

HOME NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF ECH EVERY CHILD'S HOPE [SPRING NEWSLETTER] 2015

Debora Lake Receives National Spirit of Alliance Award

Some are graduation pictures with beaming smiles in a cap and gown. Some have a proud mom holding her adorable chubby-cheeked baby. But the one thing every picture has in common is that it represents a young person who found success because of Debora. For over 30 years Debora has helped the homeless and at-risk youth in our Steppingstone program learn the skills necessary to achieve independent living. Whether it's explaining the importance of budgeting, teaching proper interview etiquette, or helping youth grow in self-respect and confidence, Debora has changed hundreds of lives.

One life was Selena Vaughn, a former client in the Steppingstone program and now an ECH board member. Selena wrote the words below to nominate Debora for the national Spirit of Alliance Award. This award is presented by the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, which is a national organization of which ECH is a member. The award recognizes an individual's direct service to clients, commitment to her organization, and dedicated service to children, families, and communities. Debora dedicated her award to all the resilient youth in Steppingstone.



[Debora and Selena at the Alliance National Conference.]



"Growing up in foster care you are often labeled from the start, and there aren't very many people who are willing to look beyond your circumstances and recognize that you have the potential to be more than just a case number or another child/teen in their program; that you, in spite of your circumstances, have the ability to succeed and that all you need is support, guidance, and someone who genuinely cares. This is Debora Lake."

Last October Debora flew to Pittsburgh to accept her award . . . and who was there to surprise her? Selena! There is no one more deserving than Debora, and the ECH staff was thrilled to plan a surprise party to congratulate Debora on her much-deserved award!

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HELP ENCOURAGE Our Eager Readers!

The boys in Ms. Mac's high school classroom (grades 8-12) are voracious readers! They have read through all the books in the ECH school library, and they are looking for more! Here are a few of the books and authors they are looking to read next. If you would like to donate books to encourage our young readers, please call the Development Office at 314-427-3755.

- The Percy Jackson series by Rick Riordan
- The Heroes of Olympus series by Rick Riordan
- How to Train Your Dragon series by Cressida Cowell
- Alex Rider series by Anthony Horowitz
- Gate Keeper's series by Anthony Horowitz
- The Teen Titan Comic Book Series
- Harry Potter series by JK Rowling



THE ECH SCHOOL WORKS WITH MANY KIDS IN A VARIETY OF STAGES IN THEIR EDUCATION

For Stan, an 18-year-old with mental illness and learning deficiencies in the senior high class, school has been difficult. When Stan first started at the ECH School, there would be days he wouldn't even get on the bus in the morning. He lived with his grandmother and sister and refused to leave the house. Stan is a tall, strong young man, so his grandmother couldn't really do much to get him to school. Staff took the time to work with Stan and help him get to school.

When at school, Stan would often have to walk around the halls in order to calm down. He was put in an afterschool program at ECH to help him complete his homework. Eventually, Stan began to fit in. He is now able to do his homework at home, he willingly gets on the bus, and he is able to talk to his teachers if something is bothering him.

Just recently, Stan visited Ms. Clark, the director of education at ECH, to ask if he could stay at ECH School and get his certification. He said he felt as if he was learning a lot and he had friends at ECH, which is something he never had at other schools. After checking with everyone, Ms. Clark agreed to let Stan remain at ECH and not transition to a school in the community. He was overjoyed and is already planning his graduation party with his classmates and his teachers.

STUDENTS CELEBRATE BLACK & WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The ECH School celebrated Black History and Women's History month together this year. Each class was challenged with the task of decorating their door with information about black women who are making a contribution. Each door was judged by the Student Council and awards were given to each class at the last SOAR (Student Outstanding Achievement Recognition) Awards.

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St. Louis (314) 427-3755
www.everychildshope.org
Kansas City (816) 356-0187
www.steppingstonekc.org

ECH Every Child's Hope is a private not-for-profit childcare agency, voluntarily affiliated with the Council for Health and Human Services Ministries related to the United Church of Christ. ECH EveryChild's Hope adheres to Federal and State laws which prohibit discrimination in the delivery of services on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, handicap/disability or religious belief.

