
OUACHITA CHILDREN YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES



Meet Our New Executive Director

I am so grateful to have been given the opportunity to step into the role of Executive Director here at Ouachita Children, Youth, and Family Services. Although I may be new to the position, I am certainly not new to the organization. For nearly seven years I served as the Business and Finance Director. During that time I had the privilege of working under two wonderful Executive Directors that equipped me to handle this large responsibility, and they were in large part responsible for why I loved my job so much. Each of them made an impression and impact on the community, as well as the organization, and I can only hope that I am able to leave this same legacy (in many years to come). Most of my career has been working in the non-profit industry, and this is the industry where my heart lies. There is no better gratification than to work for an organization that is in the business of serving others.

The past five months I have been spending time with the youth here in the children's shelter. While this has been extremely heartwarming, it has been unsettling at the same time. It is very apparent how much these kids need our help, love, loyalty, and compassion, and I am dedicated to making sure that we provide all of this and more for those we serve.

The first few months as the new Executive Director brought unexpected challenges. No sooner was I out meeting new faces and making new connections that COVID-19 brought everything to a halt. I am anxious to get back out and continue meeting community partners, donors, and

supporters. During the COVID isolation period we ceased volunteers, visitors, and in-kind donations for the safety of those in our shelters as well as our staff. Our donors, however, continued to safely support us through our Amazon charity list. Products were delivered to our facility, sanitized, and then placed in isolation for several days before unpacking and being delivered to our programs.

The uncertainty of a pandemic has certainly brought its fair share of fear and frustration, but I couldn't be more proud of the staff at Ouachita Children, Youth, and Family Services. I feel very blessed to have a strong and dedicated team that held steadfast in order to continue providing services to those in our community who are in crisis. We couldn't have done it without them. So, I finish by saying 'Thank You!' Thank you to our Board of Directors, for entrusting me to this position. Thank you to our donors for their continued support. And thank you to the staff for their steadfast work. I am truly honored and will work hard to make OCYFS proud.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Staggs



Volunteer Snapshot



Alix Stafford
ACT2 Facilitator, Mentor,
Tutor



Martin Valdivia
Spanish Translator, Mentor



Northwestern State
University Students
Gardening/ Landscape,
Maintenance



Audrey, Lee, Noah
Mentoring, Life Skills,
Donations

We Are Family!

Life is busy and it can be difficult to find time to volunteer. However, the benefits of volunteering can be enormous. Volunteering offers essential help to people in need, worthwhile causes, and the community. Matching with the program that speaks to you can help you meet friends, connect with your community, learn new skills, and even advance your career.

Giving to others can also help protect your mental and physical health. It can reduce stress, fight depression, keep you mentally engaged, as well as provide a sense of purpose.

If you would like to join our volunteer family or donate to our programs, please email us at info@ocnet.org and follow us on our social media!



@occhotsprings



@occonline

OUR PROGRAMS

Ouachita Children's Center

Emergency Shelter for Children Ages 6-17

The children that need our services are often called "at-risk". But what does "at-risk" really mean? Often this term specifies a child who is less likely to transition successfully into adulthood. However, we look at this term differently. Instead of "at-risk" we see these children as "at-promise". Our goal is to take children who are exposed and unprotected and give them an opportunity toward a brighter future. Our programs help the children in our care with resources that connect them to a sense of purpose and engage them with their community by providing individual and family therapy, after school programs, case management, and more.

In February of this year we expanded Ouachita Children's Center in addition to our existing short-term shelter. Our Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) is a long-term shelter dedicated to the children in foster care that cannot maintain in a regular foster home, or therapeutic foster home, due to the severity of their behaviors as a result of the trauma they have experienced. We currently house six males between the ages of 13-18.



QRTP Resident showing off his garden.

Contact OCC

Call (501) 623-5591

Email info@occnet.org

Located at 339 Charteroak St. Hot Springs, AR



*Kaziah - Garland Co.
Youth Coalition Leader*

Public Awareness Prevention Program

Partnership for Success/Regional Prevention Providers

Our Prevention Program is dedicated to building youth and adult coalitions to provide education and materials to our communities for the best opportunities to decrease the use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Region 8. Our Region comprises five counties in Arkansas: Garland, Hot Spring, Pike, Clark, and Montgomery Counties. We have also added a new project called "Partners In Prevention" in which local businesses pledge to help us combat drug use and abuse in their areas. Check out our page on the OCYFS website and join our movement to *Rise Above Alcohol and Drugs!*

Contact Public Awareness

Call (501) 282-6211

Located at 339 Charteroak St. Hot Springs, AR 71901

Ouachita Youth Center

The Drop-In: Homeless Youth Day Shelter & Street Outreach Program

During the COVID-19 pandemic we have witnessed those experiencing, or at-risk of experiencing, homelessness as the most exposed and in danger of the virus. Without access to clean water and hygiene items they remain consistently unprotected. While we were unable to serve youth in-office, our staff were able to meet youth where they were and provide advocacy and case management to work towards housing, education, employment, medical care and more.

Since our last newsletter The Drop-In has assisted five people with returning to or finding new housing, five people with finding employment, distributed over 159 survival kits, and served 51 new youth who are new to our program!



“I’m really glad ‘OYC’ is around... now I know about the kinds of help I can get and have some people in my life who support me.” - LA

Beginning July 2020 Ouachita Youth Center will have a new address at 202 Third St. Hot Springs, AR, in the same building as Ouachita Family Center, our domestic violence advocacy office.

