

Bright

futures

FALL 2013

Providence Place



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

Star Achievers Get Pats on the Back



Chief Operating Officer Judith Bell whoops with raised arms and high enthusiasm at the monthly Star Achievers event in the Providence Place rotunda. Recognized were:

September 2013 Star Achievers

Izaak Garcia for valuable participation in class and always willing to work.

Willie Fonseca for increasing class participation and making noticeable progress.

Kayleigh Guinn for always ready to work and very accepting of instructions.

Robyn Johns for staying out of drama, continuing to follow the rules and set a good example for other students.

(August Star Achievers on page 7)

Providence Place celebrated the achievements of 25 students – its largest graduating class ever. Read the story on page 3.

Pastors' Breakfast Reaches Out to New Churches



Terry Levine-Trevino, left, and Debbie McDaniel, right, take the breakfast group on a campus tour.

A chance event in June was the catalyst for the recent and hugely successful Pastors' Breakfast at Providence Place. It took place in late August with a group of about 25 people representing eight different churches and denominations gathering for the first-ever event on the campus.

Terry Levine-Trevino, Providence Place's new Development Director who came on board in late May, explained the heartbreaking situation that might never have gotten the help it needed had she not started her new job a few weeks earlier. She and her husband, Ruben, pastor of Community Connect Church, were visiting with a church member about their autistic son who had recently graduated high school. There seemed to be no options for him and they were reduced to having a sitter stay with him during the work day.

"They were broken people and they came to us for help," she said. "And we wouldn't have had additional resources for them if I hadn't just started work here."

(Reaching Out on page 3)

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From My *heart*



As we move into the fall, I am catching my breath from the rush of activities so far this year. It has been one of our most exciting years ever, and made all the more successful because of the loyal and generous support of so many who believe in our ministry.

As you know, we adopted our new name, Providence Place, on March 1, along with a new logo and signage and materials in bright colors that in so many ways reflect the upbeat

spirit of the people on our campus. We also had an ecumenical Renaming Celebration in April at Providence Place with Bishop Dorff of the Southwest Texas and Rio Grande Conferences as our keynote speaker. You will see in this issue of *Bright Futures* we are already reaching out to expand the number of God's people we serve.

This June, we graduated our largest number of CHI students ever, sending them on to new lives filled with hope and confidence. Our Horticulture Training Center dazzled us with the abundance of our first spring and summer gardens. Another Ectropia initiative is also thriving: Deborah's House, a ministry for women recovering from substance abuse led by Travis Park United Methodist Church, is near capacity in its apartment at our Women's Center (see story on page 7). I am humbled by what they do to support and restore once-broken lives.

We also have new recognition of our need to encourage spirituality among our own team, as we do for so many of those we serve. We have an opportunity to be true servant leaders and we encourage everyone to actively share their faith in individual ways through our new Daily Reflection and optional Bible study on Monday afternoons, which are proving very popular.

We know none of this would be possible without your financial and spiritual support, and are deeply grateful. As we move toward the end of the year, we hope for your continued contributions in enabling our work of giving God's children a Faith, a Family, a Future.

With sincere gratitude,

Jennifer Sample, President & CEO

Providence Place Administration

Jennifer Sample, *President & CEO*
Judith Bell, *Chief Operating Officer*

Terry Levine-Trevino, *Development Director*
Regina Murphy, *CHI Director*
Carol Williams, *Chaplain*

Melissa Bueno,
Licensed Child Placing Administrator
Mia Buentello, *Development Officer*
Philip Garza, *Development &
Community Relations Officer*
Ashley Lopez, *Marketing Specialist*
Debbie McDaniel, *Development Coordinator*
Sarah Reiter, *Development Officer*

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

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Reaching Out (from page 1)

Soon the parents were visiting with Regina Murphy, Director of the Center for Higher Independence at Providence Place. Her lively, empathetic manner put them at ease from the start and suddenly they had options – a medical evaluation for their son, places to visit, applications to submit – and hope. Above all they were soothed, "This is not your fault, it's okay."

When Pastor Trevino told the story at the Pastors' Breakfast, there wasn't a dry eye in the room.

"We don't know everything and, as leaders, it's important to be aware of what is available in our community to help our congregants through difficult situations. We found the help we needed at Providence Place," he said. "Terry was able to open the initial doors for this very caring couple and the people they met afterwards opened more. It was an incredible thing."

For the family, it was also incredible. Incredible that their church would find another faith-based organization to help.

"At Providence Place, it made us think that there are probably other desperate people who need help, and other pastors needing resources for their congregations," said Terry. "Church leaders are sometimes the first to counsel with a family whose 13-year-old just found out she's pregnant, or a family dealing with a disabled young adult. We figured there were lots of people out there with needs and we wanted to reach out."

