

Letter from the CEO

Michael Brennan



Dear Friends,

Fall is a meaningful time for us at ECH because, when you work with children, you're touched by the cycles of the academic calendar. Our ECH school welcomed students back to a learning environment customized to their unique needs, our family services team strengthens children and families so they can get the most out of their educational opportunities, and our Steppingstone program gives youth the tools they need to succeed through high school and beyond. Our job is to help them transition to a place where their individual strengths are put to their highest and best use.

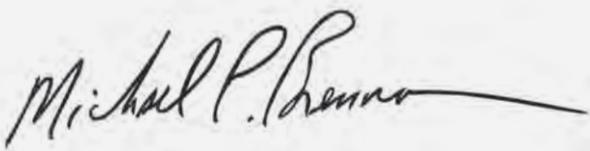
The transitional feeling in the air – the changing from summer to winter – accurately describes our organization, too. We're an agency that is proud to have dozens of employees who've been with us for 30 or more years, but good stewardship means we have to prepare for what it looks like when that part of our team is ready to retire. We're doing our succession planning and evolving our jobs to meet the preferences of younger generations. What inspires me about these new workers is their desire to be part of a cause and to do work that positively impacts their communities and their world.

We're even evolving physically, with new facilities on our Kansas City and St. Louis campuses. I've been heartened to see that our donors, whom I think of as partners, understand and respect the mission of ECH. They have not backed off from their giving. They are supporting us as we continually strive for excellence, and they are steadfast in their belief that we can bring hope and healing to children and families.

It can be difficult to keep from feeling overwhelmed during times of great change, but my position allows me to see unimaginable resilience in children who get up every day and take steps to improve their situation. I see the parents who face generations of dysfunction and choose to do whatever it takes to end the cycle for their children. When you focus on the good and allow it to inspire you, it is quite clear that together, we have a bright future.

Thank you for being a part of our mission.

With gratitude,



Michael P. Brennan

Former ECH Staff Member and Resident Become Donors, Reunite After 60+ Years

What began as an appreciation luncheon for some of our out-of-state donors at the historic Longfellow's Wayside Inn located in Marlborough, Massachusetts, turned into a reunion of two families that had not seen each other in nearly 60 years.



ECH Chief Development Officer Sherry Gerke was stunned when she unintentionally discovered the connection between two families while planning the gathering. Sherry was preparing to meet with the Allen Boemer Family, who live in Massachusetts. Since she would already be traveling there, she reached out to another donor who also lives in the area. This led her to invite Rita Masters, and her family, to join her and the Boemer family for lunch.

Our story begins with Allen Boemer's family in the late 1800s. Allen's Grandfather, Charles Schaeffer, and his Great Aunt, Margaret Schaeffer, lived at the St. Charles Rock Road campus of ECH when it was an orphanage. Years later, as newlyweds, Allen and his young wife, Lois, made contact with ECH while they were looking for jobs.

From 1956 to 1962, Allen and Lois served as house parents to the boys of cottage #6. While Allen worked on completing his college education at Washington University, Lois served as the primary house parent. Then, during her time at ECH, Lois became the agency's first public relations staff member, which became a lifelong career field for her. (Lois passed away in 2020.)

The couple welcomed their first two daughters, Susan and Cheryl, while living on campus. With full work schedules, school, and raising two young children, they turned to teenager Rita (Pollman) Masters, an ECH resident, to babysit their girls from time to time.

Rita lived at ECH for 10 years in the '50s and '60s with her sisters. Rita said that some of her fondest memories while living at ECH include the Boemers and their children. She also had a very close relationship with the daughter of Victor Hauck, who served as the superintendent of ECH for over 30 years.

Neither Allen nor Rita knew the other lived in such close proximity to one another. Who would have thought that the life journeys of these two families would lead them 30 miles from each other in a state over 1,000 miles from St. Louis?

The luncheon was a wonderful opportunity for them to learn about progress on the Youth Development Center construction project and current ECH highlights. However, the most powerful part of the experience was when a former client and a former house parent were able to reunite for the first time in decades.



