

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

## 2025 Summer Newsletter



### You Make Stories Like Brittany's Possible!



*Brittany, who successfully completed St. Ann's Center's Faith House program in 2020, served as the Guest Speaker at Hope Blossoms on May 14, 2025. This is Brittany's story, in her own words.*

***She was 19 with nothing to lose and a lot to learn.***  
*Forced to drop out of college and enter into motherhood. Little did she know that a man whose arms she would embrace. Would become the same hands she feared.*

*A child was born with no map or guide. Minimal family support left her in a bind. With raised voices and a clenched fist. She braved the unknown and fought the urge to resist. The urge to settle in a love that hurt. It took years to then rebuild from the dirt. Time passed as she searched for more. To give her son what he deserved.*

***That girl was me.***

*(Continued on Page 3)*

### Table of Contents

- 2** *A Message from Sister Nancy Downing, CEO*
- 3** *In Her Own Words: Brittany's Story, Continued*
- 4-5** *Hope Blossoms 2025: Our TOP Moments!*
- 6** *The Sponsors Who Make Hope Blossom at St. Ann's!*
- 7** *Mother's Day Joy at St. Ann's, PLUS Special Gift Opportunities*
- BACK COVER** *St. Ann's Day - Help Us Make a Difference!*

thank you



# 51

Women and  
Children Served

Through your help, **22 women** and their **29 children** have a safe, nurturing place to call home this summer within St. Ann's supportive and transitional housing programs.

## A Message from Sister Nancy Downing, CEO

Thank you for supporting St. Ann's Center and the families who journey with us! And truly – it is a journey.

On May 14 at *Hope Blossoms*, former client **Brittany** reflected on *her* journey at St. Ann's, from crisis and uncertainty to hope and direction.

In her poetic speech (see cover story), Brittany – now a business owner and ordained minister, along with her husband – shared how St. Ann's influenced her path:

*"My son was given his childhood back...  
St. Ann's breathed back into us all I thought  
I had lost. [St. Ann's] helped a hopeless girl  
become an optimistic woman."*

Brittany's testament illustrates beautifully how supporters like you positively impact two generations at once through St. Ann's programs. Thank you!

Thank you to all who attended *Hope Blossoms* – in person and in spirit. Generous guests, donors, and sponsors made our night a success! We thank our terrific Chair Vince Burke, our Honorary Host Committee, and our dedicated Event Committee and Auction Committee.

Thanks to Honorees Michael Steele and the Order of Malta Federal Association. Thank you Bishop Roy Campbell, Emcee Jim Handly, and Msgr. John Enzler. Thank you to our incredible Board, Staff, and volunteers. Thank you to everyone who pledged a gift to support young women like Brittany who count on St. Ann's.

And we specially thank John and Colleen Williams for sponsoring this event at Columbia Country Club.



**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:

- |                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Mary Lou Goehrung           | • Connie LaRossa              |
| • Patrick Selwood             | Fabiano                       |
| • Cara Snyder McVie           | • Colleen Mahoney             |
| • Anthony (Tony)<br>Cancelosi | • Margaret (Meg)<br>Slovenkay |

# Thank You

Mary Lou, Patrick, Cara, Tony, Connie, Colleen, and Meg - 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.





## Brittany's Story, Continued

### ***The road ahead led to Hope at St Ann's.***

*I arrived at St Ann's in October of 2017 with a 5 year old in tow. Uncertain of what would lie ahead. No plan. I just needed to breathe. Away from the noise. And the pain that knew no end.*

*We settled in. We were met with a plan. A roadmap for how to get us from one point to the next. I felt relief.*

*Now equipped with aid to secure not only my family but our future. Surrounded by young women who had also walked my path. I felt seen, heard and understood. For the first time I had community.*

“*The young women. Were like my sisters. We fought, laughed, and figured it out together. The staff now like mothers, and aunties who would hold us accountable while also considering our plight.*”

*I was resistant to the structure. It felt foreign. Accustomed to the uncertainty life had often brought. No longer held by duct tape and glue. The wounds once loud now subdued.*

*My son gained friends and a village. We shared birthday parties, meals, and triumphs. Not only sisters of our struggles but also our successes. My son was given his childhood back. No longer imprisoned by the fear of our next move. He blossomed here in the safety of their doors.*

*St. Ann's expanded our resources through opportunities. Through access to employment, food, and therapy. Their model healed holistically. Addressing not only the issue but the person.*

*While there, I gained not only employment but hope. Hope that there was more. Hope that we could make it. Hope that better was not only coming, it was **HERE**.*

*It gave me strength to believe that I could rise again. Even if it had to build brick by brick.*

*I was then able to rebuild my life. Now married to the love of my life. Blessed finally with a love that doesn't hurt. It affirms and secures. We've come to share not only a last name. We both share the title of ordained minister. Licensed to serve people through faith together.*

*My son has become our son. Now 13, he's aware of where we've been and where we are going. His future now bright with limitless possibilities in sight. I now own a business. To build our income and our legacy. To show future generations that greatness can be born after the struggle. That no matter how hard you fall that you can get back up.*

### ***“St. Ann's gave us our breath back.”***

*No longer do we have to hold it. Waiting for the wind to be knocked out of us again. St. Ann's breathed back into us all I thought I had lost.*

*It helped a hopeless girl become an optimistic woman. Within my future, lies pursuing expansion and retail placement for my business. Pursuing my purpose through outreach and ministry. While maintaining a loving home for our family.*

*I'm proud to support St Ann's now and in their future endeavors as they have supported me.*



(L to R) Andrea and Michael Steele; Brittany and husband Brandon



# Hope Blossoms 2025

Thank You for Making Hope Blossom!

