



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

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Savonn Turns His Life Around

Thanks to your support, Highfields' PRIDE program teaches kids how to stay off the streets



Savonn smiles in a classroom at Ingham Academy. He's a PRIDE alumnus now—thanks to you!

Six short months ago, Savonn had difficulty thinking before acting on his emotions. It had gotten him into trouble in the past. He didn't consider his consequences and chose to commit armed robbery.

However, through Highfields' after-school program PRIDE, Savonn learned how to turn his life around. The overall goal of the PRIDE program is to teach skills to youth about how their thoughts and feelings are connected to their actions, recognize the risk in their thinking and choose an alternate course of action, thereby reducing recidivism.

Without your help, kids like Savonn would still be on the streets, making bad decisions that would affect the rest of his life.

When Savonn was first referred to PRIDE, he didn't know what to expect. He had never heard of it before, and thought it would be a waste of time.

Over the course of the program, however, he began to pay attention to the lessons. One lesson in particular is an evidence-based program called Thinking for a Change (T4C). This program is one of the many evidence based programs offered through Highfields. T4C is designed for juvenile offenders to help them restructure their thinking and develop their social and problem-solving skills.

Savonn said T4C has changed the way he approaches situations. He never used to think about his consequences before making decisions.

"Thinking for a Change was very beneficial to me," he said. "Now I use it even when I don't realize I'm using it. It's built in my head. When I'm doing something, I think about my consequences now."

"PRIDE taught me how to live life the right way."

Savonn said that PRIDE has also taught him how use appropriate body language, improve his communication, and learn self-control.

"PRIDE taught me how to live life the right way," said Savonn.

If it wasn't for PRIDE, Savonn said he would be in prison. He wants to see the program continue because it has helped him become a better person.

"I think kids should come to PRIDE because it's a good program. You're going to learn here if you put your mind to it," he said.

Thanks to your support, programs like PRIDE can thrive and help teach kids like Savonn how to make better choices in life. **BF**

Hillsdale Welcomes Highfields!

Highfields opened a new office in Hillsdale this fall! We celebrated our Grand Opening with an Open House on Thursday, November 12, 2015.

As a member of the Hillsdale Chamber of Commerce, Highfields was recognized with an official ribbon cutting ceremony.

Members of the staff and executive team were onsite to welcome guests and community members. Guests were encouraged to tour the new office, meet the staff, and learn more about our programs!

"Highfields has been serving Hillsdale County for more than 20 years," said Brian Philson, CEO and President of Highfields. "We are excited to have an office location in Hillsdale, because we can provide even more support for families in the community."

The Hillsdale office joins the other three Highfields locations in Jackson, Lansing and Howell. The Onondaga Campus houses the main office and residential treatment program.

The address of the Hillsdale office is: 51 S. Howell St. Hillsdale, MI 49242. **BF**

BRIGHT
FUTURES

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Hillsdale Chamber of Commerce welcomes Highfields with a ribbon cutting ceremony on November 12, 2015. CEO and President of Highfields, Brian Philson, makes the ceremonial cut.

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Two Men and a Truck
Mark Emmert, Chairperson-elect
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Board Profile: Sara Bennett

Chairperson says this is the “new era” of Highfields



Sara Bennett is welcoming the fresh changes at Highfields. Over her past five years on the board, she has watched Highfields grow and provide the best care possible to individuals in the community.

“Highfields really does make a difference,” she said. “It changes people’s lives. When all the odds are stacked against people, it’s easy to say ‘that’s just the way it is’ but I’ve seen the staff fight battles every day that seem hopeless and they do make a difference. The team at Highfields can positively impact the world for someone.”

Sara admits that when she first joined the board she was unsure about how Highfields’ programs made a difference in people’s lives. However, serving on the board has been an eye-opening experience.

“I’m in awe of the staff at Highfields and what they do ... it’s humbling,” she said.

Sara has been impressed by Highfields’ ambition to provide the best service possible to the community.

“One of the things I’ve seen over the past

five years is a commitment to improvement,” said Sara. “Highfields is committed to always getting better.”

Sara said even the functional changes at Highfields are an important part of the improvement process.

“I’ve seen the staff fight battles everyday that seem hopeless and they do make a difference.”

“When I first joined the board, we were trying to raise funds to re-do the gymnasium,” she said. “With that completed, now we are working toward a new pavilion for the Breakthrough program. They made improvements to the residential center and made updates to technology too. I feel like Highfields has stepped into their new era.”

2015 was an incredible year for Highfields, according to Sara. There is a lot of momentum from the organization to make a big impact on the community – and people are taking notice.

“Other agencies and governmental groups are now coming to the staff and asking them to teach them how they do what they do,” she said.

Sara wants to keep the momentum going.

“I’d like Highfields to set the standards for the rest of the state and the rest of the country,” she said. “I think they can be the standard for what other programs are measured against.”

Highfields has come a long way and there is still work to be done. Sara is confident that Highfields is heading in the right direction. She believes this “new era” has helped Highfields become a leader in helping youth and families in the community. BF

Save the Date: June 13, 2016



Is it spring yet?! We can’t wait for Highfields 36th Annual Golf Outing! Get out of the office and join us for a great day of golf!

When? Monday, June 13, 2016
Where? Forest Akers West in Lansing

For information about sponsorships or to RSVP, please contact Bev McGill at bmcgill@highfields.org or (517) 628-2287 x332.

You Make a Difference

This year’s Holiday Toy Drive was a huge success! Thanks to the generosity of community members and donors like you, we were able to provide toys to 157 families who are involved in Highfields!

The holiday season can be a tough time for families who struggle to make ends meet. That’s why every year, WLNS and select Mid-Michigan Ford Dealers sponsor Highfields’ Holiday Toy Drive to provide new toys for children and help out families who are in need.

This year we received more than 200 toys and winter items to give to children and families for the holidays! BF



Highfields’ Intern, Evan Wing, separated toys by age to deliver to Highfields’ families.

Thank you for another great #GIVINGTUESDAY™

We had another great #GivingTuesday this year, and we couldn’t have done it without you!

This year, we wanted to support the teenagers in our counseling programs. Highfields helps families with kids of all ages – not just children. We wanted to make sure our teens received an extra treat this year!

Any donation received on #GivingTuesday helped provide a \$10 restaurant gift card for teens in our counseling programs! Thanks to your support, we were able to provide holiday gift cards for **63 teenagers!**

Our staff delivered gift cards to their teens during the week of Christmas. Thank you for making the holidays brighter for teens and families in mid-Michigan! BF

What will YOUR legacy be?

You can change lives and strengthen communities for future generations. For more information on making a charitable bequest to Highfields, please complete this form and mail it to: **Highfields, 5123 Old Plank Rd., Onondaga, MI 49624.** Or contact Bev McGill at bmcgill@highfields.org or (517) 628-2287 x332.

Dear Highfields,
 _____ Please send me more information about including Highfields in my will or estate plans
 _____ Please contact me about a personal visit. My phone number is: _____
 _____ I have already included Highfields in my estate planning

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Campus Updates!

Residential house Lett’s gets a make-over!

Over the past year, our facilities team has been working hard to renovate Lett’s residential house on Onondaga’s Campus. Now they are putting together the final touches!

Updates include: hardwood flooring, new appliances for the kitchen and bathroom, fresh paint, and new carpeting and furniture. These renovations help provide a home away from home for our youth!



Before



After