

# Bright

# futures

FALL 2015

## Providence Place



GIVING GOD'S CHILDREN  
A FAITH, A FAMILY, A FUTURE™

### Star Achievers



*Student Danielle Arceneaux with Education and Training Manager Charles Morris.*

Star Achievers awards recognize students for achievements in a ceremony each month in the Providence Place Rotunda.

#### June 2015

**Annie Tabler** for staying focused in class and trying new things; also working to improve her attitude and trying to make more friends.

**Harrison Vera** for handling new volunteering responsibilities, riding the bus, improving time management and organization skills and always maintaining a positive attitude.

*(Star Achievers continues on page 7)*

## 1000+ Summer Volunteers Perform Miracles on Campus

This past summer, Providence Place was thrilled to welcome more than 1,000 volunteers to campus. From individuals to large groups, and ranging from 4 years old to 80, the volunteers were here to share their time and talents, and go to work. Lots of wonderful work was done — mission accomplished!

"The transformation of the campus looks awesome and it's truly uplifting to see so many people involved to further our mission," said Joeylynn Mesaro, Providence Place's recently appointed Volunteer Manager. "I will always have a memory of seeing so many volunteers coming off all the different buses, ready to spend the day giving back to the community. What an amazing experience."

There are many different volunteer opportunities at Providence Place. The most popular is campus beautification. Since the campus is 25 acres, there's always something to do — gardening, painting, cleaning, you name it!

Other volunteer opportunities include interaction with students or expectant mothers. This work is very popular and much needed, too. *(Continued on page 3)*



*Volunteers take a break from pruning and cleaning to pose for a photo.*

Photo by Joeylynn Mesaro



**Providence Place graduates record number of students. Read the story on page 3.**

*Alec Morris at podium.*

P2 Letter from Judith Bell P3 CHI Graduates Largest Class Ever P4 Ways to Give Welcome to New Development Director P5 Community Service at the San Antonio Humane Society P6 Adoption Story | Vision, Mission, Values P7 Memorials and Honors P8 Around Campus

Through  
Grace  
to a

# Brighter Future



As we start to experience the first cooler days of early fall, there is a sense of everything starting to fall back into place after a period of much change. We have new faces here at Providence Place, people who bring an exciting sense of energy and are motivating us all with their enthusiasm and bright ideas, hard work and commitment to our mission. We bid goodbye to our biggest class of CHI graduates, with an added bonus that 80 percent of them had jobs by the time of graduation — the most ever!

Over past months we have looked at ourselves to see who we are, what we are doing and what dictates what we do. We have, in many ways, returned to our roots, returned to our first core value: grace. If it weren't for grace back in 1895, when Madame Volino had her transformational experience from a life of self-absorption to one of caring for others, we would not be here today.

So we have looked at our core values, examined them as a group and evaluated them. The experience has been a great energy generator and there has been a groundswell of interest and enthusiasm, with people buying into concepts to re-define our vision, mission and core values. The effort spilled over into our strategic planning this year and our board became engaged, as well. What has resulted is a re-telling of our story, and all our stakeholders buying into it.

On page 6, you can read about where we are now — our renewed focus on just five core values.

**Grace:** Unmerited compassion

**Wholistic Care:** Wholeness of mind, body and spirit

**Authentic Presence:** Manifestation of grace

**Openness of Spirit:** Community of acceptance

**Value of Human Capital:** Creativity, imagination and innovation

As we move toward the start of a new year at Providence Place, we are refocused, with a renewed sense of hope and excitement about our mission, and the people we serve. We are also deeply grateful always for your support, without which we could have none of the successes that bring so much satisfaction to the work we do.

