

# THE VILLAGER

SUMMER 2023

## SUMMER PROGRAMS SUPPORT AND ENGAGE RESIDENTS

*At Warren Village, summertime means field trips, summer classes, and moments of celebration.*

### Summer Kids' Club

Kids' Club provides after-school programming to Warren Village school-age children, and gives them a fun, safe space to engage with each other in a supportive group setting. Children participate in hands-on learning and enrichment experiences centered around six fundamental areas: Social Skills and Personal Development, Education and Academic Achievement, Communication and Expression Arts, Civics and Leadership, Health and Wellness, and Science and Technology. Kids' Club continues during the summer months with full days of activities, field trips, and fun, providing kids the opportunities to build and strengthen the friendships they made during the school year.

Every summer, resident kids and staff look forward to exploring different places around Denver. This year brought field trips to parks around the city and day trips to the mountains. The kids visited the Denver Botanic Gardens and the Butterfly Pavilion. During a trip to the Denver Botanic Gardens, the kids explored the indoor greenhouse and had the chance to examine leaves under a microscope, which they found very exciting. They were able to see tiny bugs living on the leaves, seeing beyond what is visible with the naked eye. At the Butterfly Pavilion, they had a chance to hold Rosie the tarantula. They also got to explore and see several types of insects and butterflies. These types of trips are valuable because they allow resident kids to learn and explore during the summer, and have fun!



*Left: Kids explore the Denver Botanic Gardens*

*Right: Meeting Rosie the tarantula at the Butterfly Pavilion*



Warren Village also runs Kids' Club programming at the Ivy Crossing apartment complex, where staff offers mentoring, resources, and community events for residents. Summer Kids' Club was popular this summer; enrollment was limited to 24 kids, and all spots were full with a waiting list. Staff continued to provide math and reading skills over the summer. They welcomed guest speakers, grew and plant flowers on property, cooked, and had fun outside with a new bubble machine. Kids' Club at Ivy Crossing has built relationships with community organizations like the Arapahoe Library District (ALD) and the Denver Dumb Friends League (DDFL), and during the summer, they brought their programming to the kids.

*(Continued on page 2)*

For example, ALD had a mobile library stop every other week outside of Ivy Crossing. One of the librarians came to Kids' Club every month to do a craft with the kids. A Community Educator from DDFL visited, along with a dog, multiple times during the summer. The kids asked great questions about pets and animal welfare and learned how to safely approach a new dog. Additionally, Kids' Club at Ivy Crossing has an agreement with Food Bank of the Rockies through their Totes of Hope program to provide food on a weekly basis for Kids' Club families.



*Left: Kids explore the book selection at an Arapahoe Library  
Right: Kids at Ivy Crossing Kids' Club meet a dog from the Denver Dumb Friends League*

## Academic Accomplishments

Residents at Warren Village are committed to their post-secondary education, and that doesn't stop over the summer. In May, our Family Services team distributed summer school supplies to 30 residents who are enrolled in an education program over the summer.

Many residents began the summer by celebrating graduation from higher education programs. Resident Krystal, who moved into Warren Village in 2021, graduated on May 12 from Metro State University of Denver with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and minor in Criminalistics.

Krystal restarted her college journey when she moved into Warren Village, and found more support this time around. "I started college in 2008 when I graduated from high school," says Krystal. "No one in my family had been to college. I was blindly going into it. I struggled to keep my grades up while working." She felt pressure to take the traditional college route, which wasn't accessible to her and her life at the time. When Krystal moved into Warren Village, she was able to take the time to finish her degree. "It's a different experience being older," Krystal notes. "School is much more adaptable now, which made me want to stay focused and feel less stressed."

Krystal grew up in low-income housing in a rough part of town. "Seeing crime while growing up made me wonder why people do horrible things to each other," she remembers. These experiences sparked her love of forensics and interest in the psychology of crime. She hopes to turn this passion into a career at a mental health center or with the police department.

