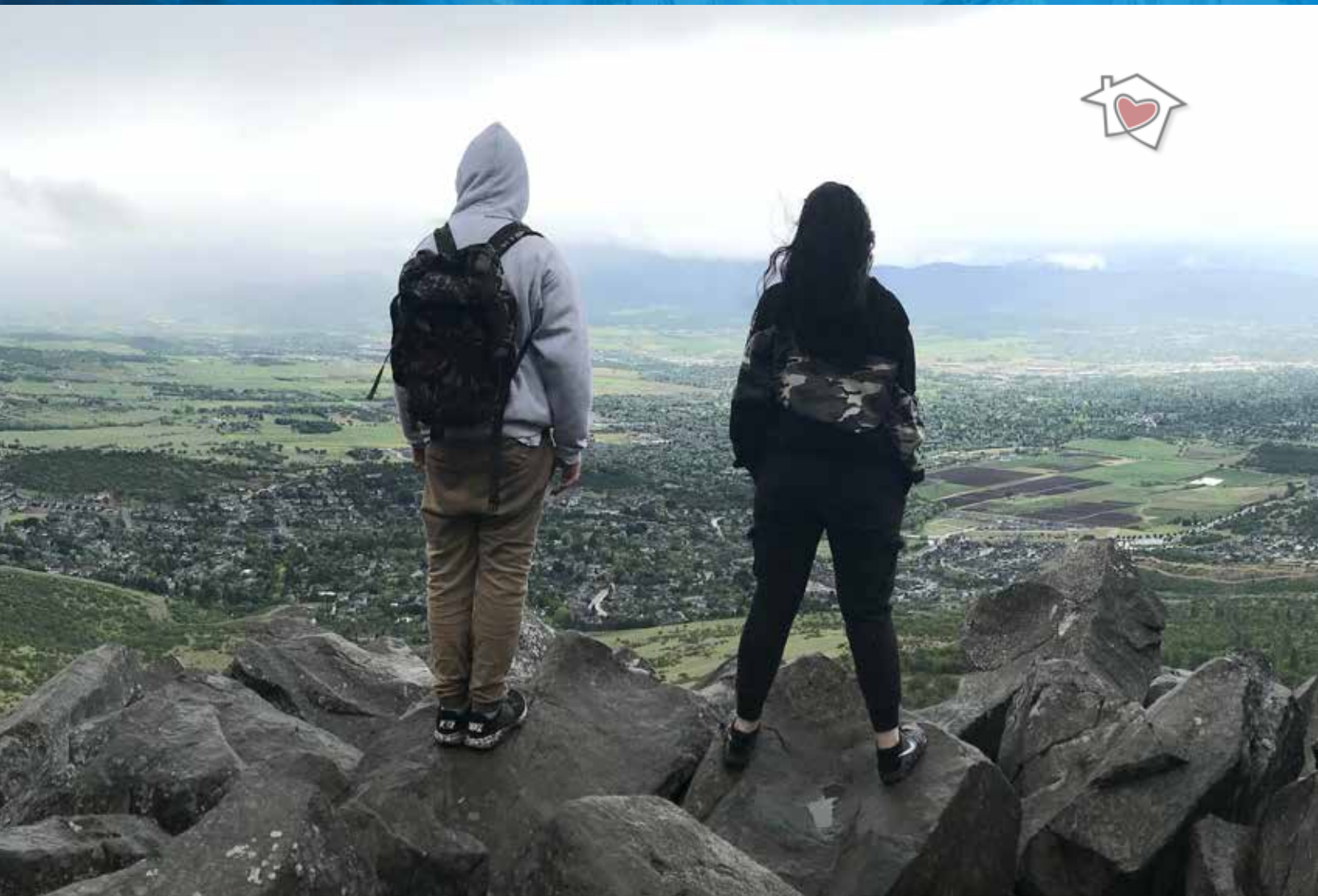




HEARTS —WITH-A— MISSION

TOGETHER WITH YOU



Update from Hearts With A Mission



The Giver and the Gift

Recently we received the following letter. We were awed and humbled by the giver and the gift.

*Dear Hearts With A Mission,
Enclosed is my donation for your ministry.*

I lost my house, possessions & pets in the Alameda fire. It has been a traumatic experience. I've done a lot of praying asking God for comfort and guidance.

Tho I'm facing challenges, I am determined to give to meaningful ministries like yours.

This donation is what I can give now and hopefully more by summer.

God bless all your efforts,

Sincerely, LC



LC, thank you for your faithful heart and generosity!



