

Unsung Hero Award – 2008

Carl Dakes

Carl Dakes knows the emotions shades of paint can evoke in hospital and retreat houses well. That's because he is the master painter behind Believe In Tomorrow's houses at St. Casmir, Johns Hopkins, and the House on the Bay, donating his time – and his impeccable sense of how to give a room life with color – to children and families going through greyer days.

“Children and colors are just like peanut butter and jelly. They belong together,” says Dakes, a 49-year-old commercial painter who owns his own company, The Dakes Co.



Dakes heads the Baltimore/Annapolis chapter of the Painting and Decorating Contractors of America. He says the decision to lend his brushes and expertise when he got the call from Believe In Tomorrow was instantaneous.

Dakes spent nine weekends with local painters, friends, and sometimes alone, filling the House on the Bay rooms with bold color. One night he worked so late that he found it more convenient to sleep at the house.

The finished product has him raving: “They [the families] don't feel like they are just anywhere. They are at a special place. Whatever room they walk into, they are at the beach.”

Dakes' favorite paint job is the entrance of the Children's House at Johns Hopkins. He says he enjoyed bringing some color in and making the place feel homier for children staying in the bustling city center.

While he takes care to thank others, Dakes is happy to do his work with few accolades.

“When you like donating, you don't know how to respond to it. My best response is to just continue doing it.”

It is with great pride that we announce Carl Dakes as the 2008 recipient of Believe In Tomorrow's Unsung Hero Award.