



# UTREACH NEWS

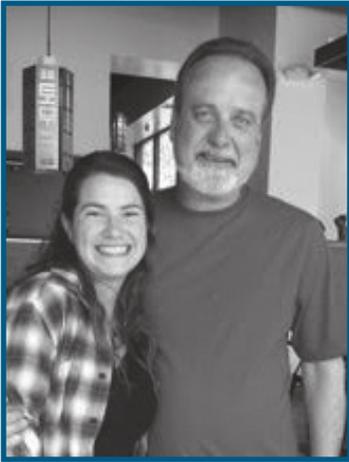
A publication of Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County & The Marnee and John DeVine Foundation

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FALL 2015

## FROM LIVING IN DARKNESS TO SHARING LIGHT

### *Changing Lives Through Prisoner ReEntry*



TJ with Tara, one of his creative writing professors.

TJ's clear blue eyes give you all of his attention. Admitting his affinity for lots of strong coffee in the morning, he sipped happily from a large cup between the breaks in his story. Here sat a man who speaks to young people about violence, who sparkles when he talks about his past work where textbooks were translated into braille for blind learners, who writes poetry, and adores his cat as evidenced by the pictures he proudly scrolled through.

Five minutes into our meeting and it's clear: this is a good man. A self-aware and self-improving man. And a convicted murderer.

TJ was fifteen years old when he and a friend, high on drugs, committed an afternoon burglary on a neighbor's house. Things escalated when the female homeowner stumbled into their ransacking chaos. The boys inexplicably murdered her and left her body broken and vandalized only to be found later by her teenage son, a boy just two years older than TJ.

We want to believe that those who commit heinous crimes are so very different from the rest of us, but when TJ entered the prison

system, he wasn't a hardened criminal. He was a terrified sixteen year old boy sentenced to life behind bars after a string of terrible, violent choices.

Both boys were tried as adults, convicted and sentenced to life without parole. But, years later, when a state appellate court reduced the conviction to second degree murder and ordered the two resentenced, TJ received the life sentence. His friend — the one who actually committed the murder and acted as the attacker — was released back into society after just ten years due to some savvy moves on the part of his lawyer. TJ sat in prison, alone and hurting for those he'd wronged, struggling with his own coming of age while plagued with the mental images and heart-wrenching guilt of what had happened. Because of the length of his sentence, he was denied any kind of psychotherapy for ten years — the decade he was becoming a man.

Prison was hard on TJ. Role models were scarce. Many of the guys serving time were desperate and without hope, not the kind of men you want to emulate when you're sixteen

**CSSW operates the Washtenaw & Livingston Prisoner Reentry programs, helping assimilate parolees and ex-offenders back into society. This state-wide initiative promotes public safety by increasing the success rates of prisoners transitioning from incarceration to reentering the community.**

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## #GIVINGTUESDAY™

There's Black Friday.

And then there's Giving Tuesday

# DECEMBER 1

Global day of giving when families, charities, students, and community groups celebrate a season of generosity.

# HUSTLE FOR HOPE

CSSW kicked off the summer by sponsoring Hustle for Hope, a fun walk to raise awareness and support for at-risk children. The warm sunshine attracted friends of CSSW to the 1.65 mile walk at Gallup Park. Thank you to the Mary Kay Pearson Family and Old National Bank for supporting the event!



The Starting Line Up



Mary Kay Pearson, Sylvia Palmquist & Margot DeVine-Mumby



Aiden House & Linda Schork

## PHOTOVOICE



“Crooked Path” Project Exhibit

Substance abuse among older adults is one of the fastest growing health problems in the United States. To bring awareness and greater understanding to the issue, the Bi-County Senior Connection, a partnership of CSSW, Livingston County Catholic Charities and the University of Michigan Senior Wellness Program, created a project called “PhotoVoice” to give seniors and their families the opportunity to share their experience of substance abuse through photography and narrative. A grand opening of the project was

held in August at Dawn Farm, an Ypsilanti addiction treatment center, for exhibitors and their support networks. PhotoVoice will be on display for the public at various locations throughout the year. Visit [csswashtenaw.org](http://csswashtenaw.org) for specific details.



“Stay Awake” Project Exhibit



## 2015 RSVP VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION LUNCHEON

RSVP recognized 130 volunteers for their gift of time and service to non-profit agencies in Washtenaw County. RSVP volunteers were treated to lunch, entertainment by Drummunity, special remarks by Ypsilanti Mayor Amanda Edmonds, and wonderful door prizes. In 2014, RSVP volunteers donated 48,864 hours valued at \$1,127,292.40. President Larry Voight acknowledged six of the longest serving volunteers: Virginia Brown (25 years), Trudy Bohms (27 years), Bill Yaeger (27 years), Phyllis Husted (28 years), Phyllis McFee (28 years), and Marjorie Krakker (29 years). Thanks to Jimmy Johns and Hillside Terrace for providing lunch and all of the individuals and local businesses who generously donated gifts as door prizes. Please visit [csswashtenaw.org](http://csswashtenaw.org) or call 734.712.4325 to learn more about the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.



