



HEARTS —WITH-A— MISSION

TOGETHER WITH YOU



Update from Hearts With A Mission



Scout's Honor

Jonathan Hicks needed an Eagle Scout project, so he started raising funds to provide HWAM youth

with gear for outdoor recreational activities such as camping, hiking, rock climbing and ropes challenge courses. Having personally benefited from these types of activities, he wanted other youth to have the same opportunities.

He raised all the funds and then purchased equipment and the storage shed.

A few weeks ago, Jonathan and some friends showed up to level and clear out a space for a new Activity Shed! Read more about it on page 6.

Thank you Jonathan!



Epic Waterfall Adventure!

Some of the TLP gang visited eight waterfalls plus the Takelma Gorge. At one point, one of the residents expressed "This has been one of the best days of my life."

Throughout the day, you could see their excitement and joy in their faces. It was a good day!

Letter from the Executive Director



Is your life making an impact?

Often we go through our day or year without thinking if we are making any impact in the world. Impact can be measured in many ways!

Many young people do not comprehend how much they matter and their lives have value and purpose. It is a hard concept to understand when social media and the culture around them tell them otherwise. They believe

their value is based on how they look or what they possess. In Gods eyes we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" and we have "hope and a future." We are told throughout scripture our words and our actions have value.

Hearts With A Mission is a faith-based organization. My desire is to serve God by demonstrating my faith through action. It is my love for Him which gives me the desire to support homeless and at-risk youth. It is my highest honor to serve youth and their families of all backgrounds.

HWAM operates with a trauma-informed mindset and incorporates several strength-based, evidence-based concepts into our framework. Positive Youth Development, Collaborative Problem Solving, Crisis Prevention Intervention and Prudent Parenting Standards are the foundation for this framework. We aim to empower our youth to come through their crisis with increased personal strength, a sense of renewal and a positive future while living in a safe, family-like, caring and compassionate environment.

When youth walk through our doors, their reason for coming really varies. Whatever the reason, our goal is to love them, provide for their needs and help them believe their life has a brighter future. We are unable to do what we do without you our faithful supporters. Your support is making an impact in our communities and they are feeling your impact.

Your impact is helping kids and their families feel someone really cares. Thank you.

Together with you,



Kevin Lamson,
Executive Director

Save the Date!



**HEARTS
WITH-A
MISSION**

2021 Homeless 2 Hopeful

**Annual Benefit
Auction**

Saturday Sept. 25





A Seat at the Table

Will Young and Tony Mendenhall have dedicated their lives to helping young people through hard times while navigating them to places where they can succeed.

Both have been HWAM youth shelter managers, taking on the great responsibility that comes with that role. They have big shoulders and even bigger hearts! During their time as shelter managers, a big worry both had was, "What will happen to these kids when they leave?"

Hearts With A Mission has struggled with that question since the day we opened our doors. Our goal is to have kids return to their families. We implemented Safe Families for Children because of that question. We started two Transitional Living Programs (ages 18-21) because of that question.

Will has developed a plan to add another layer of support for youth with the new leadership team, better known as the Youth Action Board. This group is comprised of former HWAM youth from Jackson and Josephine Counties. The team will address the social ills that plagued the young people in our community.

Will and Tony will work with these young people to form outreach opportunities and community awareness with Service Learning Projects. Will reported that the Youth



Working out the details. Ismael (right) proposes a logo for the group.

Action Board is moving forward "due to the leadership of Tatianna Gonzalez and her no-nonsense approach."

We want to give these youth a seat at the table to have a voice and to share that voice to help others.

The Youth Action Board will bring valuable perspectives to Hearts With A Mission's work while demonstrating how young people can contribute today.

Tony recently commented, "We have been impressed with the level of depth we are hearing from the youth. It is inspiring."

We are looking forward to seeing what these young people can accomplish. Find out what they have going by going to our website: heartswithamission.org, under About Us, the Youth Action Board page.





"It adds value to your life."

Sarah Smith



Born for Love

Sharon Rush, COO

"She just needed love to feel like she belongs," Sarah Smith said, when I asked her why she decided to host a homeless teen girl for five weeks. Sarah

experienced firsthand how important it is to know you are loved and to have a safe place to belong. Structure, stability and discipline were not a part of Sarah's childhood. Sarah shared how she began using alcohol and drugs at the early age of 11 years old. She spoke about the years she was homeless, couch surfing as a teenager, feeling abandoned.

As I listened to her story, it was hard for me to understand her following statement: "I thank the Lord for what I've been through; I wouldn't change it." Sarah believes her childhood prepared her for what she can now offer to teens today. She went on to explain that during those tough times, "I felt someone there; I just didn't know it was God."

Sarah shared it wasn't until much later as an adult while listening to the testimony of Michelle Caswell (Purely His Ministry), "The Lord grabbed my heart; and I wanted the forgiveness Michelle was talking about." She accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior.

