



Highfields, Inc.
5123 Old Plank Rd.
Onondaga, MI 49264

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #375
Lansing, MI



Saving Ivy

Mary and Sheldon didn't know what to do when their 4-year-old foster daughter, Ivy, started having nightmares related to her past. **Thanks to your support, Highfields' therapist, Gayla Ignacio, stepped in and knew exactly what to do to help Ivy.**



Highfields' therapist, Gayla Ignacio, reads and plays games with Ivy during therapy.

We couldn't do it without YOU!


Thank you very much for providing our son with a trampoline, weighted blanket, and sensory brushes. Just in the first week we have noticed improvement in his behavior. When he starts to get upset he will go to the trampoline by himself and start jumping. He loves these gifts you provided. Our whole family enjoys the trampoline.

Thank You

When you give to Highfields, you give hope to families in need. Highfields' supporter, Claudia Remenar, said it best:

"The thing I like about giving to Highfields is that I feel like it's noticed and appreciated, but most of all, it's used for specific improvements. Things that wouldn't happen if we didn't give. Every gift and every pledge makes a difference at Highfields."

We wanted to share with you a personal Thank You note from a mother involved in Highfields' Wraparound Program. She desperately needed resources for her son who is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, but she couldn't afford the items she needed. Thankfully, you came to her rescue.

Thank you for everything that you do for our families. We couldn't do it without you! 

Our mission is to provide opportunities to children, youth and families to become more responsible with their own lives, and to strengthen their relationships with others.

BRIGHT
FUTURES

Winter 2017

Volume 17, Number 1

Mary and Sheldon Lange met their baby girl Ivy when she was just five weeks old. They were foster parents, and also raising three boys of their own. The foster care agency told them that Ivy wouldn't stay long, and the goal was to reunify Ivy with her mom.

Mary and Sheldon took care of Ivy for 15 months and celebrated a lot of milestones with her such as her first birthday. During that time, Ivy's mother completed the necessary steps, and Ivy went back to live with her mom.

A year passed without Ivy, and Mary and Sheldon had another child. Then one day Mary got a call.

"We found out that Ivy had gone back into foster care, and that she now has a little sister named Jenna who has Down syndrome," said Mary.

"Of course we took them back," said Sheldon. "We began the journey again."

Ivy's biological mother and stepdad worked hard to reunify their family, but they fought a

lot. After another year of raising Ivy and Jenna, Mary and Sheldon were told again that they were going to be placed back with their birth mother.

A few days after Ivy and Jenna left, Sheldon and Mary got a call that Ivy's parents had a fight and that the police had been called. Ivy and Jenna came back with the likelihood that they were going to stay.

Ivy was 4 years old at the time and had witnessed her parent's fighting and the police at her home. She was traumatized by what she had seen.

"When Ivy came back to us she had a lot of nightmares," said Mary. "She didn't talk a lot which worried me because I didn't know what she had seen. She was definitely distressed."

Mary asked her agency for a referral to get counseling for Ivy and was referred to Highfields. Gayla Ignacio, Highfields' Home-Based therapist, came over once a week to work with Ivy.

Continued on next page.

Officers

Mark Emmert, Chairperson
The Dart Bank
Mark Kellogg, Chairperson-elect
Fraser Trebilcock Davis & Dunlap, P.C.
Sara Bennett, Past Chairperson
Two Men and a Truck
James B. Hunsanger, Treasurer
MSU Federal Credit Union
Wallace Markham, Secretary
Retired, JP Morgan Chase Bank

Directors

Peg Asmus
Community Member
Elaine Barr
Legal Services South Central Michigan
Kristin Bartley
Two Men and a Truck
Bill Bockwitz
Retired, Spring Arbor University
Bill Clark
Clark Construction Company
Michael Foster
Plante & Moran, PLLC
Carol Giacometto
Retired, JP Morgan Chase Bank
Matthew J. Greenberg
Miller Canfield
Jeff Hertrich
Accident Fund Holdings, Inc.
Eric Jamison
Michigan Attorney General's Office
Karen Johns
Retired, Department of Human Services
Chivon Kloepfer
WLNS TV 6
Lizzie Mills
Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC
Kris McVicar
Bank of America
Nick Oertel
Foster, Swift, Collins, and Smith, P.C.
Doug Peters
Christman Constructors, Inc.
Tom Reder
Bergmann Associates
Tanda Reynolds
Retired, Department of Human Services
Tom Shewchuk
City of Ann Arbor
Lt. Chris Simpson
Jackson Police Department

Directors Emeritus

Hon. Robert L. Drake*
Derwood L. Boyd*
Frank L. Guerrero*
Jo Hacker
Harold E. Hicks*
Dr. Olivia I. Latts
Mary McCarthy*
Shirley L. Richards
Grant A. Santimore
Duané R. Vernon
Malcolm M. Williams*
*deceased

Senior Leadership

Brian Philson, L.M.S.W., A.C.S.W.
President & Chief Executive Officer
Timothy M. Monroe, M.S.W., L.M.S.W., A.C.S.W., D.C.S.W.
Vice President
Jill Clark, M.S.W., L.M.S.W.
Director, Community Services—South Team
Derek Hitchcock, M.A.
Director, Residential Services
Beverly McGill, M.A.
Director, Fund Development
Edward St. John, MBA
Director, Finance
Lara Hewson, MSW, LMSW, IMH-E® (III)
Director, Quality and Education

Saving Ivy (cont.)

