

# The Marsh Messenger

• Fall 2019

• [www.marshfoundation.org](http://www.marshfoundation.org)

*Serving children and families since 1922*

## Busy Summer Comes to a Close

It has been a busy and productive summer for Marsh Foundation youth. Aside from summer school, regular counseling sessions and community service, activity after activity kept them busy and there was not a lot of time to be bored.

Several youth were also busy this summer with the Marsh Grown Garden Program. As part of the Marsh Foundation's Independent Living (IDL) Program, the Activities department again ran their Garden Program. This program is designed to give students a chance to obtain a job on campus, as well as teach them about obtaining employment and give them experience they can take with them into the workforce. Students are required to participate in an interview prior to beginning the program, thus, teaching them interview skills.

Once they are hired for the job, the students then work in the garden on campus. This garden produces a variety of different fruits and vegetables, and the students are involved in almost every step of the growing process. Students plant different plants, pull weeds in the garden, trim plants, water the garden, and eventually pick the produce once it has grown. Then, the students are involved in selling the produce. This



**Pictured is just a small part of the garlic crop that the Marsh Grown garden crew has harvested this summer. It is available for purchase at their on-campus farmer's market.**

year, the program decided to host a market on campus at the Homestead Barn. This has been very successful.

Through-out this process, students learn many important job and life skills, such as gardening skills, landscaping, running a business, and how to handle money.

In addition, the IDL group has been participating in a bill paying project. This teaches youth the basics of budgeting and planning for expenses they will face once out on their own. This has a variety of benefits and is a great preparation for independent living.

Another 'Chopped'

challenge was also held this summer. For this round, staff teamed up with one another to prepare a variety of dishes with unique ingredients. The ingredients were predetermined and a surprise to participants. The staff then served the IDL youth who were the judges for the competition. Winners were Megan Tuttle (Director of Residential Services) and MacKenzie Basil (Vance Hall Program Manager). Not only was the challenge educational and fun, it was also a great experience for youth and staff to interact in a new and different way.



**THE MARSH**  
FOUNDATION

## Please Share

Please share The Marsh Messenger with others in your family or office who might like to read it. Thank you!

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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

## From the Executive's desk ...

### The Importance of Foster Care

Children in the foster care system are placed primarily because they need a safe, stable environment. Some of the children can eventually return home to live with their biological parent(s) once the parent(s) receive support services. For a child, entering the foster care system is often stressful and frightening. Being taken away from the place where they once felt safe, and moving into an unfamiliar environment with strangers, is a terrifying thing to go through. Foster parents provide a safe, loving environment for many vulnerable children. With consistent love, support and healthy interaction, the children can adapt and flourish.

Foster care often provides a safe transition period for a child while the biological parents participate in the services that will help them to become the parents they want to be. Sometimes our foster parents provide support to the biological parents as well. This helps the biological parents feel less alone in their efforts to



Kim Mullins, LPCC

make progress. The biological parents are better able to work on getting their lives back on track when they know their child is safe and being well cared for.

There are times in which children have been traumatized as a result of abuse and/or neglect. When this happens, they often have no idea what a loving home can feel like. Foster parents can help children learn what it's like to have routine experiences such as, going to school, eating regular meals, and having a regular bedtime schedule. There is safety and stability in knowing what is going to happen each

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*"Every child deserves a champion - an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best they can possibly be."*

*- Rita F. Pierson*

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day. Through Foster Care children can experience a loving home and obtain the attention they need to grow and develop in accordance with their age.

When foster children cannot return to live with their biological parents or a relative, the foster parents are given the opportunity to adopt. When a foster parent has the desire to adopt, it is a very thoughtful and serious decision-making process. Many foster parents consider adoption because they genuinely want to give a child a better life. Adoption is a wonderful opportunity to give a child the family that they have always dreamed about.

Melissa Snyder, Director of Foster Care at The Marsh Foundation has worked with foster families and children for several years. She said, "Kids come into foster care having experienced one or all three of the above situations and possibly more. Children need families. Without Foster Care more than 16,000 kids, in Ohio alone, would have no safe place to sleep at night. They would have no choice but to stay in a home where their parents are experimenting with drugs, being abusive, and possibly go one more night without any food. They can better thrive, attach, and heal from past traumas surrounded by a loving, nurturing foster family."