Sarah is very clear God has called her to love and serve teen girls who have similar experiences to her own. She reflected on her decision to host Chloe: "I didn't know what it would be like to have a teen girl move into my home, but I knew I needed to help. I treated her the same as I did my child. "My son is now 23 years old and in Law School! " Chloe just needed love; to feel like she belongs." Thinking about her own teen years, she added: "People aren't



Sarah shares her experiences of taking in a teen through Safe Families for Children

supposed to leave; people are supposed to follow through on their promises."

Although Chloe has since moved out of Sarah's home, they are still very connected. Sarah now facilitates her own Purely His support group, which Chloe attends along with six other young ladies. Sarah's face lights up when she talks about this group. "These girls fill my life." "We talk about tough things; root issues of our struggles. They are so open and honest, and they really want answers." Sarah's humility shines through as she explains, "It's not me, it's God. I just provide a safe place for them to belong."

Sarah's message to anyone thinking about hosting or mentoring, "It's not as scary as it seems. These kids need love. They need someone to come alongside them. It will add value to your life." One of Sarah's favorite scriptures is Joshua 1:9: Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

Thank you, Sarah, for loving kids, for saying "yes" and showing up! You are a blessing to so many.



TLP residents and staff help out at the Josephine County Foodbank. After being given a tour, they got their hands dirty, helping to harvest over 50 lbs of carrots for the food bank. It was a great experience that gave insight into how hard work directly impacts others while learning about farming and how we get our food.



Safe Families
for Children

A program of
Hearts With A Mission

Surrounding families in crisis with caring, compassionate community.

We Are Better Together

Marisa Hayner, SFFC Coordinator of Lincoln County

Lincoln County Safe Families for Children received a call from the local ODHS branch who referred a single mom with 4 children who just recently lost her husband due to cancer 4 months prior. This family was gone for some time while her husband was receiving treatment in another state, and then had to mourn the loss even while not being home. Finally when this family returned, they came home to an absolute disaster. Not only were their hearts broken, but their home was as well. Those who were supposed to be caring for this family's animals and property did the absolute opposite. This mom felt completely lost, not knowing where or how to restart.

Safe Families staff immediately visited this mom and created a list of tangible things that needed to be fixed within the home. At this time, everyone in the family was sleeping on the couches or the floor in the living room because the rest of the house wasn't liveable. Safe Families staff immediately reached out for



A Family in Crisis

Devastating circumstances left a family in crisis.

A group of Lincoln County churches, residents and companies stepped up to help.

local support, asking if time and resources could be donated to help repair this family's home.

Tradenet, Premier Construction, and members from Lincoln City Calvary Chapel stepped up to lend a hand. Financial support was definitely needed to help cover costs of materials as there was a lot of work that needed to be done to this house. Through one of Safe Families supporting churches, Yaquina Chapel Church, one of their pastors said that there was an anonymous donor that wanted to support this project of repairing the house. This amazing anonymous donor donated \$4,000 to support the contractors who were willing to invest lots of time and personal resources to help fix this family's home. New carpet was installed, several leaks were fixed, drywall repaired, destroyed furniture was

removed, the outside property was cleaned up, fences were repaired, walls painted and bathrooms now functioning. ODHS even pitched in and paid for a massive dump bin to be on the property for over a week to support the construction workers who needed to dump trash and materials. For several months now, men and women have dedicated weekends to help support this mom and her family to rebuild their home that was once destroyed, into a home that is safe and secure.

Safe Families is so thankful for the financial support and the many many hours invested by local church groups and contractors to support this mom and her children. Thank you for being an example of leadership by showing radical love, generosity and compassion to strangers. It shows what a community can do, together.



"Everyone you admire was once a beginner."

Jack Butcher



Biking with Beau



The Benefits of Exercise

The Mayo Clinic reports that depression and anxiety symptoms often improve with exercise. Exercise releases feel-good endorphins while helping to take your mind off worries, which can disrupt the cycle of negative thoughts that feed depression and anxiety.

Another benefit is gaining confidence. Meeting challenges or goals bolsters self-confidence. Getting in shape can also make you feel better about your appearance. Additional bonuses include social interaction and developing healthy coping strategies.

If you've been feeling down, try adding a little more movement to your day.

By Shelby Clark, Medford Shelter Life Coach

Youth 71:Five has graciously invited Hearts With A Mission on their Break the Cycle Mountain Biking Outings.

Beau Jeska, leader of this group, continually welcomes newcomers with a warm spirit and enthusiasm. 71:Five provides high-quality mountain bikes, along with necessary protective gear such as helmets, knee pads, elbow pads and gloves. Before every ride, Beau leads an informative group about how to use the breaks and switch gears properly.

Throughout the ride, 71:Five staff and volunteers share their knowledge of the sport and ways to improve youth skills.