Letter from the Executive Director

Welcome to 2021!

One thing 2020 has taught us is that we are not in control. Thank goodness God is still in control!

In times of crisis, we are often given opportunities to take a fresh new look at the things in our lives that matter most to us, and sometimes it results in creating a positive change.

At Hearts With A Mission, we are continually looking at our youth's needs and how we can best serve young people and their families in crisis. As an emergency shelter for youth, one of the most heartbreaking things we see are youth who don't have a place to call home where it is safe. This is why we implemented Safe Families for Children, SFFC (ages 0-22), the Independent Living Program, ILP (ages 16-21) and the Transitional Living Program, TLP (18-22).

The cost of maintaining the current foster care system is devastating. It adds up to nearly \$8 billion each year. Citizens and communities are paying \$300,000 in taxpayer-funded costs for every young person who ages out of foster care at 18 (From Cost Avoidance: The Business Case for Investing in Youth Aging Out of Care" Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, 2013). Wouldn't it be great if we could help families before it was necessary to remove their children from their homes?

We are grateful for our Child Welfare partners at ODHS and the amazing work they do, as it is extremely difficult work! At Hearts With A Mission, our goal is to show kids and their families God's love through our actions. St. Francis of Assisi said, "Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

We are excited to announce we are expanding our Transitional Living Program for kids 18-22 in Josephine County! Read more about this on the next page.

Thank you for your continued support to help homeless, at-risk, and runaway youth and their families in our communities. Because of you, kids are receiving love, furthering their education, getting their first job, and families are being reunified. We want kids to be safe, and families who are in crisis receive the help they need to make their own family safe and healthy again.

Together with you,



Kevin Lamson,
Executive Director



A COMMUNITY WITH HEART

We were thrilled Toyota gifted us with a 2-year lease on a 2021 Rav4 & Chick-fil-A's employees chose us as recipients for \$5,000!

ILP Snow Day

Lisa Knobloch-Thomas, ILP Skills Trainer

The weather was sunny. The snow was cold. For some, the snow and sledding were a new experience, an experience they loved.

We saw Bianca having fun. It was her first time out for a while doing anything fun. Her fun-loving personality came out again, which we haven't seen in a while.

She was also excited to spend time with a couple of friends she hadn't seen for some time. For all the kids, their favorite moments were just "being with friends".

One of the pandemic's unfortunate realities is the social isolation that has hit the younger generation especially hard. Snow day was more than just a trip to the snow; it was a day of connection.

The Independent Living Program (ILP) aims to provide youth and young adults from Jackson and Josephine Counties who are in foster care help transitioning into adulthood. Compared to their general population peers, youth exiting foster care are more likely to drop out of school, become parents before they are ready, experience homelessness or end up in jail. Speaking of youth exiting foster care...



The Transitional Living Program (TLP)

Research has shown that homeless youth ages 18-22 are the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population. We are excited to announce we will be expanding TLP services to Josephine County.

Our goal is to help these young people utilize their individual strengths to end the cycle of poverty and become pillars of the community. The program focuses on the Four Core Outcomes to end homelessness, including 1) stable housing, 2) permanent connections, 3) social & emotional well-being, 4) education & employment. TLP offers an example of what a stable lifestyle can look like for young people who have had an unstable childhood.

"This is the first place that I have really felt safe."

~ Dana, TLP resident, Medford

Beginning March 1st, 2021, Hearts With A Mission will provide an 8-bed Transitional Living Program, for youth ages 18-21, to receive up to 2 years of housing support and life skill training, helping them become self-sustaining. To provide this service at our current Grants Pass location, we will be serving our 10-17 year-olds in host homes through our Safe Families for Children program.



Safe Families for Children (SFFC)

Our fantastic church partners, host families, family friends, and supporters have provided 247 youth with over 13,850 nights of safe shelter in host homes through this program.

We are looking to expand the number of host homes in Josephine County from 8 to 15. We will continue to provide emergency shelter for 10-17 year-olds from Josephine County in Jackson County when host homes are not available.

Please continue to keep us in your prayers and consider other ways you can become involved. Our goal is to help strengthen youth & families in Josephine County by surrounding them with volunteers from within their community.

Call 541-646-7385 for more information about the ILP, TLP or SFFC programs or go online to heartswithamission.org.



