



Highlighting Hope

A PUBLICATION OF HOPE VILLAGE FOR CHILDREN

WINTER 2023



Happy 2023! This new year promises to be an excellent one for Hope Village as we continue to grow and thrive. There are so many exciting things in the works that we want to share with our supporters. At the top of the list is the installment of our new Executive Director, Terri Province. Terri assumes this great responsibility with the dedication, passion, knowledge and leadership skills that will continue to help Hope Village flourish.

We are so incredibly appreciative of the Meridian community and wanted to acknowledge and celebrate this support during the holiday season through our Attitude of Gratitude program. To help teach our kids the importance of giving back to their community, they participated in several campus philanthropic projects; making ornaments and baked goodies, providing toiletries, home goods, and clothing to those in need, and helping the Salvation Army to gather donations. I am so proud of all of their hard work!

In keeping with our Attitude of Gratitude theme, we also wanted to recognize our amazing staff and the outstanding care and love they give our kids. The nominees and winners of our Employee of the Month are highlighted in this newsletter and our profound gratitude goes out to all. The staff is the heart and soul of Hope Village, and we are truly blessed to have them.

Our campus improvement goals are moving forward with a generous partnering with the Association of Builders and Contractors who chose Hope Village as their yearly philanthropic project! Besides addressing some of the facility needs, they will be taking on the cafeteria renovation. As you drive by the campus you may have noticed the perimeter fence being installed. While providing an extra layer of protection and safety for our kids, this fence will also allow the kids and staff to take more advantage of our beautiful property with outdoor activities and games.

We look forward to this new year with excitement, joy, and of course, HOPE!

Warmly,

Sela Ward, Founder

Brendan's STORY

Brendan Wilbanks came to Hope Village at the age of 17 after experiencing a hard childhood where he took care of himself and his little brother most of the time. Brendan learned a lot while he lived at Hope Village, including the necessary life skills to become a successful adult. He worked for the Hope Village Thrift Store, graduated from high school, lived in one of our transitional homes, and attended Meridian Community College. Brendan is now working full-time, and is happily married with two beautiful children.

"none of the staff ever made me feel like they were there for 'work' or to simply earn a paycheck"

Brendan says, "The staff at Hope Village were so amazing. Ms. Gloria was one of my favorites. She worked in the boys' cottage while I was there, and made the absolute best food. Always kind and loving. I would have to say what stands out the most to me about my time there is that none of the staff ever made me feel like they were there for "work" or to simply make a paycheck. Sure, they needed money to support their families, but they were always emotionally invested, and that became so much more clear the older I got."



Featured: Brendan Wilbanks with his wife, Molly, and children Leilani and Lendan enjoying a recent ski trip

When Brendan came to Hope Village, his little brother, Glendon, did not come at the same time. Because the Hope Village campus has the capability of caring for siblings, the staff was able to eventually get Brendan's brother there. Brendan says, "They made me a promise that if I would stay and we would work on things, that they would see that my brother got here, and they kept their promise."

Upon leaving Hope Village, Brendan left a letter for the staff members.

"Everyone at Hope Village,

Wow, where do I begin? When I had nowhere to call home, you welcomed me and my problems with open arms. At the time, I was unappreciative of everything, and like a lot of my peers, placed the blame of my hardships on you. I accomplished a lot here that I can truly say I wouldn't have been able to without your help. At 17, I thought I knew everything and oh was I wrong. Twenty-one now and a little wiser I can see that you had and still have my best interests at heart. What I would like everyone to know from staff in the cottage, house parents, staff at the administration office, thrift store, and even maintenance is that your job is so important. The people you touch will never forget it even if they truly can't appreciate it now. The fact that you don't give up on them will sink in one day and they will realize then, just like I did, that you all were sent there by God for a purpose of showing us how to become productive members of society and show us the love that many never felt before Hope Village. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you.

