

Our Path of Grace

A message from President and CEO, Judith Bell, on going back to our roots.

A Journey Toward Life, Love and Hope

The Lohmers share their story of overcoming tragedy to fulfill their dream of a family.

CHI Update

Providing a positive experience and opportunities for students.

THE Place

WHERE FUTURE STORIES ARE WRITTEN

Teaching

Adopting

Caring for God's Children

SUMMER 2016



Chapel Restoration Marks Beginning of New Era Believing in the Power of God's Providence

Did you know that the chapel was the first building erected on campus in 1967? In the theme of going back to our roots, the chapel is being restored and will once again be seen as the representation of belief in the power of God's providence as well as a new era for the organization. An article in the August 4, 1967 edition of the Texas Conference News: The Texas Methodist, stated: "Redemptive love' is more than a phrase at Methodist Mission Home—it is the church at work in the world today."

In January, Carrie Land was hired as our new Chaplain. Carrie has made it her personal mission to revitalize the chapel and restore the chapel to reflect the vibrant energy of the campus and God's purpose for the organization. She has been working tirelessly on the chapel since January, but she hasn't been alone in the

efforts. Staff, clients and several volunteer groups have helped Carrie over the past six months and the change is apparent.

This spring, we were blessed to have two groups join us from Nomads on a Mission Active in Divine Service (NOMADS). NOMADS is a program of the United Methodist Church that provides volunteer labor for UMC organizations on campus (nomadsumc.org). The first group of NOMADS worked in tandem with the Facilities Management Team to make the chapel accessible to everyone. During their 20-day stay, they completed work to make the chapel accessible and inviting. We had a surprise visit in May from NOMADS Pat and Gary Russell, who had volunteered last fall. During their three week visit, they used their craftsmanship skills to install a ramp, making the worship area fully accessible for all. (continued on page 3)

Who We Are

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Our Path of Grace



Judith Bell

President and CEO

The last few months have been packed with purpose, commitment and passion. Throughout last year I was often heard saying, "We are going back to our roots. I'm not sure what that means, but we are going back to where we started." I knew, in my soul, that was what we were supposed to do. We've repeatedly asked ourselves how we move forward; continuing to provide our core services but also expanding new program options. We've asked ourselves the cultural question:

"How do we follow Madame Volino's willingness to stand in the gap and provide second chances for those that society has overlooked?"

We just finished our strategic planning session and have identified four strategic priorities as we move toward 2019. Those priorities are:

- Improve operational excellence
- Increase public awareness and leverage community relationships

- Revisit the master plan for the campus
- Research human trafficking and other sustainable programming

We have defined the course for our future. The leadership team, board and staff firmly believe in our mission and will work with purpose as we move forward.

Lastly, we have added two new leadership team members. Carrie Land came on-board as Chaplain in January. She has worked tirelessly to make our campus more inclusive and has been the champion of embodying our values. Regina Murphy is not new to Providence Place; she rejoins our team as Chief Operating Officer. I am confident both Regina and Carrie will expand our mission.

I am pleased to share a snapshot of the past five months. We have gone back to our roots, connected with our past and are stepping into the future emboldened that we are fostering opportunities with endless possibilities.

Board Spotlight



Richard Planto

Chair

My name is Richard Planto and I am a proud member of the Providence Place family. As many who have been touched by Providence Place's mission, I was adopted in 1952 by loving parents who opened their hearts to me and my brother. They taught me about the sacrifice my birth mother made so that I could have better opportunities, and they were thankful for the chance to complete their family.

In 2010, I become part of the Board of Directors and I am honored to now be serving as the Chair of the Board of Providence Place. Being part of the Providence Place family has allowed me to keep a strong connection to the organization that helped me (and many others like me) find a place in

the world. Since my birth, Providence Place has been a catalyst in my life.

I graduated from Trinity University in 1974 and am now the President of Planto Roe Financial Services, Inc. in San Antonio, Texas. My wife Sara and my two children, Rebekah and Sam, are my reason to wake up every morning with a smile. I have been very fortunate and can't help but attribute some of that fortune to Providence Place.

I am deeply honored to be part of such a phenomenal organization that is imagining possibilities and eliminating barriers in an ever-changing world. On behalf on the Board of Directors, thank you for your support and making a difference.

Leading the Way...

Longtime supporter reflects on experience

Now almost 90 years old, Mamie Krkoska fondly remembers when she adopted her daughters Sylvia and Cynthia from Providence Place. Mamie ran a daycare for 20 years and her love for children was immense. "I was unable to have children of my own, but I loved children," Mamie remembers.

Mamie's connection to Providence Place dates back to when she first adopted her daughters many decades ago. Even though she was not

able to have a family of her own, Mamie and her husband had hearts full of love. They first adopted Sylvia, and three years later completed their family when they adopted Cynthia. "I felt alone," said Mamie, "but when my daughters came into my life, I felt like my life was complete."

Sylvia, who is now living with Mamie, was able to meet her birthmother back in 2000. Providence Place provides open adoptions which allow adoptees and birth mothers to re-connect if they choose. She was happy to have had the chance to know the woman who made such a selfless decision so she could have a better life.

"I love what you do and I will keep supporting you as long as I can," Mamie explained when asked why she has been a monthly donor since 2002. She believes in the good Providence Place can bring to the community through both of its programs and has personally experienced our values and our mission.

