

OUACHITA CHILDREN YOUTH, & FAMILY SERVICES

Thankful 🍁 Grateful 🍁 Blessed



This Thanksgiving holiday, we are reminded to take time to reflect and celebrate all that we are thankful for.

Personally, I have a lot to be thankful, grateful and blessed about. I am thankful for my wonderful husband that adores me and two kids that I am incredibly proud of. I am grateful that we are all healthy. I am blessed to have parents that are always there for me and to have a sister that is also my very best friend. I am delighted to serve as the Executive Director and immensely proud to be a part of this wonderful organization and our mission to serve our community. Beyond all of this, I am eternally grateful and appreciative for all of the wonderful staff at OCYFS and how our organization was able to continue to provide services to our most vulnerable populations during COVID.

Family is by far one of the most significant things that I am most grateful for. As a teenager I didn't particularly like that my

mother always wanted to know where I was and who I was with. However, I understand now that she did it because she loves me. My sister and I learned the value of hard work and independence and through everything our parents supported our decisions, even if they knew we were making mistakes. My loving mother is the glue that holds our family together. She not only makes sure that we are together for everyone's birthday and all holidays, but she reminds us that we have each other through thick and thin. Significances such as this are what most of us take for granted: support, advice, celebrations and love. You see, those we serve often don't get to experience what it means to have a family, or a family that cares. All too often we are the closest thing to family they have in this moment of their life. Our residents here so desperately want that family unit, and they express this to our staff constantly. They are craving affection, attention and concern. Because of this, when someone comes to one of our shelters we do everything we can to provide a safe place with (cont'd)

“Significances such as this are what most of us take for granted: support, advice, celebrations and love.”

a caring staff so that it can feel like a safe and comforting home, even if it is only temporary. Our staff does our very best to provide as many traditions as possible such as having a Thanksgiving dinner, birthday parties, graduation celebrations and presents on Christmas morning because these moments should not be forgotten.

This holiday season I ask you to pause, reflect, and take time to celebrate and share all that you are thankful for. Share with your family, friends and co-workers your support, advice, celebrations and love. And have a happy and safe Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,



Sheryl Staggs, Executive Director



Thanks To Our Board of Directors

We value each and every member of our executive board and benefit from their expertise, leadership, compassion, and generosity.

We thank them for making the lives of the people we serve matter, for their ability to see a better world and for being all that they are and doing all that they do.



Mike Tuohey, Board Chair
CPA
Prince & Tuohey CPA
(4 year Board Member)

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(1 year Board Member)

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(4.5 year Board Member)

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Economic Development Manager
Hot Springs Metro Partnership
(5.5 year Board Member)

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Consultant Corporate Relocation
Self-Employed
(2.5 year Board Member)

James Bennett
Community Volunteer &
Retired Financial Advisor
(3.5 year Board Member)

Hal Koppel
Orthodontist
Drs. Hall and Koppel
(5.5 year Board Member)

Program Updates

Ouachita Children's Center

Emergency Shelter & Qualified Residential Treatment Program

Looking back at the history of OCC you will find nothing short of philanthropy, love, loyalty and inspiration. Once known as the Interstate Orphans' Home, OCC has been serving children in need since 1910, and on our current campus since 1928 thanks in large part to the Hot Springs Kiwanis Club. Our past proves that the future is only built on the generosity of the people around us that want a better and brighter future for their community.

Contact: (501) 623-5591

OCC would like to thank the following volunteers for how much they selflessly give:

Alix Stafford - volunteer, mentor, family. Even though the pandemic kept in-person volunteers to an absolute minimum, that didn't stop Mrs. Alix from reaching out and continue to provide guidance for the kids she has bonded with.

Gift-to-Gift - a group of volunteers who have been a consistent part of our children's lives since the moment they walked through our front doors. From bonfires to shopping trips and dinners out. Without fail this group has shown their love for the children and their future.

Ouachita Youth Center

The Drop-In: Homeless Day Shelter & Street Outreach

While the pandemic has effected some of our in-person services, in 2020 alone the Drop-In has served over 35 youth under the age of 24 in Hot Springs who are homeless or at-risk of experiencing homelessness. The Street Outreach program has served over 55 youth and has provided over 300 survival kits this year. An astounding 634+ survival kits (hygiene items, snacks, water, blankets, hats, et.) have been given out since OYC's inception in late 2018!



Contact: call or text (501) 282-0292

OYC would like to give a special thank you to:

SQZBX Brewery & Pizza - Not only have they provided food for The Drop-In and Street Outreach, but they also donate pizzas to our children's shelter for Sunday night pizza parties! They have consistently given back, even during these extremely tough times.



