



VJJA Meritorious Award in the Area of Community Service 2023

Name: TONYA PULLIAM

Each year the association presents a Meritorious Award in the Area of Community Service. The community service honor is bestowed upon a group or individual working to make a difference in their community. This year is no exception. Our recipient has worked tirelessly and made a difference in the Richmond area.

(See award write-up below)



(L to R) Samantha Higgins, VJJA President, Tonya Pulliam, Award Recipient, Katherine Farmer, Awards Committee Chair.

Our 2023 award winner completed her bachelor's degree at Virginia Union University and her master's degree at the College of William and Mary. She has more than 18 years experience providing direct service to children and families, leadership and supervision to staff, and outstanding volunteerism to the community. She considers herself a life-long learner and works diligently to learn more to help others develop themselves to their full potential.

By day our recipient is the President and CEO of a provider organization, PICF, which has a mission to enhance the lives of children, families, and communities through empowerment, education, practical life skills and opportunities, all while offering a holistic approach to serving the disadvantaged and underserved. One of PICF's core categories of programming is operating a series of Independent Living Apartments serving juvenile justice youth returning from direct care and youth aging out of foster care who have not established permanency before

leaving the foster care system. Youth are afforded the opportunity to experience independence while remaining in a structured and safe environment. The highly structured coaching model engages youth in real-life, real-time independence while offering a nurturing environment that is suited for advanced learning.

In addition to her day job, our recipient is constantly serving her community. She is the founder of a non-profit, the Unique Resource Center, and a philanthropic thrift-store Sarah's Den. The programs offer a host of services to enhance the quality of the lives of people in their community, including an emergency food pantry, employment and financial literacy services, a clothing closet and more. More than 30 pieces of free clothing are distributed daily along with hygiene packs and meals for the homeless. Sarah's Den is located on Broad Street in historic Jackson Ward and our recipient is consistently planning events for the community, including events to distribute school clothing and school supplies.

For all of these reasons and more, please join me in congratulating our

2023 VJJA Meritorious Award Winner in the Area of Community Service

TONYA PULLIAM

from the Pulliam Innovative Consulting Firm (PICF)