SMALL PHOTO TOP RIGHT: Rita (Pollman) Masters - former ECH resident in the 50's, Allen Boemer - houseparent with late wife Lois from 1956 to 1962, Cheryl Boemer - Mr. Boemer's 2nd oldest daughter who was born while parents were at ECH

PHOTO ABOVE: Sherry Gerke, Cheryl Boemer, Rita Masters, Bob Masters, Allen Boemer

Leadership, Retirements, Promotions, and Hires

DUANE LEWIS'S RETIREMENT

After 39 years of service to ECH, Chief Operating Officer Duane Lewis has decided to retire. Duane started at the St. Louis campus as an intern in 1983 and later served in Kansas City as our Steppingstone Director for 25 years. He returned to St. Louis as the COO in 2013, where he has served since.



Duane has an easy-going, reflective way of relating to others and has been instrumental in helping our agency evolve and expand our services. Employees would agree that he is the model for what a servant leader should strive to be at ECH.

Whatever the tasks might be, Duane has always been willing to do whatever it takes to make sure employees and the children and families we serve are well cared for.

ECH will be forever grateful for Duane's leadership and contributions to the agency over the last four decades. Please know it was a job well done. We wish Duane and his wife, Bev, a happy and healthy retirement. All of our best wishes.

ANGIE SLIEPEN

NEW COO EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2022

We are pleased to announce that Angie Sliepen is assuming the role of Chief Operating Officer upon Duane's retirement. Angie took on the role starting October 1, ensuring that she and Duane had enough time to make the transition smooth. Angie joined ECH in November of 2021 as the St. Louis Campus Operations Director. In her short time here, she has been a marvelous addition to our management team. We are pleased to have her expertise working to serve the children and families of ECH.



JENE TILLIS

ST. LOUIS OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Jene Tillis joined our team on August 1, 2022, as the new Campus Operations Director. She holds an Associate degree in Allied Health, a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and a Master's in Business Management. Jene has 20 plus years of experience in human services, specifically in the areas of Child Welfare and the Department of Mental Health. She is passionate about advocating for vulnerable individuals that are the least heard and accepted in society. We are excited to have her as part of the ECH family and look forward to her expanding and supporting the mission of the agency.



SHELLEY MOORE

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT DIRECTOR

Shelley Moore joined the ECH team in August as our new Performance Improvement Director. Her background is in Human Services and Social Work. As she worked with a non-profit organization for 25 years that served disabled children and adults, she discovered that her true passion was behind the scenes, in quality assurance and compliance. We are excited to have Shelly on the ECH team and cannot wait to see where she will take the department.



AMY HANSON

COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES DIRECTOR

We are excited to announce that Amy Hanson was promoted to the Director of Community Based Services position in September. She has been with ECH for over 5 years serving in numerous clinical and supervisory roles, and most recently as the Associate Director of Community Based Services. In her new role, she will oversee Family Solutions for Kids, Community Child and Youth Psychiatric Services, Foster Care Case Management, and Residential Aftercare Services, which is a growing program that is making a huge impact on the lives of children.



In Memoriam

JAMES "JIMMY" W. SMITH

JUNE, 24 2022

Mr. James "Jimmy" W. Smith passed away on June 24, 2022. He was a former member of the ECH Board and is the father of our current Board Chair, Ms. Shari Smith.



As a young man, Mr. Smith served in the Army Air Corps during WWII. Upon returning from the army, he graduated from Elmhurst College and then started his career in the insurance business in 1951. He had a passion for serving organizations that help children and families, including the ECH Board, the Shriners Hospital, and the Ferguson Florissant School Board Advisory Council.

Mr. Smith touched the lives of many people, and made a difference in the lives of hundreds of children over the years, he will be lovingly remembered by all who know him and sorely missed.

OLIVER BERWIN

DECEMBER 6, 1938 - AUGUST 16, 2022

We were sad to learn of the passing of Mr. Oliver Berwin on August 16, 2022. Mr. Berwin served on the ECH Board for 53 years and he held the Board Chair position for over four decades. The Berwin family legacy of service to ECH has been going on for three generations. His father, Mr. Oliver Berwin, Sr., preceded him on the Board from 1947 to 1979 and also served as Board Chair. Today, his daughter, Regina Berwin, is following in her father's footsteps and serves on the board.



"I will always be extremely grateful for Ollie's unwavering support, particularly in those early years when I was a very young executive. He was a quiet, understated leader who got things done on our behalf," said Michael Brennan, ECH CEO.

Mr. Brennan reflected on one of his favorite memories; in the early 2000s, Mr. Berwin visited his office during a time when the stock market and the agency's investments were doing extremely well. "He said, 'Michael, we are doing really well right now so we need to make some increased investments in staff and program. I don't want to get to the pearly gates and have St. Peter ask me what I did with all of that money when we had children in need.' I will never forget that interaction," says Brennan.

