



Highlighting Hope

A PUBLICATION OF HOPE VILLAGE FOR CHILDREN

FALL 2023



Hello and Happy Fall!

The campus is bustling with activity with the residents back in school and involved in sports, work, and activities.

We continue to be blessed with an outpouring of volunteerism and donations from our own Meridian community and beyond.

Love Out Loud, the volunteer outreach group of Northcrest Baptist Church did an amazing job landscaping the front yard of our administrative building.

Simmons Erosion Control of Lake, MS (Chris and Jennie Simmons) took on the challenge of our erosion and drainage issues on campus, correcting all damaged areas and even laying fresh sod on their way out! Thank you all from the bottom of my heart!

Warmly,

Sela Ward

Aaron's STORY

Aaron Butler came to Hope Village when he and his sister were removed from their mom's home by Child Protection Services (CPS) due to neglect. His sister came to Hope Village and Aaron was placed in a foster home. He lived in seven different places in the two years between being put into the foster care system and being admitted to Hope Village. He was fourteen years old at the time and was really glad to finally be reunited with his sister.

Aaron lived in our Group Home for boys and eventually moved to our boys' Transition Home as he prepared to age out of the system. He had a hard time with relationships with staff at first, but says he appreciated everything after he left.

His favorite thing about Hope Village was some of the people who worked here and also the gym, he loved



(Pictured above: Aaron Butler)

the gym, lol. Aaron recalls learning independent living skills that were invaluable, such as how to fill out a job application, how to contact people and make appointments, and how to utilize a bank.

Aaron graduated from Meridian High School with honors and earned an Associate's Degree and a CDL Certificate from Meridian Community College.

Aaron takes great pride in never being homeless, not being involved in crime, or having never had issues with drugs. He has been employed ever since he left Hope Village; he currently works at FedEx and O'Reilly Auto Parts. He also owns his own home where he is raising his two daughters. Aaron did what we hope all young adults aging out of the foster care system do, beat the odds.

*Aaron did what we hope all young adults aging out of the foster care system do,
BEAT THE ODDS.*

He is not another negative foster child statistic. Aaron loves being a father and it is his goal to obtain a real estate license.

When asked what advice he would give the kids who now live at Hope Village, he said "Don't be in a hurry to leave. Use it to your advantage as much as you can."

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It's hard to believe summer vacation is over. Boy did it fly by! Between river tubing, swimming, summer jobs, and day trips to the beach and Camp Pine Lake, all the kids were busy! The summer ended perfectly with a fabulous "Back to School" pool party hosted by the Meridian Junior Auxiliary and we could not be more grateful. They had a blast! The kids have all now returned to school and while we are trying to get back into a routine, many participate in extracurricular activities and are still busy, busy, busy. A couple of boys are playing football, a few more kids are playing soccer, and one young lady is on the volleyball team at MHS. It's hard to say goodbye to our fun in the sun, but the sweater weather, pumpkin spice, football season is going to be just as amazing! Hope to see you in the stands.



Executive Director, Terri Province

23rd Annual



November 11, 2023

**10k TRAIL RUN • 5k ROAD RACE
2-MILE WALK • 1-MILE FUN RUN**

**Bonita Lakes
Meridian, Mississippi**

2023 RUN FOR HOPE HOSTED BY THE HOPE VILLAGE FOR CHILDREN GUILD

Please join us for the 23rd annual Run for Hope on Saturday, November 11th @ 8am at Bonita Lakes in Meridian, Mississippi. The run includes a 10k Trail Run, a 5k Road Race, a 2-Mile Walk and a 1-Mile Fun Run. We invite you to come with a friend, or gather your running group, school friends, teams, or office co-workers and participate in our group challenge. Bonita Lakes is beautiful this time of year so please come out and enjoy the day!! All proceeds from the run directly benefit the children who are residents at Hope Village and make a positive impact on their lives.

The Run for Hope is hosted by the Hope Village for Children's Guild, which raises money for the run through sponsorships from many businesses and individuals who generously donate. The Guild was organized in September 2001 to be a support system for our Board of Directors and staff. It is made up of volunteers who are dedicated to ensuring our children have the opportunity to experience a well-balanced, normal and happy childhood while residing at Hope Village.