Sincerely,

Judith Bell, President & CEO

## Providence Place Administration

Judith Bell, President & CEO  
Leslie Bellieu, CHI Director  
Robyn Gambrel,  
Adoption Director  
Andrea Hofstetter,  
Chief Development Officer

## Board of Directors

Bill Avera, Chair  
Richard Planto, Chair-Elect  
Kent Leighton, Past Chair  
Dr. Ron Swain, Secretary  
Dan Hanke, Treasurer

Mario A. Barrera	Tom Giltner
Kenner Coon	Rev. Dr. Tom Hudspeth
Rev. Sanford Coon	Michelle Martin
Heb Cutrer	Patricia Quintana Perron
Mark Dickerson	Dan Rebmann
Bishop Jim Dorff	Ken Schwenke
Beth Eadie	Lisa Spanjer
Rev. Richard Edwards	Catherine Tunks
Rev. Austin Frederick	

## Honorary Board

Pat Camp  
Sharon Lord Daggett  
Jenks Garrett  
David Kinder  
Rev. Dr. Joan Labarr  
Louise Taylor

## Advisory Board

Bill Day  
Beverly Purcell-Guerra  
Fernando Guerra, MD  
Nancy Ann Hunt  
Katherine Shields  
Carolyn Smith  
Tracy Vardiman

*Bright Futures* is the official newsletter of Providence Place. We welcome your comments, suggestions and ideas.

## Contact Us:

Emilie Dujour, Providence Place  
6487 Whitby Road, San Antonio, TX 78240  
210.696.2410 ext. 181 ~ emilie@provplace.org

## Visit us on the Web at [www.provplace.org](http://www.provplace.org)

If you would like to join or leave our mailing list or change your address, please fill out the return envelope enclosed in this newsletter. Be sure to check the change of address box.

Please note: Our mailing list is for internal use only. We do not sell or release names to other organizations or businesses.

*Photos by Emilie Dujour unless otherwise noted.*



Visit us on Facebook and Twitter  
[www.facebook.com/ProvPlaceOfficial](http://www.facebook.com/ProvPlaceOfficial)  
[www.twitter.com/ProvPlace](http://www.twitter.com/ProvPlace)



# THE graduates

## LARGEST GRADUATING CLASS EVER MOVES ON TO EXCITING NEW FUTURES



Chairman Bill Avera and student Garrett Rankin.



Alec Morris at podium

"It hurts painfully to say goodbye, but all I gotta say is I've had a wonderful heck of an 18-month ride with all my friends. I had many awesome and amazing adventures and got to explore everywhere around San Antonio. I've had a blast. All I gotta say is thank you, not forever, but for now."

Alec Morris, a CHI graduate who 18 months ago was shy and reticent, stole the show at graduation this year, entertaining the crowd with his enthusiasm and well exceeding the time allowed for his speech. He was so excited he continued to talk despite his mother's protestations from the audience.

We're glad he did. Even his mother relented, writing later that, "Providence Place has changed Alec's life and future in a way that otherwise would not have been possible."

### Volunteer Story (from page 1)

It can be babysitting — while expectant mothers go to their counseling sessions — assisting teachers in classrooms, hosting a special interest group (yoga, baking, music classes or sport activities). Most students are from out of town, and often bored on weekends. For them, it's great to see new people and to participate in the fun activities that are scheduled.

"An example is one of our volunteers who is passionate about volleyball," said Joeylynn. "She wanted to get volleyball going with our students on a Saturday.

It was a wonderful idea; they had so much fun."

Some volunteers also offered their help in hosting a donation drive for Providence Place. New or gently used donated items for S-Mart (a campus store students manage) are always needed. Students and expectant mothers are able to shop here for household items or clothes they can wear for interviews.

No matter what effort they make on campus, Joeylynn goes out of her way to make sure every volunteer has a meaningful experience. "Our mission is not only for all of us here, it's also for anyone who sets

On Friday, June 26, after long months of training that included huge effort, setbacks and victories, 26 students proudly made their way to the gymnasium, to receive their graduation certificates. It was not only Providence Place's largest graduating class, but also one with the most graduates who already had paying jobs — a full 80 percent.

During the ceremony, speakers congratulated and encouraged the students to continue their efforts. Charles Morris, Education/ Training Manager, gave them bullet points on last-minute life lessons, and urged them to "make eye contact, smile and say hello."

