

theOrchards

The Quarterly Magazine of Orchards Children's Services

Summer 2014

Summer **FRESH**
new initiatives

Orchards**FIT**
Meet Our Staff

Congratulations Orchards **Scholars!**

BikeDay**Fun!**

Creating Even More Smiles



theOrchards

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Courage and Change: Courage *to* Change

Though Dr. Angelou, a national treasure and beloved Poet Laureate, passed this last May, her words will undoubtedly be a source of inspiration for generations to come. Maya Angelou celebrated change, she represented change: change in her personal life, change in our nation and change in our times.

Orchards Children's Services is an organization committed to the virtues spoken of by Dr. Angelou in this iconic quote. Fifty years ago a small determined group of women had the courage to demand change for children. Defying convention, these women realized the need for change and had the courage to take action. Kindness, truth, mercy, generosity... these virtues are the guiding principles of Orchards Children's Services.

Today, Orchards' new home is a place that will help us reach our potential. This new place was born out of the courage inspired by our founders, the children we serve and our many supporters. It has taken courage over the years to take chances, to challenge old ideas and to make new commitments.

Another famous quote by Maya Angelou resonates with Orchards' mission when we think of the children and families we serve: *People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.*

The smile on a child's face says it all: how that child feels when they know that people really, truly care.

Orchards Children's Services is extremely grateful for our board members, our supporters (who are our family), our management team and our committed staff. The courage, the kindness, the generosity each and every one of you continuously demonstrates is immeasurable. Lastly, we want to acknowledge the courage of the children we serve. Truly our children are our future and we believe it is our honor and privilege to help them recognize and reach their potential.

Michael Williams
President and Chief Executive Officer

Dianna Ronan
Board Chair

**One isn't necessarily
born with courage,
but one is born
with potential.
Without courage,
we cannot practice
any other virtue with
consistency. We
can't be kind, true,
merciful, generous,
or honest.**

Maya Angelou, 1988



ORCHARDS INTRODUCES

BOARD CHAIR

DIANNA RONAN

At our Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors selected Mrs. Dianna Ronan as our Board Chair for the next two years. Since coming to our board nine years ago, Mrs. Ronan has been intricately involved, serving in many roles, the most recent being Chair of Orchards Finance Committee.

She brings many structural and efficient processes to our organization to monitor our effectiveness and challenges. Under her leadership, we will forge forward in creating a state of the art approach to fund development, policy and procedures, and Bylaws revision. This strategic approach is needed to aid the Orchards in meeting its goal of moving families forward today and into the future.

Dianna's husband, Chuck, was recently named a "Champion for Children" for his work in establishing Orchards' Community Garden and for organizing the Larry Culley Bike Day, where over 500 bikes were built and given to our children to begin their summer. Dianna and Chuck have two adult sons.

We are pleased with HAP's selection and honored to have her serving as our leader.



Orchards WELCOMES

Michelle Cooper MBA

Chief Financial Officer



The Orchards has been in transition over the past year. There have been so many new and exciting changes, including moving to our new headquarters.

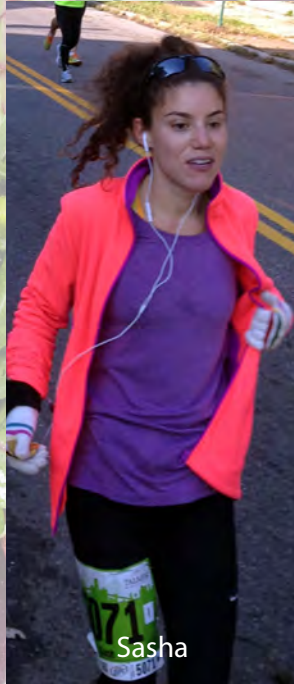
Another exciting event was the hiring of our new Chief Financial Officer, Michelle Cooper, MBA. Orchards Children's Services has flourished under the guidance of some pretty remarkable professionals over the years so finding the right person for such an important position wasn't something the board of directors and management team took lightly. Michelle Cooper is a remarkable woman, she's (as she'll tell you) first and foremost Mom of two amazing daughters. Both Jessica and Jasmine are college grad's themselves, something Michelle is obviously very proud of. Not to be outdone, Michelle achieved her MBA from Walsh College after receiving her bachelor's degree from the University of Detroit.

