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# UpDATES

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UP CENTER



WINTER 2017

## YOU DID IT!

Together, we surpassed our goal of \$150,000 donated to The Up Center's **Family Promise Fund**. We could not have done it without you! Your investment means over \$160,000 will go towards strengthening children and families throughout Hampton Roads. We know the needs of families are complex, and with your support The Up Center will be better equipped to nimbly respond to those needs.

Because of you:

- Our children are set up for success
- Our families are stronger
- Our community is more inclusive
- We are transforming the system of care for people in need

The Family Promise Fund is The Up Center's undesignated fund dedicated to families. Your investment means we can individually tailor our approach to each family's patchwork of needs. All families are different, and they deserve the best. **Thank you for investing in opportunities for Hampton Roads families.**



## SAVE THE DATE!

*Saturday, April 29, 2017*

The Westin Virginia Beach Town Center



Join more than 500 people and climb 37-stories while raising vital funds for The Up Center's **Family Promise Fund**.

**CLIMB THE TALLEST BUILDING IN VIRGINIA!!**

For more information on how YOU can get involved visit us at [StepUpVA.org](http://StepUpVA.org)

Interested in becoming a Founding Member of the Family Promise Fund?  
 Visit us online at [Giving.TheUpCenter.org](http://Giving.TheUpCenter.org), or call 757.965.8648.

## Local Superstar: Mentor & Foster Parent

Giving back is in Rashelle Parks' blood and at 27 years old she is not your average millennial. Growing up in Richmond, Rashelle was a Girl Scout and enjoyed volunteering. Upon graduating from Norfolk State University, she knew she wanted to continue to live a life of service. After college Rashelle worked different jobs trying to find her niche. In 2014, while working as a substitute teacher in Norfolk, she made the decision to pursue a career with the Norfolk Sheriff's Department. "On my days substituting I'd see the kids, and on the days I worked at the jail I'd see their parents - fathers and mothers - and it was so sad."

In 2015, she heard about The Up Center's Team Up Mentoring program and eagerly signed up to be a mentor. Rashelle and NaTyhia have been matched since and enjoy shopping and hanging out together in the community. Rashelle treasures her relationship with her mentee, but she was searching for another way to give back to children in Hampton Roads. That's when she decided she wanted to become a foster parent.

Rashelle completed The Up Center's Foster Care process and is now an approved foster parent. "I just want to be a parent. I want to help. I know there are a lot of kids that need a stable home so I want to give it to them. The apartment is ready and I'm ready." She admits she is a little nervous, but from the beginning she knew she wanted to take on the responsibility of becoming a single parent. Rashelle is eagerly waiting for her first placement and is looking forward to nurturing children in need of love and care.

**You can help to provide a stable and loving home or support for a child by becoming a foster parent, a mentor, or by investing in the Family Promise Fund today.**



Rashelle with her mentee, NaTyhia



Rashelle (center) after passing The Up Center's PRIDE Foster Care training

Interested in becoming a foster parent?

Visit us online at [www.TheUpCenter.org](http://www.TheUpCenter.org), or call 757.965.8649.

## Thank You, Sponsors and Donors, for Making the Holidays Special

The Up Center's Team Up Mentoring program would like to thank Chris Sevilla and ARAMARK, ODU Monarch Dining and Diana Lally of Dee Dee the Clown's Childrens Entertainment for making the Team Up Holiday party a great time for mentors, mentees and their families! Those who attended got to enjoy the delicious food at ODU's Broderick Dining Commons Hall, balloons and face painting from Dee Dee the Elf. The party was a great way for mentors and mentees to hang out and get to know other matches in the program.



A group photo after everyone enjoyed the delicious food!



Team Up mentees with Dee Dee the Elf

## Thank You, Eliza Hope



Two little ones from Parents As Teachers enjoying their blankets from Eliza's blanket drive.



Eliza Hope spent much of her life at CHKD due to Epilepsy, Autism and other special needs. The one thing that always brought her comfort were her blankets from home. Eliza sadly passed away in November. In celebration of her life, Eliza's loved ones collected new blankets to give to children in need. The Up Center's Parents As Teachers program is so thankful for the blankets they have been able to provide to families in need of extra comfort this Winter.

To learn more about Eliza's story, visit:  
<https://www.youcaring.com/elizahope-691109>

Interested in learning how you can make an impact in our community?

Visit us online at [www.TheUpCenter.org](http://www.TheUpCenter.org), or call 757.965.8648.