

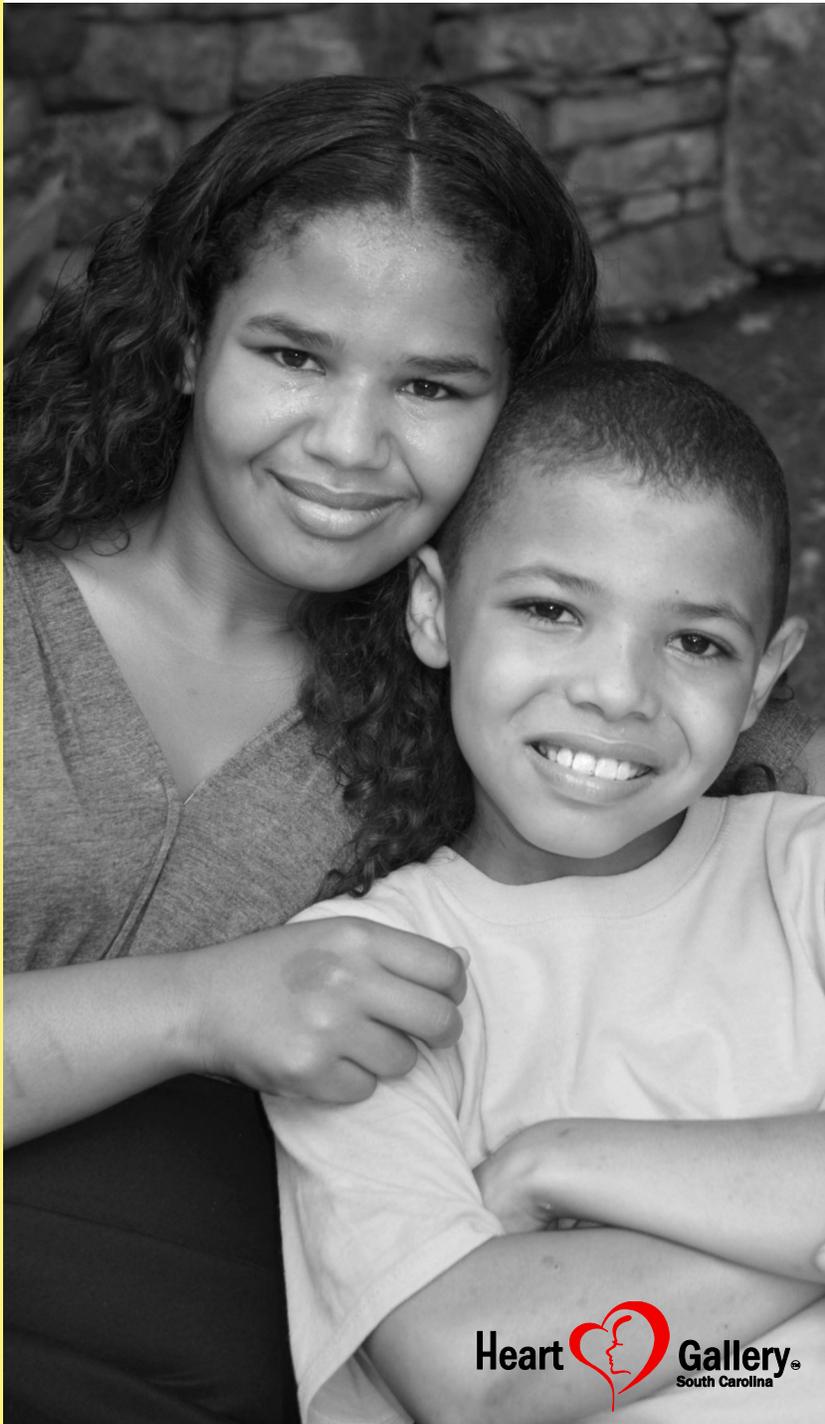
Advocates



Citizens Advocating Safety & Permanence

Foster Care Review Board - South Carolina Heart Gallery Newsletter

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Jessica & Gabe

Jessica describes herself as funny, outgoing, and sweet. She enjoys running, swimming, and going to the mall. Jessica would like to be a restaurant owner, cosmetologist, and kindergarten teacher when she gets older. Gabe wants to be a superhero, cop, and fireman so that he can help people. He loves playing outside and being outdoors. Gabe describes himself as smart, full of energy, and nice. Jessica and Gabe are seeking a family to adopt them together.