Carrie Land, Counselor at the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) spoke eloquently to the graduates, encouraging them on their road to the future.

Keynote speaker First Lt. John Arroyo shared his heartbreaking story of being severely wounded at Fort Hood last year during a mass shooting. He recounted how he managed to warn others about the shooter, playing down the fact that he risked his life to save the lives of fellow soldiers. His message was heartfelt and stirring, as he told the graduates that in the face of something difficult, they should have as their focus surviving the present and going on to follow their dreams, whatever obstacles are in the way.

With graduation over, some students have gone back to their hometowns, others have moved to apartments in San Antonio, and several have moved to our campus transitional program. It's hard to see them move on, but we're happy to get news. Alec, for example, wrote to say he will start college this fall. ■

foot on our campus. While they volunteer, we can enrich their lives too, and that means brighter futures for everyone." ■

*A volunteer repaints the fire lane curb on the driveway. (Photo by Joeylynn Mesaro)*



# WAYS TO give

## GENEROUS GIFTS HAVE SUPPORTED OUR MISSION SINCE 1895

Support for our mission and those we serve on a daily basis has been a long tradition and source of strength at Providence Place. Your gifts continue to make a difference. There are many ways to help.

### Monthly Giving Fills a Great Need

Giving on a monthly basis makes an enormous difference at Providence Place. Monthly donations help us reduce operating costs, and are a consistent and reliable source of funding that enables us to plan ahead. A monthly gift — and there is no minimum amount — means essential resources for those we serve.

### How does monthly giving work?

- It's a convenient way to donate.
- You can make automatic donations from your bank account.

- You have the ability to increase, decrease, suspend or cancel your donation anytime.
- We provide complete statements for tax purposes.

### How your sustaining support helps us:

- \$20 a month provides toiletries essential for a student or birth mother.
- \$50 a month provides maternity or interview clothing.
- \$100 a month provides linens for a mother or a student with disabilities.

### Leave a Lasting Legacy

Have you considered including Providence Place in your will or estate planning? A legacy of this type can continue to provide a future for expectant mothers, adoptive families and young adults with disabilities *and* take care of your family too. You can even create a

trust to be overseen by your heirs so you can pass on your spirit of generosity.

### With planned giving, you can:

- Make tax-deductible gifts that earn annual income.
- Make gifts that protect certain valuable assets.
- Maximize the tax efficiencies of the distribution of your estate.
- Guarantee your charitable wishes are carried out.

### You can set aside:

- A certain dollar amount.
- A percentage of your estate or assets remaining after you provide for your family.
- A paid-up life insurance policy.
- A retirement account or other financial investment. ■



For more info contact:  
Andrea Hofstetter  
Chief Development Officer  
210.696.2410.

# welcome

## ANDREA HOFSTETTER JOINS PROVIDENCE PLACE AS CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



A vital role at Providence Place was filled recently when Andrea Hofstetter came on board after a long search to find an experienced development executive.

"We are incredibly fortunate to have found someone of Andrea's caliber," said Judith Bell, President and CEO. "She brings to us a wealth of understanding of the nonprofit world and a deep knowledge of San Antonio and Texas, and sources of funding for the type of programs we offer at Providence Place."

Andrea has worked in development for 10 years. Prior to joining Providence Place, she was with San Antonio Metropolitan Ministries, most recently as development director. Earlier, she had honed her skills in development at Seton Home, the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) and the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

She has a master's degree in Communication Arts and a BA in Political Science, both from the University of the Incarnate Word. We welcome her to Providence Place. ■

# COMMUNITY. Service

## ALL IN A DAY'S WORK AT THE SAN ANTONIO HUMANE SOCIETY

By *Emilie Dujour*

Price wants to take them all — every last kitten in the place.

Price is a student at the Center for Higher Independence (CHI), and he loves kittens. "If I could, I'd take them all," he says. I agree, I'd take them all too.