A native Detroiter, Michelle has a love for children and a passion for her community. In discussing why she chose to join the Orchards, Michelle explains that she's been aware of the tremendous need in the community since she was a young woman. Her desire to help others resulted in her committing to work exclusively in the non-profit arena. As CFO for the prestigious Charles H. Wright African American Museum and also in financial management for the historic Detroit Zoo, Michelle has worked diligently throughout her career to help ensure that organizations committed to the community flourished. An avid traveler, Ms. Cooper had the unique opportunity not long ago to visit India while her eldest daughter was teaching there. "That experience opened my eyes even more about the tremendous need to care for children." Michelle is indeed passionate about service and committed to improving the lives of children and families.



BeingOrchardsFIT

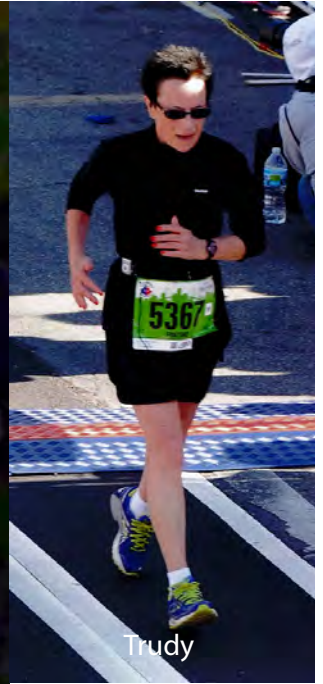
Here at Orchards, we all work together for the benefit of children and families, but some of our workers share another interest as well: marathon running. Sasha Zoller, Jeff Lusko and Trudy Fortino are three such people.



Sasha



Jeff



Trudy

All three recognize the positive value running has on their physical health. Jeff, once a smoker, was determined to embrace a healthier life style and after persevering through the rigors of training and the lurking shadow of self-doubt, ran his first marathon in 2002. His personal mantra of “just keep going” has kept him focused on his journey that will end with the completion of 20 marathons.

Sasha has used running as a means to achieving and maintaining her weight loss goal of 50 pounds. With no formal training plan, her first mile has progressed to the 26.2 miles of a full marathon and her sense of accomplishment has grown with each step. Trudy, a long devotee to health and fitness, turned to marathon running through a little inspiration from her sister and stays running as an outlet for her competitive nature. In October of 2013, this combination led her to finishing second in her age division in the Detroit Free Press Marathon.

All three attest to the positive results running has had on their mental wellness. Jeff, Clinical Director for Orchards’ counseling services, claims the connection between one’s mind and body is indisputable and understanding the psychological dynamics involved in this relationship is crucial toward making health and fitness a natural way of life. Pushing through the tough training running a marathon requires, helps build a new level of confidence that can be applied to all other aspects of life. For Sasha, running has reinforced her belief in personal

responsibility and in the knowledge that a “no excuse” mentality leads to great personal achievement. Her morning runs leave her feeling both physically strong and mentally sharp; two qualities that help her deal with the daily challenges she faces as a social worker.

For Trudy, running allows her the very rare opportunity to let her mind completely “shut down” from the many challenges she faces every day serving as the Vice President of Placement Services at Orchards. The qualities she applies to running her races are the same qualities she brings to her work here at Orchards—determination and focus. She recently ran the 5K and the 10K in the Michigan Senior Olympics and received the gold medal for the 5K and the silver medal for the 10K. So she has qualified to compete in both the 5K and the 10K in the National Senior Olympics that will take place in the summer of 2015 in Minneapolis.

