



## SPRING 2018

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### A Father's Prayers are Answered in Clark County

"He never comes out of his room, he is defiant, and he is wreaking havoc on the family relationships." Jalen's dad was desperate for his son to find help, so he reached out to OCC in Arkadelphia.

After meeting with the father and son, it was decided that he would begin attending Boy's Council—OCC's outreach classes for young men that promotes healthy development and the physical, emotional, and relational aspects of manhood. He met it all with a shrug and silence for many months. It seemed no one could get through to him.



Then, something began to shift in this young man. He began to participate not only in his classes, but also at school! The change was so dramatic that the group facilitator reported there was a "new student" in the class—but he was talking about Jalen! Through the patience and encouragement of Clark County OCC's staff, Jalen has evolved into a mature young man who is participating in life and preparing for his future. He has even started coming to other OCC classes! After almost a year, he continues to strive for a better life!

## School's Out and Summer is Full of Learning, Enrichment, and Fun!

Summer activities are in full swing now that school is out! Our kids are with us such a brief time (the average stay is 3 weeks), that we work very hard to provide opportunities for learning, enrichment, and especially fun! This summer, they'll be going to the lake, museums, putt-putt golf, laser tag, and trampolines. They will also take classes to learn art, improv drama, gardening, anger management, peer leadership, street law, life skills, runaway prevention, physical fitness, communication and social skills, and healthy body/minds. We also offer a substance abuse recovery class. To top off all these enriching opportunities, they will go on educational field trips each week and visit places like Heifer International. In the years to come, this summer will be one they'll always remember—and for good reasons.



## Homeless Youth Outreach Makes Contact



*OCC's No Strings Attached outreach team goes out regularly to make contact with homeless youth. Vanessa puts together survival kits (center). Top left, clockwise: William and Vanessa look for signs of homeless youth; Buddy and William love their work; William, Buddy, and Vanessa are our Mod Squad; Buddy searches areas where homeless youth might be living.*

"I've been locked up my last three birthdays." The OCC *No Strings Attached* homeless youth outreach team made contact with a 14 year old boy who, after weeks of interaction with them, shared this heartbreaking detail of his young life. Drug addicted parents who abandoned him and his siblings pushed him out onto the streets where he, too, became addicted to meth and IV drugs. To survive, he stole, hustled, and did whatever he needed to do to get drugs and a place to sleep. He stays in abandoned buildings, drug houses, with friends, cheap motels, and outdoors. He learned from his parents to run away from responsibility. That's all he knows.

"Adults are people that lie and can't be trusted," he told Vanessa, William, and Buddy—our outreach team members. They would bring food, clothes, and hygiene products and gradually began to establish a relationship with this young man. Through their acceptance, with "no strings attached," he is slowly beginning to trust them. He has tested them, led them in circles, and lied—all to see what they'd do. He fully expected them to betray or abandon him, but neither of those things has happened. With each contact, he has shared more details about his life and his struggles.

The outreach team continues to find him and talk to him with the goal that he will want to come in off the streets soon and find a more permanent and safe place to live. The team works closely with law enforcement to have the biggest impact possible on kids like this young man without spooking them to the point that they disappear. By their reliable acceptance and demonstration of love and care, the homeless youth they come in contact with are learning that there are alternatives to their current circumstances.

For our outreach team, each encounter is heartbreaking and also eye opening. "Most people, including me, think of homeless kids as "Oliver Twist" or "Annie" with dirt on their faces and filthy, torn clothes," said Buddy. That view is correct, to a certain extent. They look like every other kid you see with one exception: they have developed a unique set of survival tools that they use with skill in order to just exist.



## Becoming REAL



Mark Howard  
OCC Executive Director

When my daughter was a little girl, the most worn out book in the house was her favorite story, “The Velveteen Rabbit.” In that story, a stuffed horse had lived in the nursery the longest. His name was Skin Horse because he had so many worn bald patches that were the result of years of love and play. Mechanical toys would come and go, but the horse remained. In that same nursery, there was a velveteen rabbit who asked the question, “What is REAL?” The rest of the story involves the horse and rabbit pondering what it means to be real and what that process is all about. The horse finally concluded that “once you become REAL, you can’t be ugly, except to people who don’t understand.”

OCC is a place where most of our kids arrive having been broken by systems that have failed them and people who have harmed them. As you can imagine, we see a lot of tears and struggles here. Recently, one of our younger girls cried, “Why can’t I have a REAL family like the other kids at school? Why?”

There is no good answer to that heartbreaking question. It isn’t fair.

So many of our youth are scarred beyond what we would think possible, which makes becoming REAL even more challenging for them. One thing holds true for those who find shelter with OCC and receive care from our dedicated staff— they have an overwhelming desire to become REAL in the sense that they want to find stability, love, and a sense of permanence.

As I greet our youth each day, I see the promise of REAL possibilities and hope. Becoming REAL is hard, sometimes, but your donations to OCC facilitate that process for our young people. Each time I read “The Velveteen Rabbit” with my young daughter those many years ago, she would ask, before we began, “Do you think the rabbit will become REAL today, Daddy?” I would respond, “I don’t know, baby. I sure hope so. Let’s read the story and find out.”