Contact info@scheartgallery.org for more information about adoption.

Photography by Susan Cinquemani



New Review Board Members



Standing: William Hefty (5C), Christopher Hollowell (1B), Dallas Shealy (8A), Joyce Hall (14B), Helen Bowden (15B), Betty Scheiner (13D)

Seated: Kelli Dulin (13A), Lauren Ford (RBC), Ann Fuller (7B), Leanne Vaughn (10C)



Standing: Jean Davis (8B), Deborah Kinard (8B), Arlene Ham (3A), Cletus Bartsch (10C), Kevin McCarthy (2A)

Seated: Millercin Weeks (5B), Lindsey McCallister (FCRB Staff Attorney), Malinda Blue (12B), Jean Pearson (12B)

WELCOME!

New Review Board Members



WELCOME!

*Standing: Monica Albright (15B), Danielle Calabro (RBC), Jessica Cliett (RBC),
Laura Nettles (16B), Neshunda Walters (3A)*

Seated: Tashima Martin (RBC), Cherie Mabry (16B), Jeanne Browder (15B)

Employee Spotlight



Lindsey McCallister

Foster Care Review Board Staff Attorney

Lindsey joined Foster Care Review Board as the staff attorney in August 2014. She has worked with vulnerable children in various capacities since college, and she comes to FCRB after spending two and a half years as an attorney at Richland County CASA. Lindsey grew up just outside of Jacksonville, Florida and is a passionate Gator fan. She also enjoys reading, running, and playing with her dog Penny.

South Carolina Heart Gallery



In 2015, the South Carolina Heart Gallery is celebrating its ten year anniversary. Since its inception in 2005, the SC Heart Gallery has grown tremendously. What started as a volunteer effort by Program Coordinator Millie Qualls has flourished into a thriving organization that is continuing to grow. Over the past ten years, 1,167 children attended photo shoots and 155 photographers donated their time and talent. Two of those photographers have volunteered to attend Heart Gallery photo shoots every single year. With the addition of video interviews in 2014, 87 children were videotaped. Since 2005, 1,547 community photo exhibits were held in donated public space. Additionally, 8,431 inquires have been received from interested families, 311 new family intakes have been processed, and 93 adoptive home studies have been completed. Out of all the children ever featured on the SC Heart Gallery, 465, or 51%, have been matched with adoptive families.



Many Christmas wishes came true for some upstate children in care due to the generosity of the employees at Draexlmaier Automotive in Duncan. Draexlmaier hosted an Angel Tree that included Christmas wishes for over 40 children currently in foster care. Christmas wishes ranged from necessities like hooded sweatshirts to dream presents like new bikes or iPads. The outpouring of presents for the children was incredible. Employees donated over 350 presents to make each child's holiday dreams come true.

Submitted by Selina Joyner,
Heart Gallery Program Assistant

*Board Member Suzane Gebhart (13D)
and Heart Gallery Program Coordinator
Millie Qualls help decorate the angel
tree. (photo by Somer Grasser)*

Advocacy in Action

On February 2, 2015, Foster Care Review Board 5E met with their Kershaw County Legislative Delegation and shared the work that the Review Board does for children in their county.



