

# CSFC News | Volume 6 Winter 2014

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## COLLABORATIONS QUARTERLY:

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE  
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES CENTER

### HELLO AGAIN!

Welcome to *Collaborations Quarterly*, Children & Family Services Center's quarterly e-newsletter designed to keep stakeholders updated on happenings at CFSC and our member agencies. Increased communication enhances collaboration, so please forward this newsletter to your staff and supporters.

## **Nurturing small and new nonprofits**

***Hopeworks gets nonprofits up and running in no time***

"For now, I'm a one-person agency, and there's no way I could have received back office support like this on my own," says Laura Clark, executive director of Renaissance West Community Initiative (RWCI), the first tenant of the HopeWorks initiative at CFSC. "It was almost overnight that I gained access to all the systems I needed."

HopeWorks at CFSC offers office space for small and incubator nonprofits that share a similar mission. While RWCI is the first nonprofit in the space, there is room for more. CFSC Executive Director and CFO Shelley White says HopeWorks helps CFSC "further our mission to improve the lives of children and families through an innovative partnership of community resources that promotes strong families and advocates for change."

"This is more than just office space," explains White. "It provides the opportunity for nonprofits to dream, work, learn and grow together."

“This vibrant resource will provide nonprofits with opportunities for innovation and a hub where shared ideas can turn into shared action,” says White.

The conveniently located Class A office space includes 10 cubicles with locking storage cabinets at a rent of \$300 each per month and seven locking offices, with basic furniture, ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 per month. (These larger offices could accommodate two people.) The suite contains one shared conference room. Utilities and daily janitorial services are included in rent.

Tenants have access to a copier/printer/scanner, fax machine and wireless internet and can use CFSC conference rooms up to five hours each month. More hours are available at a nominal charge.

But, as White says, it’s much more than the physical space and equipment. “HopeWorks has given me structure,” says RWCI’s Clark. “I have someone to help prepare my financials and help me understand state requirements for a nonprofit. I come back to the business of being an executive director.”

“What my board and I are most excited about though, is the staff’s expertise in nonprofits,” she continues. “I could have found an accountant and someone to help with payroll, but what we really needed was someone with expertise in running a nonprofit, and we found that.” These finance, human resources and technology services are available at an additional cost to nonprofit CFSC building tenants.

Clark has a big mission. The group she leads, RWCI, is working to transform the former Boulevard Homes public housing site into a vibrant village called Renaissance. The initiative will blend mixed-income housing, educational opportunities, youth and adult development programs, health and wellness services, and commercial investment to create a community where there once was little hope. Learn more at [RWCI.org](http://RWCI.org) or by contacting Laura Clark, the agency’s executive director, at [lclark@rwci.org](mailto:lclark@rwci.org).

Virtually everything a new nonprofit might need is all part of HopeWorks. Telephone service is available for a small additional charge, as is a postage machine. The building offers 24/7 access with an access card, and it’s secured Monday through Thursday from 7:15 a.m. through 9 p.m. and from 7:15 a.m. through 5 p.m. on Fridays. Clients have ample parking, too.

To learn more about the available space, contact Nancy Sharp at [nsharp@childrenfamily.org](mailto:nsharp@childrenfamily.org).

## **A Child's Place**

***Annabelle Suddreth, Executive Director***



A Child's Place thanks Lu Ann Debolt, the Domtar Corporation Community Investment Committee, and participating Domtar vendors for making us the beneficiary of proceeds from the 2013 Domtar Charity Golf Event last fall. Domtar recently added a generous capstone contribution to event proceeds, making the final total \$125,895.

A Child's Place is gearing up for our annual fundraiser, A Swine Evening. "They're Banking on You: A Swine Evening" is a colorful gala, a celebrity piggy bank auction and party. The sole special fundraising event for A Child's Place, "A Swine Evening" features celebrity- autographed piggy banks packaged with trips and other fun items. Piggy banks are auctioned off in silent and live auctions at the event. Learn more at [aSwineEvening.com](http://aSwineEvening.com).

## **Care Ring**

***Don Jonas, Ph.D., Executive Director***



Join Care Ring for a magical evening of adult circus merriment and fantastical fantasy on Saturday, April 5 at 7:30 p.m. Enjoy "UNDER THE BIG TOP" at the Hilton Charlotte Center City. We're expecting 360 donors, community partners, medical vendors and the doctors, dentists, and nurses who participate in our programs at our gala. We also expect to see leaders from top local foundations, emerging philanthropists, young professionals and Care Ring's leading investors, such as Wells Fargo, OrthoCarolina, The Duke Endowment, Carolinas HealthCare System, Novant Health, BlueCross BlueShield and more. Step right up to a phenomenal, phantasmagorical evening.