Today, I'm shadowing our students at the San Antonio Humane Society where they volunteer. Volunteering is one step closer to independence for them. If they are on time, responsible and do the job well, they can add this experience to their resumes and ask for letters of recommendation.

They leave campus at 8:15 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays; take two buses, the 604 and 520, from Providence Place to get there. It also means waiting for the bus in 104 degrees. After a while in the heat, I ask: "Do you like taking the bus, Price?" "I love it!" he responded, grinning. "It shows I can do things without anyone's help."

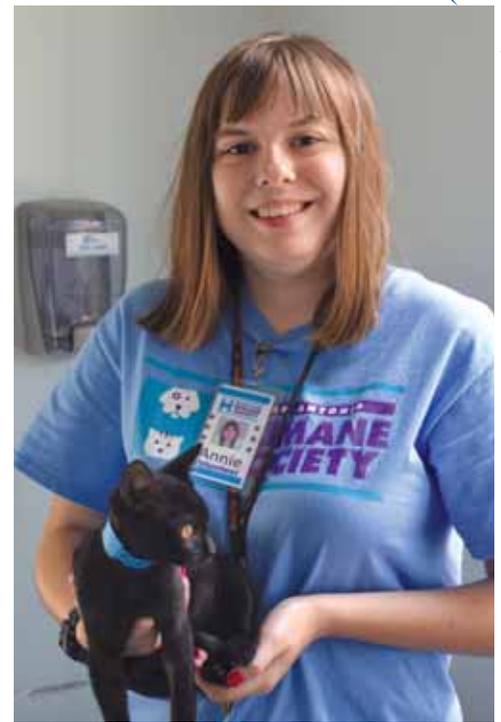
The bus ride goes well. The students know where they are going, they know what to do. I notice that they are very polite to the bus driver and she is happy to have smiling passengers.

At the Humane Society, they enter their badge numbers on the computer and go to the "Kitty Palace," a structure with multiple spaces enclosed by glass, with windows full of kittens and cats playing, jumping on cat trees or cuddled in soft, colorful beds. It's cat heaven on earth.

The students work in pairs. One takes cats to play while another cleans cages. After each cage, they switch. Our employment specialists check their cleaning, making sure they use the correct supplies, clean the litter boxes, the windows and close all doors properly.

"We're here to make sure they are doing well, but we're not helping them to do their jobs," says Deadra Stewart, an employment specialist. "This is a wonderful hands-on opportunity that simulates and develops the working environment, tasks, interaction, responsibility and experiences that are invaluable to the students while they are preparing to enter the work force."

Now, a student, Annie, and I are playing with Kumar, a two-month-old black kitty. Normally, Annie doesn't communicate or smile. Now, right in front of me, she's



smiling, laughing and explaining why Kumar is her favorite. It's great to see. The students also help fold newspapers in double sheets for the dogs' cages, and recycle the single pages.

"The students from Providence Place truly have an impact on the San Antonio Humane Society," says Nancy Najim, President/CEO of the San Antonio Humane Society, "We could not do the work we do without the support of these volunteers."

Back at the Kitty Palace, I say, "I hear it's almost time to leave, guys."

"Wait," protests Price, hugging two kittens in his arms and going after a couple more. "We have to say goodbye to them all — they could be adopted this afternoon or tomorrow."

Annie is still smiling. ■



***"The students from Providence Place truly have an impact on the San Antonio Humane Society."***

***~ Nancy Najim, President/CEO of the San Antonio Humane Society***

*Above, CHI student Annie Tabler handling a black Kitty at the Humane Society.*

*Left, Providence Place volunteers Annie Tabler, Victor Griffin, Joel Williams and Price Stewart.*

# adoption story

## A BIRTH MOTHER'S LETTER ABOUT ADOPTION

*Instead of an adoption story in this issue of Bright Futures, we thought a letter we received just recently from a young birth mother would demonstrate the value of this courageous choice to both a birth mother and an adopting family.*



*Left: Abigail asleep. Right: Birth mother Tonya, with James and Abigail.*

### To Everyone at Providence Place:

Providence Place is where my heart is and will always remain. They helped me provide the best life possible for my daughter, and I will always be thankful.