You, dear friends of OCC, help write the story of becoming REAL for each child who comes to us for help. With skilled care and community support, we will read their stories and discover they can, indeed, become REAL.

~Mark

## Our Teenagers are in Need of NEW Socks and Underwear!

Dobby, the House Elf in Harry Potter, was set free because of the gift of a sock. At OCC, we’re helping youth in crisis to become free, too. **What better way to celebrate J.K. Rowling’s birthday than to join our sock and underwear drive!** The average age of our kids is 15, so we need bigger sizes in a variety of styles. Start collecting now.

Bring your donations to OCC in Hot Springs on July 31st from 8am to 4pm!



### Young Men

- Boxer briefs or boxers
- white crewneck t-shirts (no V-neck)
- black ankle socks
- black knee high socks with logos (Nike, Adidas, etc.)
- Sizes: XL, L, & M

### Young Women

- Teenage style underwear
- Socks — variety of colors
- Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL
- Bras — all colors & sizes (A,B,C & D cups)
- Feminine hygiene products (unscented tampons, sanitary napkins, & panty liners)

## The Times, They Are A Changin'

Every youth that we help has experienced some kind of life-altering trauma which has impacted them negatively. Government funds to care for the most vulnerable members of our society are shrinking and the overwhelming needs of youth in crisis and their families have created tremendous challenges for OCC.

The amount that government contracts pay per child in our care still leaves us with a \$40 a day per child shortfall. \$40 a day! Our capacity is eighteen youth which, with the need for \$40 more per day for each one's care, comes to \$720 a day more than what we receive. That means that we must raise—through donations and grants—\$262,800 more per year.

We recognize that there is compassion fatigue—that people are tired and overwhelmed with all the needs of nonprofits who work hard to relieve suffering and provide opportunities for safety and change. We get that. But the reality at OCC is that we have been entrusted to care for children who cannot—for whatever reason—care for themselves. This also means that we cannot care for them without your financial support.



### Here's what we'd like you to consider

- Become a monthly donor. By donating each month, we will have a better sense of the steady resources available to care for our kids.
- Arrange automatic and recurring donations. You can securely set up recurring donations through our website ([occnet.org](http://occnet.org)) with complete control of the amount. You can also discontinue these automatic donations anytime you wish (*but please don't!*).
- Advocate for our kids by sharing this situation with your family, friends, colleagues, and businesses who are able to support OCC and sponsor our special events.
- Donate securely right now by scanning this QR code, which will take you straight to our donation page.



Yes, the times, they are a changin' and without a community that cares about the well-being of our kids — making sure we have adequate resources to offer the services they need, youth will suffer.

