

# St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families *2023 Spring / Summer Newsletter*



## In Her Own Words: Maeva's Story



*Maeva (pictured with daughter) shared her story during St. Ann's Center's Hope Blossoms event on May 10, 2023.*

**Good evening everyone.** My name is Maeva, and I am 30 years old. I have a 5-year-old daughter, who is here with me tonight. I was born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. When I was 7 years old, my family and I migrated to France. Then when I turned 21, I came to the United States to finish my studies.

In 2019, I lost my mother. My mother was my only support. After her death I lost everything.

I lived with a friend during the pandemic. But my friend became engaged and needed to move out later that year. That was when I found St. Ann's Center online, while searching for single mother housing programs. My daughter and I entered St. Ann's waiting list – and we moved in on December 16, 2021.

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## Table of Contents

- 2** *Message from CEO Sister Mary Bader*
- 3** *Maeva's Story, Continued*
- 4** *Hope Blossoms 2023 Highlights and Photos!*
- 5** *News, Events, and Happenings!*
- 6** *Q+A | Clinical and Social Work Services*
- 7** *A Year of Growth, Healing, and Hope*

### You Make a Difference!



Thanks to your generosity, six new mothers and their children have moved in to St. Ann's Center since Jan. 2023 to begin their journeys towards healing and stability.

**Thank You!**



## Message from Sister Mary Bader, CEO

What a thrill to gather on May 10, 2023, for *Hope Blossoms* - our annual reception and awards ceremony celebrating and supporting the families writing new futures at St. Ann's Center.

Jan and John Magnolia - thank you for all your hard work as co-hosts of this year's event! Thank you also to our Planning Committee and Honorary Host Committee. To St. Ann's Board and to our dedicated Staff - a million thanks. St. Ann's mission simply wouldn't be possible without you!

Trudy Conrad and Luke Hester - congratulations to you each on receiving the *Michele Heidenberger Volunteer Award*, recognizing your respective efforts to improve the lives of the mothers and their children who call St. Ann's home.

Kathy and Ed Quinn - congratulations on receiving the *Mary McGrory Advocacy Award*, recognizing your impact not just at St. Ann's but throughout our region.

Maeva - your story continues to inspire and encourage our community. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for sharing your testimony.

Most of all, thank YOU for supporting St. Ann's families, whether at *Hope Blossoms* or during the year. Your care makes a difference!

*Sister Mary Bader*  
Sister Mary Bader, CEO



### FY 2023 Milestones

2



Healthy Babies  
Born at St. Ann's

5



Successful Transitions  
from St. Ann's Programs



### Sister Mary's Minute



Want to read more from Sister Mary?

Visit [www.stanns.org](http://www.stanns.org) and enter your email address to receive Sister Mary's monthly reflections, along with other newsletters, resources and updates from St. Ann's!

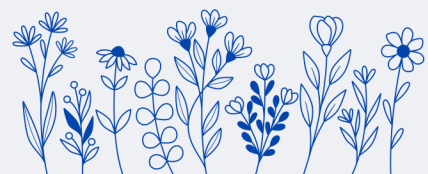
## Thank You to Our Board Members!

St. Ann's Center's Board and Leadership Team wishes to thank the following Board Members who are concluding their terms this June:

- Elise M. Ambrose
- Charles Asmar, Esq.
- Jane Kammer (Kammie) Bell
- Mary McCormick
- Colleen Williams

thank you

Elise, Chuck, Kammie, Mary and Colleen - thank you for your dedication to St. Ann's mission of strengthening and supporting families on their path to stability and independence!





## Maeva's Story, Continued

*(Continued from Cover)*

Since I came to St. Ann's, God has been blessing me in so many ways. Two weeks after I moved in, I got my working permit. Then I got a job at St. Ann's Child Care Center.

While working there, I took finance training classes with Catholic Charities for three months. Then I got my certificate and I got a job at Bank of America as a relationship banker.

