

Lutheran Family Services of Virginia

OUR MISSIONWORKS

FALL 2012



Wrapping burgers



Clocking out

Breaking it down, burger by burger

Getting students ready for the real world of work

When Summer enters the PAES classroom at the Roanoke Minnick School, she doesn't meander over to her desk or start gabbing with a friend. She clocks in and gets to work.

For the next hour, she and her high school classmates will be employees and the classroom staff will be their supervisors.

New to Minnick this year, the Practical Assessment Exploration System transforms the classroom into a mini-work environment to help students learn basic career, vocational and life skills in five areas: business/marketing, construction/industrial, consumer/service, processing/production, and computer/technology.

"Our students struggle with appropriate behavior, so PAES is the perfect fit because it bridges the gap between

graduation and employment," says Kim Irvin, the school's transition coordinator.

The five work centers have tools and materials necessary to complete graduated "job cards" that move students along the curriculum. A student working in the consumer service area might be learning how to wrap hamburgers or microwave hot chocolate; another student in the processing and production area might be learning how to assemble pipes.

Students enter the classroom, clock in, pick up a job card, assemble their tools and fill out a work record. The employee and supervisor look over the job before the employee begins the activity. At the end of the activity, the



A PAES lab work area

student records the result. If the job was completed correctly the student moves on; if not, the student tries the activity again.

“PAES whittles a task down into its simplest form,” says Irvin, “and allows the students to both build on foundational skills and discover which kinds of tasks they like.” Irvin says that students who would not normally enjoy independent work are enthusiastic about “going to work” when they enter the lab.

Students are expected to keep their work stations clean and orderly. Rules are strict and extend outside the PAES lab; if a student isn’t coming to school, he or she must call in sick to a supervisor.

One of the biggest pluses of PAES is the data generated by the card system. Irvin says that she can clearly see students’ productivity and affinities by looking at how they do on the various tasks. “It’s good for families because they learn the areas their child is most interested in and what barriers there may be to success in the workplace.”

“PAES is valuable because it teaches problem-solving and communication, two things that our kids need the most when they leave our schools,” says Terri Webber, director of education. “It’s a great program for any student on any level. Because we get a good idea of where students are vocationally, we can help them create meaningful goals for further education or independent living.”

Both Webber and Irvin would like to see the program expand to other Minnick locations as well as to other grade levels. “Our kids are so excited about the lab,” says Irvin. “It would be great to build on that excitement and offer them even more.” ●

A new brand and a new look



As you can see, Lutheran Family Services has a new look, but that is only part of our “rebranding” story. Over the last 18 months we have taken a journey that has uncovered the deeply held values and beliefs that form the core of our agency. Many thanks to the branding team assembled by expert Kelly O’Keefe and the talented people at 93 Octane, an advertising and design company.

Through dozens of interviews and thoughtful analysis, they have given us a strong, vital and attractive platform for our message. With their help we have distilled our essence to two powerful words: promise, restored. And that is what we do; restore the promise that life holds by providing individualized, cutting edge services. Please visit lfsva.org for more information about our services and locations.

Hearts & Hands award returns



Do you know a person with an inspiring story of service? We think you do! As part of our 125th anniversary in 2013, Lutheran Family Services will again sponsor the Hearts & Hands award. First created in 2008 for our 120th anniversary, the award celebrated dozens of powerful stories of people serving their churches and communities near and far. We are eager to add a new group of dedicated individuals to join those chosen in 2008: Top winners Don and Joann Tolmie and Tori Smith; and runners up Antoinette Goodrich, Hunter Fauber and Jerry Kite.

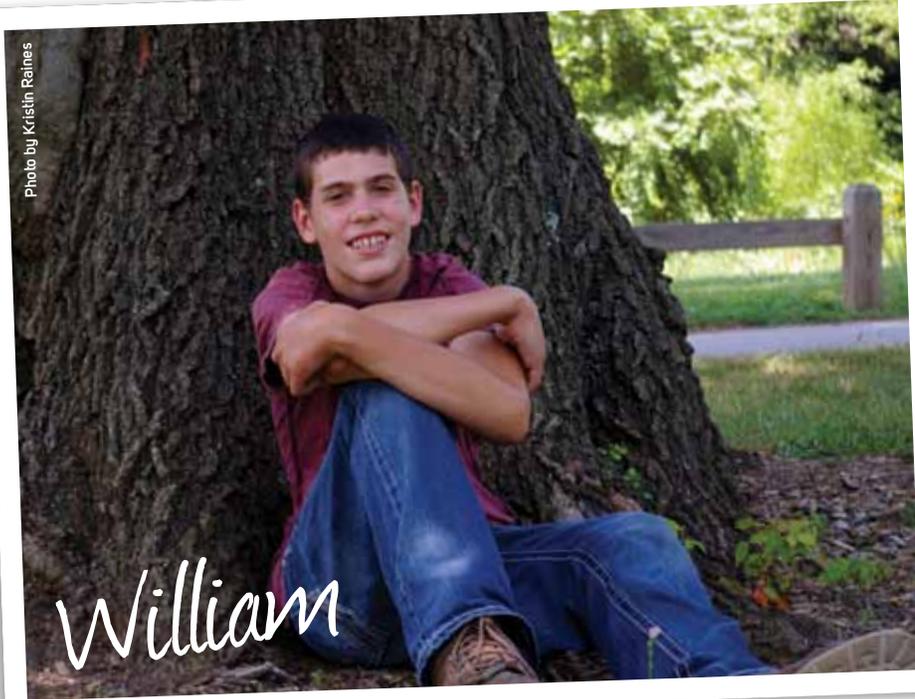
We recently caught up with Hunter, who was honored for founding the Verona Community Food Pantry. He says that it is still booming with 30 churches and 100 volunteers supporting the effort. Nomination forms will be sent out the first week in January and will be available at lfsva.org in December.

