



HEARTS — WITH A — MISSION

TOGETHER WITH YOU

WINTER 2021



Update from Hearts With A Mission



Kevin Lamson
Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As 2021 comes to a close, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful blessings Hearts With A Mission (HWAM) has received over the last year. We are so fortunate to have a talented team who work hard to find solutions for our youth who are displaced and need critical services. We have also been blessed with a Board of Directors who continue to work beside me to expand the organizations's stability and implement the best operating model to fit our population.

Christmas is a wonderful time to refocus on who we are as an organization and what is propelling us forward. When we opened our doors in 2009, we had one goal: to provide a safe place for children to go when they needed help. This vision has grown into a 15 bed Youth Shelter, two Transitional Living Programs (TLP), multi-county Independent Living Programs (ILP) and Safe Families for Children (SFFC) programs in four counties. Fast forward 12 years, these programs have helped nearly 2,200 youth since conception, and our mission stands true as we continue to touch the lives of youth in ways we could have never comprehended.

Hearts With A Mission serves homeless and at-risk youth by providing shelter, educational support, mentoring and transition planning with a faith-based approach.

We currently have programs vested in Jackson, Josephine, Klamath and Lincoln counties. Each county has their own set of needs and services that are specific to their population. In the beginning of 2021, we did an assessment of these services and made the decision to transfer the Josephine County Youth Shelter, serving children ages 10 to 17, to a Transitional Youth Shelter, serving young adults ages 18 to 21. The program has excelled and we are excited to see it continue to grow. Our Safe Families For Children program also grew this year, as we added a new location in Klamath Falls. We are so looking forward to seeing the impact this has on the youth.

I would like to close by saying that we are immensely thankful for your support. We could not carry out our mission without your prayers, donations and support. It is a privilege to be a part of HWAM and it is incredible to see what we, as a community, are doing together to protect our at-risk youth. I am looking forward to what 2022 has in store for us and how we can continue to come together to provide services for those in need.

I wish the best for you and your family this holiday season. May God richly bless you and keep you safe this Christmas.

Together with you,

Kevin Lamson,
Executive Director



SCAN TO DONATE



Or Text

HWAM to 41444



Ashley and her husband, Dave, leading Hearts With A Mission Board of Directors and Program Managers in a Strategic Planning Meeting to discuss where we are as an organization and where we are heading. It was a great time of connection and brainstorming.

Creating a Roadmap

Ashley Blakely, Development Director

As the new Development Director at Hearts With A Mission (HWAM), I am thrilled to be part of a team that values the vital work we do in our community to support at-risk youth, while continuing to search for new and innovate ways to grow and better our services.

The majority of my career has been working in the fire service, educating youth, promoting fire-safety and creating strong community relationships. I am looking forward to continuing this work at HWAM by strengthening our robust network of services, cultivating new partnerships and serving our youth.

In late October, HWAM staff and Board of Directors participated in a two-day strategic planning session, focused on long-term goals. This type of information sharing, broad collaboration and goal setting will act as a roadmap on where HWAM is headed over the next three years. As we finalize this plan, we are excited to share what that looks like and how everyone can be involved.

I look forward to meeting each of you as I continue to get settled in my new role, please know that my door is always open and I look forward to hearing more on how you are involved with Hearts With A Mission. You can contact me at ashley.b@heartswithamission.org



Ashley, Andie and Dave Blakely



heartswithamission.org | 541-646-7385

Hearts With A Mission's
2021 Homeless 2 Hopeful
Auction Event!



Darcey, Kevin and Karyn preparing for the virtual event

Thank you to our Sponsors!!



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2021 GUARDIAN ANGELS



Brian Garrison
Garrison's Home

Justin Steffens
Workspace



VOLUNTEER OF THE DECADE
Barbara Hubbard

Thank You to everyone who supported, donated and participated in this annual fundraiser!

We  You



"It's being 'that person,' when there is no one else." Neal Frechette, Safe Family Mentor



Hope in the Midst of Chaos

Marisa Hayner, SFFC Coordinator of Lincoln County

Safe Families for Children (SFFC) of Lincoln County met Elizabeth when she was at a low point in her life, feeling hopeless and devastated. Her four children were scheduled to be removed from her custody and placed into three different foster homes. Elizabeth turned to SFFC to get the help she needed to bring her children back home.

