

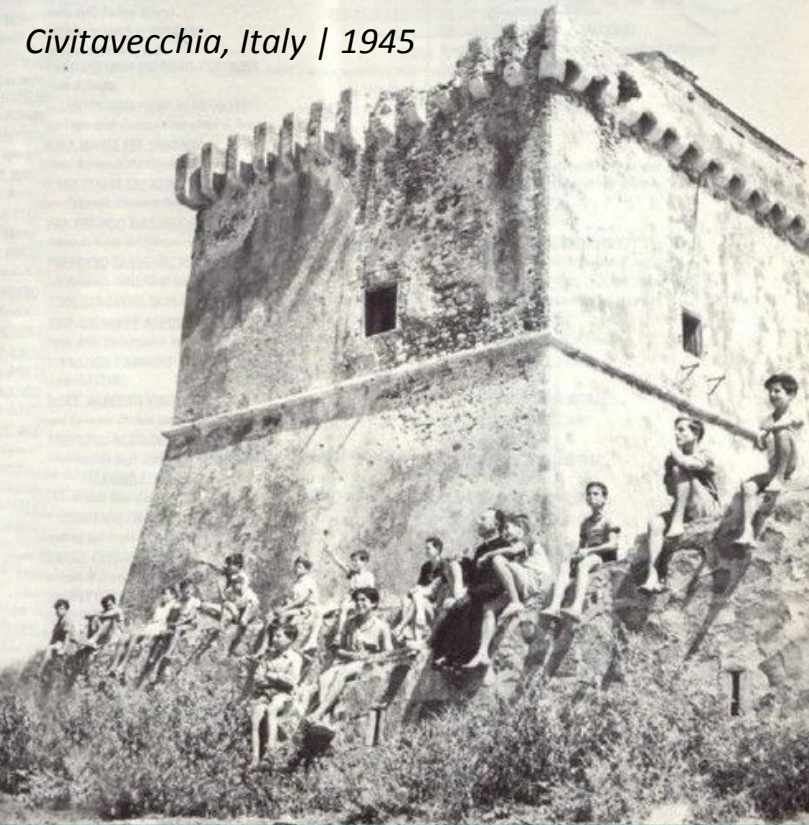


A CHANCE  
IN LIFE

# SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER

Boys' & Girls' Towns of Italy | Ethiopia | India | Bolivia | Colombia | Guatemala | Peru | Mexico | Uganda | USA

*Civitavecchia, Italy | 1945*



*New York City, USA | 2021*



## The First Village

*"I had imagined the Village was a big thing," wrote one of the group of boys who arrived there October 28. "Instead there it all was right in front of me. There was the front of the house as it is today, but all broken. The only room was the dormitory. The beds had straw mattresses. There were enough blankets but, when it rained, water dripped from the ceiling. Dirt fell down on us from the broken roof boards." - But For the Grace of God, Monsignor Carroll-Abbing*

Looking back, it is hard to imagine the humble beginnings of the Village that our founder, Monsignor Carroll-Abbing, describes in his book. We know now that this broken house with straw mattresses would become, with hard work and the help of innumerable donors, a campus with several dormitories, vocational training centers, gardens and a small farm. Now called La Repubblica dei Ragazzi (Boys' & Girls' Republic of Italy), the first Village has served as a beautiful home to young people in need for more than seventy-five years.

Reading how the Monsignor was "fraught with discouragement", I am strangely encouraged. If such an incredible feat could be done with so few resources, how much might we achieve here as we open our first program in New York City, surrounded by supporters that have stuck with us throughout the decades? I am certainly grateful that our newest Village on Staten Island does not need nearly as much TLC as the first one! It will require some work (read more inside), but we are well on our way to providing a safe and welcoming space for the young people of our community. If you have questions about how you can be involved in this initiative, I encourage you to reach out to us at [office@achanceinlife.org](mailto:office@achanceinlife.org). I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at our newest Village soon!

Gabriele Delmonaco  
President/Executive Director





New ACIL team member Jacqueline Arenales, longtime ACIL supporter Marcello Bruno and ACIL President Gabriele Delmonaco select tiles for what will be The Village's entrance hall.