Every time HWAM youth have gone, they've returned raving about the experience. They love riding nice bikes, challenging

themselves physically and watching themselves improve week after week. One youth said,

"I definitely will be going whenever possible!"

Mountain biking helps build self-confidence by pushing their comfort zone. Doing these activities with their peers builds camaraderie and trust in the group. Going on outings like this helps improve their social skills as well. Mother Nature throws different obstacles at them in the outdoors, and it's inspiring to see our youth and young adults adapt to different situations.

This program assists the youth and young adults to produce even more resilience than they've already shown!



Jonathan's Eagle Scout Project

Living in Southern Oregon and being able to explore our beautiful valley has given Jonathan many great memories. When Jonathan had to pick an Eagle Scout project he chose to support HWAM with the supplies needed to help other kids enjoy the recreational activities that he enjoyed as a youth.

Jonathan figured he spent about 125 hours fundraising, gathering supplies and building the shed. Combined with about 50 hours of help from others to build the shed, he spent around 175 estimated hours for the project. Jonathan raised a grand total of \$12,300! He spent \$4,936 for the shed, landscaping and all camping gear; the leftover cash will be going to HWAM and some awesome adventures!

Jonathan will be off to college next year and we wish him all the best!



Restoring Relationships

Bill Hague, Medford Shelter Manager

It was the middle of January 2021 when Kyra showed up at our shelter. Kyra came here struggling in her relationship with her parents and was unwilling to remain at home in a challenging environment. Their relationship had deteriorated so much it got to the point that Kyra was reluctant to comply with any instructions given by her parents. Her parents also had problems coping with everyday life issues, which is one of the main reasons she needed some separation. Kyra wanted to work through her problems.

The day she walked through the shelter doors, we started working on increasing the family's circle of support. We have worked on ways to help the family grow together by engaging other supports such as Safe Families For Children and Edgewater Christian Fellowship, who reached out to mom to help provide some new connections. Since then, mom, Julia, has been in regular attendance at church on Sundays and has also been plugged into the women's group and is currently developing new relationships. Kelly, our Family Advocate Counselor, has been meeting with Julia regularly to work on relationship building and everyday life skills. These steps have allowed us to start slowly setting aside intentional time for Kyra to spend time at home. Each outing has brought more success and more extended visits.

For her part, Kyra has worked on some of the issues she needed to work on to improve her relationship with her parents. Staff daily demonstrated to her what a healthy relationship looks like by providing a loving, caring environment. Kyra has made some significant strides in handling conflict with the other youth at the shelter and with her parents. She has worked closely with Kelly individually and corporately with her parents on the issues causing conflict in the home. As evidenced by less friction on phone conversations and her weekly visits at home, we have seen significant improvement. She has found new connections at a church she chose to attend on Sundays, along with youth group on Wednesdays and more recently decided she wanted to be baptized on Easter Sunday morning. Kyra has increased her performance at school with good grades and a clean attendance record. About a month ago, she started filling out job applications and got a job.

I am excited to report that Kyra will be returning home next weekend. She returns with increased skills dealing with her relationships, a much larger circle of support for both her and her parents, and more importantly than that, the foundation of hope, which will increase her ability to cope with everyday life.



Living life at full throttle!

The TLP gang takes a break at the Family Fun Center to enjoy a wind-in-your-hair kind of day!

heartswithamission.org | 541-646-7385

Transitioning in Grants Pass

Tony Mendenhall, SFFC Coordinator Josephine County



Changes have been afoot in Josephine County at Hearts With a Mission. The shelter has been fully converted to a Transitional Living model serving youth 18-21 and is now full of young adults. Since February, the Safe Families for Children team has been working hard to further develop the Safe Family Model in Josephine County.

The church can make a powerful impact in this community. We are excited to welcome Merlin Community Baptist and LifeGate churches to our network of churches and look forward to the renewed enthusiasm of several other churches including River Valley Church, Hope Presbyterian in Rogue River, Jubilation Fellowship and Grace Bible Church.

I am continually in awe of how God is moving amongst his Church as we are seeing more and more people being called to minister through Safe Families. As one host family explained, "We are the hands and feet of Jesus and there are people in our communities that need help. How could we not say yes to that opportunity?"

One of the greatest signs of God's hand in this movement in Josephine County is the willingness of churches to work together. We are seeing circles of support woven together with volunteers from various churches. One young family in Merlin has now received support, encouragement and meals from caring volunteers across three unique churches. It is truly the Church at work!

Upcoming Events

Youth With A Vision
Community Awareness Day
Saturday, June 26

Vogel Plaza in downtown Medford
12:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Homeless 2 Hopeful
Annual Auction Benefit
Saturday, Sept. 25
@ The Expo

Call or text
Cassie for more
information
541-944-3350



**HEARTS
WITH-A
MISSION**

Every Child Deserves a Home

HEARTS WITH A MISSION TOGETHER WITH YOU

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE • SERVICE • COMMUNITY



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