Member of: Missouri Coalition of Children's Agencies (MCCA), Child Welfare League of America

Approved by: Charities Committee, Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis

Founding Member of: The Missouri Alliance for Children and Families

ECH Every Child's Hope is not a United Way Agency.

Follow us on:



PART OF A FAIRYTALE: The Impact of ECH For One Brave Young Woman

As the CEO of Every Child's Hope, it is sometimes easy to overly focus on the daily grind of the complex business functions, contractual obligations, strategy directions, and numerous organizational challenges that we face in order to deliver high-quality services to children and families.



In the last several years ECH has intentionally expanded our community-based service array to increase our positive impact and footprint in the various communities we serve. We are challenged as an organization to ensure that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing and that we are all moving in the same direction to meet the ever-increasing needs of the clients we are called to serve. If we aren't careful, we can sometimes lose sight of the real reason we do what we do every day.

Recently, I had an experience that compelled me to reflect on this very important dynamic. I had just returned from some time away from the office and was going through my mail. The very first piece of mail I spotted was handwritten and addressed to me as the CEO.

The letter was written by a young lady in our St. Louis Steppingstone Program, which is a service designed to assist older youth (frequently homeless) to learn life skills in order to eventually live successfully in the community. The following is an excerpt from that letter:

I am writing this letter to let you know that I am so grateful and thankful for this program. I could not be happier to be a part of it.

I am 18 and have a one year old son. I have been in this program since January of 2013.

I have been living in an on campus apartment (which I love) and recently moved off campus in an apartment which I love! I feel so blessed to be part of this program.

I believe that this program gives people a second chance and hope that everything will be okay.

I might not have it all and I am not rich, but I am so happy that I have a home to call my own. I just love this program and am so grateful and thankful to be part of this fairytale.

Well, I will admit that reading this letter and understanding the powerful impact of ECH's mission to assist others to reach their potential and fulfill hopes and dreams made me a little teary-eyed. It is a reminder to all of us who work at ECH and those who support us that we can make a real difference in the lives of others.

This young lady is currently working toward a nursing degree and has the chance to have it all and be rich in ways that she might not have ever been able to imagine. I am proud that ECH is part of giving her opportunities and best of all, hope.

This is why we do what we do every day!

Chief Executive Officer, Every Child's Hope



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GET TO KNOW THE ECH BOARD



[Hail]

RON HAIL joined the Board in 2011.

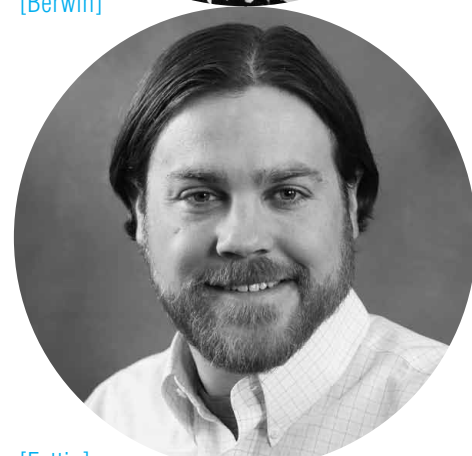
Hail is Co-Owner and Vice President of CRH Transportation, responsible for New Business Development Sales and Marketing. His knowledge as a small business owner has been a great asset to his Board leadership. As a committee member of our Golf Committee for more than thirteen years, Hail is dedicated to the mission of Every Child's Hope. In his free time Hail enjoys classic sports cars, flying, investing, and foreign travel.



[Berwin]

FOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS APPOINTED IN 2014

REGINA L. BERWIN is no stranger to Every Child's Hope. Her father, grandfather, and great-grandfather have all served on the Board before her. Berwin is President of Berwin Insurance Agency, Inc., an affiliate of CJ Thomas. Her knowledge of both the insurance industry and technology, along with her extensive volunteer fundraising experiences will greatly benefit Board leadership. In her free time Berwin enjoys creative projects such as gardening and jewelry making, and always makes time for her family, friends and the various adventures life brings.



[Fettig]

JEREMY FETTIG is also no stranger to Every Child's Hope, serving on the ECH Special Event Committee and new young friends group Hope for Tomorrow. Fettig is Vice President at Bremen Bank in St. Louis and brings an in-depth understanding of financial management and business acumen to the Board. An active member of Immanuel UCC, Fettig spends his free time with Jackie and their three beautiful children, Dylan, Quinn, and Logan.

