

# St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families

2024 Summer Newsletter



## In Her Own Words: Amber's Story



*Dr. Amber Andrews (pictured here with her daughter) shared her story at Hope Blossoms on May 8, 2024.*

**My name is Dr. Amber Andrews.** I am honored and happy to speak to you all. I want to start by thanking St. Ann's staff and guests for having me as your guest speaker. This is the first time I'm sharing my story in front of a large audience. And I will be as open and vulnerable as possible.

Let me tell you how I became a resident of St. Ann's in 1999. I was 18 and my relationship with my son's father moved very quickly. We moved in together, got engaged, and I become pregnant. Unfortunately, my son's father tragically passed away, when I was still early in my pregnancy. My parents told me that I could not come and live with them, nor did I have any other family or friends that I could live with...

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## YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



Thanks to your generosity, **NINE** new mothers and their little ones have moved in to St. Ann's Center since Jan. 2024 to begin their journeys to stability.

**THANK YOU!**



[www.stanns.org](http://www.stanns.org)

## A Message from Sister Nancy Downing, CEO

One thing I've learned so far – St. Ann's Center has a way of bringing people together!

It has been a joy to get to know supporters like you, and hear about the many “chance” connections and providential circumstances which lead people to get involved in St. Ann's mission. These many blessed “coincidences” really make one think!

It has also been fun to see people come together, in person, to assist our families – whether through diaper drives, grocery deliveries, beautification projects, or holiday parties. All labors of love, all to help brighten the lives of mothers and their children who live with us. Your efforts lift my heart!

And of course, it was wonderful to attend my first *Hope Blossoms* event, where 360 supporters gathered to lift up mothers like Amber, who shared so beautifully about her experiences as a young mom in our programs. Amber, you were the heart and soul of the evening! Thank you.

Thank you also, Sister Mary Bader, for allowing us to honor you! Thank you Pam and Dennis Lucey, our Honorary Hosts non-pareil.

Thank you Cardinal Gregory, Michael Steele, and Msgr. John Enzler. Thank you to our Planning Committee, Host Committee, Board, Staff, Sponsors – and most of all, everyone who made a gift to St. Ann's that evening. Your generosity makes such a difference for the families who journey with us!

Hope you enjoy this newsletter, and the rest of your summer. We can't wait to see you at one of our social events this fall!



**Sister Nancy Downing, CND**  
CEO, St. Ann's Center for  
Children, Youth and Families



## Sister Nancy's Note

### Subscribe to Sister Nancy's Note!

Sign up with your email address at [stanns.org](https://stanns.org) to receive Sister Nancy's monthly reflections, along with other newsletters, resources and updates from St. Ann's!

## Thank You to Our Board Members!

St. Ann's Center's Board and Leadership team wish to thank the following Board Members who are transitioning off the Board this June:

- Kathy Cornwell
- Lenora Fuller-McCall
- D'Arcy Gallagher
- Joanna (JoJo) Pim

# Thank you

Kathy, Lenora, D'Arcy and JoJo – thank you for sharing your gifts in support of St. Ann's Center's mission!

We appreciate and celebrate your efforts for the women and children who call St. Ann's home.







## Amber's Story, Continued

*My mother's co-worker told her about the amazing program at St. Ann's. I finally had a glimmer of hope. My mother and I had the opportunity to take a tour before I became a resident. I was amazed at all St. Ann's had to offer.*

*While I was a resident; I was really struggling with the recent loss of my child's father, having to adjust to a new environment, experiencing pregnancy for the first time, and I was the oldest young woman on the Infant and Maternity Unit.*

*However, I quickly adjusted. I loved the fact that I had so much support at St. Ann's. The other moms and I received transportation to and from our doctors' appointments, all our meals were provided, in house daycare for the children, in house school for the teen moms, formula, diapers, toys, clothes, and activities.*

***I knew that I had to keep pushing forward. Not only did I have to support myself, but I also had to support the new life growing inside me. Because of God, my resilience, and the support of St. Ann's I was able to go back to college and graduate.***

*After I delivered my son; the staff was so helpful. I remember one night I was battling postpartum depression and crying. I was trying to feed my newborn baby who would not breast-feed. One of the staff members came in and gave me a break to calm myself down.*

*On the Infant and Maternity Unit, I made connections with the other teen moms, who had experienced many hardships. I remember there was a young mom that was only fourteen in the program with me. As the oldest mom there, I encouraged the younger moms to keep focusing on their goals and strive to be the best mom they can be.*

*Part Two of my St. Ann's residency was at Faith House – my first experience of independent living with my son. Faith House taught me the responsibility of maintaining my own apartment. I loved having my son's daycare right across the street. Because St. Ann's provided childcare, I was able to start my career.*