The first thing SFFC did with Elizabeth was connect her with Jackie Russell, a Family Coach who supported her with resources and kindness. Jackie was there for Elizabeth on some of her toughest days. She was there through the loneliness and separation from her children, after tough court hearings and even on days when she just needed some encouragement. This bond between Elizabeth and Jackie was strong and the foundation for getting Elizabeth the tools she needed to succeed.

It was one of the greatest moments for Elizabeth when Jackie stood next to her as she transitioned to a Shelter Program



Daughter, Dannie was thrilled to tour the "Radio Shack" with her Safe Family Mentor

and received custody of her oldest son and daughter.

Her oldest son, Chuck, doesn't have a dad or positive role model in his life, so SFFC connected him with Safe Families Plus Mentor, Neal Frechette, where he created a unique bond with a positive male figure. They go crabbing together, talk about life goals, walk on the beach and play video games during rainy days. "It's being that person when there is no one else," says Neal.

SFFC will continue to support Elizabeth and her family until she can get full custody of the rest of her children. Elizabeth's situation is looking positive, and she cannot wait until her family is together again, this time with more stability and a stronger foundation.

We know change doesn't happen overnight, but SFFC plans to be there for Elizabeth and her kids for as long as they need our love and support.

The Faces of your Safe Families for Children Coordinators



Jackson County
Heather Siewell
heather.s@heartswithamission.org



Josephine County
Tony Mendenhall
tony@heartswithamission.org



Lincoln County
Marisa Hayner
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Klamath County
Bethany Holmes
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Young Mom finds help with SFFC

Heather Siewell, SFFC Coordinator, Jackson County

Kendra, a mother to a 10-month-old baby, was referred to Hearts With A Mission (HWAM) by our community partner, Access. Kendra and her child lived in an unsafe environment and entered into the Safe Families for Children (SFFC) program to seek safety and shelter.

Before arriving at HWAM, Kendra had made many attempts to make her situation work without assistance; however, after several setbacks and being without transportation, she knew she needed help, not only for herself but also for her child. When Kendra arrived, SFFC put the mother's heart at ease by placing the



baby in a host home while she made plans for more permanent housing. The host family loved her baby that evening, sent the mother photos and allowed Kendra time to pack and prepare for their next chapter.

For the first week after moving, Kendra and the baby stayed in a hotel funded by Access. Throughout this time, SFFC continued working

with Kendra on establishing her needs and supporting her through her decisions. We were thankful to be a part of this story and are happy to report that the baby and mom are doing well and getting the resources they need. We are blessed to have community partners who help navigate different needs to assist our at-risk youth and families.

A Passion for Caregiving

Lillian Wright has been active in the Independent Living Program (ILP) for two years and has grown exponentially over that time, despite some personal setbacks.

Lily grew up moving in and out of numerous foster homes. When she initially got involved with ILP, she was in the midst of some legal issues surrounding a school incident and was experiencing homelessness. Lily knew it was time to make some positive changes in her life.

Lily began taking her ILP work more seriously. She worked with Josh, her ILP trainer, on setting and achieving goals in various areas of her life, including obtaining her driver's license, finding suitable housing and getting a job that fit her unique interests and skills. Lily was also connected with a tutor through ILP and graduated high school with top marks in all classes.

Lily interviewed with a retirement facility after being introduced to the hiring manager by her ILP worker. After some fine-tuning, Lily found her passion in caregiving. She has since been able to move her way up in the company and started working part-time as a caregiver with a senior living center in Ashland, Oregon.

We are also excited to announce that Lily has begun pursuing a nursing degree through Rogue Community College! She is hopeful about her future and is excited to see what comes next.



A New Beginning for Simon

Bill Hague, Youth Shelter Manager

The tale of two stories is the best way I can describe Simon's two stays with Hearts With A Mission (HWAM). Simon spent 30 days with us in September of 2020, and during that stay, we encountered a lot of push back from him. He was unwilling to participate in our program and he resisted most attempts we made at building relationships or any opportunities to work through the things that caused him to be at the shelter. Simon's interaction with the other youth and the staff was primarily negative and eventually ended with his exit due to his refusal to participate in the program.

Simon exited the shelter and continued to struggle with conflict, boundaries and respect. We reached out to him through our aftercare program but his interaction with the staff was spotty as he worked to respect the staff through his speech and actions. The HWAM staff continued to lean in and show love and care despite his lack of response.

In August, 2021, I received a call from a DHS Case Worker letting me know Simon needed a safe place until he could figure out a long-term solution. We met with Simon and his case worker and spoke about boundaries and respect, and Simon decided he wanted to give HWAM and our program another try.