No matter what race they are in, whether it is a half-marathon, a distance Trudy can knock-off with minimal training and one that Sasha finds less overwhelming, or Jeff’s favorite, the 48.6-mile Dopey Challenge at Walt Disney World, we know our dedicated runners are up for the challenge.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THESE AWESOME ORGANIZATIONS

The National Council of Jewish Women for the Back to School Store & Inner City Youth Baseball

Andiamo Bloomfield Hills for the charitable gift cards and Zina Kramer for her support

The Detroit Lions and Meijer for making this holiday unforgettable for our kids

The Detroit Tigers for building positive memories through their generous donation of Comerica Park tickets

Cranbrook's Horizon-Upward Bound's awesome collaboration and Dr. Darryl Taylor, HUB Director

The Cranbrook Schools Garden Project sponsor and partnership

Kroger, HAP, PEPSI, Daly Merritt, Star Trax, Mike Morse Law Firm

The National Recreation Foundation for supporting the new summer program, Game Changers

The Townsend Hotel for their very generous gift of furniture that impacted so many Orchards families

The Henry Ford for a bighearted gift of much needed beds for our children

The Youth Board for their amazing community work

Joe Serra and the Joe Serra Automotive Team who continue to help us "Move Families Forward"

The Walmart Foundation for their extraordinary gift of a Demonstration Kitchen



Clearly, former Board Chair and Board Member Carol Klein knows her way around a garden!

ORCHARDS RIDES AGAIN ON LARRY CULLEY BIKE DAY



Southfield Mayor Brenda Lawrence and CEO Michael Williams cut the ribbon with the giant scissors befitting the official launch of Larry Culley Bike Day 2014. Also pictured are Board members Barbara Goldberg, Andy Meisner, Mike Quinn, Steve Schwartz, Mike Winter and Michael Adkins.

Ice cream sandwiches and popsicles could not cool down the excitement of Orchards' kick-off to the summer season. On the hottest summer day of the season, Friday, June 27th, Orchards hosted the Larry Culley Annual Bike Day. The City of Southfield has been a major supporter of Bike Day and allowed us to use the child lot/park at their municipal civic center for the festivities. Southfield's police and fire units were also on hand to give safety demonstrations using a simulated house.

Though the entire event was full of fun, entertainment and great food, the highlight of the day occurred as Mayor Brenda Lawrence of Southfield cut the ribbon unveiling 466 new, bright and shiny, Huffy bicycles adorned with colorful helmets and locks! Our children often miss out on traditional childhood opportunities. A new bike represents Opportunity, Independence, Education, Physical Fitness and Mobility; qualities that are treasured throughout a lifetime regardless of a person's background or personal circumstances.

Thank you to our Amazing Volunteers!

To prepare for Orchards' Bike Day, over 200 volunteers came together on July 25th at the Southfield Pavilion. These volunteers from: Chrysler Tech Center, HAP, CHUBB, Boy Scouts, Quicken, GM's Youth Internship Program, cycling aficionados, and friends of Orchards built 466 bikes in less than three hours! A huge thank you to our Champion for Children honoree, Chuck Ronan, who, in his trademark blue overalls, put his heart into making sure this project came together. Additional kudos to our dedicated staff who unloaded and volunteered throughout both the bike build and bike day.

We are honored to thank our Premier Sponsor, Kroger who purchased over 200 bikes and Mike Morse Law Firm who sponsored 100 bikes. Additionally we'd like to thank our other sponsors: HAP, Daly Merritt and Pepsi and all of our generous, individual sponsors. Without their support, this day would not have been possible.

ORCHARDS **WELCOMES BOARD MEMBERS**

A. J. WEINER

A dynamic professional with a passion for his community



Anthony J. Weiner, also known as A.J., is a recent appointee to the Orchards Children's Services Board of Directors. He is a dynamic professional with a passion for his community. A.J. grew up in the metro Detroit area and is thrilled to be part of the city's rebirth. After graduating from Andover High School in Bloomfield Hills, he attended Ohio State University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. With his lovely wife Kara, the couple has two children: Mollie, age 9 (going on 39 as A.J. says) and Charlie who's 11.