*The friendships I made at Faith House were amazing. We watched each other's children, we encouraged each other, we cooked together, and did activities with our children. Staff and/or the sisters would provide transportation when we needed to go to the*

*grocery store, mall, and/or doctor's appointments. If we needed a listening ear or advice, one of the staff and/or sisters would be there to help.*

*After transitioning from Faith House, I was able to continue to accelerate in my career. I got married to my amazing supportive husband, Jermaine, who has allowed me the opportunity to explore any hobby or career field I am interested in pursuing.*

***My son Mikhail who also lived with me at Faith House is now 24 years old and doing amazing. I also have a beautiful daughter, Alani who is 17 years old, in the Drama Club, and on honor roll in high school. I just want to take this moment to thank my family for their continued support.***



Michael Steele thanks Guest Speaker, Dr. Amber Andrews

*I also want to say to everyone in the room... Don't ever give up! A few years ago, I said to myself, "I am meant for more than this." I also heard a speech... the speaker said: "Your success is tied into someone else's success." I knew then I must be great to help others be great. I decided to go back to school.*

*Side note: I said I would never go back to school after I graduated college. And yet going back helped me change my life and others.' I received my Real Estate License, my Financial Education License, and an Honorary Doctoral Degree in Business Development. Honestly, I never thought I would have accomplished any of this. **Thank you, God!!!***

*[This abridged speech can be viewed in its original entirety at [stanns.org](http://stanns.org)]*

## Our Top Eight Moments from Hope Blossoms 2024!

On May 8, 2024 we hosted *Hope Blossoms* – our annual event celebrating and supporting the women and their children who journey with St. Ann’s Center. The weather was beautiful, the venue delightful, the speakers inspiring. Best of all, our guests created a warm, caring, and supportive environment.

Everyone in the room knew, and felt, that we were gathered for a purpose – to continue St. Ann’s mission and bring us closer to our vision: “*A world where all women and their children have a loving home and thrive as a family.*”

On a night as special as *Hope Blossoms*, it’s hard to pick out favorite moments. But in honor of the event date, May 8, here are **EIGHT** of our standout memories (in no particular order!).



The 360-person crowd at Columbia Country Club



### Seeing Old Friends, Making New Friends!

We loved seeing everyone catch up with old friends and make new friends among the crowd of 360 – a new attendance record for *Hope Blossoms*! Thank you, everyone, for bringing your amazing energy. Thank you also for your generous support! Because of you, our event raised over \$510,000 for St. Ann’s Center’s programs.



Sister Nancy Downing, Cardinal Gregory, Sister Mary Bader



### Cardinal Gregory Offers Warm Invocation & Welcome

“As the Church now observes a Year of Prayer, we affirm... that St. Ann’s has been the answer to the prayers of many who had no place else to turn,” **Cardinal Gregory** said, adding, “Ever since the arrival of those three Daughters of Charity [in 1860] St. Ann’s has been an answer to prayer for single mothers in need of a loving response.”



Emcee Michael Steele, Co-Chairs Pam and Dennis Lucey



### Michael Steele Emcees with Humor and Heart!

**Michael Steele** lit up the room with his trademark charisma, humor, and stage presence, while also sharing poignantly about his own special identity as an “alumni” of St. Ann’s Center: “*Our family was first formed there. My mom and dad, my sister and I were formed and brought together at St. Ann’s Center,*” he said.





## 4 Sister Nancy Makes *Hope Blossoms* Debut!

Speaking at her first *Hope Blossoms*, Sister Nancy Downing, who became St. Ann's new CEO in January '24, turned the focus to St. Ann's ongoing mission: "Our work is not yet done. Tonight as we celebrate, we hold in our hearts the 20 moms and 25 children who have a safe and nurturing place to call home at St. Ann's," Sister Nancy said.



Sister Nancy Downing, CEO, St. Ann's Center

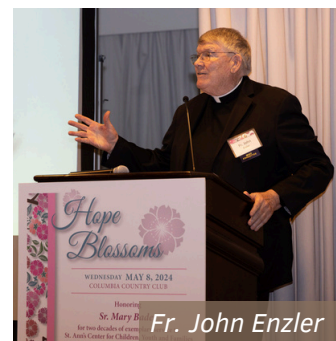
## 5 Volunteers SPARKLE!

We loved the energy and "sparkle" (via top hats!) of our dedicated volunteers. Thank you to all the women and men who lent their time and talents and helped make *Hope Blossoms* a success!



