

THE LAUNCH PAD

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Sponsor Spotlight:



Enterprise Mobility™

We're proud to highlight Enterprise Mobility for their continued support of our mission and the young men we serve. Enterprise Mobility's commitment to community impact truly aligns with our vision, and we're grateful for their continued dedication to empowering our families and youth. If you're in need of a rental, we encourage you to consider Enterprise Mobility. A huge thank you!

UPCOMING EVENTS

* Self Defense

January 11, 2026

Martial Arts World
11804 Perdue Springs Ct.
Chester, VA 23831
1pm-3pm

* Explore The Sciences

January 18, 2026

VA Dept. of Forensic Science
700 North 5th Street
Richmond, VA 23219
11am-3pm

* Richmond Spiders Basketball

January 31, 2026

Robins Center
365 College Rd.
Richmond, VA 23173
5:30pm-8:30pm



Family Feature

Raising Leaders, One Example At A Time

In this month's Family Feature, we are proud to introduce **Veena and her son, Dominic**. As a high school senior and an Ambassador, Dominic demonstrates remarkable growth, maturity, and leadership. At L.A.U.N.C.H for Life we couldn't be more proud of the young man that he is becoming.

- How long have you been with L4L?

We started, My Son and myself, as the first group of mentees back in 2022. I was the first volunteer mom member.

- How did you hear about L4L?

I was in church with one of the volunteer program managers Vicky, and she asked for a nurse or someone with medical-knowledge and CPR certified who could manage the Medical tent for the first camp. So I volunteered and as Dave was giving his introduction to the camp and what it was and who it was for, I signed My Son up. I left at lunchtime and picked him up and we've been there and with Launch ever since.

- How has your son grown during the program?

Well, my son was very quiet, very shy never looked you in your eyes. He didn't really make friends with groups of kids his age. He was a little awkward socially, and he really hesitated going. But now he's vibrant and talkative. He has confidence to ask questions to strangers you know. He's always wanting to pick the minds of the people that he meets and interact with to see what their career is, their goals are, where are they going? He's so intuitive and just open and I know that Launch had something to do with it because he was just really shy and really just laid-back. He's still a laid-back, really really cool guy, but he's more open to strangers and newness and different people and stuff.

Family Feature Continued..

- How has the program helped/supported you?

By giving my son support and a new look at life. I believe that Dave and the mentors have given my son a opportunity to learn about leadership. They give them goals. They have rules, they have regulations, they take them on adventurous trips and just expose them to so many different things. My Son went and talked to Congress to advocate for funding mentor programs to keep the funding happening. He told his story and he interacted with strangers and Congress people with respect and dignity. He captivated them with his his ability to communicate, which I attribute to Dave and the mentor program.

- What would you like to brag on your son about/his accomplishments?

Well, my son is a senior. He's gotten into the honor society for his grades. He is a football star at his high school. He loves cars and fell in love with cars at a young age and so he's pursuing careers in car maintenance and body repairs. He's going to Richard Bland College for technology and he's got a internship there. He's an ambassador with (Launch For Life) he volunteers at his church in the men's group. He's flourishing as an individual. He's just so smart and the world is his oyster.

Our Latest Events in Pictures



Strikes, smiles, and strong connections as our Mentees and Mentors enjoyed a great night of bowling and bonding at Bowl America.



More than just a game, moments like these help build confidence, trust, and lasting mentorship.



Congratulations to Landon, who was featured in last month's issue, for winning The Pin for highest score!



Laughter, fun, friendly competition, and quality time made this bowling outing one to remember!



Mentor Spotlight

Meet Ronan Flynn

We're honored to highlight one of our mentors who consistently shows up, leads with purpose, and pours into our mentees. Let's get to know Ronan.

1. How did you hear about L4L?

I used to work with Launch's President, Ken Jordan. I would see how passionately he talked about Launch on his LinkedIn posts, and when my previous volunteering engagement came to a close I reached out to Ken to learn more about Launch. He's a great salesman and I couldn't wait to get started after our conversation!

2. How long have you been a mentor?

My mentoring with Launch began last year, in 2024, just after the summer camp took place. Outside of Launch, I have been mentoring for a long time in my career. It's something that really gives me energy, when you can unlock something great for others.

3. Why did you decide to become a mentor?

As far as Launch goes, Ken's incredible posts about Launch really drove me to become a part of this community. My personal journey saw me immigrate to the United States from Ireland when I was 21, and I came by myself, leaving my family behind. I was very fortunate to have some great personal mentors to help me understand things like how to establish credit, how to live on my own in a new place, etc.



Family Feature Continued..

