



HOPE HOUSE  
FOUNDATION

# 2009-2010 Annual Report

**HOME.  
BELONGING.  
FREEDOM.  
EQUALITY.**

## **Our Mission**

Hope House Foundation is the only organization in Virginia that supports adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities exclusively in their own homes. We believe that everyone, regardless of ability, has the right to lead the life of their own choosing.

We believe neighborhoods and communities are enhanced when all the people in them, including those with disabilities, participate fully. Our services are based on the conviction that people with disabilities should live in their own homes and have control over their day-to-day lives, just as people without disabilities do.

We believe that being a part of the community should not be limited by attainment of certain skills. Helping people achieve true citizenship requires all of us to make the concepts of freedom and choice a reality; we do this through our services, our participation in our community and within our hearts – each day, every day.



All the  
citizens of a  
State cannot  
be equally  
powerful, but  
they can be  
equally free.

*-Voltaire*

This past year has been one more example of the strength and commitment of Hope House Foundation and those who support our endeavors. Though the economy remains flat, we at Hope House continue to soar.

With funding cuts looming, we hold true to the basic principle that people with intellectual disabilities are best supported in their own home and not in congregate care. It is a simple notion yet we remain the only organization in Virginia that exclusively supports people living in their own homes.

I am asked often: why is independent living so central to Hope House? The simple answer is because people with disabilities should not be defined by their disability but rather by their humanity. I believe the most essential component of adulthood begins with a home of your own. This sets the conditions for achieving a sense of belonging not only to a space, but also a place: the neighborhood where you live and the community where you work and play.

Belonging leads to connections like friendships, civic responsibilities and opportunities to participate in a rich and diversified life; in other words, equality. Having the same rights and expectations as your neighbors is what promotes and encourages us to define who we are as individuals and how we will contribute and be supported in our own unique dreams and aspirations.

People we support used to dream about a time when they would have the right and opportunity to direct their lives, but now with support from Hope House Foundation in addition to having a home of their own, this is a reality. Personal freedoms enjoyed by most Americans are not always so easy to have when you must prove to systems, families and society that your disability does not prevent you from knowing how you want to live and with whom, what you want for breakfast, and where you want to work. Listening to what people we support are telling us about the lives they want has been the first step in ensuring the freedom of choice is honored and encouraged.



As you review our annual report I hope you see that four basic values are the threads that are woven in to all we do at Hope House Foundation: having your own home, being treated as equals, belonging to your community and enjoying the freedom this country offers. It is these values that define our work and our mission.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary journey; we know our success is attributed to not only those we employ and those who volunteer with us but also to the community as a whole which has embraced us with understanding, goodwill and support.

Lynne Seagle  
Executive Director, Hope House Foundation



## Alex Ripley

There comes a point in everyone's life, when you want to move out of your parents' house and into your own place: a place where you will have the freedom to make your own choices and make your own mistakes. Whether you choose to eat pizza for dinner every day, date the person of your choice, or stay up way too late watching movies – the choices are your own.

Alex Ripley is a young man supported by Hope House Foundation. He lives in his own apartment a stone's throw from the beach. It is decorated in shades of blue, reflecting his love of the water, and he has photos of exotic cars hanging on the walls. Alex is an outgoing guy with a ready smile and many friends; a guy who finally gets to enjoy living on his own.

Until last year, Alex lived at home with his parents. His parents supported Alex's yearning for freedom and independence but faced an all too familiar scenario for thousands of Virginians each year. The waiting list to receive Medicaid Waiver services in the community, rather than in congregate settings, is more than 5,000 people and over seven years long. When Alex finally received his Waiver slot to receive services in the community, his family was unable to find an organization near their home in Northern Virginia that would provide the level of independence, freedom and privacy Alex was looking for.

Last year at a conference in Richmond, Alex's parents met Hope House Foundation Team Leader, Susan Henderson. The two immediately hit it off, and with a follow-up tour of Hope House's Virginia Beach location, called Lakewood, Alex had finally found the home he was looking for...his own home.

"Having the freedom to do what I want, when I want is great!" Alex shares, "I love my family but living with them is boring. I like having my own place."

Alex leads a very active life in his new community. He is always on the go, spending his free time at the beach, enjoying the art shows and concerts on the board walk, working with a job coach to find the perfect job, and enjoying afternoons at Mount Trashmore flying his kite with friends.



## Kiesha Turner

When you meet Kiesha, the first thing you notice is her smile; a highly contagious smile that radiates warmth and happiness. She is quick to laugh – a lyrical chuckle that hints at her talent for song. Kiesha has been supported by Hope House Foundation since 2002. She loves living on her own in her cozy and inviting apartment, but what she values most is her sense of belonging in the community.

Kiesha's community is made up of an extensive network of family, membership in a variety of social groups and her many, many friends. For Kiesha, a strong sense of belonging stirs an equally strong sense of responsibility. A Norfolk native, Kiesha grew up in Norview and graduated from Old Norview High School in 2000. Her close-knit family still lives in the area and spends holidays, birthdays, and leisurely weekend afternoons together.

Kiesha is active in her community: volunteering, spending time with her friends and family or traveling with her choir. She is an active leader in Young Life Capernaum and is also on Hope House's Breast Health Committee. The breast health team teaches women about the importance of early detection and how to conduct self-exams. Kiesha became involved because of her belief in early detection and the realization that women with disabilities can often be overlooked when it comes to breast health and screenings.

For Kiesha, life in the community and a sense of belonging are not static concepts, simple labels or obligations. Community is something you actively create, belonging is a two-way street – and both come with the responsibility to give back more than you take: "I enjoy my community and being a part of it."