***"This is what hope looks like!"***

That was the unofficial theme of *Hope Blossoms 2025* - St. Ann's Center's annual event celebrating and supporting the families who journey with us.

We are grateful for all who could join us on May 14, whether in person or in spirit!

Approx. 300 guests filled Columbia Country Club, a beautiful space enhanced with stunning floral arrangements donated by **Sarah von Pollaro** and **Urban Petals**.

The flowers symbolized the **hope** that animates St. Ann's mission and empowers women like Brittany - former client and guest speaker who defined what hope at St. Ann's meant to *her*:

***"Hope that there was more. Hope that we could make it. Hope that better was not only coming, it was HERE."***

Brittany raised hearts and spirits. So did the remarkable short film presented by **Robin Smith** and **VideoAction**, featuring interviews with four women currently progressing through St. Ann's: **Hana, K-La, Paige, and Mary.**

**Bishop Roy Campbell** centered us in prayer. Board President **Mary Lou Goehrung** and CEO **Sister Nancy Downing** made everyone feel at home. And emcee **Jim Handly** steered the program with warmth and humor as **FirstHand Productions** brought it to life on the big screen.

***"Every one of our mothers has their own unique story, and you are helping them create a new story."***

***"You are helping them create hope and helping them to put that hope into action, building a new life for themselves and for their children. And we thank you for doing that."***

**- Sister Nancy Downing, CEO**



Members of the Order of Malta Federal Association



Board President Mary Lou Goehrung and Emcee Jim Handly



St. Ann's Board of Directors (full Board not pictured)





The fun that began during our cocktail hour **Silent Auction**, carried into the **Live Auction** emceed by **Msgr. John Enzler** and **Vince Burke**. Three generous bidders won three amazing packages, including seven nights in Tuscany.

**Hon. Michael Steele** received the *Mary McGrory Advocacy Award* and delivered heartfelt remarks affirming all who engage with and support St. Ann's Center's mission.

The **Order of Malta Federal Association** received the *Michele Heidenberger Volunteer Award*. **Diane Oakley**, Hospitaller DC, accepted the award on behalf of the Order, and shared about Malta's commitment to service and volunteerism.

The night concluded with coffee, dessert, and catching up with old friends and new.

In total, our guests, sponsors, and raffle and auction participants helped raise over **\$575,000**.

We are so grateful for this generous support that will help many more families access critical programs and support services at St. Ann's Center.

***Thank you! And please, save the date for next year's Hope Blossoms event on May 13, 2026!***

*"[St. Ann's] gave me strength to believe that I could rise again. Even if it had to build brick by brick. I was then able to rebuild my life.*

*"Now married to the love of my life. Blessed finally with a love that doesn't hurt. It affirms and secures. We've come to share not only a last name. We both share the title of ordained minister. Licensed to serve people through faith together."*

- **Brittany**, Guest Speaker

Scan QR code to watch the video of Brittany's speech at Hope Blossoms!



Guest Speaker Brittany and husband, Brandon



Honoree Michael Steele and Emcee Jim Handly



(L to R) Joan Glasgow, Mary Lou Goehrung  
Diane Oakley, Hospitaller DC, Sister Nancy Downing



Jim Handly, Brittany, and Sister Nancy Downing





# Hope Blossoms



**Special Thanks to Chair Vince C. Burke, III; Bishop Roy Campbell; Jim Handly, Emcee; Msgr. JohnENZler; Honorees Michael Steele and the Order of Malta Federal Association**

**Special Thanks to Colleen and John Williams for sponsoring this event at Columbia Country Club.**

## **St. Ann's Center Thanks Our Hope Blossoms 2025 Event Sponsors!**

### **BENEFACTOR**

Kathy and Ed Quinn, Jr.  
Cory and Joe Rogers, Jr.

