



Cunningham Children's Home

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Cunningham CEO Sam Banks Accepts New Challenge

Having just completed his 25th year of service to Cunningham Children's Home with the last 20 as its President/CEO, Sam Banks has accepted a new challenge outside the Champaign-Urbana community.

In early March, Sam will become the CEO of Glenwood School for Boys and Girls. Glenwood is a community supported non-profit organization that provides socially and economically disadvantaged children with a comprehensive residential, education and life-skills program. Its campuses are located in Glenwood and St. Charles, Illinois.

Announcing an effective resignation date of February 29th, Sam shared with the Cunningham Board of Directors that “the decision to leave Cunningham was the toughest I’ve ever had to make. While I’m excited about the opportunity to return to my Chicago roots to serve children and youth in need, not being a part of the great work of Cunningham, the kids, staff and supporters will leave a hole that can only be filled by the challenges and new opportunities to make a difference awaiting me at Glenwood.”

In making this announcement, Cunningham Children's Home Board of Directors President, Casey Andrew says, “Sam Banks has been an exemplary leader for Cunningham during his tenure. The Board and staff are deeply appreciative of all Sam has done to build Cunningham into the strong, stable organization that it is today. Sam will definitely be missed and we all wish him the very best as he continues to serve children and youth.” Andrew goes on to say, “For more than 112 years, Cunningham has provided quality care for children and youth. The Board has faith in the Cunningham staff and leadership team and knows Sam is leaving Cunningham in a position to continue the tradition of quality service to children, youth and their families.”

Under the leadership of Sam Banks, Cunningham Children's Home has grown from a staff of 75 serving 57 youth with an annual budget of just under \$1 million to a multi-faceted child welfare agency with a staff of 222 and an annual budget of \$12.5 million. From its roots in residential care, Cunningham has expanded to provide a variety of residential, community-based and educational services to over 260 youth and their families annually. Throughout this time of change and growth, Cunningham has maintained a balanced annual budget, received statewide recognition for the quality of its programs and dramatically increased its levels of charitable support.

In addition to Sam Banks, Cunningham has a highly-qualified, experienced leadership team which has worked closely with him to develop and implement this organizational transformation. This team consists of Patricia Ege (Vice President for Programs and Services), Daniel Holmer (Vice President for Finance and Operations) and Cloydia Hill Larimore (Vice President for Development). Collectively, these three individuals have over 60 years of experience at Cunningham Children's Home. As the process is developed to select Sam's successor, the Board of Directors is confident that Cunningham leadership will continue moving the organization forward, providing quality care to children, youth and families.

Sam Banks, Cunningham President/CEO – 1988 to 2008

A Legacy of Excellence

- 1988 Samuel P. Banks is appointed Executive Director of Cunningham Children’s Home, a highly respected, professional residential treatment center caring for and providing professional services for children and youth who have been abused and neglected.
- 1989 The Goodman Diagnostic Center is completed and opened.
- 1993 The Lake Mattoon cabin is razed and rebuilt.
- 1994 Expanded Independent Living Programs including transitional living opportunities for older adolescent males and programming for pregnant and parenting teens.
- 1995 The newly constructed Kendall Gill Community Boys Group Home opens on the corner of Washington and Vine in Urbana.
- Cunningham celebrates its 100th Anniversary and begins its tradition of Homecoming Celebrations.
- 1996 The Board of Directors purchases 17.4 contiguous acres of land to the north increasing its main campus size to just over 32 acres.
- 1997 Cunningham’s Therapeutic Foster Care Program begins.
- 1998 CIRCLE Academy Therapeutic Day School opens.
- 2000 The Cunningham Board of Directors unveils its Master Campus Plan to upgrade its facilities to better meet the needs of the severely emotionally disturbed children and youth residing on its main campus.
- 2001 The Cunningham Children’s Home Foundation is established to focus on fund raising and asset management to provide increased financial support and stability.
- 2004 The “Lighting the Way” capital campaign is launched with a goal of \$15 million for the funding of the first phase of the master campus plan.
- 2005 The Residential Treatment Center opens as a home to 30 youth in August. This facility also includes a clinical services department, program administration and health clinic.
- 2006 The Spiritual Life Center opens and Phase I of the Master Campus Plan is completed.
- 2007 October 18th, Cunningham launches the Coach’s Campaign led by former University of Illinois men’s basketball coach Lou Henson and his wife Mary who are joined in this effort by former Illini great Kendall Gill and his wife Wendy. This phase of the “Lighting the Way” capital campaign will provide funds for the Special Therapies Center within the proposed Education Complex. As of January 2008, the Coach’s Campaign has generated just under \$1 million in gifts and pledges.