Just two months ago, my daughter and I moved from *Hope House* to *Faith House* at St. Ann's. We are beyond happy to have our first apartment. Right now I am beginning the process of going back to school, and my daughter will start kindergarten this fall.

My goal is to obtain my degree, because that is one of the first reasons why I came to the U.S. I am also planning for life after St. Ann's.

My hope is to maintain a stable life and provide for my daughter. I am also saving a lot so that I can buy my own house one day.

My dream for my daughter is for her to be successful at whatever she chooses to do in life. I want her to overcome any obstacle that comes her way. I want her to gain independence and confidence to be all she can be.

Being a Mum has taught me infinite love, strength, empathy, and sacrifice. I have learned a lot about myself. I've grown from things that were meant to break me. I get stronger by the day, and I have God to thank for that.

I also want to thank each one of you, each person that contributes and helps St. Ann's. If today I'm able to stand before you, it is because of all the resources, support and help that St. Ann's has given us. To all the staff and Sisters from St. Ann's, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Becoming a mother is one of the most difficult challenges a woman can take on in her life. My message for all the young mothers in my situation would be to never give up, always trust God - God's choices and timing are always right. I would also say to accept help when needed, to always put your children first.

To conclude I will say that I'm happy because I'm grateful for all the challenges and blessings God has been giving me. That gratitude allows me to be happy. Thank you again to everyone here tonight.



*Maeva and her daughter with our 2023 Hope Blossoms Emcee, Hon. Michael S. Steele*





## Highlights from Hope Blossoms!



Over 300 friends and supporters gathered at Columbia Country Club on May 10 for *Hope Blossoms* - our annual reception and awards ceremony celebrating and supporting the mothers and their children writing new futures at St. Ann's Center.

- Co-Hosts **Jan and John Magnolia** welcomed guests and congratulated **Msgr. John Enzler** on his recent retirement from Catholic Charities, as well as his 50th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood. **The Most Reverend Roy E. Campbell Jr.** offered the invocation, beginning our evening in prayer.
- The **Hon. Michael Steele** emceed, opening by thanking our event sponsors and recognizing the special legacy of the **Daughters of Charity** before sharing the story of his own adoption from St. Ann's as an infant.
- **Maeva**, a mother who currently lives with her daughter at St. Ann's Center, shared moving testimony and reflected on the role that faith has played in her unique journey.
- **Msgr. John Enzler** took the stage as our "chief fundraiser." **Tonya Sharpe** of Live Nation (and former St. Ann's Board Chair) assisted by auctioning two amazing "Destination DC/NYC" packages to generous bidders!
- **Trudy Conrad** and **Luke Hester** each received the *Michele Heidenberger Volunteer Award*, recognizing their efforts to improve the lives of the families who call St. Ann's home.
- **Kathy and Ed Quinn** received the *Mary McGrory Advocacy Award*, recognizing their impact at St. Ann's and across our region.
- In total, our generous donors and sponsors helped us raise more than \$500,000, which will directly support St. Ann's families!





## News, Events, and Happenings!

### St. Ann's Center Salon Gets a Makeover!

Originally donated by the Rotary Club of College Park, St. Ann's on-site salon room has long been a place for the moms in our transitional and supportive housing programs to connect and refresh after long days of caring for their children.

Recently, Judy and John Ritz facilitated the "makeover" of this treasured space at St. Ann's - ensuring many more moms can enjoy the salon for years to come! Thank you Judy and John, for helping continue what the Rotary Club began - a dedicated space where moms can feel special and comforted.



### St. Ann's Center in the Washington Post!

In May 2022, Washington Post columnist Petula Dvorak profiled two young mothers residing at St. Ann's Center. One year later for Mother's Day, Petula followed up with resident Maeva for a special "Where is she now?" article. Thank you Petula!

Read article at: [www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/05/11/maeva-ikias-mothers-day/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/05/11/maeva-ikias-mothers-day/)

#### It takes dozens of people to replace one mom, and we forget that

*After having a baby, then losing her mother, Maeva ikias has 'grown from things that were meant to break me'*

Standing before the crowd at the Columbia Country Club on Wednesday night, she offered a message to other struggling moms undertaking "one of the most difficult challenges a woman can take in her life": "Accept help when needed. And ... always put your children first."