All of the kids in our care at Hope Village have suffered some form of trauma such as neglect, abuse, and abandonment. Sadly, many of them have never experienced the "extras" in life that most of us take

THANKS TO OUR 2022 SPONSORS

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Mississippi Power Company

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BRONZE SPONSORS

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Great Southern Bank
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The Trey Cross Agency
Commercial Bank
CUI Security, Inc.
Bo Haarala Autoplex
Magnolia Steel Co., Inc.
Davidson Hauling, Inc.
Quitman Family Dental/Brock & Melissa Martin
The William Jolly Family

for granted. Through the Run for Hope fundraiser, the Guild provides birthday and holiday parties; summer field trips and a beach vacation; athletic uniforms and accessories; exercise equipment; game nights and movie nights; prom dresses and tuxedos; dance, gym, cheer, art, music lessons and so much more. We serve, on average, 25-30 kids every day, some of whom will remain with us through high school and beyond. We are so proud of their accomplishments and success in overcoming such great odds. We simply could not help our kids heal from their traumatic pasts and transform them into happy young adults if it weren't for the support from our Hope Village Guild. Your participation in the Run for Hope, whether as a runner or a sponsor, ensures they can continue their mission and ours—leading each child to a place where HOPE is born.



REGISTER NOW

Time2Run.Net



THE CHANEY GANG



"Forever our favorite run!"

Hope Village holds a special place in my heart. My first recollection was at a young age, I had the opportunity, alongside my mom and members of her sorority alumnae club, to be one of the first groups to donate books to Hope Village's library. Throughout my years away from Meridian while I was in college and working in Starkville, Hope Village was still a part of my life as I witnessed my aunt, Rhonda Poole, and my mom, Charlotte Chaney, donating many hours of their time to support Hope Village through their membership in the Hope Village Guild volunteer organization. Seeing the two of them and all the many wonderful Guild volunteers give so much of their time to support Hope Village was a wonderful thing.

As a runner, Hope Village for Children's primary fundraiser, Run for Hope, was something that always drew me home. Then, my move home to Meridian allowed me the opportunity to join this caring group of ladies, the Hope Village Guild. The only thing missing when I joined though, was my mom. Due to her cancer diagnosis, she was unable to attend meetings and events. When it was time for the 2022 Run for Hope, I decided to surprise my mom with a team honoring her. With the help of family and friends, we were able to pull off having a team, the "Chaney Gang." Every race that I've ever run, my mom has been in attendance. Knowing that I was going to run the race, I had talked my mom into sitting in the truck with my dad to watch as much of the race as possible. Little did she know, there was not only one but there were two teams running in her honor: the "Chaney Gang" and the children and staff of Hope Village. Seeing the total surprise on her face that morning and the love she received from the team members, the Hope Village children and staff, and the Guild members will forever hold a special place in my heart! The Hope Village Run for Hope is such a special event that not only provides hope for the children of Hope Village, it also provides hope for a bright future for all of our community.

Shelby Chaney

CALLING ALL BUSINESSES

to become a Run for Hope sponsor today or gather a group for the Team Challenge!
PLEASE CONTACT US @ 601-553-8660 FOR MORE INFO.

PROCEEDS PROVIDE

- Christmas Presents
 - Easter Baskets
 - Birthday Gifts & Parties
 - Halloween Parties
 - Valentines Day Parties
 - Spring Break Day Trips
 - Recreational Activities
 - Piano Lessons
 - Gymnastics Classes
 - Graduation Celebrations
 - Sports Equipment
- and SO MUCH MORE!

