2026 Impact 100 RVA Executive Summary
Name of Organization: St. Joseph's Villa

Overview of the Organization: Founded in 1834, St. Joseph's Villa (the Villa) is the nation's oldest continuously operating nonprofit serving children, with a longstanding history of evolving to meet our community's changing needs. Today, the Villa serves 3,000 children, adults, and families annually through education, mental health, and housing services delivered on the historic 82-acre campus and throughout the community. Since 1989, the Flagler Housing & Homeless Services program has provided individuals and families experiencing homelessness with safe, stable housing through rapid re-housing, individualized case management, and comprehensive care. Today, Flagler is the Villa's highest impact program serving both Richmond and the Tri-Cities. The newest addition to this program is the Housing Success Center, which opened late last year to explore innovative pilot programs and increase access to housing assistance.

Overview of the Project: The Villa is launching a new Diversion Program within the existing Housing & Homeless Services focused on preventing homelessness *before* it occurs. Much traditional housing assistance is funded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is restricted to households that meet its strict definition of "literally homeless." This creates a significant gap in the community's response to housing instability. Every day, Villa staff hear from families who are behind on rent, facing eviction, fleeing unsafe living situations, or experiencing other crises that put their housing at risk. They're doing exactly what they should do – asking for help before their situation becomes worse. Yet, because they don't meet the federal eligibility requirement of being "literally homeless," Villa staff often have little to offer. Many of these households could remain safely housed with modest, timely assistance, but they are forced to wait until their situation deteriorates enough to qualify for housing services – making recovery more difficult, more traumatic, and significantly more expensive. The Diversion Program will help by providing timely, flexible assistance to prevent temporary setbacks from becoming homelessness.

Expected Impact on the Community: The Diversion Program will address this gap by providing personalized coaching, creative problem-solving, and flexible assistance to households at risk of homelessness. By intervening early, the Villa staff can help families maintain stability, avoid the trauma of homelessness, and reduce demand on shelters and other crisis response systems. A grant from Impact 100 would provide necessary resources to allow the staff to respond when families first reach out for help, rather than waiting until their circumstances deteriorate enough to qualify for traditional services. Often, a relatively small, timely investment can prevent a temporary challenge from becoming a much larger crisis, sparing families the disruption and hardship of homelessness. In the first year, the Diversion Program is intended to provide several hundred households with problem solving and referral support while also providing approximately 50 households with targeted financial assistance, based on their unique circumstances. The ultimate goal is to keep individuals and families in their current housing or help them find safe alternatives without a period of potentially dangerous and traumatizing homelessness.