We never outgrow the desire to be
a part of a family



Kids Belong in Families

Sharon Rush, Chief Program Director

"Kids belong in families, not in shelters." This might seem like a strange comment coming from Kevin Lamson, the Founder and CEO of Hearts With A Mission, as

HWAM operates three youth shelters. But it became clear to Kevin within the first year of opening the original Medford youth shelter in 2009: "Kids want to be in a family."

Shelters are here to provide emergency, short-term, transitional care. As hard as we work to create a 'family-like' environment in each shelter, we eventually hear: "I just want a normal family."

I will never forget 13-year old Carrie, curled up in the chair of my office. She asked: "Why doesn't my mom want me?" Her big brown eyes filled with tears. It wasn't that mom didn't want her, but mom was battling significant mental health issues and addiction. Carrie was losing hope. It became apparent; if we really wanted to help Carrie, we needed to help her mom. As I got to know Carrie's mom, I learned about the struggles she faced day in and day out. When I asked, "Who do you turn to for support?" Her answer was, "no one." Isn't it odd that in our current context of social media where we can have thousands of 'Facebook' friends', we are more isolated than ever?

We never outgrow this desire to be part of a family. One of our TLP residents recently stated, "I still hope I get adopted." She is 18 years old. Everyone wants to love and be loved. Everyone desires a family of their own. We are born that way, and it is no accident. The family is the foundational institution of society ordained by God. It



Mia and her mom Layla were living in a motel. Judy, a Safe Families Family Friend, picks up little 3 year old Mia while Layla was working on finding stable housing. Judy would watch Mia once a week while mom was at work.

is in the family where God intended us to first learn about love, comfort, protection and forgiveness.

God's Word is clear: genuine and caring relationships are a basic human need, a need we never outgrow. Galatians 6:2 tells us to: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Carrie's mom needed someone to help bear her burdens.

Our vision at Hearts is to offer every family an extended 'family-like' circle of support. We can't do this without our extended family; our community of volunteers. You can make an impact by mentoring a youth, becoming a host home, or maybe a family friend who can offer encouragement and support to a mom who is feeling overwhelmed and alone. Together, we can make a difference for one child, one family at a time.



The Blagdon's are a Safe Families for Children Host Home. While they have busy lives, they always make space to open their home to host young adults as well as single parents with young children. They love the new experiences that each hosting brings and we love their open hearts and willingness to step for kids and families in crisis!



Safe Families
for Children

A program of
Hearts With A Mission

Surrounding families in crisis with caring, compassionate community.

Finding Family in Lincoln County

Marisa Hayner, SFFC Coordinator of Lincoln County

Melissa grew up in a volatile home environment. As a young woman, she found herself in an unsafe relationship with a young son and a new baby on the way. Melissa needed to get out of an abusive relationship and protect her children. On top of that, she had no idea how to care for her children or run a home properly. This young mom needed help.

Our partners at the Lincoln County ODHS contacted us about Melissa, who needed a safe place to live until Melissa could find stable housing.

I met with Melissa, where she rented a 10x10 room in a home with no stable people. She was very open to Safe Families services and was willing to be hosted by a host family along with her son.

Melissa had been under investigation with ODHS due to smoking marijuana while being pregnant. She was due to have her baby girl in a couple of months and needed a stable home environment. Melissa was required to take UA's to prove her sobriety and keep the "no contact" with unsafe individuals

in her past, or ODHS would take custody of her child. We were able to connect her with a host family - the day her perpetrator was to be released from jail!

With her SFFC Host Family's help, Melissa focused on self-care, learned parenting tools, stayed sober, and worked on personal goals. Melissa had her baby, Chloe, while living with her SFFC Host Family and is continuing to stay there as she learns how to make wise and healthy choices.

I have met with Melissa weekly to go over PRIDE Skills (Praise, Reflect, Imitate, Describe, Enthusiasm), self-care tools and household routines so she is prepared to be successful when the time comes for her to live on her own.

Melissa's Host Family has wholly embraced this little family and wrapped their arms around Melissa in support. They hosted a virtual baby shower to help this young mom who had nothing. Both SFFC

Family Support and her Host Family have stepped up (above and beyond) to help. One huge help has been babysitting for Chloe and her brother, Charles, so Melissa can go to appointments or work on goals.

Melissa finally understands what it's like to live in a stable home environment and is working so hard to build the tools to be successful when she moves out on her own.

"I have felt supported by Safe Families and by my Host Family in so many ways. Not only do I get the help that I need with my children, with my hands full with a two-year-old and newborn, but I also have grown to know the feeling of what true family means."