2023-24 HOPE VILLAGE GUILD MEMBERS

Stacy Allen
Lynne Arrington
Linda Bruister
Cindy Burt
Virginia Byrd
Jolie Carle
Charlotte Chaney
Shelby Chaney
Nancy Chisolm
Laurie Cobb
Leigh Cross

Cassie Davis
Taylor Diveley
Mary Clare Evans
Renee Foreman
Monica Graham
JJ Haarala
Mollie Haarala
Liza Hannington
Mallory Hardy
Jan Hitt
Clair Huff

Dawn Hull
Kaki Knight
Alexa Marcello
Blakely Martin
Melissa Martin
Tammy Matthews
Kim Mosley
Rebecca Pearson
Colby Pinson
Sharon Pompelia
Rhonda Poole

Jeanie Sanders
Lee Schulte
April Sellers
Hayley Shirley
Helen Sims
Tanya Thompson
Kathy Tucker
McCall Waller
Jeanna White
Makenzie Woodward



RUN FOR HOPE RAFFLE

Purchase a \$25 raffle ticket for a chance to **win a week's stay** at a 5BD/4BA dream beach home just steps away from the beach in Orange Beach, AL.
You don't have to be present to win.

Call 601-553-8660 for more information.

Scan QR code to purchase:





What do you call five men who love God, have hearts for serving, and get joy out of gardening? Our Love Out Loud volunteers! In July, our agency was honored to be a recipient of Northcrest Baptist Church's ministry where Larry Duke, Mickey Bunyard, John Cornett, Kevin McKinion, and Kenneth Gressett (plus more) worked diligently in the sweltering heat for four days sprucing up our Administrative Building. They pulled up old bushes and planted new ones; they chopped down a tree and ground the stump; they took down our old rotting pergola, rebuilt it, and painted it; they even repaired our sign. These men were visibly guided by love and their acts of service were truly a blessing to us all. Thank you for all your hard work!



HOPE HEROES
Simmons Erosion Control, Inc.
 Thank you, Chris and Jennie!

The Hope Village campus sits on thirty acres in the middle of the city of Meridian. It was originally developed in the fifties as an orphanage by the Masons that included five cottages, a cafeteria, a gymnasium, and a caretaker's home. Our campus still encompasses all of those buildings, but we have evolved and grown over the years. We have added two transition homes for foster youth aging out of the system, an education center, a playground, a storage building, and a fitness area. Consequently, the upkeep and maintenance of the property have grown as well, with erosion issues being an immediate priority. Unfortunately, we, like everyone else across the country, were affected by COVID-19 and subsequently have had difficulty getting repairs completed, and have been directly impacted by supply chain issues and the increased cost of supplies. So what is a nonprofit to do? Simmons Erosion Control, Inc. to the rescue. As members of the Association of Builders and Contractors, they were familiar with our plight and generously donated all the labor and supplies to fix our drainage issues.



MS ABC YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 2023 Charity Project Update - Recreation Center

The roof, windows, and doors have all been replaced. Blue prints have been finalized, demo took place in September, and the goal is to have all the children hanging out and playing in their new Recreation Center by December.

The campus is all a buzz watching, waiting and anticipating the completion of this multifunctional space. It will provide a place to exercise, have art classes, play games, watch movies, play pool or just do what all teenagers do-hang out with friends. We are SO EXCITED!

**DONATE TO
 OUR CAMPUS
 REVITALIZATION
 FUND**
 Scan the code!



SHARING HOPE

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOPE VILLAGE FOR CHILDREN AT HOPEVILLAGEMS.ORG

Celebrating "Meridian Day" at the Neshoba County Fair: It was fun meeting so many new friends and sharing what we do at Hope Village. Thank you to everyone who came by and visited, and a special thank you to Bob and Kathy Luke for opening their fair cabin and treating us to a much appreciated cool place to relax, plus a wonderful lunch!



It's always exciting to see another Carousel Horse around town. "Cleo", sponsored by BWI Companies, Inc. was unveiled on July 10, 2023 at BWI. The artist who painted this beautiful addition to our public art project was Daniel Ethridge.



Some of our staff members attended the Mississippi Association of Child Care Agencies (MACCA) Leadership Conference in Biloxi, MS.

Pictured: Julie McKay, Travis Reed, Shelly Stiltner, Janet Carson, Catena McBride, Amy Brassfield, Shiquita Thedford, Casey Culpepper, Lashonda Baylor, Latasha Sims, Janice Stidman, & Terri Province



We enjoyed representing in our "PEACE, LOVE, HOPE VILLAGE" t-shirts.



These ladies from the Southern Star Mennonite Church in Geiger, AL have been sewing for Hope Village for years. They create one-of-a-kind blankets and pillow cases for ALL of the children who live at Hope Village. This special act of kindness truly is a labor of love and we could not thank you enough.