## Kristina Sherman

Kristina Sherman is an “all-American girl”: Smart and vivacious, wise beyond her 24 years, and an extraordinary memory. She loves the Twilight series and can quickly summarize each book’s plot and analyze character’s reasoning behind actions. She’s on Team Edward; few can escape the sparkly vampire’s charm.

Her apartment is adorned with Twilight posters and memorabilia. An extensive movie collection fills the entertainment cabinet – Kristina can recall every title – and an overstuffed couch in her living room invites friends to stay awhile to chat.

Kristina didn’t always have the freedom to live her life the way she wanted. For several years she received support in a nursing home, a place where she was on someone else’s schedule, her activities were limited due to staffing, and the person closest to her age was 35 years old. “I was miserable,” she says of that experience.

Like anyone, Kristina wanted a place of her own without the constraints. She wanted to take responsibility for her life and make her own decisions. She wanted freedom. Then she moved into her own apartment and began receiving support from Hope House. Now she has the freedom to live her life: “I was ecstatic when I moved into my own place! I can go and come as I want. Go out with my friends and stay out as late as I want.”

From attending movie premiers and horseback riding to grocery shopping and hanging out with her friends, Kristina’s life is on her terms.

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## Heather and Bruce

**“He was a shy guy when we first met, but I knew he was the one.”**

Bruce Wielenbeck and Heather Keane met on a city van; both were on their way home from work. “She was sitting in the row ahead of me, I was in the back. She was so quiet and cute.”

It took a few weeks for Bruce to muster up the courage to ask Heather out on a date, but when he finally did she immediately said “Yes!” Months later, the two live together in an apartment at the Lakewood team. Their place is stylishly decorated like a Hatteras beach house with over-stuffed wicker furniture in soft pastels and an oak kitchen dinette with a checkered table cloth.

Bruce proposed on Christmas while they were visiting family on the Eastern Shore. “I was so nervous when I asked Heather to marry me,” he says with a smile. The wedding is scheduled for next July on the beach at Sandbridge. Heather is knee-deep into wedding planning; she’s looking for a band, cake and the song to play as she walks down the aisle.

Like every other husband-to-be, Bruce helps with planning, lends an ear and shares Heather’s nervousness. All preparations aside, he knows that the day will be perfect because “she will be there.”

As Heather leans in to rest her head on Bruce’s shoulder, she looks up at him with love, “he’s my soul mate.” Bruce smiles and rests his hand on her knee. They share the comfort, love and respect of a couple who knows they are meant to be together.

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## 2009-2010 FINANCIALS

Currently, eighty-five percent of our funding is from Medicaid Waiver, the rest of the funds are raised in the community through grants, fundraising appeals, profits from our Thrift Store, and our robust special events schedule which includes the bi-annual Stockley Gardens Art Festival, Shamrockin' in Ghent, and Kentucky Derby party.

### Current Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,638,469
Pledge receivable	350,436
Grants receivable	37,263
Other current assets	1,677,100
Property, Plant and Equipment	82,181
Other Assets	12,302
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,797,752</b>

### Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities, current	\$ 776,545
Net Assets	3,021,207
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,797,752</b>

\*The complete, audited financial statements are available upon request.

## WAYS YOU CAN GIVE



You can help support Hope House, and our mission to support adults with disabilities in their own homes, through a number of donation options including annual gifts, bequests, reoccurring credit card gifts, gifts of stock, workplace giving and through the United Way or Combined Federal Campaign (#5070). For more information call 625.6161, email [cportalatin@hope-house.org](mailto:cportalatin@hope-house.org), or visit <https://www.hope-house.org/donate/>.

## MEET OUR BOARD



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## HIGHLIGHTS and ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Hope House Foundation Thrift store had a record year raising over \$65,000. All of the proceeds from the Thrift Store go back to the people we serve.

This year we publically launched our Drive for Affordable Housing capital campaign at the first annual Rise & Shine Breakfast. The breakfast raised over \$65,000 in gifts and pledges. Over the past three years the Drive for Affordable Housing raised 2.8 million dollars. Through the Drive we worked to secure safe, affordable and sustainable housing so that the people we serve can live independently in neighborhoods throughout Hampton Roads.

We've partnered with Old Dominion University to create an art program for the people we serve. Art work has been showcased at the Annual Dinner and Stockley Gardens Arts Festival.

This year we launched The Buzz, a quarterly newsletter produced by people we serve. The Buzz features regular columns on dating, having animal companions and advocacy. You can read the latest issue of The Buzz online at <http://www.hope-house.org/news/buzz.php>.

The Norfolk Economic Development Department gave a first time gift of \$10,000 in recognition of the Stockley Gardens Arts Festivals. The twice-yearly festivals emphasize the importance of community and bring together over 20,000 people to celebrate the arts.

In spite of these financially challenging times – the state repeatedly cutting support and the economy shrinking – we continue to operate in the black due to fiscally responsible oversight from our board. In July we implemented several cost saving measures to ensure success: forgoing all staff salary increases for this upcoming fiscal year, and moving a team that was supported at a location we did not own into a location that we own resulting in money saved on rent and participant subsidies.

Upon the recommendation of the Our Voices Committee we are now including people we serve in the hiring process. The Our Voices Committee is comprised of people we serve who advise the board and staff on support and advocacy. The new hiring initiative will include interview questions provided by people we serve and a person we serve participating in the interview process.

Our community events continue to grow. Partnerships with local businesses help raise money and spread the word about our mission and celebrate all of us. This year we added Shamrockin' in Ghent and Springin' de Mayo to our active community events schedule which includes the Kentucky Derby, Home for the Holidays and Hope, Love, Change Hair & Fashion Show.



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