- Would you recommend the program to friends and family?
Absolutely I recommended the program to my niece for my great nephew Michael Brown, who attended (Launch For Life) the very next year. So my son and my great nephew are ambassadors. My son is one year ahead of my great nephew, Michael Brown and they love it. It has developed them, both of them were quiet kids. They have come out to be incredible young men.

A Special Note from Veena to L.A.U.N.C.H FOR Life

I would like to say thank you to Dave and Vicky and Annmarie and the founders that first poured into our boys to show them a different direction. To give them a different aspect and a different outlook on life in totality just taking them to places they've never been before, allowing them to see nature and businesses, corporations, and just a gambit of things that they might not have seen or might not have been interested in. It wasn't just sports. It was definitely outside of the box thinking, outside of the box programs very inclusive with the moms. The mom's meetings were incredible. I learned so much about raising boys. Dave gave us books and just insight on how to just be present and pick your battles with our young men. Don't stress over the little details like cleaning their room and washing up and wearing clean clothes they will eventually catch it on and start doing that stuff on their own, which was so helpful for me cause I was freaking out about the transition that boys go through.

-Veena Smith



Mentor Spotlight Continued..

4. What have you learned through mentoring?

Mentoring has helped me become a better leader and more aware of my strengths and opportunities as a person. A lot of the time when I am talking to someone else about a problem they have, I learn quite a bit about myself in the course of trying to help them! It also helps me be a better communicator, to think through how best I can explain a solution to a problem to others. I've also learned not to take myself too seriously!

5. What has been your favorite event/memory thus far?

The Junior events are so much fun! David does such an amazing job at taking something as fun as Laser Tag and then turning into a great learning lesson on aspects of Leadership. Watching the boys go from working as individuals to working together is always incredible. I think with the Grads I am just constantly blown away by how generous people are with their time and resources. Everyone in the community is willing to help give our mentees some great experiences.

6. Tell us about yourself, likes, hobbies, occupation, family, etc?

I have lived in RVA since 1999 and love it. I moved here with my girlfriend from DC, and Melissa has now been my wife for almost 24 years. We have two daughters, Catriona, 20 and Sadie 16. For hobbies, riding bikes and listening to music are my passions, and as my family still all lives overseas I really love to travel.

-Ronan Flynn

LEADERSHIP

ACCOUNTABILITY

UNITY

COMPASSION

COMMUNITY

HONOR





A Message from our Founder

As we step into a new year, I am filled with gratitude and hope for what lies ahead for our organization and, most importantly, for the young men we serve.

Our mission is to mentor adolescent boys growing up in need of a positive male role model, which has never been more important. Each day, we see firsthand how meaningful relationships, consistent guidance, and a caring community can shape confidence, character, and purpose. These connections are not just supportive; they are transformational.

The new year offers us a powerful opportunity to strengthen those connections. Whether it's deepening the bond between mentors and mentees, engaging families and community partners more intentionally, or supporting one another as a unified organization, our focus remains on showing up—steadily, authentically, and with heart.

Strength is not built alone. It is built through trust, encouragement, and shared experiences. As we move forward together, we recommit ourselves to creating safe spaces where our boys feel seen, heard, and valued, and where they can grow into the leaders they are meant to be.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your support, time, and belief in our mission continue to make a lasting difference. I look forward to all we will accomplish together in the year ahead.

—David Crisafi



L.A.U.N.C.H. for Life

What your teenage son is really seeing on social media, according to new survey

Published October 8, 2025

A recent *Common Sense Media* survey shows that adolescent boys are being inundated with social media content promoting rigid ideas of masculinity, body image, and gender roles. While 73% of boys aged 11–17 regularly see posts about fighting, building muscles, and financial success, this exposure is linked to lower self-esteem, loneliness, and emotional suppression. Nearly all boys (91%) encounter appearance related pressures, and 69% see problematic portrayals of girls. Experts warn that these messages, often pushed by algorithms rather than sought out by teens, can normalize harmful attitudes and even contribute to offline violence. The study also found that boys who had at least one supportive person offline whether a parent, teacher, coach, or mentor reported better mental health outcomes. This underscores the critical need for strong male role models who can demonstrate that masculinity includes emotional openness, empathy, and diverse ways of being. Parents and communities can help by fostering mentorship, encouraging healthy activities, and showing boys that there are many positive paths to manhood.

For the full article, please see the link below.

<https://www.cnn.com/2025/10/08/health/teenage-boys-digital-masculinity-wellness>

Get Involved!

Our workforce is comprised of volunteers. If you have a few free hours that you can dedicate to others, or a skill that can be shared, we will be happy to channel it in the right direction.

Contact us today!

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