Volunteers Gerri Hale & Jackie Hardy



Drummunity's Lori Fithian



Volunteers Sandy Jacobs & Ellis Bentley

## *Marnee Burke DeVine Honored*

More than 150 guests joined CSSW in honoring Marnee Burke DeVine for her extraordinary contributions to the Agency since its inception in 1959. Held at Travis Pointe Country Club, the evening included heartwarming tributes and wonderful stories about Marnee by Dr. Kim Eagle and two of her children, John K. DeVine and Kathy DeVine Brilliant, followed by a musical performance by Judy Dow Rumelhart. A special proclamation from Governor Rick Snyder was shared by event chairs Dorothy Farhat and Judy Johns. The final touch to the evening was the surprise announcement of the inaugural Marnee & John DeVine Leadership Award presented to Marnee as the first recipient of the award. Thank you to all who shared in this celebration, raising more than \$36,000 for The Marnee & John DeVine Foundation endowment.



Event Chairs Dorothy Farhat & Judy Johns



The DeVine Family



Marnee DeVine with Judy Dow Rumelhart



Marnee DeVine & Sheila Cresswell

## NURTURING PARENTING FACILITATOR TRAINING

CSSW hosted the second Nurturing Parenting Facilitator Training — an evidence based program for the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. The program is used across the country and was chosen as the basis for an in-home treatment program developed by the Department of Human Services. Stephen Bavolek, Ph.D., who created the training, facilitated the workshop at CSSW.



Dr. Stephen Bavolek, Ph.D.

## ST. JOSEPH PARISH BABY SHOWER

Thank you to St. Joseph Parish of Dexter for sponsoring a baby shower for the Nurturing Families Washtenaw Program. Generous and greatly appreciated gifts of diapers, wipes, baby gear, and car seats will be of great help to our families.



## BIRTH MOTHER'S DAY

Nearly sixty birth parents, adoptive parents, and guests attended the annual Birth Mother's Day Celebration on May 9. Held the Saturday before Mother's Day, the event honors birth parents for their self-sacrificial acts of love to their children. Special thanks to Knights of Columbus, Jefferson's Market and Cakery, Great Harvest Bread, Starbucks Coffee (Glencoe Crossing), Zingerman's Bakehouse, Afternoon Delight, Trader Joe's, The Enchanted Florist, and Edible Arrangements for their support of this moving event.

For more information about Birth Mother's Day or the Pregnancy Counseling Program, please contact Julie Payne at 734.971.9781 ext. 321 or [jpayne@csswashtenaw.org](mailto:jpayne@csswashtenaw.org).

## The Oaks 8th Annual

# ART SHOW



The Ann Arbor Oaks Adult Day Program held its annual art show in July, giving members coping with cognitive, physical or mental disabilities a creative and visual way to share stories and feelings with family and friends. The always entertaining Oaks Choir also performed,

encouraging visitors to join in their exuberant song. The Oaks now operates in two locations — Ann Arbor and Dexter. To learn more about The Oaks, call 734.662.4001.

## SENIOR SERVICE VOLUNTEER PROJECTS

Volunteers from Kapnick Insurance and the First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor helped spruce up the homes of elderly residents in our community. Projects included window washing, yard clean up, and trimming.



Twenty volunteers from Kapnick Insurance participated in the United Way Day of Action by serving with the Home Services Team.



Volunteers from First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor had a Service on Sunday project instead of a Sunday Service.

## FROM LIVING IN DARKNESS TO SHARING LIGHT

*Continued from page 1.*

and looking forward. The prison food caused plaque to build in the arteries in his legs, exacerbated by the lack of exercise available. Fellow inmates weren't always safe or friendly. TJ was stabbed in the back by another prisoner and rushed to the prison hospital where he stayed until he healed. Luckily, he was in psychotherapy at the time of the attack and was able, after a stretch of time, to understand the release of forgiveness.

Despite all obstacles, TJ used his sentence as a time for growth and giving back. He joined Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and sought psychotherapy. He took classes, served in prison libraries, worked as a clerk, and volunteered with the older inmate population as a geriatric aide. His hard work came to the attention of others and, finally, TJ was granted a parole hearing. Forty years after he entered the system, he walked out on parole into a vastly different world from the one he'd left behind at sixteen.

TJ explained that the things we take for granted in our everyday lives are tremendous obstacles for someone re-entering community. Finding a job, a landlord, a roommate, setting up a bank account, using a cell phone, securing transportation — all these things are riddled with extra challenges for an ex-prisoner. TJ is still getting used to his cell phone and laughs now about his first terrifying and overwhelming trip to Costco. When considering each hurdle combined with the psychological and emotional transitions that

prisoners face as they move from a cramped, shared, and overly structured life to the quiet isolation of freedom, it's easy to understand why recidivism rates rise.

