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Finding Identity: one woman discusses life as an adoptee for St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center's "Your Story" campaign

Center asks people to share their stories in honor of 175th anniversary

DETROIT, Feb 7, 2019 – Today, [St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center](#) (SVSF Center) helps students reach their full potential by providing the education that children and adults need to accelerate their placement into college or meaningful employment. Those familiar with the Center's history know that, for many years, it served as a kindergarten, orphanage and adoption/foster care facility for children and touched many lives— including Kim Hunter, whose birth name was Mary Margaret Therrien.

In honor of its 175th Anniversary, SVSF is inviting people who have been touched by the Center to share their stories through their "Your Story" campaign. Hunter's story is just one of the many that have been shared on platforms like SVSF's social media.

On August 22, 1966, Hunter was placed in SVSF's Nursery. A week-old infant at the time, she stayed for eight weeks until her adoption, when she was given her new name. Today, she runs a blog, [#JourneyOfAnAdultAdoptee](#), where she chronicles her own experience of learning about her birth parents and the complicated emotions that surround being adopted.

Hunter's struggle with learning about her roots is one she believes many adoptees can relate to. "It truly is complicated not knowing your true identity," she said, explaining that adopted children grow up not looking like anyone in the family. Although Hunter's adoptive parents were candid about her origins, many aren't. Those who are adopt generally don't receive their adopted child's original birth certificate, and the children often don't know

anything about their origins.

Not knowing these things can be devastating. As Hunter put it, “We mourn the loss of the unknown.”

And this mourning can have real effects on adopted children, even as they grow into adulthood. Hunter notes that many adoptees have shared their experiences and struggles, including: being people pleasers, struggling with abandonment issues, and doubting their own identities.

Steeped in the complexities of adoption, SVSF spent many years as a safe-haven for such children. Even though her stay at SVSF was relatively short, Hunter notes that her birth mother also spent time at SVSF as a child. “My biological Mom obviously felt safe and loved at SVSF,” she said, “And, as history sometimes repeats itself, she placed me there as well.”

SVSF is currently celebrating its 175th Anniversary and is eagerly looking for more stories about people who have experience with the Center. For more information visit <https://www.svsfcenter.org/your-story/>

About St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center

St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center began in 1844 as St. Vincent’s Academy in Detroit, a kindergarten for orphaned children. Now celebrating its 175th year, the organization has grown and evolved, which included a move to Farmington Hills before coming back to its roots in Detroit. Although it closed its residential doors in 2006, it continues to fulfill its mission of serving at-risk families by providing free, personalized educational support for children and adults. These programs are designed to help build self-sufficiency skills for academic and employment success, personal achievement and dignity. Visit <http://www.svsfcenter.org/> to learn more.