ECH wishes to express our gratitude on behalf of all the kids whose lives Mr. Berwin helped touch over his more than five decades of service. And we know that Mr. Berwin had no trouble getting past St. Peter when he arrived at the pearly gates because he was a wonderful steward of ECH's resources, helping thousands and thousands of children over the half-century he served on the board.

WADE THURMON

NOVEMBER 13, 1953 - APRIL 23, 2022

We are sad to announce the passing of a long time ECH Employee, Wade Thurmon, on April 23, 2022. Wade joined the agency in 2014 as our IT Director. Prior to that, he spent much of his career teaching at a local technical school. Wade made it his personal mission to provide the best possible service to every staff person - and he could proudly say he knew almost every ECH employee by name, from St. Louis to Kansas City to Jefferson City to Poplar Bluff.

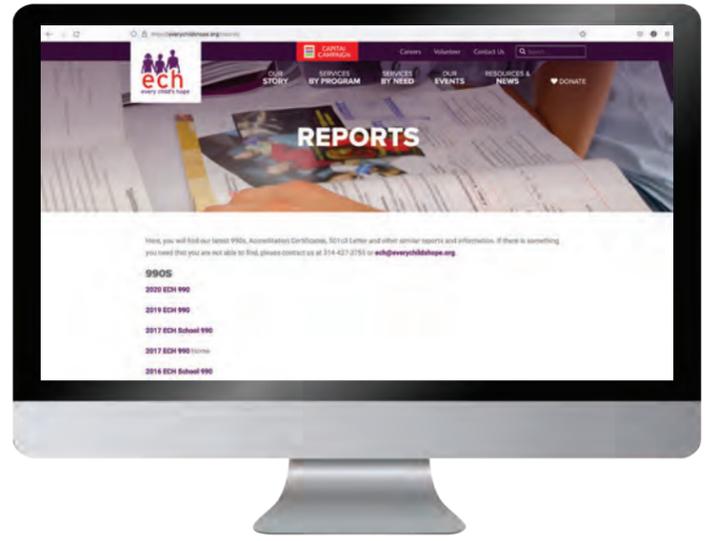


Wade's humor always put a smile on staff's faces and his kindness towards everyone he met was unlike any other. Wade also had a passion for music and played in a band called Spin with his wife, son and longtime friend. The memory of Wade will forever remain with those of us who had the privilege of knowing him.

Thank you for making a difference.

Annual Report is Online

The information below paints a picture of ECH and can be found in our latest Annual Report. The report is available for download or can be viewed on our website. We are proud of everything our team has achieved and the lives we touched. We're thankful for the support of our board and donors, which make it all possible.



Scan this QR code to view the full report, which is also available on our website.



24%

Employees who have been on staff 10+ years



90%

Employees who hold bachelor's degree or higher



1,527

Clients served in 2021



54% Males



46% Females

New KC Life Skills Center Eyes November Completion

Appliances have been installed, the landscaping will soon be planted... It's down to completing the final touches on the new Life Skills Center on ECH's Kansas City campus.

"Our youth are excited to get inside the new center and enjoy it. Our staff is thrilled to have a fresh, inspiring facility where they can help those we serve prepare for adulthood," said Lynn Durbin, Steppingstone director.

The project is a renovation of a former three-bedroom home on the campus into a modern, accessible space that includes a community room where staff will provide life skills teaching, a computer room where youth can do work and apply for jobs, and an upgraded kitchen space for cooking and relaxing.

The project is scheduled for completion in November. The renovation was made possible through grants from the Sunderland Foundation, the Hall Family Foundation, and the Steppingstone Auxiliary.

"We are still accepting donations that will allow us to purchase furniture to make our space more comfortable and functional. Any gift is appreciated," said Durbin.



Golf Classic 2022

The ECH Annual Golf Classic was held on Monday, September 19, 2022, hosted by the agency's longtime friend, Randy Karraker. With 100 golfers and 20 volunteers, it was a beautiful (but hot) day filled with golf, friends, food, and fun. ECH wishes to thank our Fairway Sponsor, One Digital, and Birdie Sponsors Bloomsdale Bank and Vehicle Assurance, as well as all of our other event sponsors and supporters who helped make the event successful.