TJ is gracious when he talks about the Washtenaw Prisoner Re-entry Program (WPR). He shares the power of small gifts and big connections — like the six months of bus passes he was provided. Without a steady income, purchasing these would be nearly impossible; and without transportation, there would be no job interviews or positive parole reviews. WPR connected him with other resources such as employment opportunities and clothing vouchers to support his transition. The WPR staff believe in him and in his rehabilitation. Nobody wants to see his process of growth and giving back waylaid by desperation, lack of opportunities, closed doors or closed minds; but without good resources and solid support — both emotionally and through resources — many ex-prisoners fail and return to a life behind bars.

Today TJ is halfway to a bachelor's degree in pre-law while balancing his classes with his jobs. He continues to volunteer and works with the U of M social work department as a research assistant and with the American Friends Service Committee as an intern. His poetry bookshelf is filling up. And he really, really loves his cat — Sam I Am. This is a man — lost and then found — committed to making something of his own life and the world a better place.

*To read TJ's full story or learn more about the Prisoner Re-entry program, please visit [csswashtenaw.org](http://csswashtenaw.org) or call 734.327.9717 ext. 379.*

### GRANT AWARDS

#### ANN ARBOR COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Blueprint for Aging  
Agency General Operations  
Intentional Communities of Washtenaw  
Senior Services

#### CLEARY UNIVERSITY

Retire the Mortgage

#### COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR SE MICHIGAN

Agency General Operations

#### EDWARD F. REDIES FOUNDATION, INC.

Washtenaw Child Advocacy Center

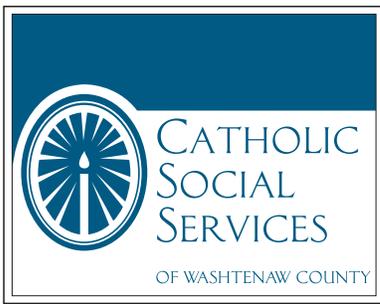
#### PREVNT

Blueprint for Aging

### EXCELLENCE IN THEIR FIELD

Washtenaw Child Advocacy Center staff member **Elizabeth Smith, MS** was invited to Rhode Island by the United States Navy to present on *The Forensic Interview: a Practitioner's Perspective*. Forensic interviewing is designed to elicit a child's unique information when there are concerns of possible abuse. The training included a trial advocacy exercise with Elizabeth testifying as an expert witness about a forensic interview and refuting the testimony of a defense expert. Navy and Marine Prosecutors from the United States and international posts participated.

**COO David Garvin** was featured in the book *Gender-Based Perspectives on Batterer Programs: Program Leaders on History, Approach, Research and Development* by Edward W. Gondolf, professor emeritus at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The book responds to the intense debate about the approach and effectiveness of batterer programs through a collection of 24 interviews with batterer program founders and leaders who have been working in the field for more than 25 years.



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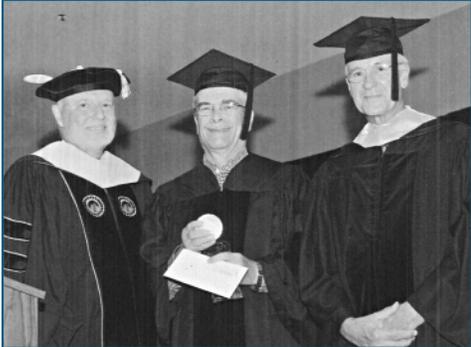
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## HERBERT BLACK RECEIVES LEADERSHIP AWARD

Please join us in congratulating long-time supporter Herbert Black who was awarded the 2015 Bob Lyons Community Leadership Award by Cleary University. The University also made a gift of \$2,000 to CSSW in Herb's honor. Herb exemplifies the values and leadership that community leader Bob Lyons demonstrated during his lifetime. For more than twenty years, Herb has offered his time, energy, enthusiasm and commitment to CSSW — from a founding trustee of The Marnee & John DeVine Foundation to his continuing efforts of leading the Retire the Mortgage campaign.

Cleary University President Thomas P. Sullivan, Herb Black & John Klee, Cleary University Board of Trustee Member

Serving as Treasurer of the Foundation for two years prior to being elected President for four years, Herb was instrumental in building an endowment to support the Agency. For the last several years, Herb has been a key proponent of reducing the \$1.2 million mortgage on the Agency's main office building. Herb's tireless efforts have reduced the mortgage by 43% to date.

The past few years have been difficult for many in our community, especially those living near the bottom of the economic spectrum. It is during these most challenging times that the commitment and dedication of people like Herb Black are most truly appreciated. Although not in the front lines delivering critical services to those in need, Herb has been a dedicated champion ensuring that CSSW may continue its work and mission in our community. Thank you, Herb!

**Interested in learning more about the Retire the Mortgage Campaign and how you can help?**  
Please contact the Development Office at 734.971.9781, ext. 313.