Foster parents are blessed with the opportunity to give a child a better quality of life and safe place to explore life's challenges. "Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best they can possibly be." Rita F. Pierson

*Kim Mullins*

Executive Director, Child & Family Services

A commitment to excellence

## Youth Mentors Needed

The Marsh Foundation and M.A.V Youth Mentoring (formerly Big Brothers Big Sisters) are currently recruiting volunteers for their Supper Club Program. There are several youth from The Marsh looking forward to spending some time with a special friend a couple of times a month beginning in the fall.



Without enough volunteers some of these youth may not be able to participate in the program. You could be that special person!

In the Supper Club program, pairs get together on the first and third Thursdays of the month for supper and an activity.

Mentors also visit their mentee at the youth's group home once a month on a weekend day of their choosing for a couple of hours. This is a great opportunity for relationship building.

To participate in this program, or for more information, please contact Sherry Grone at 419-605-2512 or [sgrone@marshfoundation.org](mailto:sgrone@marshfoundation.org).

It doesn't take a lot to make a difference in a life of a youth at The Marsh Foundation. A past youth summed it up when he said, "It is really cool how you guys do this for us. It is really appreciated. It's a lot of fun."

## Project Believe Donates Back Packs and School Supplies to Marsh Students

For the sixth straight year, Project Believe was able to visit campus and bring along a donation of backpacks and school supplies for Marsh Foundation youth. Project Believe is no stranger to The Marsh; the non-profit has also donated Christmas presents and Valentines for the past several years.

The organization, which originated in 2009, has continued to grow and expand. Tammie Rafferty, the group's founder, was inspired to help others by her own daughter's circumstances.

Project Believe donated backpacks for each student and inside were school supplies and items for the youth as they start off a new school year.

As always, The Marsh is extremely grateful for the items Project Believe donates to their youth. "We are extremely grateful for the sup-

port Project Believe has given our children over the past several years," said Mr. Robbie Breese, Marsh School Principal. "It's amazing how nice, new school supplies create a sense of pride and confidence in our students. Project Believe's contributions play a significant role in getting our school year off to a great start," he added.

Project Believe is already gearing up for the Christmas season. A complete list of the items they are gathering for the Christmas holiday can be found on their website, [www.project-believe.net](http://www.project-believe.net).

Project Believe serves other facilities and could use your donation. You can learn more about Project Believe by visiting their website at [www.project-believe.net](http://www.project-believe.net). Or, you can contact Rafferty directly at [projectbelieve@live.com](mailto:projectbelieve@live.com).

## Construction Corner

### *Already Completed:*

- Cut and fill site
- Stone laydown
- Utilities are on site
- Concrete footings poured
- Plumbing and electrical underground installed
- Concrete slabs all poured – exception of gymnasium

### *Currently In-Progress:*

- Masonry foundations
- Water and sewer lines being installed

## Marsh Foundation Hires Foster Care Licensing Specialist and Consultant

The Marsh Foundation has hired Brenna Hayes, LSW, to join the Foster Care and Adoption Division as a licensing specialist and consultant. Hayes is a recent graduate of Bowling Green State University with a bachelor's degree in social work and a minor in psychology. Hayes brings with her a variety of experiences and goals for helping children and families.

As a licensed social worker, she says that she has a heart for kids and wants to help meet the needs in foster care. "I am very family-oriented and what it comes down to is that I want to help. If I can help a youth find a home or be a positive influence in their lives, I'm happy."

Through her internship at Terra State Community College, Hayes worked with the Disability Services office and the counseling center. Among her accomplishments were starting the first support group on campus. "We mostly worked one-on-one with individuals, developing success plans, including goals and objectives, and coordinating services on and off campus services," she said.

Hayes said that she has worked with youth and young adults with 'exceptionalities' in various settings. "For clarification, 'exceptionalities' is a term that I have really enjoyed using in place of 'disabilities.'" I heard it once from a colleague and student and I think it is



**Brenna Hayes, LSW**

more empowering."

There are several goals Hayes has set for herself in her new position; mostly, she said she wants to help. "I want to help families and youth have a supportive environment. In my new role, I hope to help train prospective foster parents and really make sure that youth coming into our environments and our families feel supported and connected. In the end, we're here to make a difference, so I want to do just that, whether it's something small or something bigger," she concluded.

