



# KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE AND FAMILIES TOGETHER

Friends of the Portsmouth Juvenile Court, Inc.



IMPACT REPORT  
2017/18



# THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN POSSIBILITY



Friends Executive Director Susan Fincke, second from left, with VFFI's Anthony Mingo, DeShelle Jordan and Alisha Newman.

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR BETTER FUTURES

### OUR MISSION

To collaborate with the courts to make a positive difference in the lives of Portsmouth's at-risk youth and their families.

### OUR VISION

A community that provides the foundation and tools needed for all Portsmouth youth to achieve lifelong success.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Judi Luffman, President
- Ali T. Sprinkle, Vice President
- Terry Parker, Treasurer
- Susan M. Fincke, Secretary
- Dr. Ramiz Audi
- Lynn F. Briley
- Cheran Cordell Ivery
- Bruce LaLonde
- Ryan S. Marion
- Sonya Perdue Bolton
- G Allen Quince
- Cathy Revell
- Vernon Lamont Tillage, Jr.
- Traci Tuthill
- Doug Weller
- Lt. Leon Whitehurst (ret.)
- Valencia Woods



Judi Luffman  
President,  
Board of Directors



Susan M. Fincke  
Executive Director

Possibility. If there is one word that describes our ethos, it is possibility. Regardless of their circumstances or histories, we see the possibility of a positive outcome in every child and young person we serve. All of us – board, staff and volunteers – work hard to give them the tools and opportunities to start down a different path. A new possibility. A better future.

We believe you, our donors and friends, share our ethos. With your generosity, you demonstrate your belief in a new possibility for each child. Your caring and compassion for children and young people binds you to our mission. Whether by making a financial contribution or offering encouraging words over coffee, you reveal what is truly in your heart. Possibility.

Thank you.

Judi Luffman  
President, Board of Directors

Susan M. Fincke  
Executive Director

The cover of our 17/18 Impact Report features the faces of many of the people who partner with us to create brighter futures for Portsmouth youth. We are happy to share a few of their stories with you. And while you may not be pictured on the cover, you are a vital partner in this important work. Your support makes it all possible. Thank you.

- > Teens with jobs are much less likely to commit crimes. About a year ago, we began exploring summer jobs programs for young people on probation or parole. Members of Church and Community in Action were looking into something similar. We decided to work together and before long, other groups, including the Portsmouth Partnership, joined the effort. At a meeting in Norfolk, the youth services coordinator at Opportunity, Inc., the local workforce development organization, described their NextGen Summer Internship Program. It was perfect! Donors generously responded to a fundraising campaign led by Shannon Glover, and we were able to kick off the program in Portsmouth with 25 summer internships.
- > The regional coordinator of the Virginia Family and Fatherhood Initiative (VFFI) ran into roadblocks getting information to Portsmouth teens about services. Because there is a correlation between young, inexperienced parents and child abuse and neglect, we knew we had to help. We invited a few friends, who happened to be juvenile justice, social services and public school staff, to lunch. We also invited VFFI staff. Over ham-and-cheese sandwiches and a tray of brownies, we got the word out about resources available to teens who are parents or soon will be.
- > Jenny Goff and Leslie Clarridge of Reading Enriches All Children (REACH) are disciples of early childhood literacy. When we requested books for children who often are asked to sit quietly in the courthouse for hours, they showed up with 200 books and a library cart. We know reading is key to success in school and success in school deters delinquent behavior. We want all children in Portsmouth to own at least one book. We happily share our donated books with Portsmouth Sheriff's Office and Portsmouth Police Department.

When we requested books for children who often are asked to sit quietly in the courthouse for hours, they showed up with 200 books and a library cart.

## PORTSMOUTH COUPLE CARES FOR 30 CHILDREN OVER 20 YEARS

Ramonia and Roger Peele have devoted their lives to children. She's been a special education teacher's assistant, and he's a preacher involved in youth ministry.

Unable to have children of their own, the Peeles decided to take their devotion even deeper and become foster parents.

"It was our way of giving back to the community," Mrs. Peele said. They took classes on fostering through an agency and soon found themselves caring for their first child, a 12-year-old boy with learning disabilities whose mother had passed away. That was 20 years ago. Since then, the Peeles estimate they have fostered between 30 and 35 children, many of them for years. They have had as many as seven children, from three sibling groups, living with them at one time.

"I love what I do," said Mrs. Peele, who is 63. "My husband and I both do. He does 50 percent of the work. I couldn't get it done without him."

Mrs. Peele credits her faith with helping her to foster so many children.

"Every one of us is put on Earth to do something," she said. "Whether it's preaching, teaching, playing basketball, being a banker, whatever, everyone has a passion."

