



## SPOTLIGHT ON: The James House

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A conversation with Chana Ramsey (CEO) and Gay Cutchin (Board President)

### About The James House

The James House was founded in 1989 on the belief that all people deserve a life free from interpersonal violence. The James House provides support, advocacy and education for people in the Tri-Cities area of Virginia affected by sexual violence, domestic violence and stalking, to empower them to become healthy, safe, and self-sufficient.

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A conversation with

Chana Ramsey, CEO

Gay Cutchin, Board President

“John brings a critical eye to our work, reflecting back what we are doing (or at least what we think we are doing), and what we’re not doing.”

### { CHALLENGE }

{ When did you know you needed Floricane? }

Our board of directors was about to change dramatically as a number of terms were expiring and a handful of members were about to retire. It was a critical opportunity for our organization to fill these positions in a way that would reflect our objectives for the future.

In order to develop an active, hands-on board integrated with our staff we needed to take a good look at our organization and really assess our position in the community. We hired Floricane to guide that process and to help us align our goals in pursuit of a shared vision.

### { RESOLUTION }

{ How did Floricane help you achieve your goals? }

John came to the table having done his research; he did an impressive job getting to know the community our organization serves and identifying its basic needs. John quickly integrated with our existing board and staff by meeting one-on-one or in small groups, getting to know individuals and how everyone works together.

John created a forced “pause” in order to get everyone on the right footing, identify the gaps and create a roadmap toward resolution. His recommendations were tailored to The James House and addressed our specific needs. Throughout the process, John’s diplomacy allowed us to address difficult subjects and move forward productively.

We are in the process of building and honing our core competencies as a board so that board participation can remain active, sharp and in alignment with our organization and the community we serve.

### { SURPRISES }

{ What was the most unexpected part of the process? }

John’s ability to tread lightly, tempering old and new ways alike, in combination with his clarity of thought, allowed us to really maximize this opportunity.

I recommend that every organization pursue capacity building with a strong consultant because you simply don’t know what you don’t know.

John ranks at the top of the list of consultants I’ve interviewed and/or worked with.

John is able to invest himself personally in the organizations he serves, and that really makes a difference. You know he believes in your cause, and you know he wants to see you succeed.

What I really like about John is his ability to frame services in a way that is unique and appropriate for our organization. His approach has never felt cookie cutter, and rather than telling us where we should be, he looked at where we were and helped us to build on that.

### { BEARING NEW FRUIT }

{ What’s next? }

This is an ongoing process that should never end if, as an organization, we are continually growing and evolving. John has been integral in developing our key stakeholders, identifying what they need in order to grow with the organization. Now it’s time for us to run with it.