In her free time, Hayes loves to travel and cook and makes a great chicken parmesan. She credits her family for their continued support of her goals. "My family, parents and grandparents have always been very supportive in my endeavors and impacted my appreciation for family systems."

## Need to Make a Referral?

*Our Contact Information has Changed*



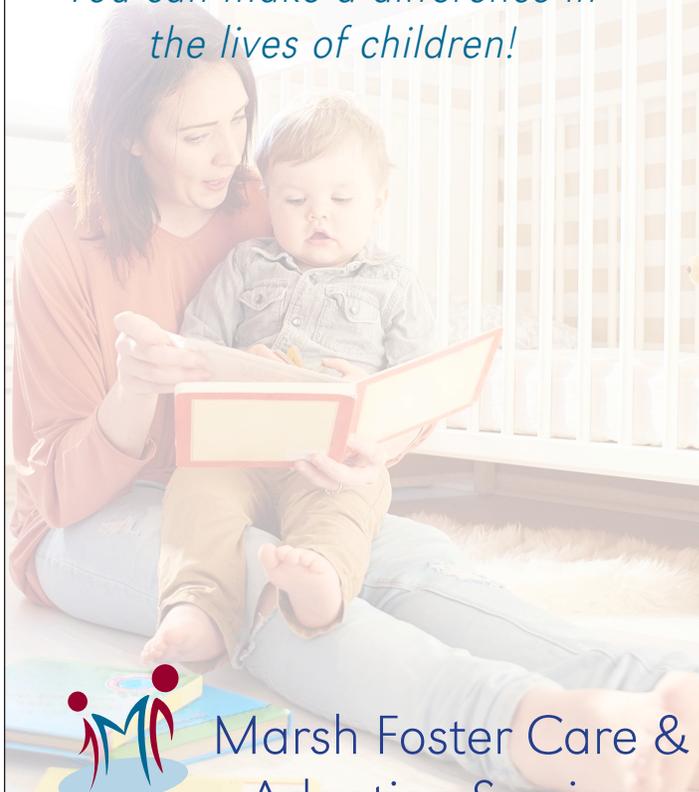
**Residential/Group Home Referrals:** Call Kelly at 419.238.1695 ext. 360 or [kgross@marshfoundation.org](mailto:kgross@marshfoundation.org)

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

**After Hours/Emergency:** 419.605.8056  
[fostercarereferrals@marshfoundation.org](mailto:fostercarereferrals@marshfoundation.org)

## Foster Parents Needed!

*You can make a difference in the lives of children!*

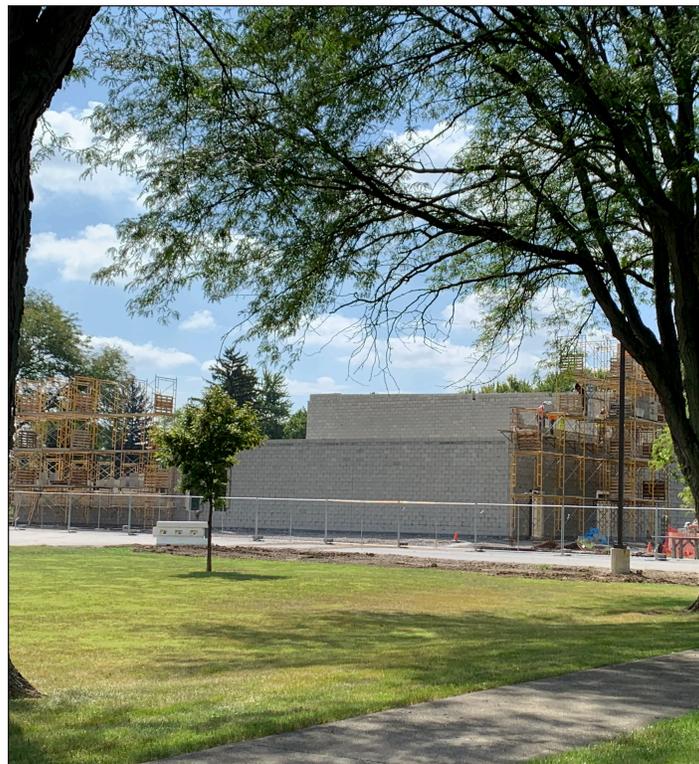



**Marsh Foster Care & Adoption Services**

**THE MARSH FOUNDATION** 419.238.1695 Ext. 307 or  
[www.marshfoundation.org/helpkids](http://www.marshfoundation.org/helpkids)