## Step by step on Staten Island

The Village is coming together at 1100 Castleton Avenue with the support (and sweat) of our ACIL community and partners. Installing a phone, receiving our first piece of mail and even something as simple as choosing floor tiles - each small piece is building something that will provide crucial resources and services to young people in need. After more than seventy-five years of serving children and continuing Monsignor Carroll-Abbing's legacy overseas, there is a unique joy in seeing a Boys' & Girls' Town come to life in the city ACIL calls home.



As part of our NYC efforts, we are excited to announce an addition to the ACIL team. It is our pleasure to introduce you all to Jaqueline Arenales, Executive Assistant and

Program Coordinator of our NYC programs! As a Staten Island resident, Jaqueline brings a deep love for the borough and years of experience working with community organizations.

## A Chance In Life and Equity for Children (EFC) reunite to produce a video series about youth in NYC and The Village

Last year, EFC and ACIL successfully collaborated on En Primera Persona, the series detailing the economic and educational effects of COVID-19 on families in Latin American. This summer, we are working together once again to produce a number of videos about the post-pandemic importance of youth-serving projects like The Village. Learn more at [achanceinlife.org/buildingthevillage](http://achanceinlife.org/buildingthevillage).

## Emergency food supplies needed for our children and families in India

The devastating second wave of COVID-19 in India has once again forced our partner programs to send our young people home. Many of their parents or caretakers work for a daily wage, something impossible to do during lockdowns and the current national emergency.

**We are sending urgently needed food supplies to the families hardest hit by this crisis. If you haven't already, please consider making a gift to this effort at [achanceinlife.org/india](http://achanceinlife.org/india). Each gift of \$60 can supply a family of 5-6 members with enough food for a month.**



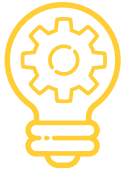
Emergency food kits help keep children and families safe in India as the country deals with an overwhelmed medical system.

## Spring Activites at La Repubblica dei Ragazzi in Civitavecchia, Italy



Photos from La Repubblica's latest restoration work (left) and the young women of La Repubblica looking fierce with their new wheels (right).

We are happy to report that another building at La Repubblica has been restored and is once again usable for workshops and programs. In other exciting news, our young people were recently paid a visit by a biker club that volunteers with local youth. The group spent the day at La Repubblica and let our kids check out their impressive collection of motorcycles - though the bikers did not, we were assured, let them drive.



## Providing tech education to young people in NYC

In the coming months, A Chance In Life will be working in partnership with community organizations on Staten Island and Tata Consultancy Services North America (TCS) to provide underserved students in New York City with access to hands-on technology education through TCS's goIT program. Students will tackle project-based challenges, learn icon-based programming languages, and acquire critical thinking and problem solving skills. The goal of goIT is to demystify computer science and help students gain the skills and confidence required to pursue STEM degrees - a huge source of opportunity as the demand for IT workers continues to grow.

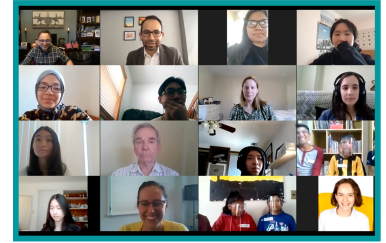


*Estate planning attorney and longtime ACIL supporter Michael Connors, Esq.*

## A Chance In Life's Estate Planning Webinar

On April 8, ACIL hosted our first estate planning webinar with Michael Connors, Esq., of local NYC firm Connors & Sullivan. Mr. Connors offered a wealth of advice and stories from his own experience with our supporters, who in turn shared their questions and concerns about creating wills and other lifetime documents. (A recording of the webinar is available at [achanceinlife.org/events](https://achanceinlife.org/events).)

Thank you to everyone who attended, and don't forget that ACIL offers a free will-creating service at [www.FreeWill.com/achanceinlife](https://www.FreeWill.com/achanceinlife) to all of our supporters! We encourage you to reach out if you have any questions about remembering A Chance In Life in your will.