Warren Village has given Krystal the space, resources, and support to pursue not only a bachelor's degree, but hopefully this fall, a master's degree, as well. "It's OK to only think about yourself and do things for yourself to be better. I learned that here at Warren Village," Krystal says. "Being here brought me a lot of peace and understanding, and helped me leave toxicity in my past." She knows that she has always been capable of reaching her goals, and graduating as a single mother with her 5-year-old son watching was an emotional day. "I spent a lot of my life trying to fix people rather than focusing on myself," she acknowledges. "Now, being a mom, I realized that I have to stop doing that. I'm going back to school for my son. You can do anything. It's hard work, but it can be done."



*Krystal and her son at Krystal's graduation*



## THE STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP

From Our President & CEO

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we embrace the warmth and joy of the summer season, I encourage you to take full advantage of the opportunities it presents. It is a time for families to come together, create lasting memories, and enjoy the beauty of the world around us.

This issue highlights some of the ways our families, volunteers and community partners stay engaged during the warmer months. From summer classes and career development sessions to recreational outings and family-friendly events, there is something for everyone. Warren Village is committed to providing resources and programs that foster these moments of connection and growth. We are thrilled to partner with local organizations like Aurora Public Library, Denver Botanic Gardens and Denver Dumb Friends League that provide summer field trips and enrichment activities. These opportunities not only enhance their learning experiences but also provide them with a chance to explore their interests and develop new skills. We believe in the limitless potential of every child and want to empower them to dream big.



You'll meet a couple of our Early Learning Center staff who help lay the foundation for a lifetime of learning and success. Their dedication, passion, and commitment to nurturing young minds is truly praiseworthy. They create a safe and stimulating environment where our children can explore, grown, and discover their potential.

As we enter this summer season, let us cherish the moments we share with our loved ones, soak up the sun, and celebrate the spirit of unity and resilience that defines Warren Village. Together, we can continue to create a thriving community where single-parent families can flourish and thrive. Thank you for being a part of the Warren Village family. Enjoy this beautiful summer season and may it bring you happiness, prosperity, and an abundance of cherished memories.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ethan Hemming'.

Ethan Hemming, President & CEO

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES NEWS

Warren Village is tremendously grateful to our Board of Trustees for their tireless work to advance the mission of the organization. One of our key strategic goals is to build the capacity, breadth, and diversity of our Board. Over the last six months, we were thrilled to welcome the following Trustees, each of whom, brings passion, expertise, and a willingness to help take Warren Village to the next level: Victor Davis, Manager, Fidelity Investments; Jessica de Gortari, Tax Managing Partner, Deloitte Tax LLP; Reba Jones, Field Office Project Engineer, Saunders Construction; Kristin Sullivan, Senior Advisor, Foster Graham Milstein & Calisher; Angela Williams, Senior Manager, PricewaterhouseCoopers. For a complete listing of our Board members, please visit [WarrenVillage.org/#board-of-trustees](https://WarrenVillage.org/#board-of-trustees).



Victor Davis



Jessica de Gortari



Reba Jones



Kristin Sullivan



Angela Williams

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT: JOHNNA AND DONNIE FLOOD



*Donnie and Johnna and their children*

Meet Johnna and Donnie Flood, Warren Village donors since 2017, and active voices in spreading awareness and funding solutions to Denver's housing crisis.

### **How did you first become involved with Warren Village?**

Donnie and I learned about Warren Village when we moved back to Denver from the Bay area in 2016. A Board member at the time connected us, and I began consulting with the organization to develop a Theory of Change and build the infrastructure to become a learning organization.

### **What inspired your work in the houselessness space?**

We were inspired by the work Warren Village was doing to support single-parent families struggling with housing instability. I worked at Mile High United Way, which gave me a deeper insight into the sector. I knew I wanted my next career move to be in support of the unhoused in our community.

### **What inspired you to become donors to Warren Village?**

As part of my consulting work with Warren Village, I had the opportunity to learn about the impact the housing, programming, and wraparound services, as well as the onsite early learning center, had on the lives of residents at Warren Village. The impact was profound, and we knew that we wanted to support the organization in whatever way we could.