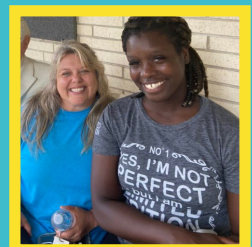
Lauderdale County Board of Supervisors Wayman Newell, Joe Norwood, Kyle Rutledge, Josh Todd, Johnathan Wells, and Chris Lafferty, County Administrator, toured our facility and learned first-hand what we do at Hope Village. The Board of Supervisors have been supporting our mission to help Mississippi's foster children for over 20 years, and we consider ourselves blessed to have their continued support. Thank you for being part of our caring community.



It is always a joy to see young people sharing their talents and giving back to the community. Hope Village was blessed to have Eagle Scout, Henry Prewitt, build a lending library for our campus. Thank you so much for this special gift.



We could not do what we do, without our amazing volunteers sharing their talents. N'spire Walker and Alana Sparrow Broughton are doing just that; they share a passion for the arts and helping children. Together, with our residents, they are producing a holiday arts showcase that is sure to be nothing short of amazing.



Congressman Michael Guest and some of his staff visited Hope Village recently while back home from Washington D.C. We enjoyed sharing our mission with them and while I think they enjoyed the tour, playing foosball with the kids might have been what they enjoyed most. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule. It's obvious the children of Mississippi are a priority of yours, and we thank you for that!



HOPE VILLAGE STAFF

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
NOMINEES AND WINNERS



JUNE

SHIQUITA THEDFORD
Case Manager

Shiquita Thedford was nominated for Employee of the month because of her never ending willingness to help whenever and wherever she is needed. Shiquita has taken it upon herself to step up and help with the Case Management in Cottage 1 and we could not be more grateful. It is truly a blessing to have an employee who has such a generous spirit. Thank you for all you do not only for your Emergency Shelter children, but all the children of Hope Village.

Other June nominees – Comondre Cole, Latonya Drish and Alisha Miller

JULY

ASHLEY GLASS
Developmental Coach

Ashley Glass has been a dedicated employee since 2012. She is kind and warm hearted to the residents and her co-workers. It’s very obvious through her actions with them. She adapts very well regardless of which cottage or shift she works in. She brings positivity and joy to those around her in the cottage. She may be quiet, but her dedication speaks volumes.



Other July nominees – Marcus Gladney, Megan Mendiola, Brittany Simmons , Janice Stidman, and Gloria Slaughter



AUGUST

TAURUS PARKER
Facilities Supervisor

Taurus is doing an outstanding job handling the many projects that require his hard work, patience, skills, and enthusiasm for improving Hope Village. He is knowledgeable about everything on our campus and is so helpful to all those who live, work and visit our facility. There is a ton of work and loads of volunteers helping to improve our property. It is very comforting to know Taurus is welcoming and friendly to them all.

Other August nominees – Warren Dawkins, Kenny Lewis, and Natichia Ellis

SEPTEMBER

JULIE MCKAY
Project Manager

While Julie McKay has not been working at Hope Village for very long, she has been involved with Hope Village for over 20 years. She has had the privilege of working alongside our founder, Sela Ward, and through the years has fallen in love with our mission. Julie not only loves what we do here at Hope, but also loves all the children who live here. She always has kind words for our residents and staff and is fully engaged with creating a trauma informed system of care for our agency. We are so thankful to have someone who is so willing to help, regardless of what or where she is needed. We are blessed to have Julie as part of our Hope Village family.



Other September nominees - Jennifer Allen, Tonia Baylor, Marcus Gibson, and Janice Murray

VILLAGE VICTORIES

What a fun summer!