In one of their most challenging cases, the couple took in three brothers, ages 4, 5 and 7 years old, all diagnosed as autistic. The boys could not speak English but had developed their own language to communicate with each other. With the help of the boys' Portsmouth CASA volunteer, Kathy Wilder, the Peeles got them into speech classes. "Kathy has been a strong support for us," Mrs. Peele said.

The youngest brother, now 18, still lives with the Peeles and started classes at Old Dominion University this fall.

Over the years, Mrs. Peele said she has learned a key to being a successful foster parent is to find out what the children like and work with that. She added, "Always be mindful of the children, because each case is different."

Asked if she had any advice for other foster parents, Mrs. Peele said it is important to have a support group – and use it.

"Some families get overwhelmed and bad things happen," she said. "You have to keep that support group open."

The Peeles, who have been married 40 years, remain in touch with some of the children they took in. The first child they fostered still calls and sends flowers on Mother's Day. They also regularly see two other children, a young brother and sister, who lived with them while their mother was in jail.

In addition to caring for the young man attending ODU, the Peeles currently are fostering a 6-year-old girl. And they are getting ready to, for the first time, possibly make the situation more permanent.

"We were recently asked if we would adopt her and we said we would," Mrs. Peele said. "It's a long process."



Ramonia and Roger Peele open their home and their hearts to children.

## DONORS HELP FRIENDS EDUCATE FAMILIES ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING



It often begins on social media. A young person is lured into a relationship with a stranger offering understanding and compassion. It ends with fear and intimidation at the hands of a human trafficker. Sadly, children in foster care often are targets.

According to The Polaris Project, 1,025 cases of human trafficking have been reported in Virginia since 2007. In 2017 alone, 156 cases were reported. A third of those cases involved minors and over 80 percent were female.

In April, Friends hosted Human Trafficking: What You Need to Know, a presentation by Special Agent Kathryn Nguyen of the FBI's Violent Crimes Against Children Unit. She described the profile of a predator and their methods of recruiting young people. She also revealed hidden dangers of social media and encouraged parents to monitor their children's online activities.

Because of generous donors, like you, we provide this important information to Portsmouth families at no charge.

According to The Polaris Project, 1,025 cases of human trafficking have been reported in Virginia since 2007.



## PORTSMOUTH CASA COORDINATOR TAPPED FOR STATEWIDE LEADERSHIP ROLE



Portsmouth CASA Coordinator Natasha Knight was selected by State CASA Program Coordinator to serve on the Virginia CASA State Leadership Team (SLT). She was tapped for her experience and leadership. The SLT is working toward a unified vision for all 27 CASA programs across the Commonwealth and to address common challenges.

# FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Board of Directors acknowledges the following individuals, corporations, foundation and government entities for their support. Your generosity helps improve the quality of life for children and young adults in Portsmouth and supports the economic and social vitality of the city.

## GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

- City of Portsmouth
- Victims of Crime Act
- Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
- Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act

## CORPORATE, CIVIC AND FOUNDATION FUNDERS

- Calvary Baptist Church
- Dominion Foundation
- First Presbyterian Church
- Grove Baptist Church
- Harbor Point Behavioral Health Center
- I.C. Norcom High School Senior Class
- Kroger Community Rewards Program
- Massimo Zanetti Beverage Co. - USA
- Network for Good
- Network Interfaces Corp
- Norfolk By Boat
- Pam's Hair Designers Inc.
- Portsmouth Bar Association
- Portsmouth General Hospital Foundation
- Portsmouth Rotary Club
- Portsmouth Service League
- Prevent Child Abuse Hampton Roads
- Richardson & Rosenberg LLC
- Skipjack Nautical Wares
- St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church
- The Retired Portsmouth Teachers Club
- Third Baptist Church
- Tidewater Children's Foundation
- Tidewater Community College - Portsmouth Campus
- TowneBank Portsmouth Community Relations
- Trinity Episcopal Church
- United Way of South Hampton Roads

- United Way of Virginia Peninsula
- Warden Family Foundation
- E.C. Wareheim Foundation
- Western Branch Diesel, Inc.
- Zion Baptist Church

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

- Elsie Ackerman
- Dr. Ramiz Audi
- Louis & Isabel Brenner
- Phyllis Bricker
- Lynn F. Briley
- Pamela L. Broughton
- Paige & Yvette Watkins Cherry
- Cheran Cordell Ivery
- Tim & Betty Wade Coyle
- Shelia Cross
- Jim & Cathy Cullen
- Joseph & Flora D'Amato
- Barbara Early
- Barbara Edwards
- John R. Erickson
- Carl & Susan Fincke
- Nettie S. Fischer
- Barbara Jane Garrett
- Mark & Ulla Geduldig-Yatrosfy
- Christine Gills
- Ronnie & Lisa Gehring
- Shannon & Paula Glover
- Maureen T. Harman
- William E. Harman, Jr.
- Judy Harris
- Christopher Howard
- Vincent Jones
- Sharon Knowles
- Bruce & Wynne LaLonde
- Audrey Lassiter
- Jonathan C. Larrew
- Dennis & Kelly Lewin