VIP Grandstand "Ringside" seating is \$2,500 for a table of 10. General admission, single tickets are \$175. For more information, contact Steffi Travis, Chief Development Officer at 704-248-3712 or [stravis@CareRingNC.org](mailto:stravis@CareRingNC.org). Visit the events page on our website at [CareRingNC.org](http://CareRingNC.org) to learn more.

On Jan. 11, the Children and Family Services housed an ENROLL AMERICA event to educate the public about the Affordable Care Act and the Insurance Marketplace. NC MedAssist was the lead agency for CFSC, supported by Care Ring, RAIN, Legal Services of Southern Piedmont and numerous MedLink health safety net partners. Despite torrential downpours throughout the day, 87 consumers had the opportunity to sit down with an in-person assister! We were just shy of our goal to serve 100 families. Photos from the enrollment event are posted [here](#).

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) was featured in a Jan. 10 segment on [Carolina Business Review](#). During the broadcast, panelists from funding organizations and implementing agencies talked about NFP and the critical role it plays for 1,500 mothers in the Carolinas. Ursula Douglas, Care Ring's NFP manager, was among the five panelists. To see this clip, [click here](#).

## **Communities In Schools**

***Molly Shaw, Executive Director***



Communities In Schools partnered with nine of Charlotte's leading education/youth and human service agencies to host the Charlotte 2014 Education Summit on Jan. 22. More than 400 attended the half-day community summit, which was sponsored by the America's Promise Alliance (APA) and its national partners, AT&T and DeVry University. The purpose of the summit was to examine local data and identify what's working and where challenges remain in Charlotte's efforts to prepare young people for success in and out of school and to serve as a rallying event to keep the America's Promise goal of a national high school graduation rate of 90 percent by the year 2020 in the forefront of top priority community challenges. Charlotte-Mecklenburg's current graduation rate is 81 percent.

Highlights included keynote speaker Paul Tough, author of *The New York Times* bestseller, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*; Geoff Sanderson with Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Schools and his presentation about early indicators (first grade) of school dropouts and the importance of early intervention; and Sarah Abraham with Harvard University, who presented recent studies regarding systemic and generational poverty in the Southeast and the long-term impact of quality teachers. In addition to Communities In Schools, the lead summit coordinator, local partners were Charlotte Housing Authority, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, Greater Charlotte Alliance of Black School Educators and The National Alliance of Black School Educators, Mecklenburg County Dept. of Social Services, MeckEd, Mental Health Association of Central Carolinas' Parent VOICE, UNC-Charlotte's Urban Education Collaborative and the YMCA of Greater Charlotte.

## **Community Link**

***Floyd Davis, President and CEO***



## **Don't Fear Tax Time**

Even the great Albert Einstein once said, "The hardest thing in the world to understand is income tax."

“Well, Albert, we’re here to help!” is how the Community Link team responds.

Community Link’s free tax preparation service – known as Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) – is up and running. Services are offered for households earning less than \$52,000 or less than \$72,000 if accessing an AARP site. A collaborative communitywide effort, the service is made possible through more than 200 volunteers, 10 partnering VITA sites and nine AARP sites.

Designed with our area workforce in mind, this service helps individuals tap into earned credits and refunds for dollars they can use toward their housing. And those people won’t have to expend dollars to pay a tax preparer. Visit [CLvita.org](http://CLvita.org) for more information.

Community Link’s mission is to enable individuals and families to obtain and sustain safe, decent and affordable housing.

## **Council for Children's Rights**

***Susan K. Campbell, Ph.D., Executive Director***



In December, the social media movement known as #GivingTuesday was back for the second year. Just as Black Friday and Cyber Monday are synonymous with the biggest shopping days of the year, #GivingTuesday (Dec. 3, 2013) aims to create the largest day of philanthropy worldwide. This year, 11 Charlotte area CFSC agencies, including CFCR, partnered to create #GivingTuesdayCharlotte to raise awareness of the movement, as well as the work and mission of each partner agency.

Other partner agencies included A Child’s Place, Care Ring, Charlotte Family Housing, Communities in Schools, Community Link, Crisis Assistance Ministry, NC MedAssist, RAIN, Safe Alliance and YWCA Central Carolinas. We all promoted the partnership on Facebook and Twitter ([@GivingTuesCLT](https://twitter.com/GivingTuesCLT)); it was also highlighted on Charlotte Today, News14 In Depth and WSOC. Plans for 2014 are already under way.