### **Tell us a little about Elevated Denver.**

Elevated Denver is a startup nonprofit addressing homelessness at a systemic level by shifting power to those with lived expertise to co-create sustainable solutions that are highly responsive to community needs. We are working to humanize the issue, cultivate compassion, and reinstate hope through storytelling in our podcast, and researching the current system's strengths and weaknesses through a community landscape.

### **What intersections do you see between Elevated Denver's work in the community and Warren Village?**

Elevated Denver and Warren Village both seek to have a long-term, positive impact in the lives of struggling Denver community members. Elevated Denver looks at the system overall to understand where folks are getting the support they need when they need it, and how we might improve as a city and community to ensure that is true for everyone struggling with homelessness. Warren Village is a critical component of the system and can serve as a model for how we might approach serving other sub-populations. We appreciate the partnership and support of Warren Village and are excited about how we can continue to collaborate towards maximum impact.

For more information on Elevated Denver and to listen to the podcast, visit [elevateddenver.co](http://elevateddenver.co).

## WAYS TO GIVE TO WARREN VILLAGE: BECOME A SUMMIT MEMBER

### **Summit [ suhm-it ] noun**

1. *Achievement, top, apex – the topmost level attainable*
2. *The economic and personal independence that Warren Village residents work toward every day*
3. *Members of Warren Village's subscription giving program*

This summer, you can support Warren Village through our new monthly subscription giving program. Residents at Warren Village can face seemingly insurmountable barriers in their journeys to economic independence. However, with the resources and support they access here, they are able to summit those barriers. As a Summit Member, your monthly subscription gift will sustain impactful programs and resources and support even more single-parent families in the future. Be a part of the community that supports residents as they take steps to reach their summit. Set up your recurring monthly gift and become a Summit Member today at [www.warrenvillage.org/ways-to-give/subscription-giving](http://www.warrenvillage.org/ways-to-give/subscription-giving). Contact Austin Locke at [alocke@warrenvillage.org](mailto:alocke@warrenvillage.org) or 303.320.5056 with questions.





## CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT: JOHNS MANVILLE FAMILY NIGHT

Johns Manville returned this summer to partner with Warren Village for another Family Night. This is a special time for Warren Village parents and their children to get together and enjoy some quality time with one another. This June, JM employees provided Illegal Pete's buffet-style dinner and brought an array of activities for the children and parents to engage in. From kickball to tossing frisbees, kiddos, volunteers, and parents alike had a great time coming together at Cheesman Park.

With the busyness of day-to-day life, many residents miss out on the opportunity to engage with their neighbors, and Family Night provides them the space and time to build community and get to know one another. This shared time has proven to be a critical element in their journey toward economic independence.

Community partners like Johns Manville play a vital role at Warren Village, and Family Nights give them the opportunity to not only serve and give back, but also share meaningful moments of engagement with residents and staff. For corporate engagement opportunities, contact Shardai Perry-Miller at 303.320.5032 or [sperry-miller@warrenvillage.org](mailto:sperry-miller@warrenvillage.org).



## WARREN VILLAGE AT ALAMEDA UPDATE



Our amazing board, staff, and developer partners continue to pursue the dream of opening Warren Village at Alameda. While we have encountered the typical pre-closing delays, we are on track for construction to begin in August and an opening of the facility in late 2024. Please keep your eyes out for a groundbreaking ceremony announcement soon!

*Rendering courtesy of SAR+ Architects*



## GET TO KNOW US: EARLY LEARNING CENTER STAFF

### Marco Basurto, Early Learning Center Food Services Coordinator



*Marco prepares homemade meals for breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack for each classroom*

Food Services Coordinator, Marco Basurto, brings smiles and healthy meals to the Warren Village Early Learning Center students every day. He pursued his passion for cooking after learning from his father, who works in the restaurant business. Marco began cooking in restaurants, but he has been cooking for kids for over a decade.

Marco joined the team nearly three years ago, and since then, his food has become well-loved. Although chicken nuggets and burgers are frequent requests, Marco prides himself in preparing healthy meals for the kids. "I don't know what the kids eat outside of the Learning Center, and I don't have control over that. Here, I'm able to provide them with good, healthy meals." On this day, Marco prepared oatmeal with blueberries for breakfast. For lunch, the kids enjoyed Salisbury steak with gravy, mashed potatoes, pineapple, and a whole grain biscuit on the side.