## Donors January - May 2018

Homer Allen	Luke & Christy Kauffman - In Honor	Larry & Missy Williams
Joe & Sue Allen	of Dr. Steven Baldwin	Pamela Williams
Gloria Angel	Phyllis Kincannon	Suzanne Wilson - In Loving Memory
Rubinder Bains	Hal & Sue Koppel	of Ms. Roberta (Bunny)
Ben & Kay Bancroft - In Loving	Faith Lefeat	Crittenden
Memory of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Steven Lightsey	Robert & Peggy Woodall
Marcel Banut	Ladell Looper	Jane Yahoda
Katherine Barnhardt	Freida Luquire - In Loving Memory of	America Jail Association - In Honor of
Dennis & Natalie Berry	Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Capt. Belinda Cosgrove
Peter & Jacqueline Blakeslee	Henry & Jane Luschen	Anything of Wood Custom Cabinetry
Bill & Barbara Bowman	Patrick & Ellen McCabe	Baldwin Dentistry
Donald Brady	Douglas & Allison Miller	Bennett's Oaklawn Service, Inc.
Don & Mary Beth Bridges	Joe & Carla Mouton	Bone's Chophouse
Henry Browder & Janice Morrison	Donald Munro	Christ Lutheran Church
Keith & Jean Brown	Diane Murdock	Christ of the Hills United Methodist
Monica Brown	Dean Norton	Church
Roxanne Butterfield	Helen Oliver	Christ of the Hills United Methodist
Anne Campbell - In Loving Memory of	Johnny & Carolyn Partridge	Church - Exercise Group
Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Joseph Patricio	Christway Unity Church
Ken & Vicki Cook - In Loving Memory	Daymi Perez	D & D Moving Co.
of Mr. Ed Smitherman	Ann Prince - In Loving Memory of	Diamond Lakes Federal Credit Union
Jack & Freida Cooley	Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Epsilon Sigma Alpha International -
Nancy Cummings	Duane Ragsdale - In Loving Memory	Zeta Chi Chapter
Jeffrey & Elizabeth Daly - In Loving	of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Faith Construction, Inc.
Memory of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Linda Ragsdale - In Loving Memory of	First Presbyterian Church -
Don Davis	Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Presbyterian Women
Suzanne Dickinson	Mike & Michelle Ratcliff	First Security Bank
Lawrence & Caren Dodd - In Loving	Christopher Raybon	Froggy's
Memory of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Thomas Riggins	The Glory Barn Church - Ladies
Amy Ebner	Mark & Sarah Robbins - In Honor of	Ministries
Bob Edmonds	Ms. Suzanne Murphy	Gross Funeral Home
Micheal & Cynthia Edwards	Martha Rodgers	Hill & Cox Corporation
Kay Ekey - In Honor of Ms. Christina	Joel & Alison Rush	Hot Springs Jazz Society
Planje	Cynthia Saalfeld	Hot Springs Sunrise Rotary Club
Pam Ellis	Rob & Suzy Saettele	Hot Springs Village Rotary Club
James Elmore	Daniel Sampson	Jordon, Woosley, Crone & Keaton,
Carolee Emerson - In Loving Memory	Billy & Charlotte Sanders	Ltd.
of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Serena Saylor	Lara's Jewelry & Design
Max English	Carol Scholp	Lil'Bits Daycare
Sunny Evans	Tina Seastrunk	Master Gardeners
Dick & Sue Finley	Linda See	Morgan Stanley
Kathy Finnegan	Gayle Shelton - In Loving Memory of	Morris Foundation, Inc.
Thomas & Sally French	Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Mountainside United Methodist
Rose Fuller	Floyd & Eleanor Sheffield - In Loving	Church
Jeffery & Angela Fuller-Freeman	Memory of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Oaklawn United Methodist Church -
Dena Garza	Todd & Margaret Shiver	United Methodist Women
Neal & Rose Gladner - In Loving	Gary & June Simmons	Pancho's Taco Pronto, Inc.
Memory of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Clarence Smalley	Piney Grove United Methodist Church
David & Dianna Gonyer - In Loving	Johnnie Smith	- Mary Martha Circle
Memory of Mr. Nathan Sperry	Alexandra Stafford - In Honor of Ms.	Presbyterian Kirk In the Pines
Chamisa Goodwin	Nan Cameron	Presbyterian Kirk In the Pines -
Sandy Griffith	Jim & Fran Tanney - In Loving	Presbyterian Women
M. Craig Halbleib - In Loving Memory	Memory of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Anthony Tidwell	Private Advisors, LLC - In Loving
Mylissia Haskins	Davis Tillman & Suellen Hales-	Memory of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey
Gregory & Terri Helms	Tillman	Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church
Mary Hill	Alan & Pati Trippel	- Ladies of Sacred Heart
Shelly Hill	Diane Vasica	Shults Greenhouse, Inc.
Tori Hill	Robert & Cynthia Wagstaff	South Hot Springs Lions Club
Brandt Isaacs - In Loving Memory of	Michael Walker	Southern Floor Co. & Interiors
Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	Robert & Lisa Walker - In Loving	Southern Realty of Hot Springs, Inc.
Lidia Ispas	Memory of Mrs. Dolores Tuohey	TLI Print
Shelby Jackson	Tom & Anne Wallace	Top Nails of Hot Springs Village
Jared Jones - In Loving Memory of	Kimari Watson	Trademark Real Estate, Inc.
Estil W. Jones	Katy Weaver	United Rentals, Inc.
John & Lisa Juneau	Kenny & Toma Whitlock	United Way of the Ouachitas
Ronald & Candace Kaler	Danny & Ann Whitt	US Stations





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## WISH LIST

### Shelter Needs

- Electric Shavers & Hair Clippers
- Flat Irons
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Hair Brushes (both boar bristle & plastic)
- Wide Tooth Combs
- Hair Grease, Pomade, Pink Oil, Moisturizer & Relaxer Kits
- Wave Caps, Shower Caps & Head Scarves
- Movie DVDs and Video Games—PG-13 and PG rated
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Adult coloring books
- Colored pencils & gel pens
- Glue sticks
- Blunt scissors (not pointed)
- Blank journal books
- Old magazines (for collaging)
- Sketch pads
- Relaxation music

### Positive Behavior Incentives

- Movie Passes (for 20)
- Restaurant Gift Cards
- Individual Snacks
- Individual Drink Boxes or Soda
- Special Event Tickets or Passes (for 20)
- Gift Cards to Retail Stores
- Craft store gift cards
- Name brand socks (logos)
- Sports water bottles
- Decks of cards / Dominoes
- Ear buds
- Belts— big & small for males & females

### Kitchen Needs

- Unbreakable plates & bowls
- 10 oz. Plastic Glasses
- Healthy Snacks—Fruit, Hummus & Pita Chips, Watermelon, Peanut Butter or Cheese Cracker Packages
- Healthy Drinks—Non-Sugary

### Office Needs

- Gently used laptop computers (NO Macs, please)
- Laminator
- Assorted office supplies
- Tiger—OCC's cat, needs dry food and kitty litter

*Contact Sallie Culbreth for more information at 501-623-5591 x223 or sculbreth@occnet.org*

### Homeless Youth Outreach Needs

- Fast food restaurant gift cards
- Sheets of bus passes
- Insect repellent bracelets
- Baby wipes

*Contact Sue Legal for outreach needs at 501-623-5591 x221 or slegal@occnet.org*

**\*\* We now refer used clothing donations to Jackson House or Salvation Army, where we "shop" as needed \*\***