OYC Volunteer Needs

Street OutSreach: Deliver items, post flyers, disseminate information.

The Drop-In: (weekday afternoons) Welcome guests and help them access the facility, provide information, office organization.

Contact OYC

Call or text (501) 282-0292.

Located at 202 Third St. Hot Springs, AR

Homelessness Reduction Program

We serve 46 counties in state of Arkansas as the collaborative applicant of the Arkansas Balance of State Continuum of Care. Our purpose is to facilitate a coordinated effort of planning, integration of resources, and implementation of programs targeted at reducing homelessness and improving housing stability across Arkansas. We are proud to announce that Delta Hills, which encompasses 26 counties, was added to the counties we serve. Along with this addition, we have been working closely with the Arkansas Department of Health to provide services like COVID testing, flu shots, diabetes testing, employment, and ID obtainment for those experiencing homelessness during COVID-19.



Contact Homelessness Reduction

Call (501) 623-5591 ext. 221

Located at 339 Charteroak St. Hot Springs, AR

Ouachita Family Center

Domestic Violence Emergency Shelter & Advocacy Program

As families experienced increased time together during the pandemic, our domestic violence hotline experienced an increase of calls from victims seeking shelter. The isolation and confinement has also led to a decrease in support systems for those who are in an unsafe environment. Every day, not just during a global crisis, we are asked, "Why do victims stay (or return)?"



Fear: Survivors are in the most danger in the period immediately after leaving an abusive relationship. Because of this, some may return to their abuser in an attempt to save their own life, or the lives of their children.

Normalcy: Some survivors experience abuse as children and therefore it is difficult to recognize when a relationship has become abusive or destructive.

Financial Issues: Lack of means to support themselves and/or their children financially or lack of access to cash, bank accounts or assets can often mean victims stay in an unhealthy environment.

Our goal is to ensure that victims do not experience a lack of support. Leaving an abusive relationship requires emotional and material support that is not widely available. We provide not only shelter and advocacy but also therapy, peer support, court advocacy, resources, referrals, and more. Rapid re-housing and transitional housing have been added to our list of resources, which has allowed us to assist five women with obtaining housing as they transitioned out of the shelter.

OFC Volunteer Needs

Childcare, transportation, answering the hotline, gardening, donation organization.

Contact OFC

24 Hour Hotline: 501-865-3939

Ouachita Family Center Office: (501) 701-4253
202 Third St. Hot Springs, AR 71913

*"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another."
- Charles Dickens*

WAYS TO GIVE

By giving to Ouachita Children, Youth, and Family Services you are making an impact in your community. Your generosity helps us serve those who are in crisis by helping us provide resources and programs that will give those we serve the tools to work toward their goals. Our mission is to empower those we serve to work toward a brighter future and create lifelong success. These are our children, our youth, our families.

Memorial

A memorial donation is a donation made in memory of a loved one. You can donate directly to us on behalf of the person you are remembering, and we send a card to loved ones to notify them of your memorial donation.

Honor

A unique and special gift for a special someone. You can donate to us, and we can let them know that you have donated in their honor. These make great birthday, anniversary, or holiday gifts!

Legacy

Part of planned giving is what is called a legacy gift. A legacy gift is a donation made by an individual through a will or other formal designation. Legacy gifts can be material goods, property, stocks, money, or anything of value to the beneficiary.

Volunteering

Money is always great, but not everyone has an opportunity to donate financially. But everyone does have a gift. If you have a special passion, talent, or heart for service, we can use it! Not sure where to start? Call us and we'll get you matched with the program that fits what you're willing to give.

AmazonSmile Charity List

If you already shop on Amazon, you can look up our Charity List for donation options. Simply browse our list, order, and it gets sent directly to us! *Due to privacy rules, Amazon does not let us know who the sender is, so please fill out the gift box information so we can thank you for your gift!*

In-Kind Donations

In-kind donations can take various forms such as services, goods, etc. Each of our programs has their own specific needs, but if you aren't sure which program speaks to you directly OCYFS will gladly take any in-kind gifts and disburse them to the program where it will be best utilized. Please refer to the following list for each program's needs.

WISH LISTS

Ouachita Children's Center

- Shampoo & Conditioner (for all hair types)
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpastes
- Journals
- Movies (PG-13)
- Underwear (male & female/all sizes)
- Video Games (non-violent)
- Colored Pencils
- Slides Shoes (sandals)
- Arts & Craft Supplies

Ouachita Family Center

- Bath Towels
- Dish Towels
- Liquid Laundry Detergent
- Dish Soap
- Bathing Suits (women & children/all sizes)
- Beach Towels
- Socks (all sizes)
- Underwear (women & children/all sizes)
- Flip Flops
- Shampoo & Conditioner (for all hair types)
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpastes
- Body Wash
- Lotion
- Cleaning Supplies

Ouachita Youth Center

- Backpacks
- Cooling Bandanas
- Reusable Water Bottles
- Laundry Detergent (pods)
- Laundry Sanitizer
- Large Crockpot & Liners
- Slider Ziploc Bags (gallon size)
- Deodorant
- Baseball Caps
- Non-Perishable Food Items (granola bars, pull-tab canned food, etc.)
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Reloadable Gift Cards
- Warm Weather Sleeping Bags/Mats



Our Mission

Ouachita Children, Youth, and Family Services is a non-profit organization providing quality services for children, youth, and families, empowering them to achieve lifelong success.