped to mentor families facing difficult situations because they too have lived through similar experiences.

Sonnja learned to advocate when her own daughter was diagnosed with autism. "I became involved in the schools and helped her get to where she needed to be," she said. Her daughter is now a 38-year-old college graduate with a family of her own. Sonnja's advocacy continued for two of her grandchildren who experienced childhood trauma. Sonnja said sharing her story with families "helps them relate."

Intensive Care Coordination and Family Support Partners provided an elevated level of care to Elliot and his family during a time of crisis. Learn more about these programs and the many other resources our agency offers at [UMFS.org](https://www.umfs.org)

Sonnja went on to compliment Angela and her family's commitment to ICC, as well as their love for one another. "Working with them has brought me so much joy and enriched my life," she said.

The family continues to accomplish goals they never thought possible, and through ICC, Angela has gained a skillset that will be vital to Elliot's continued progress. "She advocates, speaks up, and is more confident," Lisa said. The transformation in the family, Lisa added, "has been amazing to see." ✨

* Names of family members were changed to protect their privacy.