### **LEGACY**

Kammie and Scott Bell  
A Friend of  
St. Ann's Center  
Genevieve L. Murphy  
The Joseph E. Robert, Jr.  
Charitable Trust  
Fight for Children

### **ADVOCATE**

Archdiocese of  
Washington  
C. Maury Devine  
Kimberly and John  
Manthei

### **BELIEVERS**

Mary Lou Goehrung,  
Signs by Tomorrow -  
Rockville  
Thomas and Julia  
Heidenberger  
Jan and John Magnolia  
Genevieve L. Murphy  
Mary Noël and Bill Page  
Judy and John Ritz  
Rothwell Family Foundation  
Albert and Linda Rosecan  
Charitable Foundation

### **SUPPORTERS**

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Borger  
Pam and Dennis Lucey  
Colleen Mahoney  
Mary and Matt McCormick  
Jane and Mark Polivka  
Mr. and Mrs. Salvatore Selvaggio  
Lisa and Chris Smith  
The Ancient Order of  
Hibernians in America, Inc.  
Colleen and John Williams

### **ALLIES**

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Aertker, III  
CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield  
Carolyn and Kevin Boyle  
Compass Advocacy  
Barbara and Joseph Edmondson  
Heritage Investors  
Management Corporation  
Robert H. Lacey, III  
R. Scott and Courtney Clark  
Pastrick

### **FRIENDS**

Jane and Kevin Belford  
*in honor of Vince Burke*  
Boland Services  
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen C. Conley  
Kathy and David Cornwell  
Colleen and Monty Crown

### **FRIENDS**

John L. Czajka and Margaret L.  
McCarthy  
Susan and Christopher Flaherty  
Founders Bank  
Beth and David Fromm  
Karen and Pat Gilroy  
Barbara J. Jones  
Jules and Kerry LeBoyer  
John H. LeSeur  
Bette Lewis  
Mrs. Judy Marie Lewis  
Church of the Little Flower  
*In Memory of Frances Silk -*  
Long and Foster Real Estate  
Mr. and Mrs. Michael T. Madden  
Peggy McKelly  
Cara McVie  
Anne Moore and Vincent Allen  
Diane Oakley, DM  
OME Solar, LLC - Matt Gardiner,  
John Gardiner, Tom Roginski  
Barbara Sweeney and John O'Neill  
Our Lady of Mercy Church  
Potomac Community  
Resources, Inc.  
Mr. and Mrs. Jorge V. Ribas  
Monica Skarulis, M.D.  
Judi Teske  
The Concordia Group, LLC  
Washington Aloysius  
Charities, Inc.  
Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Welsh





## Ready, "Willing," and Able?

Have you already made arrangements in your estate plans for your family and friends and are now ready to create a legacy of caring for women and children through an estate gift to St. Ann's Center?

Your gift will ensure future generations of families in crisis will have the support they need to heal and re-build their lives.

Please consider including in your will language such as:

*"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."*

Other ways to show your support of women and children include:

- Make direct gifts to St. Ann's.
  - Support operations or a specific program, or honor a loved one by creating a named fund that can provide annual support for St. Ann's services.
- Make gifts of appreciated securities.
- Make a gift that can provide you with an income for life.
- Designate St. Ann's as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy, IRA, donor advised fund or commercial annuity.
- Add a "payable on death" designation on a bank account or certificate of deposit or "transfer on death" designation on an investment account.

If you have already included St. Ann's Center in your estate plans, thank you. If you are considering one of these special gifts, please contact Sue Flaherty, VP of Development at 301-559-5500 or [sflaherty@stanns.org](mailto:sflaherty@stanns.org).

With thanks and best wishes,

**Sue Flaherty**, Vice President, Development

## Mother's Day Makeover!

Your support of St. Ann's means young women can access vital resources as they begin building new futures for their families.

Your support also makes fun experiences possible, like our "Mother's Day Makeover" self-care and shopping party!

We thank **Suited for Change** and our volunteers from **Robin & Rennee Catering**, **Mary Kay**, **Zonta International**, and **Williams & Family Community Outreach** for creating an amazing experience at St. Ann's for our residents and women from the community.



## KWPP Volunteers Beautify St. Ann's

For the second year in a row, volunteers with **Keller Williams Preferred Properties** beautified our center for "RED DAY," providing St. Ann's families with beautiful and comfortable spaces where they can play and grow together.

Elisa Walters, project organizer, said: "We thoroughly enjoyed helping refresh the grounds - from painting doors and creating the new play area to planting flowers and spreading mulch. It was a rewarding experience for all of us!"





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

## 2025 Summer Newsletter

### **Celebrate St. Ann's Day — Help Our Families Bloom and Grow!**

This St. Ann's Feast Day, join the joyful celebration at St. Ann's Center — and double your impact on the lives of mothers and children working toward brighter futures. Thanks to the generous support of the Raskob Foundation, every gift made will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \$25,000!

Your donation helps provide safe housing, early childhood education, and loving support to families as they heal, grow, and build strong foundations together.

Let's honor St. Ann's legacy of care by helping our families *bloom and grow*. Give today — and plant seeds of hope that will flourish for years to come. As one of our Moms said, 'My future looks bright *now*.' Won't you please help all of our Moms and incoming families feel that hope?

Your Tribute gifts will be listed on our website on the St. Ann's Celebration page and will remain until September.

You can also make your gift online:  
**[bit.ly/stannsfeastday2025](https://bit.ly/stannsfeastday2025)**



**St. Ann's Day 2025**  
"Planting Seeds of Hope"



 Matching Gift Opportunity! 

**CELEBRATE**  
**St. Ann's Day 2025!**

