

## Letter from the CEO

Julia Adami



Dear friends, donors, and colleagues,

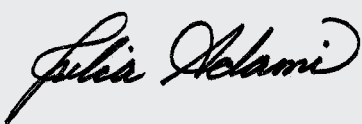
This issue's cover story (found to the right) is a must-read testament to the rippling power of hope.

Hope is at the heart of everything we do at ECH, our name reflecting a promise to the youth we serve. A glimmer of hope can be enough to change the trajectory of someone's life and, in the best case, move them toward the things that set their soul on fire so they can make an impact of their own.

Jen's story is the perfect example of that. A young woman who once found hope through our Steppingstone program will soon be a licensed social worker, walking alongside children and families facing their own challenges. Every life Jen touches throughout her career will feel the ripple effect of the care and support she experienced at ECH. The hope that helped unlock her potential is the same hope that will now touch countless others through her work.

While our educational support was one of the key factors in Jen's journey, success stories take many forms. Each ECH program has the power to change lives and create ripples that extend into families and communities for generations to come. By sharing your charitable goals with us, together we can set the stage for those we serve to thrive.

With gratitude,



Julia Adami

## Donors Make the Difference: ECH Scholarship Recipient Uses Education to Pay it Forward



**"Genuinely, I would not have been able to pursue my master's degree if not for Every Child's Hope and the scholarship from the Carroll family,"** says Jen\* (name changed for privacy), a 24-year-old graduate student and former Steppingstone resident. **"It's lifted a massive amount of weight and offered freedom to pursue a career in social work, where I'm going to be able to support people the way Steppingstone supported me."**

Jen's journey with ECH began in 2020, just before her 19th birthday, when she made the difficult decision to leave an unsafe home and enter the Kansas City Steppingstone transitional living program.

She remembers the stark contrast between the day she arrived and the day she left: **"I walked in terrified and uncertain about reality, feeling childish and unstable. But then, that first night, I felt peace, like I could finally breathe. Three years later, I left with confidence, direction, and purpose."**

At Steppingstone, Jen gained stability through weekly meetings with a case manager who offered consistent support in a way she had never experienced. She received free therapy sessions. She learned emotional strategies such as boundary setting, as well as practical life skills like completing FAFSA forms and grocery shopping on a budget. Perhaps most importantly, Jen was given the space and a safe place to heal.

Through the scholarship, she was able to earn her bachelor's degree in social work in 2025 and is now completing her master's, set to graduate in 2026. Jen will soon begin her career as a therapist—coming full circle to offer others the same steady care and guidance that once changed the course of her own life.



## About the Henry Eugene Carroll and Elsie Aufmuth Carroll Scholarship Fund

In 2022, Jen was awarded the Henry Eugene Carroll and Elsie Aufmuth Carroll Scholarship. The scholarship fund has provided \$310,000 to 85 ECH clients across Missouri over the past seven years. The fund was set up by the Carrolls' son, Gene, in their memory.

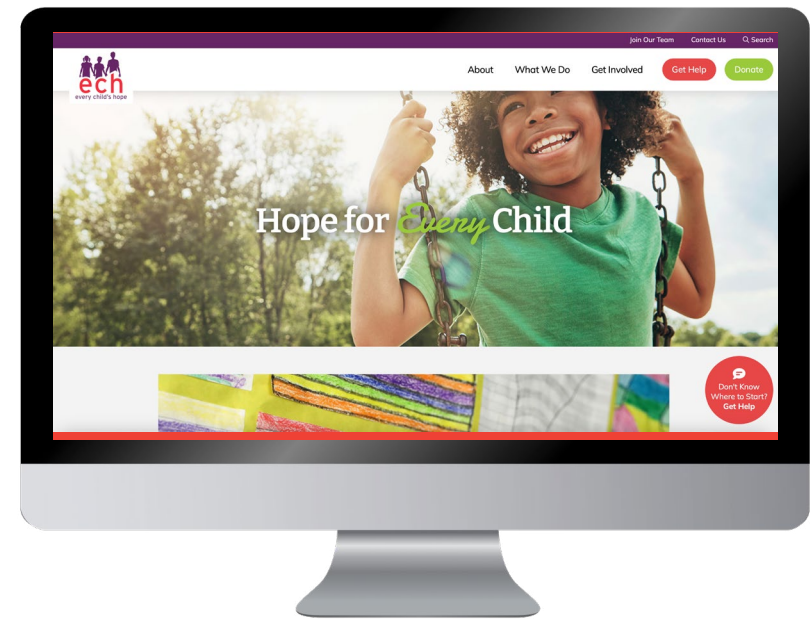


# ECH's 25th Annual Golf Tournament Breaks Records



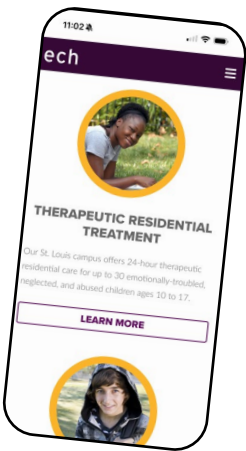
It was a gorgeous day at Old Hickory Golf Club in St. Peters, where ECH hosted our **25th Anniversary Golf Tournament**. This year marked the first time the tournament was completely sold out, welcoming 136 golfers and raising over \$69,000 to support the programs that we provide to children and families across Missouri.