We are so grateful for our close relationship with the Lincoln County ODHS caseworkers. There have been multiple scenarios where SFFC gets a call from a caseworker, and we are able to go on home visits together to better support our local struggling parents. It is a great partnership.



Katerina, Dalton and Jilleah sing and play the Ukuleles together. Dalton and Jilleah were both hosted by separate Lincoln County Safe Families for Children host families.

"They cared for me a lot, they always found a way to show me that I could have a better life and that gave me hope." ~ Natalie"



The Role of Family Advocate

Kelly Jefferies, HWAM Family Counselor/Advocate

This past year in my role as a Family Advocate, I have been blessed to work with several families in Jackson and Josephine Counties. During my visits I have learned so many valuable lessons.

I am reminded of my own journey as a parent. I was a really good parent, right up until the time I gave birth!

It was then I found out I knew very little, and I was fortunate to have a strong support system. Many families today are isolated and lack the type of extended, loving support I had. Families come in all sizes, shapes and beliefs, but I have learned these families have many of the same struggles to one degree or another. The everyday things families struggle with are poor communication, lack of basic parenting skills, and a shortage of time and energy. Being mindful of trauma or generational family breakdown is often the core of my work.

Our society has programmed us to think that asking for help is a weakness. It is not until the family structures are so stressed or broken that we are invited in. Parents are exhausted, and the kids are beginning to experiment with anything that will change their thoughts or numb their emotions; drugs, alcohol, gaming, sexual behaviors, and running away from home, just to name a few. When a healthy family structure is lacking, family members often start to avoid each other rather than talking about what is happening in the home.

It is important for families to realize reaching out for help is

actually a strength. All families need support at one time or another. We join the family and offer communication skills and other strategies to engage in positive changes. All children need to be seen, loved and valued, and all parents want support, structure, peace and quiet.

Helping families build in daily routines and family time, encouraging parents to take the risk to praise the positives while learning communication skills to address the negative behaviors are at the center of my work with families.

Removing barriers is my first goal. I have met with families in our shelters, their homes, or in coffee shops. Working around busy schedules is a must. My job is to offer what the family has not been able to access in the past or currently. I have been impressed at the small amount of time each family takes to reset and move forward once the commitments are made.

Often just telling a tearful mom she is doing a good job and pointing out responsible parenting is all it takes for her to want to learn more and maintain new supports. Asking a dad to be present one night a week to have a family night with his family opens up hope to the child. Encouraging parents to reconnect allows the child to express thoughts unfiltered while affirming they are heard and valued, allowing for the buy-in needed to move forward.

Being an advocate on behalf of the entire family is so rewarding for me and is critical in keeping families together while supporting them to become stronger and healthier.



"One of the biggest things I learned is that I am important.
I just never felt that before." ~ Tia"



Kathy Tinsley
2020 Guardian
Angel Award

A Virtual Success

Our 2020 Virtual Event was held in November after being revised, revamped, postponed, revised and revamped again, but you hung in there with us! Thank you for all you do!

To Our Amazing Sponsors: Thank you for being so patient through all the changes!! In a year that was as tumultuous as we have ever seen, you stepped up and gave us a platform to share our mission with a much wider audience.

We truly missed seeing all of your faces and connecting with you in person! Thanks to your generosity we raised over \$96,000!



Karyn Adams
2020 Volunteer
of the Year



THANK YOU TO OUR
PRESENTING SPONSOR!

Stephanie  Jarrard



NMLS 1598758, Mortgage Advisor

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR EVENT SPONSORS!!



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Save the Date!



**HEARTS
WITH-A
MISSION**

2021 Homeless 2 Hopeful

Annual Event

Saturday Sept. 25



"I am grateful how much help and how much like family I felt at this place along with my brother and I cannot say thank you enough to everyone there who had an impact on my life, so a million and one thank you's to Hearts and all the amazing people I met and had the pleasure of meeting there."

~ Eric



**HEARTS
WITH-A
MISSION**

HEARTS WITH A MISSION TOGETHER WITH YOU

Every Child Deserves a Home

A New Year of Expansion, Transition and Hope



Youth Shelter

517 Edwards St, Medford, OR 97501

Transitional Living Program

521 Edwards St, Medford, OR 97501 | 1504 NE 9th St, Grants Pass

Admin Office

529 Edwards St, Medford, OR 97501

Mailing Address

711 Medford Ctr #334, Medford, OR 97504

Lincoln City

PO Box 299, Newport, OR 97365

heartswithamission.org | 541-646-7385