Every day, Marco prepares daily meals from scratch and takes the time to listen to what the kids like and dislike. He often looks for new recipes that he thinks the kids will enjoy and tries to find healthy recipes with lower sodium or greater servings of fruits, vegetables, and protein. Marco does his best to cook what the little ones like, and he quickly learned that they are not fans of tuna. Although tuna was not a big hit, Marco's homemade cornbread is a fan favorite.



*Kids in the Learning Center enjoy grilled cheese, homemade tomato soup, and apples for lunch*



When developing his daily menu, Marco is required to follow nutritional standards, but he appreciates having control over his own kitchen and being able to pursue his own ideas. He appreciates the freedom to cook with creativity and love, but says the most rewarding part of working at the Early Learning Center is the people he works with and the support they give him.

Marco has built connections not only with his team members but also the kids at Warren Village. At times, it can be difficult working in early childhood education, but Marco is passionate about what he does. He is especially happy seeing others' gratitude and appreciation for his home cooked meals. "Sometimes I get surprised that everybody knows my name, and they want to give me hugs and cards. One time, a little girl brought me a flower from outside. Little things like that are really special to me."

*Marco shares some of the cards and art that Learning Center students have made for him*

## Maria Rodriguez, Early Learning Center Infant Teacher

In between lovingly talking to little ones, giggling in the classroom, and saying goodbye to families, Maria's face lights up as she describes her work at Warren Village. For over fifteen years, Maria Rodriguez has cared for the infants in the Early Learning Center because, as she says, it "makes my heart happy." Maria chose to work with the youngest children simply because, "the babies are angels." Every day, Maria's love shines through, and the babies she cares for bring her immense joy.

For Maria, seeing the babies' faces is her daily motivation—even on days when she is tired or stressed. "I've noticed that the babies feel what you feel. They can feel your love and everything you give them; so, they respond in the same way. They give you love back." Maria feels a responsibility to truly love the babies in her care, because parents are trusting her at drop-off. "I want to give the babies everything," says Maria, and that is exactly what she has done as one of Warren Village's longest serving teachers.

One way Maria shows her love is by introducing the babies to Spanish. As a native Spanish speaker, she often speaks, sings, and reads to the babies in Spanish. Maria enjoys working with the little ones because in their first year, children's minds absorb more—making it an ideal time to introduce a second language. She views this as an opportunity to support kids and help set them on their path.

While the infant classroom brings Maria great happiness, she is also very grateful to be a part of Warren Village. "Warren Village is special for kids, families, and the community. It's also special for the staff, because they recognize your hard work. This is an amazing place that provides opportunities for many, and I am proud to work here."



*Maria reads books to the kids in her classroom in both English and Spanish*



*Maria and the other infant teachers spend time in the infant gross motor skills room developing skills like sitting, crawling, and climbing stairs*

## THE NEXT STEP ↓

To support the Early Learning Center and the work that staff like Marco and Maria do, visit [warrenvillage.org/donate](http://warrenvillage.org/donate), and designate your gift to the Learning Center. You can even utilize the Childcare Tax Credit to claim a 50% state income tax credit for your contribution.

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

We value your opinion as a member of the Warren Village community, and are eager to learn more about you, why you give, and how you feel about our work. Please use the QR code to take a short survey that will provide us with valuable information about what you think about our organization and how successful we are in supporting unhoused and unstably housed low-income single-parent families as they work to achieve economic mobility and independence.

To thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts, the Warren Village Board of Trustees has pledged to donate \$5 for each of the first 400 donor surveys completed.



SCAN ME! ↑



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**Save the Date**

**Friday, October 6**

**at the Denver Art Museum**

**Join us for an incredible evening to celebrate Warren Village families, hear inspiring stories, and build community. Contact Michele Kilen, Development Director, at [mkilen@warrenvillage.org](mailto:mkilen@warrenvillage.org) or 303.320.5057 for sponsorship opportunities.**