These days, I find that when times seem uncertain and dark, every storm does pass. We all have different obstacles that we must overcome in life, but Hope Village isn't one of them. So often as a resident, I was quick to blame everyone but myself. Everyone I encountered at Hope Village truly had my best interest at heart. It took years to realize that."

"My advice to current residents is to have fun and be a kid. So often, before Hope Village, I had to be the adult for my family. Study hard because an education is every bit as important as everyone tells you it is. Learn the system and the benefits that you can take advantage of to help with schooling and things when the time comes. Don't rush life. You will blink and a decade will have passed, and you will look back and miss these times no matter how they seem today. I will forever and always love Hope Village. I couldn't tell my story without it."

-Brendan

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT OR MENTOR THROUGH HOPE VILLAGE FOR CHILDREN PLEASE CONTACT OUR FOSTER CARE AND MENTORING SPECIALIST MONICA WESS @ 601-553-8660.

HOPE VILLAGE STAFF » EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH NOMINEES AND WINNERS



Dear Friends of Hope Village for Children,

It's hard to believe we are coming up on twenty one years of serving children at Hope Village. We started back in 2002 with two group homes, and now we have three therapeutic group homes, an emergency shelter, two transition homes, a mentoring program, an educational program and a foster care placement program. Wow, have we grown. It is so exciting to have watched not only our agency grow, but our kids too. We opened our doors with four kids, and to date there have been over one thousand children who have lived here on our campus and the success stories just keep coming.

I am thrilled to now be leading this organization that I have called "home" for the last 21 years. Our organization is committed to providing a supportive and nurturing environment for children in need, and I am excited to help continue and expand upon the important work that Hope Village does. I began my employment back in 2001 and have served as Facilities Supervisor, Human Resources Coordinator, Comptroller, Chief Operating Officer, and now I am honored to serve as our Executive Director. It really is a blessing to have been part of this wonderful organization from the beginning, and I look forward to its next chapter as we continue to build positive relationships with and for our children.

As the new Executive Director, I am committed to upholding the values and mission of Hope Village, and to working closely with the board, staff, and supporters to ensure that we are providing the best possible care and support to the kids who live at Hope Village. I am also committed to being transparent and accountable in all of our decision-making, and to keeping our supporters informed about the work we are doing. I am confident that, together, we will be able to continue making a difference in the lives of the children and families that we serve.

Thank you for your support, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Terri Province
Executive Director



SHOMEKIA EVERETT

Developmental Coach

OCTOBER



CATENA MCBRIDE
Transitional Case Manager



GEORGE MOSLEY
Developmental Coach



SHELLEY STILTNER
Developmental Coach

Our Employee of the Month for November was Sherry Hampton. Sherry has worked at Hope Village for over 8 years and is currently working full time in the Emergency Shelter. Sherry is everyone's best friend with her wonderfully positive attitude and willingness to go above and beyond for both the kids and staff. She is committed to the mission of Hope Village, and we are lucky to have her in our Hope Village family.



GOMEZE ROBINSON
Case Manager



JODY SIMS
Developmental Coach



SHIQUITA THEDFORD
Case Manager



SHERRY HAMPTON
Developmental Coach

NOVEMBER



AMY BRASSFIELD
Case Manager Assistant

DECEMBER



CHARITY BATES
Developmental Coach



MARCUS GLADNEY
Case Manager



JOSH LADEN
Chief Financial Officer



CATENA MCBRIDE
Transitional Case Manager

KATHY PARRISH
Community Outreach



RAY WILLIAMS
Developmental Coach

**WE COULD NOT
DO WHAT WE DO
WITHOUT OUR
WONDERFUL
STAFF!**

DECEMBER 2022 "ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE"

During the month of December, our residents celebrated having an "Attitude of Gratitude." They participated in many different activities. They also took some time to "reflect" on why they are grateful.

Our kids made ornaments for the Guild and Executive Board members as thanks for all of their hard work!