Kershaw County Director Jeanne Hannah, FCRB Member Laurie Parks, Representative Laurie Slade Funderburk, FCRB Member Sandra Inabinet, Senator Vincent A. Sheheen, FCRB Chair Mary Long, FCRB member Ernest Williams, and FCRB Supervisor Stephen Clyburn

In August 2014, Foster Care Review Board 5E participated in a Permanency Roundtable for a young man who has been part of the foster system for over a decade. A Permanency Roundtable (PRT) is a structured meeting intended to help establish legal permanency for youth by involving internal and external experts for the child. A PRT includes case presentation, rating of the child's permanency status in foster care, brainstorming about current barriers to permanency, and finally, development of a specific action plan to provide the best support for the child in care. Research by the Casey Foundation found that children who had at least one positive, lifelong connection to an adult were significantly more likely to achieve permanency. Youth whose action plans include a psychological evaluation to determine their needs were also more likely to achieve permanency. Finally, for youth who remained in care in the months following their PRT, it was discovered that the restrictiveness of the living situation decreased. For the child discussed at the PRT, which FCRB 5E attended, the results matched the research. Following the initial PRT, the child was provided with a psychological, had increased resources to counseling, and, a lifelong, positive adult was sought out to provide a connection. Mary Long, FCRB 5E Vice Chair, was "honored to be part of such a vital group of people that advocate on behalf of foster children and for their permanency, and noticed that half the people at the table were associated with FCRB as either a staff member or volunteer." Sandra Inabinet, a longtime board member, remembers the first review of this child's case, and is hopeful that the PRT will shed light on this child's needs and give him the resources to move forward in adulthood. In addition to the Foster Care Review Board, the PRT was attended by the child's Adoption Specialist, Mental Health Counselor, CASA Guardian ad Litem, Teaming Supervisor, Cottage Coordinator, and Clinical Consultant. This child is featured on the Heart Gallery, and while he is still waiting for his forever family, the board feels that the PRT helped move him in the right direction.

Submitted by Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

Review Board Roundup

Marion County 12B

In 2014, Foster Care Review Board 12B purchased and donated new and gently used interactive/educational games and books for family visitation at Marion County DSS. Review Board members regularly and actively participated in partners meetings. The board chair attended an adoption finalization hearing and Palmetto Power meeting in Columbia. The board vice chair attended a “Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma” workshop. Board members attended FCRB Annual Professional Development Day and Regional Professional Development Day.



Chairperson Harriet Williams (left) and Vice Chairperson Barbara Taylor-Best pose with some of their donated items for family visitation at Marion County DSS. In addition, Mrs. Williams holds a monetary donation from her dentist, the funds of which were used for additional items to enhance family visitation times.

Chairperson Harriet Williams (center) and Marion County DSS foster care staff with donated games and books.



Submitted by Angel Sbardella, Review Board Coordinator

Berkeley County 9B & 9E

Review Board members on both FCRB 9B and 9E have been busy this fall attending trainings and meetings to deepen their knowledge and strengthen their relationships with partners. During the second half of 2014, partners meetings were reconvened in Berkeley County. Board members attended regularly scheduled meetings to applaud improvements, share ideas to further progress, and continue developing the relationship between child welfare partners. In September, 9B RBMs Stephanie Easterling, Shelly Eicher, Chuck Koches, and Jerry Roberts joined 9E RBMs Gene Coon and Dave Fitzpatrick at the Regional Professional Development Day at Trident Tech to learn about being a trauma-informed child welfare system.

Submitted by Kate Bozik, Program Director

Aiken & Bamberg Counties 2B

Reuben and Deedee never imagined they would be spending Thursday afternoon waiting for their names to be called at the Aiken County Courthouse, but when their child's friend was in trouble, they responded. The family recalls meeting John several years ago, when he lived a few doors down in a foster home. Their child and John became friends and over the years, as John moved placements, maintained contact. When John turned seventeen years old earlier this year and expressed how much he wanted a home, they knew it was time to act. Deedee recalls John struggling in his group home, and knew that he needed a safe and stable home. Reuben shared that he had no doubt that John would end up in their home. "John has had some rough patches, but he is a good kid and he belongs in our family." Going before the judge for a Permanency Hearing, the family shared their desire to have John join their family, and with the support of the agency and Guardian ad Litem, Rueben and Deedee were granted legal custody. John's Guardian ad Litem, Linda Hook, has been involved with the family for eight years, and expressed how "excited she was by today's outcome. Knowing that John trusts this family, and this family loves him is the best possible outcome." FCRB 2B board members Phyllis Yerace and Mary Kolarek attended the hearing and were thrilled that after reviewing John's case since 2009, this young man now has a family of his own.