Mr. Weiner is a hard working professional. Serving as an executive vice president for the JLL commercial real estate agency, he's been widely recognized for his accomplishments. Named to the prestigious 40 Under 40 list for Crain's Detroit Business in 2009, A.J. represents the bright future of the greater metropolitan area. A graduate of Leadership Detroit, he is committed to working with other dedicated professionals to provide a better tomorrow for our children and our community.

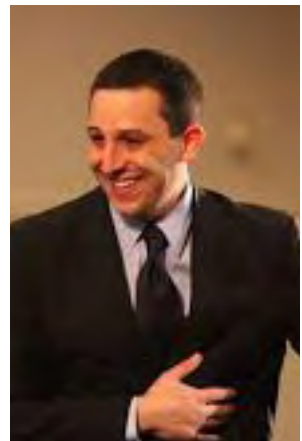
A.J. is also a dedicated dad and boasts of his son's athletic prowess: "Outside of playing golf I'm not much of an athlete but Charlie sure is. He plays football, baseball and basketball and he's real good at all of em." Not to be outdone, Mollie is quite a gymnast and volley ball player. The family resides in West Bloomfield with A.J. commuting between his JLL offices in Royal Oak and Detroit.

A.J. first became aware of Orchards Children's Services through his lifetime friend and former Orchards' board chair, David Kramer. David knew exactly what he was doing when he encouraged AJ to work with the management team and other board members to find a new location for our Southfield offices. Like everyone who's ever served on the board, once A.J. got involved with the organization on a one-time project basis he was compelled to stay involved. As A.J. says, "I realized this organization was really about making a difference in our community; that's what's important to me; that's what I'm passionate about so I had to get on board."

Orchards Children's Services is grateful A.J. Weiner did get on board. He is responsible for our new Southfield home and he's a tremendous asset to our wonderful team. The board of directors, management group and the entire Orchards family welcomes A.J. Weiner as our newest board member.

ANDY MEISNER

An ongoing dedication to public service



Oakland County Treasurer and former State Representative Andy Meisner was elected Oakland County Treasurer in November, 2008, after serving three terms in the Michigan House of Representatives, where he chaired the Commerce Committee and served on the House Education, Tax Policy, Judiciary, and New Economy and Quality of Life Committees. Andy is best known for his work on legislation bringing the motion picture industry to Michigan, stem cell research and reform of the public mental health system.

Andy's public-service career began in 1994 as a Lyndon B. Johnson Fellow in the Washington, D.C., Office of Congressman Sander Levin, where he continued as a congressional aide and gained experience in helping to manage the federal budget and bringing grants home to Oakland County. Andy worked as vice president of marketing and communications for a national non-profit organization dedicated to community-based prevention of substance abuse and violence, and as corporate communications director for the Farbman Group commercial real estate firm.

Andy earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Michigan and a law degree from the University of Detroit-Mercy, and is a member of the State Bar of Michigan.

ORCHARDS WELCOMES BOARD MEMBER

SHARON SPILKIN



An accomplished business woman of many talents

Sharon is quite an accomplished business woman; for thirteen years she worked for the Jewish Federation; it was there that she met and became friends with Randie Levin. Those who know anything about the Orchards know that Randie Levin has been active with Orchards Children's Services for years; Randie's late husband Jerry served as its President and CEO. It was Randie Levin who introduced Sharon to Orchards, and now she's joining the Board of Directors. When first asked what prompted her to consider becoming a board member, Sharon advised that she has a passion for helping people. Already committed to becoming a board member when she attended the open house for the new Orchards facility, Sharon remarked about the experience: "I was so impressed by the staff, they were so proud of the organization; I knew I'd made the right decision."

When asked what prompted her to consider becoming a board member, Sharon advised that she has a passion for helping people.

Sharon Spilkin is hesitant to talk about herself. Saying she didn't think she was "newsletter worthy", Sharon reluctantly agreed to be interviewed for the Orchards Children's Services newsletter. Ms. Spilkin is one of those people who is remarkably humble; when describing herself she says simply that she's a stay at home mom. Of course, that's an important job as any stay at home mom, as any stay at home mom's fortunate family can attest to, but Sharon's idea of being a stay at home mom is kinda unique. Let's start by saying she's the mother of eleven year old fraternal twins, Bridget and Julia. The girls are seventh graders, so we know that's plenty to keep a stay at home mom busy. This stay at home mom is also on the audit committee for Oakland Community College, she's the treasurer for her girl's school PTA and she's the finance chairperson for Temple Kol Ami. So much for that whole, "not being newsletter worthy" idea.