**Happy Hour**

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

**Dacha Beer Garden | Navy Yard**

**Tuesday, August 22, 2023**

**\$20 wristband gets you extended Happy Hour from 5:00 to 9:00 PM & 1 ticket entry into the raffle**

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

### Upcoming Happy Hour Supporting St. Ann's!

Join St. Ann's Center in Navy Yard this summer for an extended Happy Hour benefiting our programs!

**Date:** Tuesday, August 22

**Time:** 5 PM - 9 PM

**Place:** Dacha Beer Garden, Navy Yard  
79 Potomac Ave SE, Washington, DC 20003

Please join us! St. Ann's will be selling \$20 wristbands which get you extended Happy Hour deals and 1 ticket entry into our raffle!



## A Day in the Life at St. Ann's Center

### Q+A with Shaneen Alvarez, LCSW-C, LICSW

*Director of Clinical and Social Work Services*

#### **Can you briefly share about Clinical and Social Work Services (CSWS) at St. Ann's Center?**

In CSWS we provide residents with services such as case management, clinical case management, crisis management and intervention, individual and group therapy services, and aftercare services. We provide these services using our reflective model that is trauma-informed, strengths-based, with a focus on the teen mother's development.

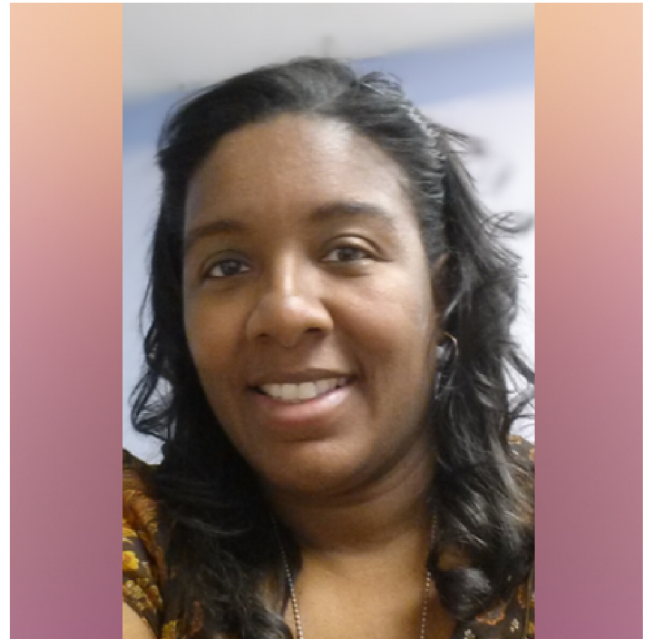
#### **What role does CSWS play in mothers' journeys towards stability and independence?**

Our *Model of Care* guides our case managers, interns and externs in supporting young mothers by helping them to connect with their babies, to connect with others, and to gain stability with regards to her emotional and mental well-being.

We collaborate with all departments - *Residential, Daycare, Education and Employment, and Admin* - to ensure our residents receive the wrap around services needed to gain or maintain stability.

#### **As Director of CSWS, can you share what a typical day looks like for you?**

A typical day for me might begin with responding to emails and phone calls or attending to urgent matters involving residents at St. Ann's. From there, I might attend Program Meetings, conduct supervision with staff and interns, support staff directly with their clients, hold unit meetings, work on our *Model of Care*, address concerns from our residents, connect with families in the community,



*Shaneen Alvarez, LCSW-C, LICSW  
Director of Clinical and Social Work Services*

or advocate on behalf of our young mothers with partnering agencies.

#### **What is it like for you and your team to work with the women and children at St. Ann's?**

Each day at St. Ann's brings its own challenges, lessons learned, and blessings.

The challenge is that there are significant needs - which can sometimes be overwhelming even as we strive to do our best. The lessons learned are that we cannot do it all, and we need to give ourselves some grace.