We noticed a level of effort we had not seen in his previous stay with us. He was willing to meet with Bryan, our Case Manager, to build a service plan that would help him be successful while at HWAM. He continued to move forward with meeting his goals. We started seeing a willingness to participate in group sharing,

working with the staff to encourage other youth in the house to comply with staff requests and a positive response to receiving redirection when needed.

Simon had a desire to be reunited with his biological mother. Bryan worked diligently on making it possible for that to happen. Simon was undoubtedly focused on the possibility of being released from state care, and he seemed to desire to do the things necessary to move that idea forward. A lot of hard work ensued.

I remember when Simon received notice that he would be going to court to decide if his mother would be able to regain custody. He was anxious and excited.

His 16th birthday landed on the day of the verdict. That was the day he exited the youth shelter and Foster Care. **What a wonderful birthday present!** I am grateful that we could provide a safe, loving place for him while a plan to reunite him with his mother could be worked out and accomplished.



A Spooky Evening of Fun

April Waggoner, TLP Program Manager

In 2021, the Transitional Living Program (TLP) focused on recreational activities that supported relationship building and exploring new activities to spark new hobbies or interests. Over the past few months, residents participated in rock climbing, hiking, zip-lining, pottery painting and pumpkin carving. These activities have allowed residents to try new interests, sometimes out of their comfort zone, while still being surrounded by supportive peers who encourage them. These activities have also cultivated a fun and welcoming atmosphere within the house, building solid relationships with each other. For example, several girls in the house bonded over a recent event and decided to take a day trip to the coast together. For young people who have experienced a lot of movement during their lives, finding stability in friendships is transformative.

This year the TLP residents decided to throw their first Halloween party. Both the Medford and Grants Pass houses were invited, along with some of our aftercare residents. The residents hung out with their peers, ate fun food, played games and watched a movie. The residents were excited to host the party, dress up and visit with their friends. There was a lot of laughter, smiles and full bellies from the spooky evening of fun.



Grants Pass Pivots

Tony Mendenhall, Josephine County TLP & SFFC Director

At the beginning of 2021, Hearts With A Mission (HWAM) decided to transition the Josephine County Youth Shelter, serving youth between 10-17 years of age, to a Transitional Living Program (TLP), for young people between the ages of 18 and 22. The demographic of that segment of the population experiencing homelessness has dramatically risen.

The change in housing required some modifications to transform the house from a childcare setting into a dorm-style living space. Throughout this conversion, GP's TLP Director, Tony, reflected on the many memories and youth served while the shelter was operational. "We never knew who might walk through those doors and where our heart would take us in helping them," Tony stated.

There were tremendous relationships established over the life of the shelter. Due to these strong bonds with HWAM staff, 90% of the youth who were in the shelter have transitioned into the TLP to continue their journey in an environment that is safe, loving and full of hope. Though the transition wasn't easy, Tony is happy to continue to see many of those same faces at the TLP.

"Many of the youth we serve lack the support to be who they want to be and have come back to a home to the people, and a place they know they are accepted. We are excited to continue walking beside our youth and continuing to support their needs through faith and kindness," stated Tony.



Tony gathers with some of the Josephine County TLP gang.



Collecting Cans for Hearts

Fed-Ex has been collecting cans for Hearts since June of this year. To date they have raised over \$1,200! Thank You Fed-Ex!

If you would like to donate your cans, just drop them off at the Youth Shelter, located at 521 Edwards St, Medford, Oregon.

You can pick up Blue bags ahead of time at the shelter. Happy recycling!

You can also donate directly to our BottleDrop account by going to, www.bottledropcenters.com/.../hearts-with-a-mission/



Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!



From All of Us at
Hearts With A Mission
and
Safe Families for Children



WE  YOU



**HEARTS
WITH-A
MISSION**

Every Child Deserves a Home

HEARTS WITH A MISSION

TOGETHER WITH YOU

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE • SERVICE • COMMUNITY



Youth Shelter

517 Edwards St, Medford, OR 97501

Transitional Living Program

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

SFFC Southern Oregon | Admin Office

529 Edwards St, Medford, OR 97501

Mailing Address

711 Medford Ctr #334, Medford, OR 97504

SFFC Lincoln County

PO Box 299, Newport, OR 97365

SFFC Klamath County

PO Box 6510 S 6th St, PMB# 292, Klamath Falls, OR 97603