- Judi Luffman
- Christine Mahlmann
- Jim Mahlmann
- Michael Mahlmann
- Ann M. Mendes
- Britani Mikell
- Ebony Mills
- The Honorable William S. Moore, Jr.
- Mark & Katherine Munson
- Gail Nance
- Mary K. Nunley
- Terry Parker
- Janey Paulk
- Sonya Perdue-Bolton
- Gail C. Pittman
- Diane Pomeroy Griffin
- Sharon T. Quinn
- David Ratcliffe
- Cathy Revell
- Shelia C. Riddick
- John & Carol Rowe
- James E. Short
- Phil Smith
- Ali T. Sprinkle
- Vernon Lamont Tillage, Jr.
- Linda Torres
- Margaret C. Tuthill
- Bart & Traci Tuthill
- Mary Ann Wagnstrom
- Douglas Weller
- Arlethia White-Farris
- Lt. Leon Whitehurst (ret.)



Portsmouth Service League's Nora Waggoner and Erin Colston lend Natasha Knight, Portsmouth CASA Coordinator, a hand with packages.

## SERVICE LEAGUE MAKES HOLIDAYS SPECIAL FOR KIDS

Every Portsmouth child in foster care had a special gift to open at the holidays because of the generosity of members of the Portsmouth Service League. Members selected a child from a list of children identified by age, gender and favorite things, such as movies, sports teams or TV characters, and then went shopping. In all, they donated more than 25 bags filled with toys and other goodies to Portsmouth CASA. CASA volunteers delivered the packages with love from PSL members.



# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018

## ASSETS

Cash/Cash Equivalents .....	\$ 122,135
Fixed Assets.....	\$ 6,011
Deposits.....	\$ 149
<b>Total Assets .....</b>	<b>\$ 140,160</b>

## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities.....	\$ -4,210
Net Assets.....	\$ 144,371
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets .....</b>	<b>\$ 140,160</b>



# LOCAL LEADERS SUPPORT PORTSMOUTH PINWHEEL GARDEN



Delegate Matthew James, who has represented portions of Portsmouth in the Virginia House of Delegates since 2010, dedicated the 2018 Portsmouth Pinwheels for Prevention Garden in April. Having attended the United States Naval Academy, Hampton University and Northwestern University, James has the distinction of being the first African American recognized by the Virginia Economic Developers Association as Legislator of the Year.

Delegate Matthews stressed the importance of providing youth with economic opportunities and applauded Friends for working with Opportunity Inc.'s NextGen program to give Portsmouth court-involved youth summer internship opportunities. He encouraged Portsmouth to continue collaborating on innovative strategies to support at-risk youth and families, noting that strengthening families is a proven approach to keeping children safe.

Delegate Matthews stressed the importance of providing youth with economic opportunities.



State Senator Bobby Scott, FOPJC Executive Director Susan Fincke, FOPJC Board President Judi Luffman and Delegate Matthew James support strengthening families.

## 2017 PINWHEELS FOR PREVENTION SPONSORS

### HEROS

Dominion Foundation  
The Tuthill Family  
TowneBank

### CHAMPIONS

Harbor Point Behavioral Health Center  
Children's Specialty Group, PLLC  
Western Branch Diesel  
Portsmouth Rotary Club  
I.C. Norcom High School Senior Class  
Trinity Episcopal Church  
Massimo Zanetti Beverage Company - USA  
Judi Luffman in Memory of Frederick & Mary Merrall

City of Portsmouth  
Renaissance Hotels  
Financial Counselors of Virginia  
Jones CPA Group  
Grove Baptist Church  
First Presbyterian Church  
Diane Pomeroy & Earl Griffin

### FRIENDS

The Honorable William S. Moore, Jr.  
The Honorable John & Carol Rowe  
Norfolk By Boat  
Bruce & Wynn LaLonde  
Mark & Ulla Geduldig-Yatrofsky  
Sprinkle & Sprinkle, PLLC  
Third Baptist Church  
Carl & Susan Fincke

Ann M. Kirk-Mendes & Mavilio Mendes  
Portsmouth Bar Association  
Lane & Perkinson PC  
Network Interfaces Corp  
Champions for Children/Prevent Child Abuse Hampton Roads  
Tidewater Community College  
Portsmouth Fire Rescue & Emergency Services  
Portsmouth Police Department  
Calvary Baptist Church  
St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church  
Paige D. Cherry

## WE THINK MOTHERS WOULD APPROVE

Two of Portsmouth's premier small businesses teamed up to honor Mother's Day by giving back to their community. Pam Broughton of Pam's Hair Designers and Friends board member Cathy Revell hosted Mother's Day with Friends at Stellar Wine Co. Guests enjoyed celebrating Mother's Day while supporting Friends programs to keep children safe and families together.



