



Resolution in Recognition of the Visionaries and Founders of Charlie's Gift

- WHEREAS** Johanna and Mitchell Vernick, with great generosity of spirit, recognized the needs of children on the Autism spectrum, their parents and families, and
- WHEREAS** The Vernick family sought to lead by example in response to a broader community need, attracted the expertise, support, guidance and creativity of caregivers, professionals and friends in the community, and
- WHEREAS** In collaboration with Dr. Nicole Dawson, Mary Kiser and Suzanne Petree, Charlie's Gift opened its doors in Downers Grove, Illinois in 2007 in service to children on the Autism spectrum and their families, and
- WHEREAS** The story, *What's Autism?*, eloquently told and masterfully illustrated by Gene Mandarino, became a much sought-after resource for educating the broader community about Autism, with its donated proceeds underwriting this important work, and
- WHEREAS** The care and support for the patient and the family established by Charlie's Gift became the gold standard for treatment that few have matched to this day, and
- WHEREAS** The next chapter of Charlie's Gift began in 2009, as the operation of the program was entrusted to The Community House, in alignment with its mission to "build community by providing inspiring opportunities for learning, social support and recreation," and
- WHEREAS** The Counseling Center of The Community House was honored to continue the laudable work of the Vernick Family, Dr. Dawson, Mary Kiser, Suzanne Petree, and its founding directors Christine Ekis, Rene LaPorta and Debra Mandarino, and
- WHEREAS** The Community House has continued to steward this program, integrating it with the broader services of The Counseling Center and refining it in response to community need, while maintaining the core mission and high standard of care and compassion that defines Charlie's Gift, and
- WHEREAS** The work of the counseling staff of The Community House will forever be inspired by visionary founders and pioneers of Charlie's Gift, and
- WHEREAS** The full integration of Charlie's Gift into the Counseling Center of The Community House allows for greater coordination of care, broader services across the eastern DuPage County region, inspired leadership and compelling innovation,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that on this day, the Fifteenth of September, Two Thousand Eighteen, the Board of Trustees of The Community House does hereby record for history our abiding gratitude to the visionary pioneers who shaped the treatment and care of children on the Autism spectrum. The Vernick Family and those who joined them in the earliest days of this important work will forever be our inspiration, having set the high standard against which we measure daily our work. While the name of the services known as "Charlie's Gift" will no longer be used in the operation of The Counseling Center, caring for and treating children on the Autism spectrum and supporting their families will forever be at the core of our work, now fully integrated into the operation of The Counseling Center of The Community House.