CFCR advocates for supportive school discipline policies and alternatives to suspension to improve educational outcomes for children. We are delighted our Individual Advocacy Team earned a favorable decision from a Superior Court judge on behalf of a middle school student whose long-term suspension was deemed excessive and not supported by the facts of the case.

CFCR continues to be recognized as a trusted advisor on children’s rights issues. In the past few months, Dr. Susan K. Campbell and CFCR’s Robert E. McCarter, managing attorney, have participated in a number of media interviews. The most notable topics included youth mental health issues and the recent Miller v. Alabama decision which

supports allowing judicial discretion by finding that it is cruel and unusual punishment to impose a mandatory life sentence without the possibility of parole on youthful offenders. Listen to the Charlotte Talks interview [here](#).

Since 1983, April has been recognized as Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month. Locally, we will recognize the month through several events:

- On April 1, the Duke Energy building will be lit up blue.
- The official symbol of Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month is the pinwheel, and on April 3, pinwheel gardens will be planted around our community.
- Throughout the month, in partnership with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, there will be school-based programming for second graders as well as some artistic expression by middle and high school students.

CFCR is one of four nonprofit organizations benefitting from the proceeds of Charlotte Wine and Food Weekend. This year's event will be celebrated April 22-26. Learn more at [CharlotteWineandFood.org](http://CharlotteWineandFood.org).

## **NC MedAssist**

***Lori Giang, MBA, Executive Director***



NC MedAssist recently participated, as CFSC's representative, in the ENROLL America event. The event was designed to educate people on the new Insurance Marketplace. Read more about our collaboration with Care Ring and other nonprofits in the Care Ring section above.

## **RAIN**

***Debbie Warren, Founder, President and CEO***



RAIN is participating in a Special Project of National Significance (SPNS) program with UNC-Chapel Hill and the University of California-San Francisco to expand our outreach efforts in the Latino/a community. SPNS projects advance knowledge and skills in the delivery of health and support services to underserved populations diagnosed with HIV.

The program's goal is to increase the number of Mexican MSM (men who have sex with men) and transgender women living with HIV who are engaged in consistent care. The grant will use personal health navigators (PHN) to decrease barriers to identification, linkage, and retention in caring for this population. In addition, we will use social network referrals for testing, venue-based testing and partnerships with community-based agencies.

The **Third Annual Sweet Tooth Festival** took place Sunday, March 23 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Omni Charlotte Hotel. RAIN's newest fundraising event is a drop-in celebration of all things sweet and features the Charlotte area's best purveyors of cupcakes, candies, cookies and sweet treats. Charlotte's original dessert festival will showcase more than 25 bakeries, sweet shops or home-based businesses.

**The Amazing Race Bar Crawl** is scheduled for Saturday, April 19 from noon until 7 p.m. Teams of five race to a series of seven bars to complete the race and the chance to win gift cards from participating restaurants and bars. Each team will complete a given challenge at each destination. The fun kicks off at Brixx Pizza Uptown at 225 E. 6th Street. Learn more at [BarsAgainstAIDS.org](http://BarsAgainstAIDS.org)

Saturday, May 3 is the date for **AIDS WALK Charlotte**. The walk begins at 8 a.m. at Gateway Village Promenade at 800 W. Trade Street. This is the largest HIV/AIDS awareness and fundraising event in the Carolinas. A two-mile walk through Charlotte's historic Fourth Ward, it's a visual representation of our communities' commitment to and compassion for those impacted by HIV and AIDS. Individuals walk in memory of those who have finished their journey, as advocates for those infected and as a beacon of light for the future when our steps will have helped stop its spread. Get the scoop at [AIDSWalkCharlotte.org](http://AIDSWalkCharlotte.org).

## **Smart Start of Mecklenburg County**

***Jane Meyer, Executive Director***



Our Third Annual Teddy Bear Breakfast will be held Saturday, April 5 from 9 to 11 a.m. at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 600 East Blvd.

The family-friendly fundraiser will include a bear parade, silent auction, craft corner, children's musical entertainment, a performance by the Charlotte School of Ballet, and a teddy bear corner where each child can choose a dressed teddy and take it home. City Councilwoman LaWana Mayfield will be our Master of Ceremonies. A Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library storyteller will provide an interactive reading of Jessie Bear, Jessie Bear, What Will You Wear? Visit [SmartStartofMeck.org](http://SmartStartofMeck.org) for more information or to purchase a table.

