

eliminating racism empowering women

ywca

YWCA Wheeling
1100 Chapline Street
Wheeling, WV 26003

March 6, 2008

Mrs. Susie Nelson, Executive Director
The Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley
P.O. Box 670
Wheeling, WV 26003

Dear Susie:

This morning, I had a conversation about a recent movie with a red-haired second-grader who was home from school with a cold. She's usually a pretty mischievous kid, but thanks to the cold she was stretched out on a couch and focused on narrating the movie in great detail – the kind of seven-year-old, "he-said, she-said" detail that makes the narration almost as long as the movie itself. Her mom, who was home from work for the morning, shot me sympathetic looks but was grinning a bit nonetheless. (I'll bet she's heard the story at *least* a half-dozen times herself.) It was a truly enjoyable visit and I was sorry to have to excuse myself in order to get back to work. But Alyssa, our little storyteller, and her mother live in a safe, warm and inviting suite of bedrooms and community living space just down the hall from my office on the third floor of the YWCA Wheeling's building, and I am likely to have the opportunity to chat with them again sometime soon.

With the help of the Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley, Alyssa, her mother and older sister, and two other adult women live in the YWCA Family Violence Prevention Program's newly created transitional housing. All are victims of domestic violence, and the stories Alyssa's mother quietly shared at our February 8th open house and ribbon-cutting are horrifying. No woman or child should have to live in the kind of fear that prevailed for years in their home, before Alyssa's mother made the final break that brought them to our Madden House emergency shelter. But shelter is a very temporary fix for a family in crisis, and the family is rooted here in the Ohio Valley: the girls attend Ohio County public schools, and their mother works at a local hospital and attends WVNCC. From the safety and security of transitional housing, for up to two years, all can heal while they rebuild their lives. Our ultimate goal is to help this family find safe, permanent housing at the end of this transitional time in their lives.

Your \$6,500 gift has been spent to help transform a suite of offices into living space – critically-needed support that allowed us to leverage a federal grant for this project. Please find attached an accounting of the funding provided by the CFOV for this project (as well as photos), and please share our sincere gratitude with the grant-making committee of the Foundation. I invite any CFOV Board or staff member to tour our facility and see, firsthand, the difference your gift has made.

Again, thank you so very much for your generosity! With your help, we are making a very real difference in the lives of domestic violence survivors.



Wendy Barbeau
Executive Director