SELENA VAUGHN, an IT Analyst at AT&T, is also a successful graduate from ECH's Steppingstone program. Vaughn has stayed involved with ECH over the years, speaking at fundraising events and mentoring youth in the Steppingstone program. Vaughn brings a unique client perspective to the Board that will be invaluable. Vaughn is the proud mother of daughter Chrystian, son Ty'Shon and is also a licensed foster parent.



[Vaughn]

SUSAN SHELTON joins the Board after retiring as an administrator for the state of Missouri Children's Division. Among other responsibilities, at one time Shelton served as ECH's licensing oversight specialist for the state. Prior to retiring, Shelton served as the St. Louis County Director for the Missouri Children's Division. Shelton brings a wealth of knowledge of the child welfare system on a state, regional and national level. With many leadership offers in the community after her retirement, we are honored Shelton chose to serve ECH.



[Shelton]

EVERY CHILD'S HOPE EXPANDS FOSTER CARE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Every Child's Hope provides foster care case management services to approximately 130 children and families in St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County. We work with the children, biological families, foster families, potential adoptive families, and blood relatives to ensure that every child has a plan for a permanent place to live and grow up in their community.

With this in mind, Every Child's Hope expanded the foster care case management program to other areas of Missouri. On Oct. 1, 2014 we began providing this service to children and families in Cole County (Jefferson City) and Franklin County (Washington and Union). Initially we will serve 45 children and families in Cole County and 15 in Franklin County. This is a new service for these two regions and our hope is that in the future, Missouri will expand this contract to include more children and families.



MAJOR GRANTS SUPPORT KANSAS CITY STEPPINGSTONE

At ECH we rely on the generosity of the local community to help fund our programs. Our Kansas City Steppingstone Transitional Living Program is the lucky recipient of two major grants. Wal-Mart's State Giving program awarded \$25,000 last fall to aid the local community in ending youth homelessness.

“We are so grateful for the support from the Walmart Foundation through this generous grant,” said Kansas City Steppingstone Director Lynn Durbin. “The Steppingstone program helps young people achieve self-sufficiency by assisting them in the acquisition of independent living skills, which facilitate their reintegration into the community.”

“At the Walmart Foundation, we understand that organizations such as ECH Every Child's Hope are essential to building stronger communities. They share our values and are committed to helping youth in need live better,” said Anne Hatfield, Walmart Public Affairs spokeswoman.

Early this year ECH was honored to receive notification of a \$60,000 grant from the Missouri Housing Trust Fund. The goal of the fund is to help meet the housing needs of very low income families and individuals. The Missouri Housing Development Commission administers the Trust Fund, which provides funding for a variety of housing needs, such as homeless prevention; rehab or new construction of rental housing, rental assistance; and home repair. The grant award will provide rental assistance to the Steppingstone youth as they work toward achieving independence and becoming contributing residents in the local community.

[ECH employees Christine Balden, Eve Dyson, and Duane Lewis attend the grand opening of the Union office.]

MAKE A GIFT TO EVERY CHILD'S HOPE & RECEIVE INCOME THROUGH A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

By Sharon Fenoglio

A charitable gift annuity is a common life income plan for seniors. It may be funded with cash or publicly traded securities of \$5,000 or more. In addition to your initial tax deduction, you and/or your spouse or designee receive lifetime fixed payments – a portion of which is tax-free. Your payment rate is based on the age or ages (if a second recipient is named) of the payment recipient(s) at the time the gift is made. When the gift annuity ends, the remaining assets are placed in the Reserve Fund at ECH Every Child's Hope for perpetuity.

BENEFITS OF A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY:

- Lifetime fixed payments (a portion of which is tax free) for you and/or your designee
- Charitable income tax deduction for a portion of your gift
- Reduction of capital gains tax if funded with appreciated securities
- Estate tax benefits
- Supports the mission of ECH Every Child's Hope

Sharon Fenoglio, Director of Development, would be happy to prepare a personalized calculation for you and answer any questions you may have regarding gift annuities or any other planned giving vehicle. Call her anytime at 314-427-3755 or email sfenoglio@echmail.org.