Submitted by Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator



FCRB 2B members Mary Kolarek & Phyllis Yerace, parents Deedee and Rueben, and Guardian ad Litem Linda Hook

Aiken & Bamberg Counties 2B

On August 20, 2014, Senator Tom Young spent the morning observing the review board process with Foster Care Review Board 2B in Aiken County. Mary Kolarek, Vice Chairperson, “hope[s] today’s review board experience with Senator Young encourages other state review boards and legislators to work closely together to bring greater efficiency in the welfare and judicial system and expedite permanent placement for children.” Senator Young shared that attending the review was an “enlightening experience and it was worthwhile as the subcommittee continues to make recommendations to improve child protective services.”

Submitted by Nina Spinelli,
Review Board Coordinator



*Senator Tom Young with FCRB
2B members Steve McElmurray,
Mary Kolarek, and Phyllis Yerace*

Cherokee County 7B

Providing school supplies for our service project doesn't sound like a very exciting selection for FCRB 7B. We (Dawn Bridges, Sissy Brock, Ann Fuller, Frances Littlejohn and Janet Moss) have chosen this project for the 14 years that I have served on this board. Several years ago our members decided that it might be time to change and do something different; however, it has become clear to us that the school supplies we provide are important to the children and relied upon by our partners. The month of August was only a short week away when I received my first phone call. It was from the Foster Care Supervisor at DSS asking “When would we have the school supplies available as the caseworkers needed to deliver the filled book bags to our children placed out of county?” The next call was from the Foster Parent Association President, “Just wondering when the school supplies would be available for the foster parents to pick up?” This really made me stop and think. I immediately sent the message out to our review board members that our foster parents were counting on us to help with this cost. Like the troopers on all of our boards across the state, they responded and within a week, our children had the necessary supplies to begin the school year. The generosity of our board members allows for extra supplies to be available throughout the school year for our children and can be used by DSS to help other children of clients in need. So remember when choosing your service projects, your project may not be the most exciting or inventive one but it can certainly will be a big hit. Tried and true is okay ! Every child deserves the right tools for success.

Submitted by Sissy Brock, FCRB 7B member

Spartanburg County 7A

Spartanburg FCRB 7A was very active in 2014. Board members contacted and partnered with local businesses to provide back-to-school items for children in care: Smith Drugs provided 100 book bags, 100 notebooks, and 100 composition books; BIC Corporation provided writing supplies; and private donors helped purchase notebook paper and other miscellaneous school supplies. This large service project was spearheaded by board member June Bond. As a thank you to Spartanburg DSS foster care staff, the board provided a holiday breakfast for 50 foster care workers. Board members arranged for children

in care to attend a Wofford football game and meet the coaches, purchased and donated 135 Wendy's/Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption coupon booklets, and sent graduation cards and gift cards to high school graduates and scholarship recipients. Two board members attended the Spartanburg Heart Gallery photo shoot and provided snacks for summer Heart Gallery photo shoots. One board member attended and took minutes at all 2014 partners meetings and attended both Regional Professional Development Day in Simpsonville and the 7C Jaidon's Law training at Spartanburg County DSS.



7A members partnered with BIC Corporation, Smith Drugs, and private donors, to provide 100 back-to-school book bags for children in care.



7A members arranged a holiday breakfast for 50 DSS foster care staff members.

Submitted by Angel Sbardella, Review Board Coordinator

Greenville County 13C

Peals of laughter and expressions of excitement prevail among the foster children as they enter Shoe Carnival in Cherrydale Shopping Center to participate in Shoe Night. Shoe Night is an event, sponsored twice a year (April 10 and August 14, 2014) by the Greenville County Foster Parents Association (GCFPA), when a child in foster care may pick out his/her very own brand new pair of shoes. For many of the children, this is the first pair of new shoes they have ever owned. The Rotary Club of Greenville East provides funding from its pancake breakfast fundraiser to assist with underwriting the cost of Shoe Night. 13C Review Board members, Gene Bishop, Jane Daniel, Suzanne Gebhart, Vernon McCurry (also a Rotary Club member), and Rhonda Littleton, sell tickets to and attend the pancake breakfast to support Shoe Night and the children who get shiny new shoes as a result. On Shoe Night, many of the Rotarians join the children, assisting with trying on shoes and making final selections. The girls seem to focus on shoes with sequins or bows while the boys lean toward selecting athletic shoes. As the children check out at the counter and leave with their prized possessions, the smiles on their faces express appreciation and happiness.