Mrs. Spilkin is happily married to Andy Spilkin and though she didn't come out and say it, aside from her lovely daughters, he's the love of her life. Married for twenty years, Sharon moved to the Detroit area after receiving her Masters in Accounting from the University of Michigan. Being a girl from a small town on the west side of the state, what prompted her to move to the big city? I could sense Sharon smiling as she responded simply, "Andy"; she moved to the metropolitan Detroit area to create a life with Andy. Well, the west side of the state's loss has been the greater Detroit area's gain.

The Board of Directors and the Management Team of Orchards Children's Services knows she's made the right decision too. We want to take this opportunity to welcome Sharon Spilkin aboard. Her passion for service and her expertise in accounting and finance will surely help the organization continue to grow and flourish in the future.



Orchards Summer Adventures

Keeping Youth Engaged.

Whether it's hiking on the Sleeping Bear Dunes or attending professional art classes in downtown Detroit, Orchards is determined to keep our youth engaged during the summer months. The Summer Adventures program has provided meaningful recreational and socialization experiences to hundreds of kids every summer for the last nine years. This year is no exception as our Camp Steering Committee, led by Carol and Mitchell Klein, has once again raised the funds needed to send over 200 children from the ages 6 – 18, to various summer camps and enrichment opportunities. These may include: traditional day and overnight camps, sport camps, arts and music enrichment camps or horse riding camps as well as many others. No matter the setting, it is expected that the youth will have a life-changing experience by either being exposed to new opportunities or by participating in more intensive specialized experiences that will help foster their existent talents.

We have seen that attending our carefully selected camps increases our participants' engagement with their academics and their ability to form positive social relationships. These, in turn, have led to better educational and long term successes. We are grateful to Super Summer, the Macomb and Detroit YMCAs, College for Creative Studies, Royal Kids Camp through Northridge Church, and Camp Tanuga as well as others for partnering with us to provide these meaningful life experiences.

A number of children who first participated in our Summer Adventures program went on to join our youth board. Orchards did not want to end our relationship with these children so we have recently created a college scholarship program.

SCHOLARLY COURAGE

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the Orchards Scholarship Program was created in May 2013. Graduating high school seniors, connected to Orchards through any one of our programs were referred by their OCS caseworker.

Applicants from Foster Care, Independent Living, Adoption, Family Reunification Program, Youth in Transition, and Youth Board created a diverse and worthy pool of candidates. The Scholarship Committee had the difficult task of narrowing it down to a small group of finalists. In its first year, the Orchards Scholarship Program was able to sponsor five first year college students by providing funds for tuition, housing, meal plans, textbooks, supplies, transportation, and other items that provided the tools to succeed.

As the 2013-2014 academic year comes to an end, we are proud to announce our scholarship recipients, who studied at Western Michigan University (two students), Southwest Michigan College, The University of Michigan- Flint, and Oakland Community College, successfully completed their freshman year of college. Highlights included students making the Dean's List, earning a spot in a coveted internship program, participating in student leadership organizations, and receiving other recognition from individual instructors.

The students are looking forward to returning to their respective colleges/universities in the fall, and the Orchards Scholarship Program is looking forward to helping these students continue their academic success.

Pictured L-R are Graduates Lori Johnson, Katelynn Morris, Antonio Watson and Dennis Schneider





In April, the Youth Board grabbed shovels and rakes, garden gloves and clippers, to work Orchards' new garden plot donated by Horizon Upward Bound on Cranbrook School's Bloomfield campus. Under the guidance of Farmer Chuck Ronan, we helped prepare the ground for planting. In September, the harvest will be distributed to Orchards families.



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**Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise...**

- Maya Angelou