Delivering baskets of goodies to Books A Million in appreciation for the book drive they held for Hope Village over the holidays!

Creating shoe boxes of games, toiletries, and toys for the kids of Operation Christmas Child!



Hope Village partnered with the Salvation Army and took shifts of ringing the bell for donations at Wal-Mart.

WHAT OUR RESIDENTS THINK ABOUT HOPE VILLAGE...



OUR RESIDENTS SAY...

Q: "What are three things you are most thankful for?"

- "Hope Village, my job, school"
- "My Grandma, my Sister, my clothes"

Q: "Do you like volunteering and why?"

- "Yes, because it makes people happy and it's good to see the less fortunate get things they need."
- "Yes, because it helps someone else out."

Q: Why is it important to "give back?"

- "Because the community does so much for us."

CHRISTMAS AT HOPE VILLAGE

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED CHRISTMAS ITEMS FOR OUR RESIDENTS!

1st MS Federal Credit Union
Allison Harrison - Scentsy
Meridian Air National Guard
East Mississippi Realtors
Hederman Brothers Printing
Junior Auxiliary of Meridian
Lamar School
Lt. Roy Fisher
Mississippi Highway Patrol
Northeast Middle School
Natalie Hughes

Primary Eye Care of Meridian
Rae's Elves
Sam's Club of Meridian
The Vollor Family
Ulyssia Cole and Family
United Way of East Mississippi
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 12124
Weidmann's
WTOK-TV

- These do not include monetary donations
Hope Village received for Christmas 2022

Q: Why do you contribute to the kids at Hope Village? Answers:



"How could we not contribute? When you read the cards and realize how little they are asking for, much of it being necessities, it tugs at your heart to give. You realize how fortunate you and your family are and you wish you could shower them with more and more."

- Terri Mascagni, Senior Account Executive, Hederman Brothers

"We were delighted to partner with Hope Village for our annual Christmas giving project because our students wanted to give to other children in our community in a meaningful way. Students were able to drop off items in boxes at our collection area, and the excitement among our student body grew as the contents of each box grew!"

- Erin Honeycutt, Principal, Lamar Elementary School

RUN FOR HOPE 2022 SUCCESS

- ▶ Most successful to date
- ▶ Record # of participants
- ▶ \$ Goal was reached

Thank you to our amazing sponsors and Guild!





HOPE HEROES The Deweese Family

It is often said, "It takes a village" and for us, here at Hope, it could not be more true. Through the generosity of our community and many charitable supporters, we are able to effectively provide for our residents. For the Deweese family, it's generational. The late Glen Deweese was one of our original board members twenty two years ago, and he and his wife Janice, passed down their passion for giving to their own children. Glen's son Doug and his wife Bet, have also been long time supporters of Hope. They have both served as board members and together they have supported many of our projects over the years. But the most impactful thus far, was back in 2005, after hurricane Katrina hit. We were all trying to respond to the many children who were displaced, and Doug and Bet responded in a big way - they donated the funds to allow us to open another group home and bring those displaced foster children to a safe place they could call home, "Faith Cottage." The desire to help is evident in this family, and we at Hope Village cannot say thank you enough!

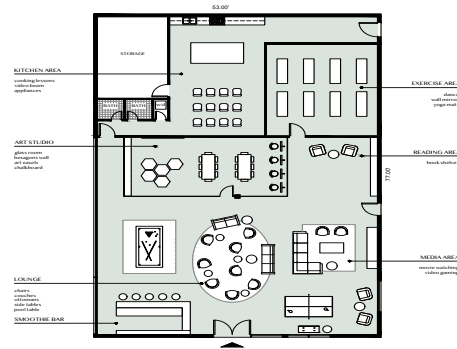
THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS FOR HELPING US WITH OUR CAMPUS REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Their contributions, both in-kind and financial, have paved the way for our future growth:

The following individuals and companies listed below donated or heavily discounted items and services to make our recent renovation projects possible. We cannot thank them enough!