Answers to "How do I know how to use Providence Place?" and "How can I learn about your services?" were addressed at the breakfast and during the tour afterwards of the CHI dorm, Work Training Center and the Women's Center. The email and telephone effort the Providence Place team made to reach potential attendees brought more results – more people who want to attend the next breakfast and learn about Providence Place. Terry is planning hot chocolate and cookies in the fall.

"It was so gratifying to get this response," she said. "Best of all, we've opened new doors for ourselves, as well. Shepherd of the Hills Church called back to invite us to set up a table at their fall craft fair to sell our Good Reasons seasonings!" ■



Above: Expressions on the faces of Providence Place graduates show their excitement about their success. Below: DARS Counselor Lorenzo Wilhite was guest speaker.

Largest-ever CHI Graduating Class

On Friday, June 28, in an outdoor graduation ceremony with an overflow crowd seated on sparkly white folding chairs, Providence Place celebrated the achievements of its largest graduating class ever. A total of 25 young women and men were about to venture into brand new lives. Family and friends were there to cheer them on for having acquired the life and work skills – and the confidence – for a life of far greater independence than they had ever imagined for themselves.

CEO Jennifer Sample led the simple ceremony, which started with the CHI Signs of the Times Choir singing, and an invocation by Chaplain Carol Williams. A special guest and speaker was DARS Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Lorenzo Wilhite, who spoke to graduates about the opportunities ahead, shared his grandmother's points of wisdom and then charmed them all by asking the students to join him in a Harlem Shake.

As always, the most stirring part of the event was the students themselves, all of whom were invited to speak about their hopes for the future and what their time on the Providence Place campus has meant to them. Once more, it was an emotional celebration with so many heart-wrenching and heartfelt stories signed or spoken to the audience of loving supporters there to witness an achievement many of them had never thought possible.

Graduates this year came from all over the state and are listed in alphabetical order:

Desiree Bennett - Kingsbury, Texas
Justin Campbell - San Antonio, Texas
Danielle Christian - San Antonio, Texas
Tara Davis - Irving, Texas
Elantra Ervin - Tyler, Texas
Sergio Escobar - San Antonio, Texas
Daniel Fleischmann - Mercedes, Texas
Rebecca Hicks - Humble, Texas
Gabe Hoard - Kerrville, Texas
Salome Escobar - San Antonio, Texas
Kannon Hernandez - New Braunfels, Texas

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Michael Johnson - Dallas, Texas
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John Langston - Paducah, Kentucky
Haley League - Longview, Texas
Fred Leonard - San Antonio, Texas
Nisreen Muneizel - San Antonio, Texas
Kayla Ortegón - La Pryor, Texas
Shiva Timsina - San Antonio, Texas
Joseph Trevino - Houston, Texas
Jennifer Walters - Fort Worth, Texas



Lorenzo Wilhite's Fist of Five

1. Help others
2. Listen
3. Be courteous, say phrases like "Excuse me"
4. Forgive and say you're sorry
5. Say "Thank you"

Mogiv Means Any Time, Anywhere, Any Amount

Mogiv is alive and well at Providence Place only a few months after Development Director Terry Levine-Trevino took over the reins last May. Mogiv is the digital giving platform nonprofits and churches are using to make sure every penny counts and that giving can happen via email or text just whenever you want to make a gift.

"The world is changing and we're changing with it," Terry said about the new service, explaining that Providence Place has a great number of young people involved with its mission who are used to using their phones for many aspects of their lives, including their decisions to donate. "And we've also been surprised by the number of our older, longtime supporters who also want to use their phones and computers to support us."

For the most part, Providence Place's funding comes from individuals, churches and foundations that value the services it provides. Increasingly, people are busy and if they decide to give, they want to do it

right away. The Mogiv application makes giving possible in a secure and easy way, enabling Providence Place to continue its mission of helping young women facing an unexpected pregnancy, families desperate to adopt and young adults with disabilities find a new level of independence.

If you're concerned about the security of your gift, be assured the Mogiv system, which uses Phoenix Payments, a highly secure third-party billing provider, for its charges will only use your payment information – name, email address and password – to process your donation. There's a onetime registration step to sign up via phone and register your bank account or card number, which can also be done on the Providence Place website.