Submitted by Vernon McCurry, FCRB 13C member

Beaufort & Jasper Counties 14B

On January 12, 2015, Foster Care Review Board 14B's members, Ollie Mae Ferrell and Barbara Solley, Chair, attended the Jasper County Department of Social Services Partners Meeting. Rochelle Priester, Jasper County Director, shared that the agency is working on the Annual Easter Egg Hunt in April, which corresponds to Child Abuse Prevention Month and is a great way to meet new foster parents and connect with the community. James Green, President of the Jasper County Foster Parent Association, shared that the Christmas Party was a huge success, and with the help of the Foster Care Review Board, they were able to give each child between four and five gifts. In addition, they were able to provide smaller gifts to siblings and foster siblings that attended the party, and it was wonderful to see how much of an impact the gifts made. In addition, local service organizations worked together to fulfill wish lists. One little girl wanted to start a garden and asked for soil, pots and seeds. She was beyond words when she opened her present and got her wish! In addition, representatives from Adoptions were present and shared that they are working hard to find pre-adopt homes so children may smoothly transition to adoption once they are legally free. The Guardian ad Litem program continues to advocate for their children in care.

Submitted by Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

Kershaw & Richland Counties 5E

Knitting has always been a passion of FCRB 5E board member Sandra Inabinet, but over the last few months, she has turned her hobby into a project for the Kershaw County Department of Social Services. Sandra and her knitting circle hand-made 20 scarves for the children in care. The project began last winter, when her group knitted red and white scarves for Valentine's Day, and they became so popular, that they decided to continue the project for Christmas. One child, Beth, received a scarf for Valentine's Day and happened to be at DSS for a review when the new Christmas scarves arrived. Picking one out, Beth shared that the "scarf is so pretty and the colors are beautiful. I loved the one I got in February, and wondered who made it, and it was nice getting to meet the person who made it for me. I've worn my red one a lot, and I'm happy about getting this new one." Mary Long, FCRB 5E board member, thanked Sandra and her friends for making the scarves. Mary continued that it was a "joy to be able to witness one of the teenage girls in foster care pick out her own scarf. She then mentioned getting a red

scarf for Valentine's Day previously not realizing the same ladies had also made those. Kindness and service to others is a true blessing!"

"When I saw firsthand how excited one of our Kershaw County foster children was to pick out a new scarf made just for her, it was worth all of the hours spent knitting scarves for this project," said Sandra Inabinet. "My friends and I want these precious girls to know that these were made especially for them with love. Hopefully these will bring joy and a sense of worth to each recipient." The board also donated stuffed animals and toys for the visitation rooms at the office.



Board members Mary Long, Sandra Inabinet, and Laurie Parks with new toys for the visitation room

Submitted by Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

Florence County 12A

For the 12A annual service project for 2011, 2012, 2013 & 2014 board members Betty Hester, Wanda James, Jerry Lyles & Tiffany Saunders have each given \$100.00 to the Florence County DSS Foster Care Teens, ages 13 – 18, for them to go on a Teen Trip.



Submitted by Doretta Crosson-Irby,
Review Board Coordinator

Pickens County 13A

Foster Care Review Board 13A worked to collect toys, hygiene items and donations for the Pickens County Dream Center for the holiday season. In collaboration with United Way of Pickens County, the Dream Center's primary focus is providing a transitional housing shelter and to educate and mentor families while assisting them in finding employment and assistance to help them overcome poverty and become self-sufficient. The Dream Center is a privately funded organization, receiving no governmental aid for operational or maintenance costs. Private donors and supporters have made the opening of the new center possible, but the need for financial assistance will always be

there as will the need for mentors and volunteers. Tonya Wilson, who focuses on Family Preservation with the Pickens County Department of Social Services is "so thankful for the Dream Center in Easley. It is so wonderful to have this program for our families in Pickens County. Not only can our families receive practical parenting classes, they can also grow from the interpersonal relationships developed within the programs. Even after our cases close, our families continue to have a resource that can be an ongoing support. Together, we all help make families stronger, which will continue to strengthen the future of all of Pickens County."