When I found out I was pregnant, I didn't know what I was going to do. I was already a single mom to a 2-year-old boy. I didn't know how I was going to provide for another baby.

So, I decided to go with adoption, knowing that another family could provide everything that I could not. I was terrified to go through an adoption agency because I was unsure how I could provide for my son as well as myself.

But Providence Place turned out to be a Godsend for me, my son and my daughter.

Everyone we worked with treated us as if we were family. They helped me find a wonderful family for my daughter. What I came to know is that Providence Place isn't about adoption. Providence Place is about family, future, and learning. Providence Place didn't just help me find a family for my daughter; they helped her family find her.

They have helped me more than I could've ever imagined. My daughter has a wonderful family to care, love, and provide for her. I never would have found them without the support and the help of the agency.

I will never be able to pay back in full everything that they have done for my family and my daughter. They do everything they can to help and care for everyone out of the kindness of their hearts. ~ T.W., age 24

*Note: The background to this heartfelt letter is that Tonya, having selected the family for her daughter, asked them to join her as she gave birth to her baby.*

*The adoptive family and Tonya chose her name together, and little Abigail Joy will be able to stay in touch with her older brother, James, over the years through an agreement arranged through Providence Place.*

*Abigail's new family now has a little girl on whom they can focus their attention and love. ■*

## Simplifying Our Mission and Values

In past months, we have given time to looking at what we are doing, who we are serving and have traced our steps back to our origins in 1895. Our discussion has been energetic, involved and engaged on all levels — our staff, our leadership, our board and our stakeholders.

### Mission Statement

Providence Place is a non-profit and for-purpose organization fostering opportunities. We empower adults with disabilities and people on the adoption journey by supporting independence and building bright futures with endless possibilities.

### Vision Statement

Imagining possibilities and eliminating barriers in an ever-changing world.

### Core Values

We value abundant life for the people we serve through our commitment and dedication to:

**Grace:** Unmerited compassion.

**Wholistic Care:** Wholeness of mind, body and spirit.

**Authentic Presence:** Manifestation of grace.

**Openness of Spirit:** Community of acceptance.

**Value of Human Capital:** Creativity, imagination and innovation. ■

## Honors

## In Honor Of

## From

LeRae Burton	Mr. and Mrs. Larry Taylor
Abigail Cain and Richard Test	Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Buchanan
Mr. and Mrs. Jake Davidson	Mr. Gerald Williams
Jake Davidson	Mr. Gerald Williams
James Thomas Ellison	Mrs. Fay Lawler
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Erwin	Mr. and Mrs. G. Holman King
The Fenter Family	Mr. and Mrs. Douglas James
Steven Andrew Greer	Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Greer
Lisa Hall	Mr. Gerald Williams
Mary Ann Hunn	Mr. Lance Smith
Charles Lyles	Mrs. Anne Lyles, Deanne and Jon

## In Honor Of

## From

Leanne Wier May	Mr. Gerald Williams
Dan and Leanne May	Mr. Gerald Williams
Mothers' Day	Mr. and Mrs. Joe Barranti First UMC of Azle, TX Friona UMC
Everly Myers	Mr. and Mrs. Tim Jambers
Roy E. Price, Jr.	Mrs. Sue E. Price
Marene D. Shoaff	Rev. A. M. Davenport
Donald S. Stanley	Mr. Gerald Williams
Lori Stanley	Mr. Gerald Williams
Ms. Cheryl L. Williams	Mr. Gerald Williams
Margi and Elissa Wolf	Mr. and Mrs. Sam Wolf