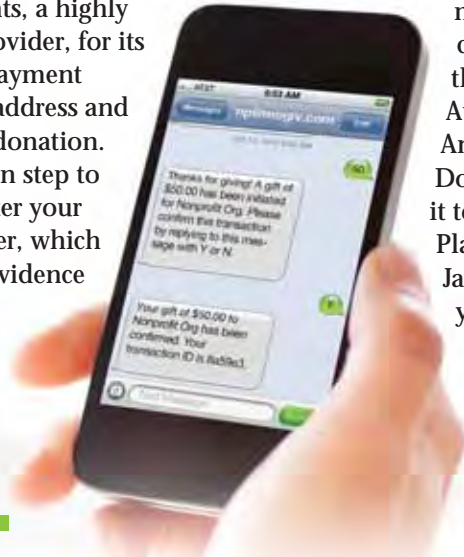
"It's a bank-to-bank transaction," Terry said. "Because of that it's regulated and a very secure system, probably more secure than putting a check in the mail." ■

Meet the Challenge

We need your help. We have a wonderful opportunity with a challenge grant to double the impact of your gift to Providence Place.

If you complete the reply envelope enclosed with our newsletter – mark your contribution to the Blue Bird Auxiliary/ Anonymous Donor – and mail it to Providence Place by January 15, 2014, your gift will be matched dollar for dollar.

Thank you for your support.



Give by text or email: provplace@mogiv.com

Terry Levine-Trevino Brings Corporate Experience to New Development Role



Terry Levine-Trevino spent years in corporate work, but has found her calling in the nonprofit arena.

In May this year, Terry Levine-Trevino said she began to realize where the rest of her life had been leading her. She joined Providence Place as Director of Development, brimming with ideas and experience from her previous corporate work at USAA and with her husband's ministry at Community Connect Church.

A 12-year veteran at USAA, she had worked in Process Improvement, a management niche rapidly gaining credibility in corporate America for adding efficiency to existing processes undergoing change due to new technology or reorganization.

"What I did at USAA was work with the people side of change," she explained. She said all too often when a new technology is introduced to make a process quicker

or more efficient, there's a lot of time spent researching, selecting and implementing the technology, but very little time given to helping workers use it.

"The result is they might use it, but not to the fullest advantage," she said. "They've been given the user manual, but they are still working with the 'old' mindset."

Change management, she said, is proven to help the transition significantly.

"When millions of dollars are invested in a change, you need more than the user manual," she said. "You need to understand what the potential resistance level will be, why people wouldn't want to use it and what would make them want to use it." Coupling this understanding with training and reinforcement produces the results.

She had left USAA to help her husband, Ruben Trevino, who had recently started pastoring, on a temporary basis, fully expecting to return to a corporate position. To her surprise, she found a growing interest in the nonprofit world.

Hannah's Happy Life: Open Adoption and Two Doting Families

Tiny three-year-old Hannah hunkered down behind a filing cabinet in a back corner at Providence Place on a recent Saturday morning. She was cheerfully smearing her lips and cheeks with lip gloss she discovered in her mother's purse. The shrieks of laughter from the Patterson and Atkinson families plainly showed the happiness of the two families this little girl had brought together.

It's now almost four years since Shelby Atkinson, then only 17, found out she was pregnant with Hannah. The daughter of an ex-pastor, she was ashamed and fearful of her parents' reaction, but they were calm and agreed they would all brave it together. Abortion, however, was out of the question.

Deep down, Shelby and the baby's father knew they could not give their baby

"What I found at Community Connect Church was so appealing," she said. "We were starting some new approaches and I applied what I had learned. Just seeing how it applied on this smaller scale was amazing. It worked and you could see it."

She spent nine months working on strategies and networks for the church as well as training and empowering a team that would take this business concept to another level for church ministries, and allowing her to step back.

"I had found my calling," she remembered. "All my experience and training had been for this. I wanted to work in the nonprofit arena, an arena where I could contribute and truly affect lives and ministries."

She found it at Providence Place, where she's already making a difference – and working as hard, or harder, than she did in the corporate world. (See *Mogiv story on this page, and Pastors' Breakfast on page 1.*) ■



everything she should have and agreed adoption was the best decision though clearly a difficult one.

"We felt comfortable and welcome at Providence Place," Shelby said of their first visit. With several adoptive families' profiles to review, she asked their families to help. Amazingly, they found they had all chosen the same couple: Heather and Robert Patterson.

When they met at an informal dinner at the Atkinson's home, Shelby was excited.

"The connection I felt with them came so naturally," she said. "I could tell they genuinely cared about me and my feelings."

On her way to the hospital two months later, Shelby alerted the Pattersons. Sensitive to the poignancy of the moment, the Pattersons kept a little distance, but when the doctors discovered a weak heartbeat, they were unnerved.

Heather remembered how her heart sank. "This can't be happening," she thought. But this small drama, which ended happily with a healthy birth, was small compared with the next 48 hours, which were agonizing for everyone.

"I never thought about changing my mind, but it still hurt so much to sign the papers," Shelby remembered. She was heartbroken and she struggled with depression for some time. It was open adoption that saved her.