Submitted by Nina Spinelli ,
Review Board Coordinator



*13A RB members
Kelli Dulin, Nina
Spinelli (RBC), Jan
Dulin, Judy Rozelle,
and Betty Garrison*

Pickens County 13A & 13E

On Thursday, February 12, 2015, Foster Care Review Boards 13A and 13E attended the 5th Annual Julie Valentine Center Luncheon. The Julie Valentine Center provides resources and treatment to thousands of sexual assault victims across the upstate of South Carolina – including more than 2,000 in 2014 alone. Last year, 766 of the Center’s clients were children. The main guest speaker at the luncheon was Jim Clemente, a former FBI profiler, advisor for the television show Criminal Minds, and a survivor of childhood abuse.



Betty Garrison (13A), Ellen Johnson (13A), Jim Clemente, Judy Rozelle (13A), and Wilma Shealy (13E)

Foster Care Review Boards 13A & 13E joined forces to donate children’s books for the visitation rooms at the Pickens County Department of Social Services. Former teacher Wilma Shealy noted that “children who are reading do better in school, and like to learn– it’s a basic thing, and very necessary.” Board member Ellen Johnson, a former English teacher, knows “firsthand that a love of reading is crucial to success in school and in life. For troubled children, books provide a window to the

wider world, a connection point. Just being able to take refuge in a book can make such a difference in a child's life.” Foster Care Supervisor Robin Libby is “extremely grateful to receive these books for our children, because it opens new horizons to them and offers a wonderful activity for children and parents while at the office. It is great to have books in the meeting rooms because we see parents that struggle with interaction, and books open a way to give conversation and contact.”



13E RBMs: Melissa Robinson, Wilma Shealy, Jeff Turner, Robin Libby (Pickens County Foster Care), and Dan Sharpe



Betty Garrison (13A), Wilma Shealy (13E), Judy Rozelle (13A), Robin Libby (Pickens County Foster Care), Ellen Johnson (13A), and Jennifer Stehl (Pickens County Foster Care)

Submitted by Nina Spinelli , Review Board Coordinator

Pickens County 13E

On September 30, 2014, Foster Care be “on target” and really provided the best Review Board 13E Chair Melissa overview of what the Review Board does and Robinson and Review Board Coordinator Nina how the board and guardian can work together Spinelli presented a training session for the for the best interest of a child. Brigitte Pickens County Guardian ad Litem In-Service Stephens, Pickens County Guardian ad Litem Day. The training day was an opportunity for Coordinator loved the training and is always the Review Board to share the mission, appreciative of the great work that FCRB does objectives, and purpose of the Review Board and is always happy to have training follow-up. and to outline the structure and organization of

the review process for the Guardians ad Litem. Tom Garrett, a volunteer GAL for six years, enjoyed the session and felt that the new information and material will help as he writes his recommendations. Dave and Maryanne Turner have been co-guardians for several years and found the presentation to



Submitted by Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

Richland County 5B

Spearheaded by RBM Ann Maletic, Richland County DSS received several car seats in November of 2014 provided by the Car Dealership Association of Richland County. Ann made tags for each seat.

Additionally, Ann Maletic handmade and donated 7 small blankets for the babies and young children entering foster care at Richland DSS. They were presented on December 10, 2014 to Richland County DSS.



RBC Doretta Crosson-Irby and 5B members Ann Maletic, Cheryl Anderson, and Millercin Weeks.



