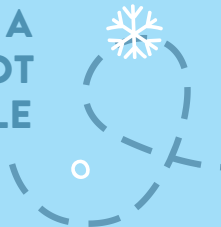




A MESSAGE FROM YOU WILL SHOW A YOUNG PERSON THAT THEY ARE NOT ALONE AND THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARE. IT'S A SMALL GESTURE THAT MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE.



December 2022

Dear <<NAME>>,

"Wow! Someone I've never even met cares about me?" That's what we heard last year when people like you responded to our unusual greeting card request. So, I'm sending the greeting card again this year and ask that you please don't keep it...send it back.

Youth in our group homes ages 11-17 and young people in our independent living apartments ages 17-25 call VHBG home as they work to learn resilience skills and transition to a permanent home. For many young people, this is a very sad time of year because they're struggling to find a sense of belonging and have no one outside of VHBG to spend the holidays with.

But with your help, we'll provide as much unconditional love and support as we can. Support like Joy is getting from staff who understand her trauma. Please take a moment to read her story on the back of this letter.

We also hope you will be generous once again and match or exceed your previous donation to Virginia Home for Boys and Girls. Please open your hearts and return the holiday card today along with a donation in the postage paid return envelope. Your ongoing support with a donation of \$XXX now will mean that we can continue to support these young people with what they need most: a safe home, specialized education, therapeutic care, and a chance at a happy life. Not just at this time of the year but all year long.

Together, you and all of us here can make young lives a bit brighter with love and hope. May you and your loved ones share a warm and wonderful holiday season!

With gratitude,

Claiborne Warner

Claiborne M. Warner
President & CEO

P.S.
Mail the enclosed holiday card, along with a written message from you, back to us and we'll give it to a youth who'll be happy to hear from you!



Your generous previous gift enabled us to serve hundreds of youth in crisis. Won't you please consider a gift of \$[AMOUNT]? Your gift allows VHBG to provide supplementary care and services that go above and beyond what is required to provide the precise care that each unique child needs.

YOU CAN GO ONLINE TO GIVE AT [VHHBG.org/GIVE](https://vhhbg.org/GIVE)

Gift Amount: \$ _____ Check Enclosed (made payable to Virginia Home for Boys and Girls)

Let's make sure we have your contact information correct. Please change anything below that needs updating:

Name(s): _____ << ADD INFO >>

Address: _____ << ADD INFO >> City: _____ << ADD INFO >> State: _____ << ADD INFO >> ZIP: _____ << ADD INFO >>

Email: _____ << ADD INFO >> Phone: _____ << ADD INFO >>

ID: << ADD INFO >>

THANK YOU!

8716 West Broad Street, Henrico, VA 23294
Lionel Bacon, V.P. Philanthropy | (804) 270-6566 ext. 1150
LBacon@vhhbg.org | vhhbg.org





Joy's Story

With a name like “Joy” you automatically expect a person with a face glowing with happiness. Instead, Joy’s face projected the misery and despair she felt.

Thin from neglect and starved of an education, at the age of 13 she lived with a mother who didn’t care for her. She went unnoticed until her school reported her truancy and poor grades to authorities who investigated and found Joy living in unsafe conditions. Her toxic home environment included emotionally draining verbal abuse from her mother. Joy’s trauma manifested in behaviors that made finding a traditional foster home for her impossible.

Joy needed a safe place to live and learn the resilience skills that would help her be successful in her future. VHBG was the best place for her to live while she learned to heal from her trauma and make a plan to transition to a more permanent home. Because Joy had never lived in a safe, loving home she suffered from depression and a mood disorder. She couldn’t remember having a good night’s sleep due to nightmares and she’d never really had a nutritious meal. Staff immediately remedied that and offered her ways to appropriately express her frustration and calm her nerves. She used art as a channel for her feelings and painted pictures – often humorous. Journaling helped her express her feelings and she decorated her bedroom with bedding that was cozy and comfortable. She entered our John G. Wood School and improved her grades and took our Culinary Arts class where she learned cooking skills. Laughing and having fun experiences at VHBG gave Joy confidence.

An aunt that Joy barely knew was located and was willing to adopt her but Joy was apprehensive and pushed her away. However, her aunt persisted and proved to Joy that she wasn’t going to give up on her which made Joy happy as she planned for her discharge from VHBG. At Joy’s farewell party, staff and housemates marveled at her transformation from a sad child into a really funny person. “She kept us in stitches,” said one of the Youth Counselors. “I think getting her first really good night’s sleep was the beginning of helping bring out her amazing sense of humor. I’m just so glad to see her happy now and truly full of joy.”

You are the reason young people like Joy have hope for their future. Thank you!

VHBG is a nonprofit organization that has been serving children in crisis since 1846. VHBG has remained agile and able to respond to the ever-changing needs of our community and we have never strayed from our core belief that all children deserve to grow up surrounded by a loving, nurturing family in a safe, supportive community. While we began as an orphanage, we have evolved into an organization with three core program areas: Transitional Living (Group Care Services and Independent Living); Specialized Education (John G. Wood School); and Therapeutic Resources to support the mental health needs of the young people we serve at VHBG.