Our history organized and online soon!



For the last year, there has been a whirlwind of organization, scanning and annotating happening in the history room at Lutheran Family Services. To help celebrate our 125th anniversary, we have created an electronic archive that brings to life the Lutheran Children’s Home of the South through photos, newsletters, minutes and an eye-opening number of fascinating letters. The archive will be available at lfsva.org the first week in January.

Photo by Kristin Raines



Country boy seeks family to love

William is great kid who loves working with his hands, especially on cars and preferably vintage. This self-described country boy would like nothing more than to work in an outdoor job and live in a rural area. Sports lover and movie fan, he also is a pro at video games. A sweet young man with a laid back personality, William struggles in school at times and needs some help.

- For more information about William and other children who are waiting for adoption, call 1.800.359.3834 or contact Amber Brown at adbrown@lfsva.org.

Give the gift of warmth

They are mothers with young children and erratic child support, young people with minimum wage jobs, disabled older adults living on a meager income alone, or heads of households who can't find work.

And are all facing a personal energy crisis: they can't pay their heating bill and are in danger of having the heat cut off. But with help from the Human Warmth Fund, they do not have to choose between heat and food or medicine.

Last winter the Fund helped more than 160 households in the Tidewater region, dispersing more than \$20,000 to help pay heating bills. Supported by Tidewater area Lutheran Churches and managed by Lutheran Family Services, the fund is staffed by volunteers housed at St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Norfolk.

- Helping is easy. To make a contribution, contact Ellen Bushman at 757.722.4707 ext. 1302 or ebushman@lfsva.org. Or you can take the chill out of winter at the second annual "Chilly" Cook-off, 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday, January 12, at Our Saviour Lutheran Church, 4200 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach. Email ebushman@lfsva.org to learn how to enter your prize chili in the cook-off.



» mission moments

From a parent's letter: "The child in whom others had lost hope now has real hope for himself and his future. Today, he is truly proud of himself, proud in ways that he has never been before. I know without a doubt that his new sense of pride, his new lease on life is directly related to the work you and the other members of the faculty at Minnick School have done with and for him... Each of you advocated on his behalf; each of you looked beyond the behavioral problems he had and saw a child who, just like any other child, deserved a chance and deserved the very best you could give; and finally each of you rolled up your sleeves, opened your hearts and gave it." – From a letter written by Diane L. Silver



Ava Bellecci

A little donor with a big heart.

Ava Bellecci of Newport News is a generous young lady. When she received a birthday gift of money from her grandparents, Jan and Al Miller of Hampton, she decided to donate part of it to "children without parents." We thank you Ava, and wish you a happy fifth

birthday. Your \$5 contribution has been put toward our adoption program to help children find families to love.

November is Adoption Month. Of the more than 5,000 children in foster care in Virginia, 1,124 are waiting to be adopted. During National Adoption Awareness Month in November, help us continue the conversation about adoption by visiting us on Facebook at AdoptLFSVA.

Wish list

Everyone has a wish list and Lutheran Family Services is no different! Here are lists that will benefit adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and students in our Minnick School autism programs in Harrisonburg, Roanoke, Wise and Wytheville.

Charlottesville Developmental Services Program:

- Wii (with 4 controllers) and Wii games like bowling, tennis, baseball
- Karaoke machine
- iPad(s) to use for communication, math, and reading skill apps designed for individuals with disabilities
- Gift cards to Wal-mart or Michael's for craft and activity supplies
- Regal movie cards to use at a nearby theater
- New games and puzzles for adults

Minnick School Autism Programs:

- Velcro rolls that can be cut to size
- Glue sticks
- Construction paper
- 4-inch, 3-ring binders
- Ballpoint pens (not Sharpies)

Give more and save more!

The NAP Tax Credits now apply to 65 percent of your gift of \$500 or more – a significant increase from the previous rate of 40 percent. For a \$500 gift you can take \$325 off the bottom line of your state taxes! Make your gift early; tax credits are on a first-come, first-served basis, and may run out before the end of the year.

Remember these numbers

Workplace giving campaigns are in full swing. To designate LFSVA for the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign use #3706, for the Combined Federal Campaign use #75391, and for United Way simply write in our name.



Visit us at lfsva.org

The people of Lutheran Family Services of Virginia work with the most fragile and overlooked to restore the promise life offers. We provide loving temporary or permanent homes for children in foster care, help families seeking to adopt through foster care, strengthen families through community-based services, educate children with complex needs, provide developmental services for adults with disabilities, offer grief support, and support older adults and their caregivers. Our services are born of faith but open to all.

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