Lamar & Lynne Arrington	Kathryn Moon
Braden Jr. Ball (IOLTA Trust Account)	M'Prints, Meridian, MS
Belle Rouge	Wendy O'Connor Wallpaper Art, Textiles
Oscar Bur	Pershing, LLC
Manuel Canovas	Pilot Travel Center
Ann Carter	Rhonda Poole
Leslie Sims Carruth	Raymond James Global Account
Katie Coleman	Red Elephant Club of Birmingham, Inc.
Community Foundation of East Mississippi	Ridgeland Specialty Hardware
Couture Lamps	Sela Ward & Howard Sherman
Crown Hardware	Sara Smith
Marty & Linda Davidson	Sazerac Stitches Custom Lighting
Janice Deweese	Schumacker
Julie Everett	ServPro Meridian, MS
Fadecci Lighting	Martha Snider
FLOR	Southern Cleaning Services
Warner Gaston	Southern Pipe & Supply of Meridian, MS
Glass, Inc. Meridian, MS	Stone Source
Grace Hospice Foundation	Structural Steel Services, Inc.
Shaun Gray	Mrs. Russell Stutts, Jr.
Willie or Christy Greer	Ann Sullivan
Hotel & Restaurant Supply	Thibaut Wallpaper
Clair Huff	Brent Thompson
Thomas Kendall	Judy Little VanVeckhoven
Leona Kern	Viking Range, Greenwood, MS
Lowe's Meridian, MS	Stanley Jr. & Terry Wade
David Mason	Tom Wallace
Juliet McDonald	Hallie Ward Interiors
MGT Films	Catherine Weathersby
Mississippi Highway Patrol	Beth Whitehead Art and Design
Manny & Melanie Mitchell	The Yates Companies, Inc.
Adam Mitchell	
Mitchell Signs, Meridian, MS	

VISION FOR NEW RECREATION CENTER



THANK YOU MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS (ABC)!

We are privileged to have been chosen by the Mississippi Chapter of Association of Builders and Contractors (ABC) as 2023 charity of the year! We are so excited to see how the Young Professionals will transform our Recreation Center. The kids are going to love it!



Featured: Association of Builders and Contractors (ABC) - Mississippi Chapter Young Professionals who helped assess the renovation needs of Hope Village's future Recreation Center

TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE REMAINING RENOVATION NEEDS AT HOPE VILLAGE, VISIT WWW.HOPEVILLAGEMS.ORG/HOW-CAN-YOU-HELP/REVITALIZATION-PROJECT/

MISSISSIPPI POWER DONATES TESLA POWERWALLS TO HOPE VILLAGE



In December 2022, Mississippi Power donated two Tesla Powerwalls to Hope Village for Children for our (2) Transitional Homes for young adults ages 18-21. The Tesla Powerwall is a rechargeable lithium-ion battery (stationary) home energy storage product manufactured by Tesla Energy. The Powerwall stores electricity for solar self-consumption, time of use load shifting, and backup power. The Powerwalls were installed by Cross Roofing, the only contractor in the state of Mississippi who is certified to install these products, and Cross Roofing generously donated the labor to install the Powerwalls..

“Hope Village for Children is so very grateful for this generous donation from Mississippi Power and Cross Roofing. It really is a comfort to know our children are able to stay in their homes if there is a utility failure and these power sources are what make that possible. It is only through the generosity of our community and companies like MS Power that Hope Village is able to provide quality services to the children in our care. We are honored to be a part of this program and look forward to a continued partnership in helping our state’s most vulnerable children.” – Terri Province, Executive Director, Hope Village for Children

“Such tremendous gratitude for MS Power’s extraordinary generosity. The gift of the state of the art Tesla generators to keep our kids safe at Hope Village is a godsend. We can’t thank them enough!” – Sela Ward, Founder of Hope Village for Children

