

The Marsh Messenger

• Summer 2021

• www.marshfoundation.org

Serving children and families since 1922

Marsh School Holds Spring Awards and Graduation Ceremony

The Marsh Foundation School held its annual spring celebration on Friday, May 21 in the Bagley Auditorium. The day included an awards ceremony, graduation, and a celebration meal. Two students earned and received their diplomas.

This year, due to Covid restrictions, only Marsh staff, students and families of the graduates were able to attend. However, the in-person event was much appreciated after holding it virtually last spring.

At the ceremony, many students received academic awards for their successes throughout the school year. This year's event was extra special because Mrs. Val Dunn was recognized for her retirement. Mrs. Dunn taught for 35 years, with 22 of those years being at The Marsh Foundation School. She will be greatly missed.

On behalf of The Marsh, director of education and school principal, Robbie Breese presented Dunn with a plaque during the ceremony expressing gratitude for all she has given to the students she's taught over the years.

The students and staff wished her well in all of her future endeavors during the reception following the ceremony.



Above: Mrs. Val Dunn receives a plaque in honor of her retirement from principal Robbie Breese. Below: Dunn poses with a cake during the reception held in the cafeteria.



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Leadership

- **The Marsh Foundation Board of Trustees:**
 - Gary Clay
 - Gary Corcoran
 - Robert Gamble
- **The Marsh Foundation Executive Team:**
 - Robbie Breese
 - Jeff Grothouse
 - Kim Mullins

The Marsh Foundation
1229 Lincoln Highway P.O. Box 150
Van Wert, Ohio 45891

From the Executive's desk ...

The Marsh Foundation continues to expand the buildings and property owned and needed for the mission of George and Hilinda Marsh. The 15,100 square foot gymnasium, kitchen, and cafeteria is now in full service. The new space connected to the north side of the Administration Building is being used for recreation, meetings and meals. The space is a tremendous upgrade from the past facilities and the students are responding very well to the change.

The Marsh Foundation Trustees have also purchased the previous Adult Day Care Building on Westwood Drive. This 5,000 square foot facility will be used for Foster Care training, office space and family meetings. Renovation will begin this month with hopes of occupancy by late summer. The facility needs paint, landscaping, driveway re-surfacing, office space remodel,



"The space is a tremendous upgrade from the past facilities and the students are responding very well to the change."

- Jeffrey M. Grothouse
Executive Secretary & Treasurer

replacement of doors, new signage and overall clean-up. The Marsh Foundation Foster Care and Adoption staff are excited for the additional space and new programing that will be provided to the Van Wert community.

The Marsh Foundation, maintenance staff, continue to maintain The Marsh Campus in its beautiful setting. The continual maintenance, by an outside contractor, of the exteriors of the group homes continues for the next

five years with restoration of roofs and window lintels. The grounds of The Marsh Foundation have never looked more stunning...with new trees filling in areas and landscaping very well maintained. Thank you to the maintenance staff led by Mr. Lyle Ulrey.

Horses have arrived for the Summer Horse Program. This long-standing program led by Ms. Stephanie Hall has been a summer hit for all students. The program will end in August with a Horse Show program with the students and

instructors.

The Business Office staff continue to provide the best service for our staff and students. This includes; health care, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, rentals, housing, farm lease agreements, maintenance, and human resources. All of these services are provided for our staff by Karen and Sarah.

The kitchen staff is providing all meals in the new cafeteria six days a week. On one weekend day, group home staff will cook for the students. A revised menu has been provided for the students and staff and has been met with rave reviews from our students. Thanks to Kayla, Paula and Crystal for a job very well done.

This summer will be busy with the remodel of the new Foster Care Office, maintaining the grounds and daily repairs. I wish to express my deepest appreciation to these men and women who work to keep the services for The Marsh Foundation top notch. I also wish to take this time to express my gratitude to the Trustees and Executive Directors for their dedication to the mission of The Marsh Foundation. It is an honor and privilege to work alongside these dedicated employees.

Jeffrey M. Grothouse
Executive Secretary & Treasurer



A commitment to excellence

Marsh Foundation Hires Third Full Time Counselor

As The Marsh Foundation transitions to a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP), the need for counseling services has increased. To help meet that need, The Marsh has hired a third full-time counselor, Seth Rollins. With a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling, both from Wright State University, Rollins is a licensed professional counselor, or LPC.

While attending graduate school, Rollins completed a one-year internship at Youth Positive Health, a day treatment program in Dayton run by South Community Behavioral Health. According to Rollins, this provided him experience working with youth in both an individual and group counseling setting. And, prior to his time at graduate school, he worked at The Marsh for a

summer as the assistant activity coordinator. This position not only introduced him to the organization's mission, but also to the many needs of the youth on campus.

According to Rollins, the sense of community is one of the biggest reasons he was drawn back to working at The Marsh. "Everyone at The Marsh does so well at working together to serve clients," he said. "I think The Marsh Foundation does a tremendous job of helping children who come from very difficult situations, and I wanted to be a part of helping to serve these children," Rollins added. He said he is excited about the resources available to help work with individual clients. These include things like the pond, weight room, new gymnasium and green house.