ECH EVERY CHILD'S HOPE Annual Golf Tournament!

Planning has begun for the 15th Annual Golf Classic that raises funds to support the work we do every day on behalf of children and families in need in our community.

Join us on **Monday, September 21, 2015** for the scramble held at the beautiful Old Hickory Golf Club in St. Peters, MO. Plenty of auction items, games on the course and great food and drinks will be on hand. Mr. Randy Karraker from ESPN 101.1 is once again serving as our honorary chair.

There are many opportunities to provide support in addition to purchasing a foursome such as hole sponsors, birdie sponsors, and if you don't play golf, you can still support by coming out for lunch and/or dinner.

This has been a very successful event for us and our guests have always really enjoyed the day. Most importantly, all of the funds raised that day go directly to support the work we do to help hurting children, youth and their families.

For more information please go to our website at everychildshope.org or contact our Associate Development Director Laura Kilcullin at lkilcullin@echmail.org.



HOPE FOR TOMORROW . . . Every Child's Hope is You!

Hope for Tomorrow is a social organization of young professionals who care about children and want to serve and support the mission of ECH Every Child's Hope. Members enjoy a fun and social atmosphere while improving our community and participating in networking opportunities.

There are many benefits for Hope for Tomorrow members.

- Social gatherings to promote networking with other young professionals.
- Add to your resume.
- Special events geared for fun and to raise funds for ECH.
- Discounts for ECH special events, including Extend a Caring Hand Dinner and Golf Classic.

[Honorary Chair Randy Karraker gets the tournament going!]

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Dues are \$20 per year.

Check out Hope For Tomorrow's Facebook page at [Hope For Tomorrow St. Louis](https://www.facebook.com/HopeForTomorrowStLouis) or visit our webpage at www.everychildshope.org.

For more information, contact Laura Kilcullin at 314-427-3755 x231 or lkilcullin@echmail.org.

LEARNING AND GROWING in the Early Education Center

THE EARLY EDUCATION CENTER AT ECH IS A WONDERFUL PLACE FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN AND GROW. HERE ARE A FEW THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN GOING ON!

STAFF HOSTED A FROZEN-THEMED WINTER BALL FOR THE CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS. ELSA AND ANNA EVEN MADE AN APPEARANCE!



READY READER VOLUNTEER, MRS. A., BROUGHT HER DANCING PARTNER MR. TAL AND SHOWED THE CHILDREN THE TANGO AND SWING.



THANKS TO THE COAT-A-KID ORGANIZATION, OUR KIDDOS HAD WARM JACKETS FOR THOSE COLD WINTER DAYS.



MR. TAL AND MRS. A TAUGHT THE KIDS THE SHIM SHAM DANCE.



THE CHILDREN MADE HEALTHY SNACKS AS PART OF THE EAT SMART/ MOVE SMART PROGRAM, WHICH PROMOTES HEALTHY EATING AND MOVEMENT.



VOLUNTEERS ED & JAN VIEHMANN AND IMMANUEL UCC IN FERGUSON SUPPLIED FAMILY FOOD BOXES WHICH MADE CHRISTMAS A LITTLE BRIGHTER FOR ECH FAMILIES AND KIDS.



THESE PRETZEL SPIDERS USED APRICOTS AND RAISINS!



ROOM 4 USED STRAWBERRIES, PINEAPPLE, AND KIWI TO MAKE A "SNACK STOP-LIGHT."





ECH Every Child's Hope
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St. Louis, MO 63114

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STAFF AWARDS

Staff longevity is rare in the social work field, but ECH is proud of the high number of staff who have invested significant time at our organization. The dedication of our staff is what sets us apart as a leader in the child welfare community. Last January the following staff members received service awards, acknowledging their milestone achievements.



Early Education Center employees
L to R Juanita Chism (20 years), Patricia
Alexander (10 years), Tracy Jones (5 years)



From L to R:
Debora Lake (30 years), Deborah
Cunigan (5 years),
Crystal Roden-
berg (5 years),
Sharon Fenoglio
(20 years), Phil
Garrett (35 Years),
Judy Waggoner
(15 Years), Angela
Noud (5 years),
Duane Lewis (30
years)