The Hope Village for Children Transitional Homes are an extension of the Therapeutic Group Homes, and were built by Habitat for Humanity in 2009. These homes are intended to bridge the gap between dependency and self-sufficiency; the time period between adolescence and adulthood where daily living skills become survivor skills. There are (2), three bedroom, three bathroom Transitional Homes located near the 24th street entrance to the Hope Village campus. These homes have a house parent and can have up to four residents (two residents to a room). One house is for young men and the other for young women. Read more about the Hope Village for Children Transitional Homes here: <https://www.hopevillagemsgs.org/programs-and-services/transitional-homes/>

If you or your company is interested in donating monetarily or in-kind to Hope Village for Children, please contact Casey Culpepper at 601-553-8660 ext. 2266 or email cculpepper@hopevillagemsgs.org.

HOPE VILLAGE THRIFT STORE



In partnership with the Arts & Community Events Society (ACES), the Hope Village Thrift Store participated in its first ever pop-up shop event where beautiful, donated dresses were sold at great prices for upcoming events in Meridian. Proceeds from dress sales benefitted Hope Village for Children

“Collaboration is the key to strengthening community organizations. Hope Village and the Meridian ACES have proved that with their ArtiGras Project Runway event on January 21st. The concept joined the forces of Hope Village Thrift’s amazing selection of party dresses and ball gowns with one of a kind accessories created by ACES members that offered a unique shopping experience for the upcoming Mardi Gras season. Shoppers enjoyed a mimosa and found affordable, high fashion looks.”

- Joyce Lane, Co-Founder, Arts & Community Events Society

OUR GUILD GO GETTERS Donna Ulmer and Linda Grant

Donna Ulmer and Linda Grant were two of the original members of the Guild. They began volunteering with our children back in 2002 and both continued to serve for over ten years. The impact they made in the lives of our children is immeasurable. They gave of their time, their service and, most importantly, their love. We will be forever grateful for their dedication to our mission of leading a child to a place where Hope is born.



HOPE HEROES

Linda & Marty Davidson

Linda and Marty Davidson have been long time supporters of Hope Village and we could not be more grateful for their most recent contribution, The Linda and Marty Davidson Education Center. Here at Hope Village, access to educational services are critical to the success of the children we serve. By providing a space where children can come every day to “catch up”, work on projects, study for the ACT, or just get help with homework, we are providing them with hope for a better future. We are so very thankful to Linda and Marty for helping us make this vital part of our program a continued reality for our children.



THE LINDA & MARTY DAVIDSON EDUCATION CENTER

In order to improve the educational outcomes and endeavors of each child at Hope Village, we are proud and grateful to have the Linda and Marty Davidson Education Center. Centrally located on our beautiful campus, our Education Center is fully equipped with computers, classroom white boards, a project/resource room with arts/craft supplies, as well as, a study room and library. Certified teachers provided by the Meridian Public School District and our on-staff Education Director help tutor our children in the afternoons throughout the school year and summer. They receive assistance with assigned homework and projects during the school year, and then spend time enhancing their learning and sharpening their minds during summer break. We recognize that national research shows children in foster care are at high risk of dropping out of school, are less likely to receive a high school diploma or a GED, and are less likely to participate in postsecondary education. The great majority of the children in our care struggle in the educational arena. Many of them have missed years of school and most have not had the support needed to thrive academically. Because educational success is a key component in helping our residents grow and transform into productive adults, education is a long established priority goal and hallmark of Hope Village's continuum of care and services. We know education makes a difference and will provide the children in our care the best possible chance for success and “Hope” for a brighter future.



THANK YOU TO THE PHIL HARDIN FOUNDATION

Thank you to the Phil Hardin Foundation for providing a grant that assists in partially funding our new full-time Education Director Position.