Car seat tag



5B member Ann Maletic and Richland County DSS Resource Staff

Submitted by Doretta Crosson-Irby, Review Board Coordinator

Spartanburg County 7C

Board members from 7C were very active in 2014. FCRB 7C organized a training breakfast, led by Attorney Ken Schabel, regarding Jaidon's Law; board members invited Spartanburg County DSS, GAL Program, Region 1 Adoption Services, Cherokee County DSS and partners, IFCCS, DSS attorneys, and local representatives. Board members provided breakfast casseroles, coffee, and drinks to the approximately 70 people who attended the training. In addition to successfully implementing the Jaidon's Law training, 7C board members volunteered at and donated items to Heart Gallery photo shoots in the

Upstate. The 2014 chairperson met with the new DSS director as well as legislators to update them on developments in Spartanburg County DSS foster care. Board members regularly attended and actively participated in partners meetings. Several board members attended the Legislative Delegation Meeting in August, at which former 7C board member MaryAnn Riley was recognized as 2013 FCRB Member of the Year. Board members also attended FCRB Annual Professional Development Day and Regional Professional Development Day in Simpsonville.



Board members Monica Hill, Zora Massing, Carole Self, and Lisa Scott attended FCRB Annual Professional Development Day (pictured with RBC Angel Sbardella—center)

Submitted by Angel Sbardella, Review Board Coordinator

Dillon & Marlboro Counties 4A

In 2014, FCRB 4A sponsored the Independent Living Pack-a-Sack Program through the South Carolina Foster Parent Association. The board's total monetary donation for 2014 was \$250. This is a program that the board members have enjoyed sponsoring for the past few years. The 2014 4A board chairperson attended partners meetings for Dillon and Marlboro counties, volunteered at the Conway Heart Gallery photo shoot, attended FCRB Annual Professional Development Day, and attended a TPR hearing. Three board members attended FCRB Regional Professional Development Day in Florence.

Submitted by Angel Sbardella, Review Board Coordinator

Kershaw County 5E

On Thursday, December 11th 2014, Foster Care Review Board 5E helped play Santa Claus to the children in care in Kershaw County. Gathering Christmas wish lists from the children in care, the board members worked within their community to make sure that each child had all their wishes granted. There was such an overwhelming response that the board had enough gifts to also provide small presents for siblings who attended the holiday party. Mary Long, board member, shared, “it looks like this may become a tradition. Everyone thought this was so much fun and a fantastic idea. All you have to do is ask and people respond—and boy how did they respond. A fantastic time was had by all which resulted in a fantastic time shopping for gifts and a fantastic Christmas for these children.”

Submitted by Nina Spinelli,
Review Board Coordinator



Laurie Parks, Sandra Inabinet, and Mary Long shopping for presents (top) and putting them by the tree (bottom)



Horry County 15B & 15C

Boards 15B and 15C completed a “Lunch on Us” service project to show appreciation for Horry County DSS and IFCCS Myrtle Beach staff. From July 2014 through December 2014, Review Board members presented DSS and IFCCS staff with \$5 gift cards to Chick-fil-a.

Submitted by Doretta Crosson-Irby,
Review Board Coordinator



RB members Heather Dempster, Colleen Alton, Kimberly Inabinet, and Candy Woods with IFCCS service coordinators Kevin Long, & Christina Ricks, and Kathy Hamilton (RBM).

Important Upcoming Dates

Annual Professional Development Day	April 24	New Member Orientation	May 29
State Board Meeting	April 24	State Offices Closed for Independence Day	July 3
Confederate Memorial Day	May 11	State Board Meeting	July 24
Memorial Day	May 25		

2015

Vision Statement

South Carolina will make child well-being a top priority by assuring safe, permanent families for all children in foster care.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Foster Care Review Board is to provide external accountability for the foster care system and to advocate on behalf of children in foster care.

Advocates is published semi-annually by the Foster Care Review Board. The deadline for submission for articles for the next issue of *Advocates* (2015 Issue Two) is

June 26, 2015.

Anyone wishing to submit an article should contact *Advocates* editor Selina Joyner at:

SJoyner@oepp.sc.gov

The publisher reserves the right to make the final determination as to the content of each issue. Articles submitted are subject to editing and are not guaranteed inclusion.

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