

A Response from Richard Lackey

Richard Lackey is a third generation Connie Maxwell supporter who lives in the Orangeburg area and now serves as a Connie Maxwell Board of Trustee Member

First, thank you again for your obvious concern for the children of Connie Maxwell.

Second, by way of my background and CM involvement, my paternal grandfather and two of his six (6) siblings were raised at the Greenwood campus due to the early death of their father, which left their family impoverished. My grandfather had no greater love than that for Connie Maxwell. He took me for my first of many visits to Connie Maxwell at the age of four (4) during one of his board of trustee meetings. He continued to serve on the board for more than 40 years until his age and health prevented such service. He credited CM for his Christian faith and work ethic. My father then served a term on the board. I am now honored to be serving in my second term; however, my entire family continues to actively support the mission of CM....helping children and families in need (broken down to its simplest form).

Third, it was certainly a tough decision to close the campus; however, the board unanimously supported it. It has been discussed for several years, with numerous factors playing into the ultimate outcome. Here are a few:

- 1) The cost of maintaining the campus – Because of the age of the buildings and footprint (over 150 acres), the budget here is more than double (approximately \$300k v. \$680k) of Connie Maxwell's other campuses (that care for approximately the same number of children). The buildings continually have major issues due to age and would eventually have to be razed and rebuilt at a tremendous cost.
- 2) Positioning of the property – The location of the property has never been an optimal logistical fit due to distance to schools, doctor's appointments, and other activities in general. Assuming you still live in the area, you have also noticed that the area is quickly being developed both industrially and commercially. While this does inflate the value of the property, it will eventually be surrounded by said development and not be an ideal setting for the children. All other campuses are in a residential setting more appropriate for children and families.
- 3) Charleston campus – As you mentioned, we are in the very early planning stages to build a campus in the Charleston area. This is due to the fact that a donor has given a \$2,000,000 gift to be used specifically for this purpose. This will give CM a presence in the "low country" that we have never had previously. We are hopeful this will translate into more folks in that area learning about CM, thus more financial development

opportunities...again to serve more children and families. I would tell you that the timing of the Charleston campus versus the closing announcement of the Orangeburg campus is merely coincidental. Will some of the proceeds of the eventual Orangeburg sale be used to develop the Charleston site? Certainly. The decision to close Orangeburg, however, would still have been made.

The savings from the tremendous carrying costs of Orangeburg coupled with the proceeds from the eventual sale of commercially/industrially viable property will ultimately allow CM to increase the number of children and families that can be served through providing more Christian guidance and support.

I apologize for the length of my email, but I wanted to answer your question as fully as possible. As I alluded to earlier, this was a decision that was not taken lightly.

Sincerely,

Richard Lackey
Connie Maxwell Board of Trustee Member