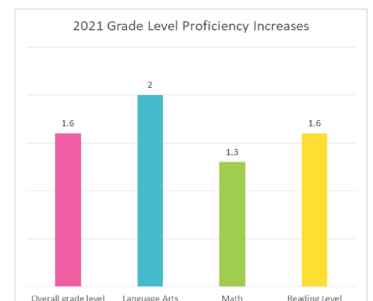
Do you love reading? Do you fly through math puzzles? Do you encourage your little ones to watch Bill Nye the Science Guy? Then there is probably a teacher, a mentor, or educator somewhere in your past who has influenced you in a positive way. Education is an essential element that allows our foster children the opportunity to overcome their past circumstances. If education is one of your passions, please consider donating to this worthy cause and help us match the Phil Hardin Education Grant.

If you are an individual or business interested in supporting education and the children at Hope Village, please contact us for more information 601-553-8660 ext. 2266



Education Makes a Difference

- The HVC Educational and Case Management staff work collaboratively with the Meridian Public School System to meet the academic needs of all our residents.
- Our tutoring program is individually tailored to each child.
- Each child's academic progress is monitored weekly.
- Extra tutoring is provided when a need arises.



May is "National Foster Care" Month

HOPE VILLAGE FOSTER PARENT PROGRAM

Hope Village is dedicated to finding potential foster parents and foster homes for our children within our local community. Because we know the children in our care best and have developed individualized treatment plans and services tailored to their personal needs, we are able to match each child to the most suitable family.

Helping our kids find a foster home in the community allows us to support both the resident and the family during the fostering process and provide wrap-around services and resources in order to ensure a successful placement. Hope Village strives to remain an integral part of their lives, acting as an extended family and support system and celebrating their progress and development.

2023 SPRING FUNDRAISER PURCHASE A YARD SIGN TO SUPPORT OUR FOSTER CARE PROGRAM



By donating to this fundraising campaign, you are helping provide the necessary support that benefits our Foster Care clients:

- Trainings
- Respite
- Licensing
- Certifications.

Families or businesses that donate \$100 or more will receive a complimentary sign and recognition.

Purchase an individual sign for \$35 each

PLEASE CONSIDER BEING A FOSTER PARENT

The Thomas Family

Ms. Ellen states that her interest in foster parenting first happened when she and her husband, Mr. Michael Thomas, were watching Wednesday's Child on television. She states, "I didn't realize that there were so many children needing a place to feel loved. Every child, no matter what, should have a place to feel safe and loved. My goal as a foster parent is to help a child feel safe and feel that he or she is a part of a family that loves them. Every child should know what true love feels like." Instead of saying they are her "foster child or children," she wants to say they are "her son," or "her daughter."

- Ellen Thomas, Hope Village for Children Foster Parent

**Thank you for supporting us so
we can support foster families
more effectively**

**PURCHASE
YOUR SIGN
HERE:**



HOPE VILLAGE MENTORING PROGRAM

Hope Village's Mentoring Program was designed to create and nurture positive, trusting relationships between residents and members of the community. Mentors provide guidance, advice, and support to our kids which is critical to their growth and healing. Residents and potential mentors are matched based on similar interests, likes, and hobbies, and we offer various levels of commitment (on/off campus, with or without Hope Village staff etc) to meet the needs of both the residents and mentors. We know that not everyone has the same skills, time, or talent, but we also know that every person has something valuable to offer our kids!

For more information on becoming a mentor or foster parent, please contact Monica Wess(mwess@hopevillagems.org).



Hope Village for Children
P.O. Box 26
Meridian, MS 39302

FOLLOW HOPE VILLAGE FOR CHILDREN ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM

OFFERING SUPERIOR SERVICES:

Therapeutic
Group Homes

Foster Care
Placement

Transitional
Living Homes

Emergency
Shelter



Hope
Village
for children

For every child victimized by abuse, neglect, or misfortune, we will provide HOPE.

DONATE ONLINE!

For information regarding the Children's Promise Tax Credit for individuals and businesses,
call 601-553-8660 ext. 2266

Scan QR code to support
Hope Village for Children