Gretchen Edwards-Bodmer, Christine Damrose, and Barbara Edwards share a moment.



Paula and Shannon Glover support Friends work.



## CONGRATUATIONS!

Congratulations to Diane Pomeroy Griffin on her appointment to the bench in Portsmouth Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. Judge Griffin brings insights gleaned from 38 years practicing family law and mediation. She was named Portsmouth's First Citizen in recognition of her considerable contributions to the city.



# CASA JAIL VISIT LEADS TO FAMILY RECONNECTION

When a CASA volunteer is asked to advocate for a child in foster care, one of the first things he or she does is reach out to the biological parents. Gathering as much information and insight as possible will help the judge make the best decisions regarding the child.

Parents receive a letter explaining CASA's role and asking for information on relatives who might be able to step up. Typically, though, a parent who was incarcerated doesn't respond.

That changed for one family after CASA volunteers toured the Hampton Roads Regional Jail in March.

"We wanted to learn: Is there any better way we could work with the parents as their children are going through the system?" said Natasha Knight, the Portsmouth CASA program coordinator. Knight had arranged the visit as part of CASA's continuing education requirement.

The group of about 35 advocates from CASA programs throughout Hampton Roads spent two hours at the jail. They learned what happens when a person is booked and what a typical day is like for an inmate and for a guard. They inquired about opportunities available to inmates such as classes on parenting and anger management.

They also discovered that if an inmate wants to write a letter, he or she must pay for paper, envelopes and stamps. Knight realized this may be a reason parents in jail don't respond to letters from CASA.

That theory was tested in May, when Portsmouth CASA was appointed a case involving a 17-year-old boy whose father was incarcerated at Hampton Roads Regional Jail. Father and son hadn't been in touch for almost 10 years.

The father received the usual CASA letter. He also was asked if there was anything he'd like to communicate to his son or to the judge. Tucked inside the envelope was lined paper and a stamped return envelope.

Within two weeks, he wrote back thanking CASA for reaching out to him. He included a photo of himself and asked that it be passed on to his son. On the back was written "I love you."

When the CASA volunteer gave the boy the photo, joy spread across his face.

"Oh, I look just like him," he said.

"Is there any better way we could work with the parents as their children are going through the system?"

# PORTSMOUTH BAR ASSOCIATION RECOGNIZES FRIENDS' DIRECTOR

The Portsmouth Bar Association awarded the 2018 Liberty Bell Award to Friends Executive Director Susan Fincke. The award is presented annually to an individual who promotes a better understanding and appreciation of the rule of law, encourages a greater respect for law and the courts, stimulates a sense of civic responsibility and contributes to the effectiveness of our institutions of government.

"We are delighted to recognize Susan for her hard work and dedication to the youth of Portsmouth," said Ali Sprinkle of the Portsmouth Bar Association. "Susan led a regional effort to create a handbook for parents with children in foster care to help them understand the legal and child welfare systems. She initiated the Pinwheels for Prevention campaign to raise community awareness of child abuse and neglect. She has worked to make summer internship opportunities available to our youth. She goes above and beyond her duties as executive director of Friends of the Portsmouth Juvenile Court."



"We are delighted to recognize Susan for her hard work and dedication to the youth of Portsmouth."

# COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES

Paula Booth  
Kathryn Bryant  
Irene Candis  
Kayla Cooper  
Shadera Doyle  
Shakebra Ely  
Marcia Gibson-Ali  
Alana Glover  
Jameka Grant  
Mary Hardy  
Michele Harrington  
Jacqueline Hicks  
Stacey Hill  
Shannon Hodges  
Bryane Ingram  
Troy Joyner  
Laniesa Kasperski  
Brenda Littles  
Donna Merrit  
Tuiz Mills  
Tyree Scott  
Willie Scott, Jr.  
Anthony Simmons  
Taylor Stott  
Diane Wesh  
Kathleen Wilder  
Glen Williams  
Isiah Williams  
Carol Yeast



## STAFF

Susan M. Fincke, Executive Director

Natasha Knight, Portsmouth CASA

Program Coordinator

Tony Armistead, Community Service

Program Coordinator

Audravelle Jackson, Portsmouth CASA

Program Associate

Linda Torres, Bookkeeper

Design: CT Design Group

Copywriting: Sonja Barisic & Susan Fincke

Photography: David Ratcliff

Printing & Distribution: Jones Printing Services



1345 Court Street | Portsmouth, VA 23705  
Phone: (757) 397-2799 | Fax: (757) 397-2994  
Email: [info@fopjc.org](mailto:info@fopjc.org)

Connect with us: [www.FOPJC.ORG](http://www.FOPJC.ORG)