## Memorials

## In Memory Of

## From

Harold Bruns	Mrs. Billie J. Bruns
Thomas Clyde and Inez Buzbee	Mr. and Mrs. T. F. Beasley
Ted Dotts	Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Brigham
Marilyn Evans	Dr. and Mrs. Randall Singleton
Bill Hannon	Mr. and Mrs. Scotty Bates Pete and Jackie Harland
Kennard E. Johnson	Ms. Susan J. Kibbe
Gail Wright Marion	Mr. David P. Marion
Tom McClung	Susie McClung and Meg McClung Phillips
JoAnn Goss McFarland	Mr. Melvyn E. McFarland
James S. Melbert	Mr. and Mrs. Merrill C. Swanson and Family Mr. and Mrs. John H. Nilson and Family Patricia N. Westbrook and Family Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. Nilson and Family

## In Memory Of

## From

James S. Melbert	Mr. and Mrs. Lane Lively
Doris Ann Middleton	Mr. and Mrs. Richard Culpepper
Orlen "Pat" O'Day	Phyrne O'Day
Dorothy Owen	Mr. Edward P. Owen
J. W. Perry	Mrs. Ruth Perry
Gary Price	Mr. and Mrs. Scotty Bates
Melanie Smith Roy	Mr. and Mrs. Scotty Bates
Doris A. St. John	Mr. Glen F. St. John
Charles A. Swan	Mrs. Nell Swan
John Tausch	Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Scarbrough
Charlotte Wickwar	UUMC, Seekers Class
Kasey Brooke Wilson	Dr. and Mrs. Wallace T. Shook
James Charles Young	Mr. and Mrs. George M. Ware
Jim Young	Mrs. Evelyn Simmons Ms. Karen Brock Mr. and Mrs. George M. Ware

Star Achievers *(continued from page 1)*

**Sadman Faruque** for responsibly attending all classes everyday, never complaining, speaking up, greeting people with a smile and a wave, always smiling.

**Chris Brazil** for going above and beyond to be helpful and polite, always having a good attitude, even willing to step outside of his comfort zone for Choir teamwork!

**Ashley Berthe** for being kind and helpful in class, working very hard in horticulture, taking care of the chickens, stepping up to any task.

**August 2015**

**Alberto Castillo** for overcoming behavior issues and having a better attitude, working hard in the garden and helping staff in the dorm kitchen.

**Chris Chatman** for continuing to show a positive attitude and showing improvement in social interaction.

**Emma Coates** for being a consistent hard worker and for willingness to try new tasks in the Work Training Center (WTC).

**Josh Guerra** for having the highest production, and for exhibiting such a positive attitude in WTC.

**Tori Colomo** for continuing to have a positive attitude, trying hard, and not giving up.

**September 2015**

**David Poulton** for starting a job at University United Methodist Church, working quickly and professionally, and showing he can be a superior team member!

**Dylan Adams** for a complete 180-degree turnaround with his attitude, and having a positive outlook on everything, getting positive comments and praise.

**Joseph Trevino** for overcoming many obstacles and now working at Lackland



*Students gather in the Rotunda for the Star Achievers celebration.*

Air Force Base, where he is a valuable employee and team player.

**Christian Fitzgerald** for his new job and his help on the weekends when there are volunteers on campus. He jumps in to help clean up, take tools back, filling needs.

**Danielle Arceneaux** for being successful here and interested in independence, for working hard, being self-motivated to do things accurately, for being respectful and kind. ■



GIVING GOD'S CHILDREN  
A FAITH, A FAMILY, A FUTURE™

6487 Whitby Road  
San Antonio, TX 78240  
Formerly Methodist Mission Home

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SAN ANTONIO, TX  
PERMIT #1268

Return Service Requested



Visit us on Facebook and Twitter  
[www.facebook.com/ProvPlaceOfficial](http://www.facebook.com/ProvPlaceOfficial)  
[www.twitter.com/ProvPlace](http://www.twitter.com/ProvPlace)



# around camp



Young volunteers take a break in the shade.



Left, Tina Williams-Visesio helps HandsOn client Rosetta Parks receive her prize at Summer Jam.



*Photo by Joeylynn Mesaros*

Karla Saenz and Avry Kitchen at the watermelon-eating contest.



Karla Saenz wins a prize at Summer Jam.

*(Photos by Joeylynn Mesaros and Emilie Dujour)*