## 6 Msgr. John Enzler SHINES!

We are so fortunate to count Father John as a friend of St. Ann's Center, and we appreciate him coming out of semi-retirement to assist *Hope Blossoms* once again as "Chief Fundraiser!"



Fr. John Enzler

## 7 Sister Mary Bader Receives *Mary McGrory Advocacy Award!*

Sister Mary Bader was honored for her 18 years (2005 - 2023) of leadership of St. Ann's Center. Sister Mary, who returned from her new post in St. Louis for the event, reminded us: "We're all in this together... Brick by brick by brick, we're building the kingdom of God."



Sister Mary Bader, Board Chair Mary Lou Goehring

## 8 Amber Inspires and Uplifts

Dr. Amber Andrews shared beautifully about how her experiences as a teen mother at St. Ann's led to her successes today. Amber also said: "I want to thank everyone for volunteering, supporting and donating to St. Ann's. Your seeds that you have planted and continue to plant help young moms blossom into extraordinary women that have a community to support them."



Amber Andrews, Sister Nancy, Sister Mary, Mary Lou Goehring



## What's New at St. Ann's?

### Grace House Refresh, Courtesy of KW Red Day

On May 9th, one day after inspiring the crowd at *Hope Blossoms*, Amber Andrews joined 75 volunteers from her brokerage, **Keller Williams Preferred Properties**, for RED Day - Keller Williams' annual day of service! The thoughtful team: beautified our Teen Mother & Baby Program rooms with new comforters and "love notes" for resident families; created a meditation room for moms to have a "retreat" space; and ALSO transformed one large common area into an "Underwater Playground!"



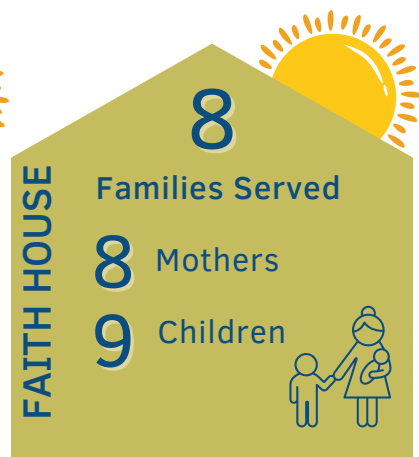
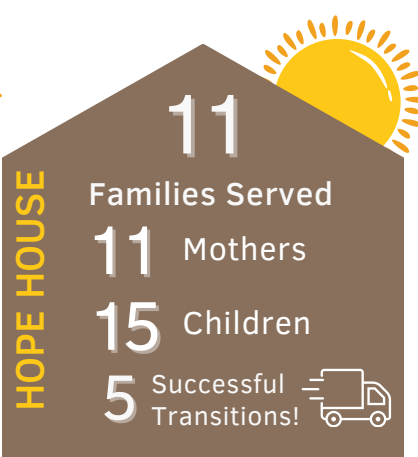
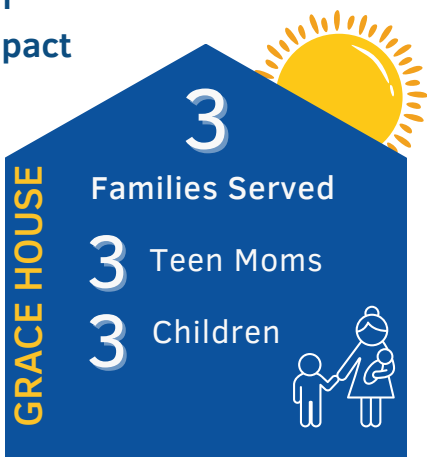
### Child Care Center Graduations and Milestones

On June 14, the newest graduates of St. Ann's Center's Preschool Program received their diplomas - formally marking their readiness for Kindergarten next year! As we celebrate our graduates, we also celebrate St. Ann's Child Care's FY24 expansion to current enrollment of **68 students**, with further growth planned!



### Residential Program Celebrates FY24 Impact

Did you know that the average family stays with St. Ann's Center for **20 months**? This flexibility allows the time needed to set and reach education and career goals!







## Where There's a Will, There's a Way!

"Of course, St. Ann's is in my will!"

That's what one woman exclaimed to me recently. She said she had supported St. Ann's for years because the work is so important. "I've included St. Ann's in my will so that when I don't need my home or my IRA, I know I'll still be doing good in the world," she said.

After you have taken care of your family, please consider including St. Ann's Center in your will. If you do include us, please drop me or Sister Nancy a note so that we can include you in **The 1860 Alliance** and personally thank you now.