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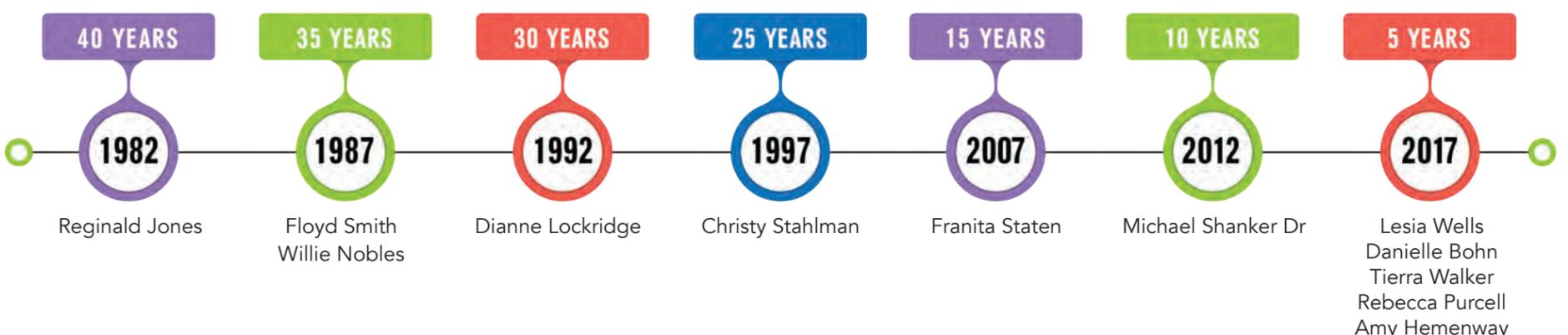


One Digital Fairway Sponsor



Manny Rivera's Team

ECH Employee Milestones



Get Ready for the ECH Christmas Campaign!

Every year, ECH is overwhelmed by the generosity of our supporters when the holiday season arrives. Last year, you collectively donated over 1,700 toys, presents and gift cards for the children and families we serve during the holiday season. We also took in over 3,000 other items to support programs and families throughout the year. Your support made the holidays a little brighter for over 350 children and families. THANK YOU!

As we head into the 2022 holiday season, we again ask for your support - as well as the support of your family, friends and community.

The question is, how would you like to get involved? You can choose your preferred way of supporting ECH this holiday season. Whether you are a self-proclaimed professional shopper or a one-click order pro, we have an opportunity for you to be a hero for a child this year. We also ask that you share this information with your circle of friends.

Here are 4 options for getting involved this year. Scan the QR code for more details. **Gifts should be received by Dec 7, 2022.**

FOR THE ORGANIZERS & PLANNERS



COORDINATE A HOLIDAY DONATION DRIVE!

- Coordinate your own unique Holiday Drive for your group. Contact Sarah to set up a donation drive of approved items that we need!

FOR THE MISSION SUPPORTERS



SUPPORT OUR YEAR-END CAMPAIGN

- You can easily make a tax-deductible, year-end donation online, just follow the QR link to our giving page. Funds raised through this campaign will ensure that children and families receive the support they need year-round.

Get Ready for the ECH Christmas Campaign!

FOR THE SHOPPERS



SHOP 'TILL YOU DROP

Adopt-A-Child or Adopt-A-Family

- Select a child, multiple children, or a family and fill their wish list.
- This is a great option for individuals, families, and small groups.
- \$75 average commitment per child (~3 gifts).

Grant-A-Wish

- Select one wish or multiple wishes to fill. You can also request "Wish Tags" that include children's wishes, which you can display for your group members to select from.
- This is a great option for individuals or large groups.
- \$25 average commitment per gift.

Thank you for your generosity.



FOR THE NON-SHOPPERS



POINT...CLICK...DONE!

Gift Card Drive

- Donate \$25 for a virtual gift card, then we will do the shopping for you! Every virtual gift card will fill one child's wish.
- Or, donate Gift Cards that you already have in any denomination.

Amazon Wish List

- Visit our Amazon Wish List and select a gift (or two) from a selection of our most-requested items. It will ship directly to us.

MAIL ITEMS/DONATIONS TO:

ECH Christmas Campaign
RE: XX00-0 (Please include the client ID# on the mailing label and on every gift included in the package.)
8240 St. Charles Rock Road
St. Louis, MO 63114



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