Volunteer Dianna Gonyer stands among the donations she has organized in our new donation room. Dianna has not only whipped our donations into shape, but she has also provided breakfast and lunch for our staff!

Volunteers regularly come to us to find the purpose from their own pain. To help others who are currently where they, themselves, used to be.

Oftentimes when you serve, you find that the most important things you have to offer are not actually things at all. Effort spent helping others can be as simple as a kind word, spare time, or a helping hand. Thanks to our wonderful donors and volunteers, we are able to provide consistent care to ensure those we serve feel safe, loved, and empowered.

We would like to express our gratitude for those who have helped us grow so much over the past few years. Without the loving support of those in our community who give with their whole heart, we cannot do what we do. Each of our programs have had so many people who come in and make a difference. We would like to take this opportunity to shine a spotlight on a few of them.

For all the ways you can get involved, please email athompson@occnet.org!



We receive incomparable support from Project Hope Food Bank. While they provide fresh fruits & vegetables (and lots of other goodies) to our shelters they are also creating wide smiles and full hearts.

Ouachita Family Center

Domestic Violence Emergency Shelter & Advocacy Program

In 2020 our domestic violence shelter has served over 150 victims, with over 200 hotline calls. Since its inception in early 2019, OFC has served over 369 victims of domestic violence with shelter, legal services, advocacy, and resources. Recently OFC has added a new sector to our program called Transitional Housing. This program gives survivors the resources they need to transition out of the emergency shelter towards their own homes.

Contact: (501) 701-4253

24 HOUR HOTLINE: (501) 865-3939



OFC would like to thank the following donors for their constant thoughts, prayers, and assistance with our shelter residents:

Sue Finley - Sue has been an integral part of our domestic violence program since the beginning. She has donated bags, hygiene items, paper good, household items, and even provided cleaning kits for the shelter and residents who are transitioning to their own homes.

Jennifer Dodson - Ms. Dodson from New Life Church has offered her number on speed dial for our domestic violence program and its needs. She has the ability to find just about anything we have needed from large furniture items to paper goods, and more.

Homelessness Prevention

Our homelessness prevention program assists 46 counties in Arkansas to prevent and respond to those who are experiencing any form of homelessness or housing insecurities. Our new COVID related projects include rapid re-housing to help those in shelters transition to their own home, and to assist in keeping them in their homes.

In January we will be participating in the national Point-In-Time (PIT) Count to survey homeless individuals in our area on behalf of the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development as part of the Continuum of Care. If you would like to get involved with our Point-In-Time count January 28, 2021 at the Transportation Depot in Hot Springs, please contact Sue Legal at slegal@occnet.org. Volunteers and donations for this event are needed!

Contact: (501) 623-5591



For your very own yard sign please call!

Public Awareness & Prevention

Our public awareness and prevention team is looking for coalition members to join our RAAD movement in Garland, Clark, Hot Spring, Pike, and Montgomery Counties. If you would like to join a coalition to help educate your community on the dangers of underage drinking and marijuana use please contact athompson@occnet.org.

Together we can Rise Above Alcohol & Drugs!

Contact: (501) 282-6211

Program Wish Lists

Ouachita Children's Center

Large 4-in-1 game set
Jumbo tic-tac-toe game set
Jumbo Connect 4 game set
Cologne and perfume gift sets
Scented lotion and body wash gift sets
Make-up sets
Wireless headphones
Canvas art packs
Hoodies - all sizes
\$10 - \$15 gift cards

Ouachita Youth Center

Back packs
Rollable winter sleeping bags
Rollable sleeping/camping mats
Tents
Crockpot
Crockpot liners
Small deep freezer
Video game system (with games)
Thermoses
Flashlights/lanterns
Unisex beanies, gloves, scarves, socks
Rollable fleece blankets (T or TXL size)
Slider-style gallon-size ziplock bags
Hot chocolate envelopes
Dried soup envelopes
Small Hand Sanitizers
Disinfectant wipes
Unisex hooded jackets (all sizes)
Individual chapsticks
Travel Kleenex packs
Baby wipes

Ouachita Family Center

Office supplies; file folders, envelopes,
address labels, file cabinet dividers,
clipboards
File cabinet
Bath tub mats
Bath rugs
Large bath towels
Wash Cloths
Hygiene products: shampoo/conditioner,
toothpaste, toothbrushes, bar soap, shaving
cream, razors
Feminine products
Cleaning products
Dish washing liquid
Hand Soap
Hand Sanitizer
Cordless phone



For more ways to give and how you can help please visit our website at www.occnnet.org on the "HOW TO HELP" page.



@occhotsprings



@occonline