Rollins said he is looking forward working with other



Seth Rollins is the newest counselor at The Marsh Foundation.

experienced counselors at The Marsh. "I specifically want to gain skills and knowledge for working with children who have experienced trauma and who have spent significant time in the foster care system," he said. In his free time, Rollins enjoys spending time with his family and friends, reading, watching movies, running and

playing the guitar. He said he really appreciates his family's support as he worked to complete graduate school. "I specially want to thank my Grandma Barb who encouraged me to pursue this position and has taken a special interest in my new job," Rollins concluded.

May is National Foster Care Month

One of the most meaningful things you can do in life to help a child is to become a foster parent. The Marsh Foundation celebrated Foster Care Appreciation Month throughout the month of May. The organization is consistently focused on recruiting additional families to help care for the many children in need.

The Marsh Foundation works to show foster families appreciation all year long, not just in May. Strong support in

the home is one thing that differentiates our program from others.

The Marsh offers a continuum of care that includes a Foster Care Program. Last year, hundreds of children were turned away from our program because of a lack of foster homes. The Marsh believes that all children have the right to love, protection and to be cared for by a committed family. If you have an interest in becoming a foster parent, please

call 419.238.KIDS for more information. Inquiries can also be placed at www.marshfoundation.org/helpkids.

All foster parents receive extensive training. Certified foster parents are required to undergo continuing training to maintain their license.

Foster parents can be married couples or a single individual. Foster parents are substantially reimbursed for costs associated with caring for a foster child. Consultants are

assigned to each foster family and are available 24 hours, seven days a week. Consultants help create the youth's treatment plan, offer support and are available in crisis situations.

The Marsh is also able to license foster to adopt homes which makes the process of adoption a little easier for families who are interested in that option. Call today to find out how you might be able to help a child in need!

Foster Care Division Opens New Office in Wapakoneta

The Marsh Foundation Foster Care and Adoption division has officially opened a second office in Wapakoneta, Ohio. The small incubation office is located within The Chamber of Commerce at 30 E. Auglaize Street. With the continuous expansion and recruitment of new foster families in the surrounding areas, the additional office will make it easier to connect with families south of Van Wert.

The Marsh Foster Care Director, Melissa Snyder, said that the new office is a great asset to The Marsh. “We work with a lot of families in Mercer and Auglaize Counties. This new office space will allow us to be closer and even more accessible to these families.” She also said it is an opportunity to educate more people about the need for foster families. “We have a great need for foster families and there are many children in need of care. This office will allow us to raise awareness and



The Marsh Foundation Foster Care and Adoption staff pose in front of the Wapakoneta Chamber of Commerce, the location of their newest office.

tell more people about the need and opportunity to help,” she said.

Children in foster care experience many changes. Placements close to home help minimize that change. “Our kids experience a lot of change which can cause anxiety,” Snyder said. “If we can keep kids in their own communities it generally makes for an easier transition and more effective placement,” she continued.

There is a continued need for foster families in Wapakoneta and the surrounding communities.

Those interested in learning more about fostering, can contact our Foster Care Supervisor, Melissa Snyder (msnyder@marshfoundation.org), or at 419.238.1695 ext. 307. Information is also available on our website at www.marshfoundation.org/services/foster-care.

Need to Make a Referral?

We are currently accepting referrals to our foster homes and our residential group homes on campus. If you would like to make a referral to one of these programs, please use the contact information to the right.

Residential/Group Home Referrals: Call Kelly at 419.238.1695 ext. 360 or kgross@marshfoundation.org

Foster Care Referrals: Call 419.238.1695 option 3, then option 1.

After Hours/Emergency: 419.605.8056
fostercarereferrals@marshfoundation.org

2021-2022 Marsh School Calendar

- Monday, Aug. 16**
Teacher Work Day
- Tuesday, Aug. 17**
Staff In-Service
- Wednesday, Aug. 18**
First Day for Students
- Wednesday, Sept. 1**
Staff In-Service (No School)
- Monday, Sept. 6**
Labor Day (No School)
- Friday, Sept. 17**
Staff In-Service (2 hr. delay)
- Monday, Oct. 11**
Staff In-Service (No School)
- Friday, Nov. 5**
Staff In-Service (No School)
- Saturday, Nov. 6**
Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Wed. - Fri., Nov. 24-26**
Thanksgiving Vacation
- Wed.- Fri., Dec. 22 - Dec. 31**
Christmas Vacation
- Monday, Jan. 3**
Classes Resume
- Friday, Jan. 14**
Staff In-Service (early dismissal)
- Monday, Jan. 17**
MLK Day (No School)
- Monday, Feb. 21**
President's Day - No School
- Friday, March 4**
Staff In-Service (No School)
- Mon. - Fri. March 14-18**
Spring Break - No School
- Saturday, April 9**
Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Thursday, April 14**
Staff In-Service (early dismissal)
- Friday, April 15**
Good Friday (No School)
- Friday, May 20**
Last Day for Students
- Monday, May 23**
Teacher Work Day



Clockwise starting at top: The Marsh Foundation came together in solidarity for all victims of sexual assault on National Denim Day in April. Several staff participated and wore denim. You can learn more about the significance, here: <https://www.denimdayinfo.org/why-denim>. The Marsh Foundation campus is always beautiful but there is something about spring that makes it a little extra special. Summer at The Marsh means time for the Marsh Grown Garden Program. When ready, a market will be set up for youth to sell the fresh produce to the community. This program works to teach many employment skills to our youth. In order to raise money for the program, the youth held a successful spring flower sale again this year.