Top: The whole happy family with Robert Patterson at extreme right in the middle row and Heather to his left, holding their dog. Heather's sister, Lilly, is holding Hannah, and sister Reiley is at top. Shelby Atkinson is at left in the center row, with her parents, Jeanene and Gordon, and a friend in the front; **Circle:** Hannah; **Bottom:** Heather and Robert with a days-old Hannah.

"It felt like nothing mattered until I saw Hannah again," she said. "I've been able to see her grow and blossom into this beautiful little girl, and the pain goes away when I see her so happy and loved."

Shelby has her life back. She's working a part time job and is a college sophomore, very grateful she has the opportunity to make decisions about her future while still in touch with baby Hannah. She knows that, despite her family's support, her life now would have been very different had she chosen to parent.

Hannah too has a wonderful life, with two families focused on her every smile, loving her happy disposition and always totally charmed by the shiny lip gloss spattered all over her face. ■

Memorials

In Memory Of	From
Inez Bell	Mr. and Mrs. Rick Cabrera
Mr. Marshall Bloodworth	Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Almquist
L.D. "Bugs" Burney	Mr. and Mrs. Bob Tolleson
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Mary Neil Ormston	Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Bateman
	DepoTexas, Inc.
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Alexis and Christopher Clement	Mr. and Mrs. Jay Clement
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Deborah's House is a Winning Proposition

Providence Place is turning out to be a great choice as a location for Deborah's House as the large apartment is almost at capacity. The Travis Park United Methodist Church initiative now has six women living in the four-bedroom apartment in the Women's Center on campus who are actively looking for paying jobs or in training to qualify them for positions.

Kate Campbell, Executive Director of Deborah's House, is thrilled with the progress, most of the women having come into the transitional housing program since July. Started as housing for women veterans, the initiative now includes women recovering from substance abuse and/or emotional trauma.

"They come to us from a recovery program when they are at a point where

they are stronger and ready to look for a job and get back on their feet," Kate said. "They are all doing so much better in their lives, and one of our women has actually re-connected with her son."

Kate explained Deborah's House's trained mentors work with the women to help them stay with the program, which has four key elements: sobriety, safety, spirituality and solvency. Her professional counselors work closely with the women on the spirituality side of their lives, a major strategy in preventing relapse.

"We want to be able to provide a safe, drug-free environment to enable them to maintain the sobriety they have achieved in a recovery program before they come here," Kate said. The goal is that they should be able to earn a living wage and the women stay at Providence Place until

they are used to paying bills again and are confident about being able to spend 30 percent of what they earn on rent.

The women at Deborah's House marvel at the program. "They come up to me," Kate said, "and there is an incredible gratitude when they tell me, 'There is just nothing like this program anywhere in the city,'" and it's wonderful to be able to help in this way," Kate said.

For Providence Place, said CEO Jennifer Sample, it's another indication that the campus outreach to nonprofits focused on women and children, and formalized through Ectropia, is bringing new people to the campus who benefit from shared services and add vibrancy to the campus.

To find out more about the program, contact Kate Campbell at 210.268.3314, or go to www.travispark.org/deborahshouse. ■

Star Achievers (from page 1)



COO Judith Bell with Star Achiever Haley League.

Benjamin Reinhart for being a positive example, especially for incoming students, and for assisting fellow students.

August 2013 Star Achievers

Willie Fonseca for cooperating with WTC team to try a new task and completing it correctly and efficiently.

Kevin Hormozi for effort and willingness to go that extra mile.

Haley League for helping others fill out job applications in job search class.

Kayla Ortegon for helping others fill out job applications in job search class.

Aaron Stewart for keeping a positive attitude, taking initiative and going above and beyond in the WTC. ■

Drive One Home Attracts More than 80

More than 80 golfers showed up at the Hyatt Hill Country golf course in March to tee off to support the annual Providence Place "Drive One Home" Golf Tournament, many for the fifth year in a row.

"We had perfect weather and over 28 game-changing sponsors on board," said Philip Garza, Development and Community Relations Officer. With these sponsorships and in-kind gifts, many people played a pivotal role in the lasting impact the Providence Place tournament hopes to build. Sponsors included:



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Trader Joe's
Vandyk Mortgage-Melinda Hipp

We are grateful for our inclusion in Valero's Birdies for Charity, which this year raised more than \$17,000, and hope you will pledge again in 2014.



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around campus



Student Meagan Lemon had fun in her fire fighter's gear at the Summer Jam.



CHI students take some time out for basketball.



Christian Fitzgerald and Curtis Keyes snap beans in their Work Training Center class.



Afton May and Briana Davila prepare the meal for the Pastors' Breakfast.