Try language like this:

*"I give to St. Ann's Center for Children Youth and Families, EIN #53-0204626, located in Hyattsville, Maryland, \_\_\_\_\_% (or a fixed dollar amount or the residual or real property) of my estate."*

I thank you for your support of the vulnerable young mothers and children who turn to St. Ann's Center for help—today and in the future. If you would like more information please contact me at [sflaherty@stanns.org](mailto:sflaherty@stanns.org) or 301-559-5500, extension 163.

With thanks and best wishes,

**Sue Flaherty**  
Vice President,  
Development

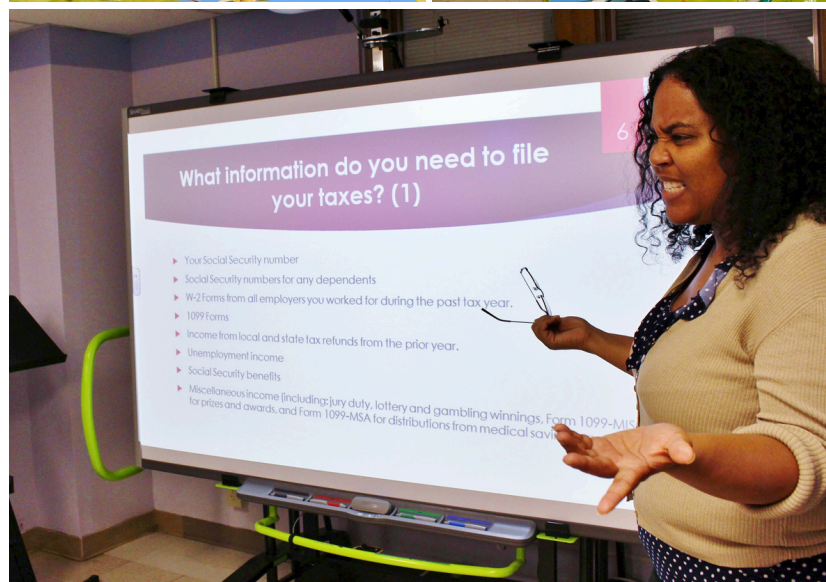


## Your Help = Critical Life Skills

Your support of St. Ann's Center provides more than just a warm bed for families transitioning from crisis to stability and independence. You also help our families prepare for bright new futures through wraparound supports, including our weekly **"Life Skills Classes,"** one of the critical resources coordinated through St. Ann's Education and Employment Program (EEP).

In FY24, EEP was fortunate to partner with collaborators offering specialized expertise and insights for the women participating in Life Skills classes. FY24 collaborators include: **Bee's Babies Essentials; Brains, Beauty, and Brawn; TRUIST Bank; Miss Nache Snow; and Zonta Club of PGC.**

Life Skills topics covered in FY24 include: career development; resume writing; interview skills; self-esteem; personal goal setting; vision boards; financial wellness and personal banking; anger management; and healing from trauma.



What information do you need to file your taxes? (1)

- ▶ Your Social Security number
- ▶ Social Security numbers for any dependents
- ▶ W-2 forms from all employers you worked for during the past tax year.
- ▶ 1099 Forms
- ▶ Income from local and state tax refunds from the prior year.
- ▶ Unemployment Income
- ▶ Social Security benefits
- ▶ Miscellaneous income (including jury duty, lottery and gambling winnings, Form 1099-MISC for prizes and awards, and Form 1099-MSA for distributions from medical savings accounts)



**St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families**  
4901 Eastern Avenue  
Hyattsville, MD 20782-3301

## 2024 Summer Newsletter



### **CELEBRATE** St. Ann's Day 2024!

*Honoring  
Women and  
Empowering  
Families!*  
[Link to Give](#) →



Matching Gift Opportunity!

This July 26 - *St. Ann's Feast Day* - we invite you to celebrate the mothers and their children at St. Ann's Center rewriting their futures. We will also honor the extraordinary women who have meant so much to you with a tribute page on our website. We are excited to share that **The Raskob Foundation** will generously match your donations dollar for dollar up to \$25,000!

Support the families at St. Ann's Center - **DOUBLE THE IMPACT** - and honor a wonderful woman in your life with your tribute! Your gift will be generously honored by The Raskob Foundation until August 30, 2024.

Make your gift at: [bit.ly/StAnnFeastDay](https://bit.ly/StAnnFeastDay)

*Save the Date!*

*End of Summer*



RSVP!

# HAPPY HOUR

**Hosted by St. Ann's Center's Young Professionals Network**

**Dacha Beer Garden | Navy Yard**

**Tuesday, September 17, 2024**



**\$20 wristband gets you extended  
Happy Hour from 5:00 to 8:00 PM &  
1 ticket entry into the raffle**

**All proceeds benefit the women and  
their children at St. Ann's Center**