



For Immediate Release:

October 10, 2017

Contact:

Drew Melson

Director of Marketing Communications

Office: 804-553-3318 Mobile: 804-267-9569

Email: dmelson@sjvmail.net

Virginia's first Recovery High School, McShin Academy, to open at St. Joseph's Villa

Serving students grades 9 to 12 with substance use disorder

Richmond, VA – The Virginia Department of Health reports more than 1,400 people died of drug overdoses in Virginia in 2016—a 38 percent increase from 2015. Two Richmond-based nonprofits, the McShin Foundation and St. Joseph's Villa, are partnering to break the cycle of addiction in adolescents by establishing the first recovery high school in Virginia.

McShin Academy, located on the Villa campus, is designed to help students recover from substance use disorders while continuing their education in a small and nurturing environment.

"We have seen an alarming rise in opioid use and fatalities among teenagers," said Honesty Liller, CEO of the McShin Foundation. "There is an increased need to help teens recover while keeping them in school and engaged in other activities."

The McShin Foundation is Virginia's leading Peer-to-Peer Recovery Community Organization. Students of McShin Academy will receive guidance from McShin's peer recovery coaches. St. Joseph's Villa will provide education services. The Villa currently operates four schools on its 82-acre campus that address students' distinct academic and behavioral needs.

Nine out of ten people who meet the clinical criteria for substance use disorders began smoking, drinking or using other drugs during adolescence, according to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse. While there are treatment facilities for drug and alcohol addiction, McShin Academy will be the first place in Virginia to support students in recovery as they complete their high school education.

"There are not many schools in the country that operate a substance use recovery model," said Cindy Faison, COO of St. Joseph's Villa. "It is a relatively new concept."

McShin Academy will be housed in its own building and run separately from the Villa's other schools. It is funded by private tuition, with scholarship opportunities available through the McShin Foundation.

"St. Joseph's Villa was founded to meet the most critical needs of vulnerable children and youth. Our partnership with the McShin Foundation directly aligns with that mission," said Kathleen Burke Barrett, Villa CEO.

More information about McShin Academy can be found at www.mcshinacademy.com.

#

St. Joseph's Villa

Established in 1834, St. Joseph's Villa is the longest serving children's nonprofit organizations in the country. Today, St. Joseph's Villa is a non-sectarian 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization impacting 3,000 children and families each year. The Villa's day and residential programs include: special and non-traditional education; education/housing services for homeless children and their families; summer and after-school care for children with disabilities; stabilization services for children in crisis; and housing for adults with disabilities.