

Your generosity changes lives. Thank you!

Our Early Head Start Center Expansion to Open in June



Be on the lookout for an announcement about our ribbon cutting. Your generosity in nearly doubling our capacity in Lynchburg has been phenomenal. Special thanks to the donor who provided a \$60,000 matching gift, which we met with your help!

Did you see our Early Head Start feature on WSET's Living in the Heart of Virginia? **Watch it here. Snap the QR code with the camera on your phone.**



Parent Council Chair Dana Jedynak shared her experience; her two daughters have been students in our Early Head Start Center. With reliable childcare in place, Dana has been able to return to her health care career.

Referred to Early Head Start from Johnson's Health Center, Dana especially appreciated the wraparound care she received. "EHS was a stepping stone to local services," she said.



To donate to the Early Head Start expansion, visit support.humankind.org/2026EHS or snap the QR code with the camera on your phone.



Kind HEARTED

YOUR GIFTS CHANGE LIVES

MARCH 2026

Inside this issue: Child Abuse Prevention, Workforce Development, Early Head Start Update

The Pursuers: How Board Chair Jennifer Huffman & Her Family Have Come Full Circle



Jennifer Huffman

When HumanKind Board Chair Jennifer Huffman leads a tour at our Early Head Start center, she said she sometimes feels emotional. "I don't just see children, I see little Jennifer."

Jennifer and her sister Nicole, who attended Head Start in Bedford as children, now share the impact that the program had on them and their whole family.

"Head Start gave me the start I needed: a love for learning and the skills to thrive," said Nicole, who received her doctorate in education last year.

The Pursuit Begins

Their parents Anthony and Betty Bonds did everything they could to give their three daughters stability. They worked hard. They went to church. They built a village.

"We talk about life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. But to pursue is a verb. It speaks to action," Anthony said. "Looking back, when I was a young boy, the main role model I had was my grandfather. When he passed away in 1959, it devastated me to the point that I felt hopeless...I was in a state of hopelessness ... When I saw how Head Start was helping my girls and our interactions with Mrs. Beulah Payne, hope came alive."

Anthony started his career cleaning a printing department floor 55 years ago. After returning to school, he now works in research and development at the same company, while also pastoring two churches.

The Long Arc of Impact

Sometimes called the "virtuous cycle," one good thing can truly lead to another.

Not long ago, Jennifer welcomed an Early Head Start tour group that included her own fourth-grade teacher. The teacher stood in awe, looking at her once-quiet student, now a Board chair, Senior Vice President of Solutions Banking at Atlantic Union Bank, Keynote Speaker, and community leader.



Jennifer Huffman was interviewed by Living in the Heart of Virginia's Emily Robinson about Early Head Start's impact.

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The Pursuers: How Board Chair Jennifer Huffman & Her Family Have Come Full Circle (cont.)

Jennifer today speaks with unshakable clarity about Early Head Start's long arc: "You don't imagine the impact at the time, but you see it later on...When I walk those halls, I imagine who these children will be in 30 years."

How You Can Invest in Tomorrow's Pursuers:



Visit. Schedule a time to come see Early Head Start in action. For more information, email info@humankind.org.



Give: Monthly, one-time, or through a Donor Advised Fund.



Volunteer. Lend your expertise, whether it's reading to children, helping with the community garden, or being a part of events like the Lynchburg Turkey Trot that supports all of HumanKind's programs.



Nicole Bonds



Give to the next generation of pursuers by helping to nearly double the capacity of our Early Head Start program. Visit support.humankind.org/2026EHS or snap the QR code with the camera on your phone.



Read the full story at humankind.org/the-pursuers/ or snap the QR code with the camera on your phone.

HEALTHY FAMILIES

How Your Support Helps Prevent Child Abuse

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month – and a great time to thank our donors for investing in Healthy Families. Here's one parent's experience with Healthy Families, which meets moms and dads right where they are to help them to learn how to be the nurturing, loving parents they want to be:

During her time with Healthy Families, Karina has stepped away from toxic partner relationships and is focusing on healthy, positive connections. While saving and preparing to purchase a home for her and her children, Karina continues to move forward with confidence and purpose.

Karina recently graduated from our Healthy Families program, marking an important milestone in her parenting journey. Through her hard work and commitment, she has built a strong foundation for a brighter future. Today, Karina has a great career and is learning to truly love and value herself, recognizing her own strength and worth. Because she has written a new chapter for her family, her children's lives will be forever changed.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Opening Doors to Opportunity: Denise Hutton's Impact Through Workforce Development

Each day someone walks into the doors of Virginia Career Works and talks to a HumanKind employee about the frustration of job seeking. Some are just out of high school trying to get that first stable job, others have been laid off after a long career. Each has skills and strengths, but also face significant barriers, whether it's the need for more training or experience, or reskilling for a different field. Today's labor market is shifting in unprecedented ways.

To help guide this journey, the team opens doors to opportunity.

In November 2025, Denise Hutton, one of HumanKind's career navigators through Virginia Career Works received statewide recognition as a Virginia Champion of Disability Employment. For Denise, the recognition is gratifying, but the real joy is seeing participants gain confidence, independence, and stability as they join the workforce.

"It is rewarding to see people go from their lowest to their highest, navigating obstacles, and finding a place to grow," said Denise, who is known affectionately by colleagues and partners as "Wonder Woman."

Through HumanKind's Workforce Development programs, Denise connects job seekers to career counseling, training opportunities, and supportive services that open doors to meaningful, living wage employment. She also collaborates closely with community partners to customize career pathways, ensuring participants have the tools and encouragement they need to succeed – not just get a job, but build a future.



Denise is proud of her client, who received personalized career guidance and employment assistance. The program introduced her to Southern Air, where she did on-the-job training and was later hired as a Design Detailer.



For more on Workforce Development and Virginia Career Works, visit humankind.org/economic-resource-center/workforce-development/ or snap the QR code with the camera on your phone.