Marsh Students and Staff Celebrate Earth Day

In April, the youth and staff at The Marsh Foundation celebrated Earth Day with time spent cleaning up campus. During the school day, the youth from each group home spent time raking leaves, pulling weeds, picking up sticks/trash, etc. Available staff also joined in. Earth Day emphasizes caring for our planet and the environment around us. The day helped students realize that even small acts can make a difference!

As a special treat, all volunteers were treated to root beer floats in the cafeteria when they were finished.



New Staff Members

The Marsh Foundation would like to welcome new staff members:

- Crystal Flores - Kitchen Staff
- Kevin Longstreth - Fitness Instructor

Serving children and families since 1922



Clymer Chat

In preparation for its transition to a home for boys, Clymer Hall currently has two girls in placement. In July, the change to an all boys campus will occur. In the past several months, girls have been steadily discharged as they've completed the program at The Marsh.

While this school year posed challenges not before seen, the girls handled them well and overall had a successful school year. Those still on campus enjoyed participating in the Earth Day celebration as well as the spring awards ceremony.

Some girls had the opportunity to participate in the IDL program over the past several months. This included a special cooking session in April. Cooking is just one of the many life skills that the IDL group focuses on with youth who are 16 or older.

Hundreds of girls have called Clymer Hall home over the years. As the home transitions to one for boys, it is bittersweet for many. The Marsh wishes continued success and happiness to all of the past Clymer Hall girls!



Marsh Matters

There are 10 boys living at Marsh Hall leaving no current openings. The boys did well through the strange school year and are looking forward to the freedoms summer has to offer.

A few of the boys have been interviewed for the summer garden crew and will participate in the Marsh Grown program. The season kicked off with a spring plant sale and now the garden is planted. Youth will work in the garden during the week and then sell their produce at an on campus farmer's market. The garden crew is an extension of the Independent Living Program on campus where youth learn practical life skills that will benefit them in the future.

The boys have already been seen outside playing basketball and have been down to the pond to go fishing. They are also excited to have started the summer horse program. They have the opportunity to ride each day and are also learning care for the animals. They are looking forward to a fun summer and many outdoor activities.



Vance Voice

Vance Hall has no openings with ten boys currently residing in the program. They finished a successful school year, despite the strange circumstances. Many were honored during the spring awards ceremony.

The boys at Vance are very excited about the completion of the new fitness facility in the Administration Building. When the kitchen and dining areas were moved to the newly constructed facility, the existing cafeteria was transformed into a fitness area full of cardio and weight lifting equipment. When they have free time, the boys enjoy working out and lifting weights. They have also been participating in fitness classes.

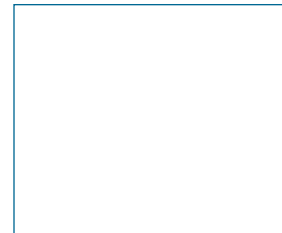
Summer is now in swing and the boys are busy with summer school and some are having the opportunity to participate in credit recovery classes. There is also plenty of time for outdoor activities like visiting the pond, riding their bikes or playing basketball.

If you are interested in making a referral, please contact Kelly Gross at 419.238.1695 ext. 360.

❁ Hello Summer ❁

The Marsh Foundation
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Did You Know? We offer adoption services!

The Marsh Foundation has the ability to license homes with a dual foster care and adoption license. This means that families that may be interested adopting their foster children in the future can simplify the process with The Marsh Foundation.



This allows The Marsh to provide additional support to families. Families that think they may be interested in adoption can complete the necessary steps up front, with very little additional work. Many families that are interested in becoming foster families are interested in accepting young children that may be available for adoption in the future.

If you are interested in more information, contact The Marsh foster care department at 419.238.1695.

The mission of The Marsh Foundation is to inspire hope, to teach and to care for children and families.

Calendar of Events

June 2021 - September 2021



- Summer school programming is now through July 2.
- The Business and Child and Family Services Offices on campus will be closed on Friday, July 2 in observance of the Independence Day holiday.
- The Business and Child and Family Services offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 6 for the Labor Day holiday.

For more information about any event, visit www.marshfoundation.org.

Attention Marsh Foundation Alumni

Are you an alumnus of The Marsh Foundation? Did you know that on our website, www.marshfoundation.org, we have a directory of alumni? To view the directory, or sign up yourself, visit the Alumni page online at www.marshfoundation.org.