*Young people at our partner programs in Bolivia (left) join ACIL interns in NYC to share experiences and stories via Zoom (right).*

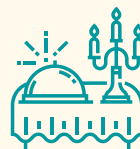
## NYC High School students fundraise for young people in Bolivia

For our eight high school interns, the end of their 12-week internship with A Chance In Life was one of success and celebration. Their final project, an online marketing campaign, succeeded in raising almost \$3,000 - enough to sponsor eight vulnerable children in our programs around the world!

In gratitude of their efforts, we arranged a (virtual) trip for them to visit our partners and young people in Cochabamba, Bolivia. On April 6th, the interns met with children they helped sponsor in Bolivia through an engaging Zoom conversation. Both groups learned how their peers live in other countries and got to connect as young people trying to be agents of change in the world.

## Save the Date for our 2021 Events!

As COVID-19 cases continue to decline, A Chance In Life is planning to once again host our annual in-person events. Safety guidelines will be announced ahead of time to all attendees, and there will be an option to attend virtually. We cannot wait to safely gather and celebrate our young people with all of you! Make sure to mark your calendars for the dates below:



**New York Annual Gala  
September 22, 2021**



**Wine & Spirits Dinner  
December 9, 2021  
at Riverpark**





# SPOTLIGHT ON OUR DONORS



*Marcello installs The Village's first mailbox.*

*For Marcello and Sapienza Bruno and their daughters, Federica and Simona, supporting A Chance In Life is a family affair. We caught up with them last week to learn more about how each of them has found their own unique way to connect with and support our mission.*

***How did you learn about A Chance In Life, and what drew you to its mission? How have you previously been involved, and how do you hope to be involved in the future?***

Marcello: I learned about A Chance in Life from Gabriele Delmonaco, who also happens to be a longtime friend. Gabriele invited my family and me to attend the galas, where we had the privilege of meeting other members of the organization. The fundraising events were impressive; it was wonderful to hear about the success stories of the generous contributors, and to learn more about the origins of ACIL. We all hope that families and children around the

world are living the same quality of life that we are, but ACIL strives to be the change they want to see in the world, and that's what drew me most to its mission. Most recently, knowing my background in engineering, Gabriele asked if I could consult on property matters for The Village. It allowed me the opportunity to contribute to ACIL in my own way. It has been so rewarding to play a part in its legacy and I plan on continuing my hands-on consulting role at The Village in the future.

***As Italian Americans, what is like to see a piece of Italy's legacy arriving in your neighborhood?***

Sapienza: I was born and raised in Italy, and it is an honor to see an organization that originated in Rome now have a presence in Staten Island - especially an organization such as ACIL. It brings an element of authenticity to the large community of Italian Americans we have on Staten Island. I'm proud to be part of a culture that is progressive and passionate in making a difference.

***Federica, you work for a generous corporate sponsor of ACIL. Why do you think it's important for companies like Fiserv to support community projects?***

Federica: I think that large companies have a corporate responsibility to give back to their communities. There is only so much one person can contribute financially or volunteer their time to community projects. It is up to large companies to represent that collective voice and recognize the positive impact they can make in the communities where they live, work and operate. As a Fiserv associate, it makes me so proud to work at a company that not only acknowledges that responsibility but also takes action. The health of the community has a direct impact on the health of business; it is so important for companies to be aware of the outreach programs in their areas and take advantage of the resources they have to make a difference.

***Federica and Simona, what role do you think young people play in building a world in which every child is given a chance in life?***

Federica & Simona: As young adults, we think that it is our responsibility to expose and bring awareness of the realities of those that are underprivileged. Our peers need to build a world where we crush stereotypes thrown into casual conversations, and start being the voice for those that can't be heard. Every child should be given the opportunity of an education regardless of their societal or economic situation.

***As longtime residents of Staten Island, what services are you all most excited to see The Village provide to young people in your community?***

All: Education is the key to advancing society and if ACIL can do that, then Staten Island becomes a better place to live and grow. In the midst of a global pandemic and recent political unrest, we don't think The Village could have arrived at a better time. We are eager to see The Village create programs for young families and their children in need of a healthier social and academic development, whether that may be providing relief for children learning in a toxic home environment or the resources for a better education.



*From left to right: Simona, Marcello, Federica and Sapienza Bruno, supporters and volunteers of ACIL.*