The event would not be the same without the support of event host Randy Karraker of Matrix Midwest, who has served as honorary chair for 18 years! We are also very grateful for our major event sponsors: One Digital, Nancy Sanders & the Hermann Family Charitable Trust, Vehicle Assurance, Bloomsdale Bank, Global Vision Technologies, Manny Rivera, Potbelly, Keurig Dr. Pepper, and Grey Eagle. We also thank all sponsors, golfers, volunteers, and donors for making this a year to remember.



## ECH Has a New Look Online

Check it out! We're thrilled to announce the launch of our new and improved website: [everychildshope.org](http://everychildshope.org)



With a fresh design and updated content, the new site brings ECH's story to life and celebrates our rich history, while better sharing the impact we are making today in the lives of children and families. Clients and families will find it easier to access the services and information they need, and donors can clearly see how their generosity changes lives.

## ECH Celebrates Donors at Summer Event

We appreciate all who attended our donor event on August 20th at Fast Lane Classic Cars! We celebrated the generosity of our friends, who are crucial to the success of ECH's programs, while learning more about the difference they make. CEO Julia Adami received a ceremonial check that quantified the value of volunteer hours donated to our organization – **1,369 hours worth \$42,658** – before one of our former clients shared his story of hope and transformation.

Thank you to everyone who gives your time, talent, and treasure to our mission.







# Art Therapist Floyd Smith Retires After 38 Years of Service

After 38 years of dedicated service, beloved therapist Floyd Smith has announced his retirement from Every Child’s Hope. Floyd’s profound impact, particularly within our adolescent male population, cannot be understated.

**“Floyd has been such an incredible pillar of consistency and quality care within the ECH community for so many years,” said Sean Bradley, Residential Treatment Director. “Although times have changed,**

**Floyd’s dedication and unwavering desire to do what’s right for the kids he served and the Residential Treatment program have not.”**

As a certified art therapist, he most recently led art therapy groups that inspired meaningful art installations across campus, leaving a creative and lasting mark on ECH. Floyd will be deeply missed and his influence will continue to be felt for years to come. We are deeply grateful for his many contributions to the ECH community and inspired to carry his legacy forward.



ECH honors our staff member **Jorre Hadley**, who lost her life tragically this summer. Jorre was a rock star on our Foster Care/Family Connections team, helping children who had been removed from their homes and families who were working to reunite. We were blessed to have her as a part of our team. She truly made an incredible impact for all she served.

# It’s Already Christmastime!

The countdown is on for the elves at ECH as we begin preparations for a busy holiday season...and we need YOU to make it happen! We are so thankful and humbled by last year, during which we distributed gifts to 475 children and \$10,420 worth of gift cards. The story below is a peek into the impact your generosity of spirit can have on brightening our kids’ holidays.

“For kids who enter foster care, there is so much unknown and only so much that can be promised. Holidays can be intimidating; there are feelings of sadness, fear, longing, nostalgia, or loss. A lot of that changes thanks to our donors each holiday season!

One older youth in our care was extremely apprehensive about sharing what he wanted for Christmas because he did not yet have a community he trusted. With encouragement from his worker (and a moment of vulnerability), he wished for art supplies.

When Christmas came around, he received sketchbooks, pens, markers, canvases – more than he anticipated! This donor showed the youth that he had someone in his corner who cared about his wants, not just his needs. All of our kids are just one caring adult away from ending cycles of trauma... sometimes that shows itself in a colorful box with a bow!”



**CONTACT FAILONA COLLINS**  
Director of Advancement  
314-427-3755 x231 or  
failona.collins@everyschildshope.org  
to discuss customized options.

There are four ways for you to participate:



**Gift Drive**  
Create your own gift drive with friends, family members, church groups, coworkers, or any other team who’d like to share in some holiday magic. **Contact Failona at failona.collins@everyschildshope.org to get started.**



**Shop Like an Elf**  
Be one of Santa’s elves by heading out to fulfill the Christmas wishes of one child or an entire family! We’ll supply the list, you check it twice and enjoy getting into the spirit.



**Shop Online**  
Are you more of a digital shopper? We can share wish lists that allow you to make the holidays bright for a child or family from the comfort of your keyboard. And don’t forget... gift cards of any denomination are very appreciated!



**Year-End Monetary Donation**  
Make your year-end, tax-deductible donation online at **everychildshope.org**. Your gift will ensure children and families have the support they need year-round.



# A Look Back



**ECH began serving the St. Louis region before the Civil War**, before the close of westward expansion. Our mission started as an orphanage for children who lost their parents as part of the cholera outbreak in the City of St. Louis, providing food, shelter, and care to children who needed it. Our work has evolved over the last 165+ years as the needs have changed. One tenet that has stayed the same is providing hope and help to the most vulnerable among us. We help thousands of people each year by empowering youth, strengthening families, and improving the quality of life across Missouri.

## Ho-Ho-HOPE! It’s Christmas Campaign Time!



Look inside to learn more about our upcoming 2025 Campaign. It’s sure to be our biggest ever!



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