We were recently awarded a national Race to the Top Challenge grant via the Early Learning Challenge. We'll use the funds for the implementation of Assuring Better Health and Development (ABCD) model, which is a proven, universal approach to screening young children in primary healthcare settings.

Smart Start will contract with the Community Care Partners of Greater Mecklenburg to provide an ABCD coordinator to serve identified medical practices in Anson, Mecklenburg and Union counties. The coordinator will assist medical providers in integrating routine

developmental screening into their patient care process, using validated screening tools, talking with parents about developmental concerns and helping provide connections to community resources.

ABCD works to increase health and development screening and referral rates for all children by integrating routine developmental screening into well-child visits.

## **Safe Alliance**

***Phil Kline, President and CEO***



This January, we celebrated the first full year of operation of the new Clyde and Ethel Dickson Domestic Violence Shelter. Thanks to our friends, benefactors and supporters, our new shelter has quickly been embraced as a critical community asset. In 2013, we provided sanctuary, hope and healing to more than 950 women and children victims of domestic violence.

In February, we hosted our signature event – the 2014 Art With Heart Auction – with silent and live auctions of artwork donated by local, regional and national artists and galleries. Since its inception in 2000, the volunteer Art With Heart committee has raised more than \$1 million for our programs that assist individuals and families impacted by sexual assault, child abuse and domestic violence.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### **CFSC Agencies Spring to Action**

***Nearly all Silver Oak Apartments residents being displaced have found new housing***

Just before the holidays – Dec. 23, 2013 – an article by Mark Price in *The Charlotte Observer* made clear how tough it can be, especially during a cold winter, for people just trying to make ends meet.

A planned demolition of the 337-unit Silver Oak Apartments on Monroe Road sent residents scrambling to find housing. Some would have surely found themselves



homeless if not for the quick action of area nonprofits, including a few of our own CFSC agencies. But as Price reported, “A quickly forged alliance of charities is rushing to help hundreds of low-income people being displaced.”

The alliance provided a way to get the hundreds of dollars needed for deposits, advance rent and fees. Charities involved included Crisis Assistance Ministry, which served as “quarterback,” Communities in Schools, A Child’s Place and Community Link, which was the entry point for services. Also involved were Legal Aid, Charlotte Family Housing, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Christ Lutheran Church. Crisis Assistance spent more than \$15,000 on security and utility deposits.

The closing of Silver Oak presented challenges for parents of school-age kids as they searched for affordable homes and new schools for their children while trying to celebrate the holidays. A Child’s Place went into action immediately.

“This situation was brought to our attention at one of our middle schools,” says Kim Parker, program director at A Child’s Place. “Families were reaching out to all of us with no clear direction on how to get help. We had to act immediately; families had less than two months to vacate.”

A Child’s Place and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools provided education on the federal McKinney-Vento (MCV) Homeless Assistance Act and how it assists families experiencing a housing crisis and made referrals for those families without an identified housing plan. Eleven families with a total of 23 children were determined eligible and registered as MCV. These students will remain at their home schools through the end of this school year.

Community Link worked directly – and onsite – with a number of residents to help them find alternative, permanent housing. “This involved connecting them with property providers as well as working through any barriers to help them get housed quickly,” said Randall Hitt, Community Link’s chief advancement officer.

Hitt said Community Link’s experience was crucial for moving with the speed that was needed. “For several years, we have successfully rehoused individuals and families who have housing barriers,” he said. “In addition, we were able to tap into our network of trusted property providers who could provide safe, decent and affordable housing.”

“It’s estimated 170 households remain at Silver Oak,” Price reported on Dec. 23. And they had to begin moving Jan. 10. Community Link and Charlotte Family Housing rehoused more than 115 individuals from 34 households. As of Feb. 10, one family was still onsite at Silver Oak, but a rehousing plan is in place. Each agency brought a different area of expertise to the emergency effort. For Communities In Schools, that was “the ability to work directly with students in the school and to direct parents where necessary to the primary agencies working with the landlord,” said the agency’s Andrew Ladd.

“From the beginning, we all ‘sat at the same table’ to ensure we were all pooling our

resources collectively,” Hitt said. Together, they helped bring about a miracle.

## THE LAST WORD

Let's keep the conversation going. Tell us your success stories, how collaboration has helped your clients and what you'd like to see in *Collaborations Quarterly*. Contact [pageleggett@yahoo.com](mailto:pageleggett@yahoo.com) with your feedback and story ideas.

### CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES CENTER

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