



"Changing lives through education"

The Elizabeth Kates Foundation Newsletter

www.TheElizabethKatesFoundation.org

INSIDE OUT

Spring 2025

A Message From the President

Dear Friends,

As we approach Kates Day on May 7, I am greatly humbled when I realize how many people are responsible for the success of our biggest event of the year. Thank you to the inmates who work hard all year growing the plants, and making the crafts and baked goods that are a big focus of Kates Day. Thank you to Warden Ratliffe-Walker and the entire staff of VCCW who are a vital part of the Kates Day success. And, last but not least, our gratitude goes to all of our Foundation members and donors who continue to support us year after year.

Because of each and every one of you, The Elizabeth Kates Foundation continues to serve the educational needs of imprisoned women to help them start a new and productive life when they return to the community.

I look forward to seeing you at Kates Day.

With heartfelt appreciation,
Vickey Verwey

A Message From the Warden

Thanks to all our inmates and our staff at VCCW who work hard to make Kates Day such a tremendous success. And, thank you to The Elizabeth Kates Foundation, which plays an important role in inmate education and preparation for a successful life after prison. We are grateful for all they do and for their dedication for the past 83 years.

With deepest gratitude,
Dana Ratliffe-Walker

Attention Foundation Members

Please renew your membership if you haven't already. Membership is \$25 a year. If you are not a member, we hope you will join. For membership information visit:

www.theelizabethkatesfoundation.org.

Every year former board member Peggy Spera spends months collecting fabulous items to fill the beautiful gift baskets for the Kates Day raffle. Tickets are still \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Please note: a name and phone number must be legible on the back of every ticket turned in. Foundation and board members will be given tickets to sell to friends and coworkers. Bring your check or cash and ticket stubs to Kates Day for the drawing, or mail them if you are unable to attend. (The Elizabeth Kates Foundation, PO Box 64, Goochland, VA 23063).

Kates Day - Wednesday, May 7

1:00 pm - Security check-in begins. Shop for crafts, baked goods and raffle tickets. You may pay for and pick up your reserved dinner tickets

2:00 – 5:00 pm - Plant Sale is open. Raffle tickets, baked goods and crafts are available. You may also pay for and pick up your reserved dinner tickets.

5:00 pm - Annual Meeting of The Elizabeth Kates Foundation in the chapel.

5:30 pm - Dinner and entertainment in the gym featuring the VCCW choir, raffle prizes, and scholarship presentation. Dinner is \$15 and reservations are required by Friday, May 2. **Call Ms. Wheeler for reservations, (804) 556-7408.** Tickets may be paid for by cash or check only and picked up at Kates Day.

Note: The meeting and dinner are open to the public.

Regulations for Kates Day

Items **NOT** allowed: Cell phones, purses, Fitbits, Apple Watches, key rings with multiple keys, and credit cards.

Your photo identification is required for admittance to VCCW, and you must pass through a metal detector before entering. You may bring only your ID, cash, checks and a single car key with you. Plastic bags will be provided for these items upon your arrival.

Dress code regulations stipulate modest clothing. Clothing NOT allowed: sleeveless blouses or shirts, leggings, camouflage clothing, and orange clothing. Jeans must be neat, no frayed hems or holes. Knee-length Bermuda shorts are allowed but no short shorts.



Spring Education Update

- The Kates Foundation is pleased to announce that 72 women are taking college courses this semester, some with Pell Grants and others with scholarships awarded by The Foundation. Spring courses include College Composition II, U.S. History to 1877, Ethics and Society, Religions of the World and College Success Skills.
- Thanks to our donors, we also continue to provide scholarships for correspondence courses and funds for the Commercial Drivers License Program (CDL) at the State Farm Work Center.
- As always, we provide funds for the Horticulture Program, and inmates are currently busy growing and tending plants for Kates Day while earning their Horticulture Certifications.
- Kates Readers, a book club for women working on a GED, promotes the joy of reading while enhancing vocabulary and learning skills. We are thrilled to hear that after group discussions, women like to send their books home to share with their families. We especially appreciate Ms. Weir, the GED instructor who encourages book club participation.
- Forty-three women have completed various educational programs and attended a Spring graduation ceremony. To encourage educational participation and success, The Kates Foundation provides small gifts, cards and refreshments after the ceremony.

Student Testimonial

"The horticulture class allowed me to nurture the good in myself while nurturing the seeds provided by The Kates Foundation. At the time, I was attending college classes that were paid for by Kates. I was also able to sell plants at Kates Day. This gave me experience and much needed joy by allowing me to dip my toe into the world of work pre-release." – Natasha

CDL Update

Andy Gibson is the Logistics Manager at the State Farm Agribusiness operations in State Farm, Virginia. Responsible for ensuring and delivering the supply of food statewide for the Department of Corrections, Gibson saw a natural fit between the trucking business and job training for inmates. Now when he sends a truck of food supplies across the state, an inmate with her Commercial Learners Permit may be behind the wheel, with a driver/trainer in the passenger seat, and an officer in a back seat. Meanwhile, the student driver is earning miles toward the 60 to 80 required hours of behind-the-wheel training before obtaining an official CDL.

The program, which began in late 2023, currently has six students in the comprehensive classroom program who will receive between 120 – 180 hours of training throughout the course of the program. Thirteen women have graduated, and three have been released and are now working full-time for major trucking companies nationwide.

"We are grateful to The Kates Foundation for the financial support they have given us. These contributions remove financial barriers from prospective student inmates and improve efficiency across the board. We thank them for sharing our goals of changing lives in a profound way," said Gibson.



The Foundation provided gift bags to inmates for graduation, which included a journal, a pen, a calendar, a word search book and graduation card.



Horticulture students made beautiful fresh wreaths to sell during the holidays.



Women at State Farm Work Center made beautiful fall pumpkins to sell at Kates Day



See you at Kates Day, where many beautiful crafts made by inmates are available for purchase.

The mission of The Elizabeth Kates Foundation is to provide educational and vocational programs to reduce recidivism.

The Elizabeth Kates Foundation is a not - for - profit 501(c)(3) organization. A copy of the Foundation's financial statement may be obtained from: The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218.





**P. O. Box 64
Goochland, VA 23063**

The Elizabeth Kates Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization. We encourage you to participate by joining our Foundation as a member and/or by making contributions. Annual dues are \$25.00 and our year ends March 31.

\$_____ Annual Dues (\$25.00)

If you wish to make an additional contribution, we have two funds for your consideration:

\$_____ CeCe Bullard Scholarship Fund helps provide college level education

\$_____ General Fund used for all other projects.

☐

My company's matching gift form is enclosed.

If you would like your contribution to be a memorial or gift to honor someone, please indicate below. All checks should be made payable to The Elizabeth Kates Foundation and mailed to the address above. Please be sure to give us your name and address so we can send proper acknowledgement to you for your records.

Your name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Gift in honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

With thanks for: _____

Other: _____

Notices should be sent to (gift amount not included in notices):

Name: _____

Address: _____

Our records are not shared with others. A financial statement is available upon written request from the
Office of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218