The blessings include: Recognizing the honor it is to serve in this role as families entrust and share parts of their lives with us; and receiving the opportunity to start over the next day and try again to serve our families using trauma-informed approaches, in ways that respect and address their pains, fears and challenges.





## A Year of Growth, Healing, and Hope

By Dr. Augustine Frazer, Vice President of Programs

As I near the one-year mark of joining St. Ann's team and our mission of supporting the most vulnerable population during their developmental growth, I want to reflect on the experiences that have strengthened my hope for our client's futures. St. Ann's Center's rich history of *total care of the whole person* remains at the heart of our services.

Our staff firmly believes in this mission and our core values, and they are committed to supporting our young families through a teamwork approach – allowing St. Ann's clients to be more involved in their case management plans and outcomes than is typically possible. Each staff member is invested in our residents' journey and cares deeply for their well-being, even after clients transition from our programs. This level of care and compassion has grounded me in St. Ann's agency-wide, strengths-based and trauma-informed *Model of Care*, which I see enacted daily across our programs.

Individuals come to St. Ann's with unique challenges. In response, St. Ann's opens the door and meets each young person where they are by co-creating highly individualized treatment plans. This tailored approach fosters healing, social and life skills development, and strong growth in independent living.

The one element I have learned about our young mothers is that they are heroes struggling with the constructs of youthfulness and motherhood.

***"Young women come to St. Ann's with varying levels of belief in their abilities to create bright futures for themselves and their little ones. But regardless of the length of stay, they leave stronger than they came in, equipped with vital life lessons and new tools and resources for the path ahead."***



Dr. Frazer (Center) with Sister Mary Bader, CEO (L) and Tonya Sharpe, Former Board Chair (R)

In the years ahead, I will undoubtedly project and review the programs for evolving social challenges to ensure our mission, vision, and values meet today's complex social challenges. Along with funding, designing our programs to be continually relevant to the residents' needs will contribute significantly to our clientele's success.

St. Ann's has demonstrated continued responsiveness to our community, especially to the unique needs of parenting or pregnant teens facing complex traumatic experiences and rejection. Yet their hope and resilience allow them to find stability at St. Ann's, a place they call home.

St. Ann's has enormous potential to meet these needs and help our young mothers write new chapters in their stories. Our committed sponsors bless our mission and make this work possible - ***A Luta Continua*** - (the struggle continues).

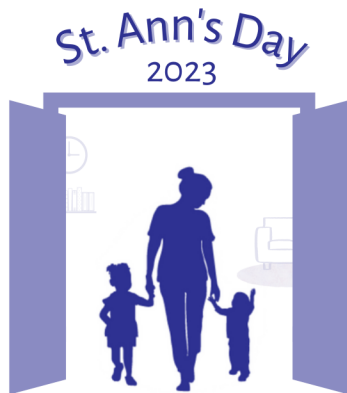


A Tradition of Caring

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

4901 Eastern Avenue  
Hyattsville, MD 20782-3301

2023 Spring | Summer Newsletter



 Matching Gift Opportunity! 

Help us Open Doors of Hope & Welcome!

This year on July 26 - *the feast day of St. Ann* - we invite you to honor the special women in *your* life by making a gift to support the women and their children who turn to St. Ann's Center for help.

The *Raskob Foundation* will generously *match your gift dollar for dollar, up to a total of \$20,000!* Make your St. Ann's Day gift now through August 30, 2023. Make your gift at: [bit.ly/StAnnFeastDay](https://bit.ly/StAnnFeastDay)

Aug. 22, 2023 | Save the Date!

# Happy Hour Fundraiser

Sponsored by St. Ann's Young Professionals Network

## DACHA BEER GARDEN®

Date: Tues., August 22 | Time: 5 PM - 9 PM

Place: Dacha Beer Garden, Navy Yard

79 Potomac Ave SE, Wash., DC 20003

All are welcome! St. Ann's will be selling \$20 wristbands which get you extended Happy Hour deals and 1 ticket entry into our raffle!