Clockwise starting at top: Several Marsh staff participated in this summer's MAV Youth Mentoring golf outing. Pictured (l to r) are: Lauren Calvert, Nick Channell, Brad Mendenhall, Robbie Breese (winning team), Tom Schatzer, Lyle Ulrey, Jeff Grothouse and Randy Patterson. The market stand was busy this summer and held right on The Marsh campus. It was full of great produce that the crew grew in the garden. Kim Mullins (Executive Director of CFS) and Ben Marsee (Marsh Hall Program Manager) participated in the staff 'Chopped' challenge. There has been a lot of progress on the fitness and dining facility construction already!



## Summer Equestrian Program Concludes with Show

The youth at The Marsh Foundation recently concluded their summer equestrian program with a show for staff, trustees, families and guests. The program, which began in May, gave the youth opportunities to ride at least four times per week.

For the program, The Marsh leases horses from The University of Findlay and hires on-campus riding instructors, Stephanie Hall, Leah A. Lichtensteiger and Bethany N. Greutman.

In addition to riding instruction, the youth also learn how to care for and demonstrate respect for the horses.

The program culminated with a horse show. Each youth had the opportunity to demonstrate their skills for the audience. Ribbons were given to the top placers in the various categories. All youth also received a participation gift from the instructors.



### *New Staff Members*

The Marsh Foundation would like to welcome new staff members:

- Sydney Biglow - Family Teacher
- Loretta Germann - Overnight Family Teacher
- Nicole Metzger - Family Teacher
- William Wiechart - Maintenance Staff
- Daniel Tinnel - Maintenance Staff

*Serving children and families since 1922*



## Clymer Chat

There are currently no openings at Clymer Hall. A recent discharge created an opening, however it was quickly filled. The ten girls had a fun and busy summer and now are adjusting to the back-to-school schedule and routine.

The girls at Clymer enjoyed many activities over the summer. Things like going to the pool and riding bikes kept them busy during their free time. During the day, they participated in a summer school program which included library and technology time. School time was followed by group counseling each day. A favorite summer activity is the horse program and this year was no different. The girls enjoyed riding daily and learning a lot about the care of the horses. They were proud to show off their skills at the annual horse show in August. There were many friends and family in attendance.

The girls are looking forward to a busy and successful school year!



## Marsh Matters

Marsh Hall's intensive treatment program is currently full with 10 boys. They had a successful summer and are looking forward to a successful school year as well.

Several boys participated in the Independent Living program on campus and worked on the Marsh Grown garden crew throughout the summer. This gives the youth hands on work experience not only in the garden, but also at the farmer's market. This year, the program started a market stand right on campus (open to the public) on Wednesday afternoons.

By selling the produce they grow in the garden, they also learn money management and sales skills.

As summer comes to an end, the boys will miss their extra free time spent fishing at the pond and shooting baskets outside. However, their days will be filled with new and exciting projects as school gets underway and the new activities schedule takes affect.



## Vance Voice

There are 10 boys at Vance Hall, filling the program. They had a good summer, participating in a wide variety of fun and educational activities.

As a part of the Independent Living program on campus, the boys have been working on practical skills like check writing and cooking. There was another 'Chopped' cooking challenge this summer. This time, staff teamed up to prepare different dishes with unique ingredients and the youth were the judges!

The boys also enjoyed spending time outdoors throughout the summer. They spent downtime shooting baskets, riding bikes or fishing at the pond. These activities are not only enjoyable for the boys, but they also give them an opportunity to work on relationship building and various social skills with their peers.

Like the other youth on campus, the boys at Vance are looking forward to the upcoming school year.

# Welcome Autumn!

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

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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

October - December 2019

- Marsh Foundation representatives will attend the Teaching Family Association's annual conference Oct. 21-23 in Cincinnati.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences for The Marsh School are Saturday, Nov. 9.
- There is no school on Friday, November 15 due to a teacher in-service.
- The Marsh Foundation School will not be in session Nov. 27-29 and the CFS and Business offices will be closed Nov. 28-29 for Thanksgiving.



For more information about any event, visit [www.marshfoundation.org](http://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](http://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](http://www.marshfoundation.org).