Our residents volunteered at the Wesley House Community Center. They participated in the Wesley House’s weekly food distribution where they handed out bags of food to those in need.	A resident received funding for tuition, books, and housing from the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services. He is so excited about receiving these funds to further his education.	Elements of a Coat of Arms - residents researched their last names and created family crests to showcase their identities and history.
Residents spent a fun-filled Labor Day at Sela Ward’s farm.	Residents participated in a wellness program (implemented by Activities Coordinator, Lou Ann Henson).	Ms. Catena implemented a really (yummy) experiment at the Education Center. Residents learned how to make ice cream in a bag!
Our residents shined while participating in a campus talent show.	M.M. participated in “ride with the cop.” She really enjoyed it. She had the chance to be involved with 2 cases, and now she wants to become a police officer.	Hope Village residents and staff members attended “Lemonade Day” during Reconciliation Week.

LEVELS OF FUNDING FY2022-2023

CHAMPIONS OF HOPE \$10,000-\$49,999 AND \$50,000 AND UP

Home Instead Senior Care
Paul and Sherry Broadhead Foundation
The Patricia Crown Family
Marty and Linda Davidson
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Glass, Inc.

Lauderdale County Board of Supervisors
The Phil Hardin Foundation
KHR Family Fund
The Noblitt Foundation
Robert and Beverly Smith
Specialty Roll Products

Structural Steel Services
Thomas HVAC Services
Trustmark Bank
United Way of East Mississippi
WR Baird Charitable Trust

LEADERS OF HOPE

\$5,000-\$9,999

Elijah List Ministries
 Gulf Guaranty Life
 Insurance
 Hummingbird
 Investment Club

PILLARS OF HOPE

\$2,500-\$4,999

Jimmy and Ann Alexander
 BWI Companies, Inc.
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 Clay and Laura Holladay
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 Foundation, Inc.
 Alice Stevens
 The Riley Foundation

PROTECTORS OF HOPE

\$1,000-\$2,499

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 Colonel Eric Bratu
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 Douglas and Katie Coleman
 Wanda Cooper
 Steven and Paige Corey
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 Duane Dewey
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 Lee and Diane Allen
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 Gary and Barbara Boone
 Shelby Chaney
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 Community Foundation of East
 Mississippi
 Community Southern Methodist
 Church
 John and Ann Compton
 Linda Cook
 CUI Systems, Inc.
 Sandra Dabbs and Kelly Carr
 Dr. Zaineb Daud
 Ruthie Davis-Jones
 First Christian Church
 Steven Flomenhoft
 Dr. Otis Gowdy
 Kayla Haney
 Jimmy Harvey
 Thomas and Vickie Hester
 Angela Jolly
 Jones Memorial Presbyterian
 Junior Auxiliary of Meridian
 Keely Bible Class
 Leake County
 Sam and Frances Long
 Madden Baptist Church
 Dr. Brock and Melissa Martin
 Leslie Matteson
 Vicky McDonnell
 Meridian Board of Realtors
 Meridian Rotary Club
 Dr. Margaret Morrison
 National Financial Services
 North American Coal Corp.
 Parish Tractor Company
 James and Robin Parker
 Tammy Ratcliff
 Ben Shirley
 Harry Spooner
 Danny and Leigh Thomas
 Russell and Tanya Thompson
 Scott and Lynn Vaughn
 Cary and Faith Vaughn
 Boyd Williams Real Estate Co.
 Women Fellowship First
 Christian Church

FRIENDS OF HOPE

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 Mary Clare Evans
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 Dr. Willie Greer
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 Amy and Allen Tyra
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 Peg Wahrendorff
 Royal and Evelyn Walker
 M.L. and Kim Waters
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PARTNERS OF HOPE

\$1-\$249

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 Billy Anders
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 Layla Aspinall
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 Richard and Hilda Davis

Scott and Cassie Davis
 Teresa Davis
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 Connor Moheb
 Haskins Montgomery
 Jamiyah Moore
 Morgan Tile Carpet one
 Kimberly Mosley
 Brian Mulrooney
 John and Sarah Mutziger
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 Network for Good
 Gary Newell
 Northeast Middle School
 Katherine Null
 Olive Baptist Church Military
 Ministry
 Jerry and Betty Oltremari
 Robert Oneill
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 John and Rebecca Oubre
 Over the Moon Children's
 Boutique
 Phillip Pardue
 Wade Parker
 Ken Jr. and Dusti Parker
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 Page Sikes
 William Simmons
 Simply Irresistable Boutique
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 Larry Stroud
 Zachary and Hallie Swindoll
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