“Having an outside person come in was very helpful because Ivy could talk about things that she might not want to talk to me or Sheldon about,” said Mary.

Gayla used play therapy with Ivy, which is a form of counseling that uses play to communicate with and help people, especially children, prevent or resolve psychosocial issues. She helped Ivy process what she had seen and experienced by reenacting scenes with her, such as the night that the police were called. It has helped Ivy get more comfortable confronting her past.

“Having an outside person come in was very helpful because Ivy could talk about things she might not want to talk to me or Sheldon about.”

Gayla also supported Mary and Sheldon throughout the process by teaching Mary how to do play therapy with Ivy.

“Ivy can be a difficult child to handle, so having tools from Gayla about how to approach her with things was very helpful,” said Mary.

After therapy ended, Mary noticed positive changes in Ivy.

“Ivy became more confident and her nightmares are almost non-existent,” said Mary. “It definitely made a difference.”



Ivy and Mary do play therapy together.

Mary is grateful for the personal care and support that Ivy received from Gayla.

“I just thought that the tools that Gayla used and the way she used them was all top notch,” said Mary. “We felt lucky and blessed to have her assigned to Ivy’s case.”

Last September, Mary and Sheldon officially adopted Ivy and Jenna into their family. Gayla was invited to the adoption ceremony and she gladly attended to show her support. [BF]

Community Provides 270 Donations for Families



Thank you for supporting Highfields’ Holiday Toy Drive! We received over 270 donations of toys, books, and clothing items for children and families involved in our counseling programs. 102 teenagers received \$20 Meijer gift cards for the holidays thanks to your support on #GivingTuesday!

Upcoming Events:

- **March 16:** Past Board of Directors luncheon (location TBD)
- **April 26:** Highfields’ Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors (location TBD)
- **June 12:** Highfields’ 37th Annual Golf Outing, with Title Sponsor Lyman and Sheets, at Forest Akers West in Lansing. For information about sponsorships or to RSVP, please contact Bev McGill at: 517-628-2287 x332 or bmcgill@highfields.org.

Where Are They Now?

“Looking back, I’m glad I was sent to Highfields. I do credit Highfields for helping me turn my life around.”



Mike and his wife Colleen married in August 2015.

Today, Mike is a 28 year-old happily married father of two. He has a steady job, a house, and a positive outlook on the future. He seems like he has life all figured out, but that wasn’t always the case.

When Mike was 14 years old he was a rebellious teenager. He was caught

committing a crime of breaking and entering and was referred to Highfields.

Mike was a student in Highfields Residential Program for 15 months and during that time he learned how to make better choices. He listened to the staff and focused on becoming a leader in his house. He completed the phases of the program and re-entered the community as a changed young man.

But it wasn’t easy. At first, Mike faced challenges and struggled to get rid of bad influences. He realized that if he wanted to continue moving in the right direction he needed to completely change his life.

“After Highfields I was still trying to find my place in the world and it was tough,” he said. “There was a time when I didn’t really hang out with anybody. I just kept to myself and worked, and that was best for me.”

Mike used the tools he learned at Highfields to stay out of trouble. He graduated high school, and then earned an Associate’s Degree in Business.

Mike continues to use lessons he learned from Highfields about being an effective leader to set a good example for his children.

“I’m grateful for what I have now and I’m happy that Highfields helped me change for the better,” said Mike. [BF]

Campus Update!

New Music Program Inspires Students

“Music speaks to everyone, but especially these kids,” said Russell Davis IV, Highfields’ Residential Counselor and Music Program Supervisor.

Thanks to a grant from the James and Kimberly Currie Foundation, Highfields has a new music studio on campus. The majority of the students have been taking advantage of the music and arts program. They learn the process of creating an original song - from writing the lyrics, to creating a beat, and recording in a studio.

Russell believes music is a great way to inspire Highfields’ students.

“Music is a creative outlet for them,” said Russell.

The students have finished writing and recording a collaborative song titled: “When I Look Back” which can be found on the Highfields’ YouTube Page. [BF]



Student Jayvon records a song in the music studio

Highfields services

Highfields is a nonprofit human services organization providing opportunities to children, youth and families through home-based counseling, a residential treatment facility, and experiential education and support programs.

Highfields provides 17 different programs in 12 counties and serves over 8,300 individuals every year.

Our Mission

To provide opportunities to children, youth and families to become more responsible for their own lives and to strengthen their relationships with others.

Our Vision

To create bright futures for children, their families and communities.

Our Locations

Onondaga Campus
5123 Old Plank Rd.
Onondaga, MI 49264
(517) 628-2287

Jackson Office
1206 Clinton Rd.
Jackson, MI 49202
(517) 783-4250

Lansing Office
4305 S. Cedar St.
Lansing, MI 48910
(517) 887-2762

Howell Office
204 S. Highlander Way, Suite 3
Howell, MI 48843
(517) 262-0874

Hillsdale Office
51 S. Howell St.
Hillsdale, MI 29242
(517) 212-8168

Website

www.highfields.org