Chapel Restoration (continued from page 1)

We want to recognize Pat and Gary for their time, craftsmanship, dedication and love for Providence Place. Their time here was a gift from God.

Carrie shared this reflection about the chapel restoration:

"How do we know where God is leading us here at Providence Place? Let's look at the evidence:

First, God has designed circumstances for where he wants us to be even if we are unaware of it.

Second, God has given us direction through his teachings regarding loving God and one another. By renovating the Chapel we are putting God first; honoring God above everything else.

Third, Providence Place was designed and purposed by God for His mission and ministry of serving and growing those groups who are

marginalized. This begins when we come together as the family of God in worship, partnership with outreach and volunteer groups such as the NOMADS, campus partners, students, and staff; bringing everyone's gifts and talents to the table of God for His purpose, not our own."

The chapel restoration project is still underway, and believe it or not, the chapel has been in full use during all of restoration projects! The Chinese United Methodist Church has continued to use the chapel for its Sunday morning worship. Our Thursday afternoon worship services (complete with the Providence Place Praise Band) are held amidst flooring planks, power tools and dust. Carrie's office has been moved to the chapel creating a safe place for those seeking refuge and sanctuary.

Thanks be to God.

Gracefully Giving: 7 ways to support Providence Place

- Pray For the Expectant Mothers, Children, Parents and Students
- Share Your Time & Talent: Volunteer!
- Provide a Financial Gift to Support Those We Serve
- Organize a Donation Drive (Wish List)
- Schedule a Campus Tour
- Set Up a Speaking Event For Your Church Or Program
- Tell Others About Providence Place

Please contact the development team to show your support at 210.696.2410 or at info@provplace.org

Featured Staff

This year, we welcomed a new member to our Providence Place family. Carrie Land, our new Chaplain, has been a wonderful addition to our staff.

Originally from Chicora, Pennsylvania, Carrie's first job was during college with United Cerebral Palsy as a residential manager. After graduating from Slippery Rock University, she worked multiple social work positions, including case manager at the Lutheran Children's Home and senior counselor for Texas Rehabilitation Commission, now Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services (DARS). While working for DARS, she completed her master's degree in Social Work from Our Lady of the Lake University, as well as courses through the University of North Texas in Vocational Rehabilitation, and most recently, master's degree in Theology from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky.

Her goals as Chaplain "will be based on the spiritual growth and development of those seeking a deeper understanding and relationship with God." Thanks to her efforts, the Chapel now holds weekly services where staff, students, volunteers and all interested can attend and worship as a community.

When asked about her hopes for this year, she excitedly replied, "God does have divine goals for this campus, and it is now time to join together and embrace this year with anticipated hope!"

A Journey Toward Life, Love and Hope



Creating a family through adoption



When Ben and Ruth first married, they were eager to start a family. The Lohmers had always considered adoption, however, they were blessed with a beautiful child. In November 2009, Ruth gave birth to a baby boy. The Lohmers were elated to have an addition to their family. Sadly, they were only able to enjoy their child for a short amount of time. Their son suffered from a genetic mitochondrial disorder, called Leigh's Disease, that took his life in January 2012. The Lohmers grieved for their son and decided not to take a chance with another biological child, in case history repeated itself.

Since they had already talked about adopting a child, they decided to move forward with the adoption process. They heard about Providence Place from a friend who had a wonderful experience adopting a child through our adoption program a few years before.

The Lohmers were matched with their birth mom in June 2015. Ruth mentioned how their connection to birth moms is unlike other families. "We have been through the

loss of child, so we know what it's like to say goodbye," said Ruth. She believes the decision birth mothers make is brave and selfless. She "has a lot of respect for [the birth mother] and the other birth mothers who make that decision for their children."

On July 16, 2015, the Lohmers received the call. Their birth mom was going to be induced the next day and she wanted the Lohmers to be present for the birth. Later that day, they drove to San Antonio and met the birth mom for ice cream.

It was in St. Luke's hospital that they first met their daughter Abigail (Abby). After spending a few days in the hospital, the Lohmers, the birth mother, and the newest addition to the Lohmer family went to the Chapel and participated in an Entrustment Ceremony. The birth mother recited a sweet poem and handed Abigail to the Lohmers. After the ceremony, the

Lohmer family drove "off into the sunset."

Abby is now almost a year old. Her delightful smile brings nothing but joy to her family and reminds Ruth and Ben of the incredible blessing they received less than a year ago.

They are thankful to the birth mother for believing in them and entrusting them with such a big responsibility.

With Abby's upcoming first birthday, the Lohmers will celebrate the day their dream of another child came true.

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A SWEET POEM AND HANDED
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*THEY ARE THANKFUL TO
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BELIEVING IN THEM AND
ENTRUSTING THEM WITH
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PHOTO: Ben & Ruth Lohmer with their daughter Abby.

Pregnant or considering adoption?

Fill out our confidential Expectant Mother Inquiry at www.provplace.org/requestform.

One of our counselors will answer you shortly.

Our Campus Location:
Providence Place
6487 Whitby Road
San Antonio, Texas 78240
844.546.8697

Deaf restaurant opens in Toronto

In 2014, Anjan Manijumar decided to open a new restaurant with a purpose. He set out to hire only deaf waiters and waitresses. His innovative restaurant gives employment opportunities to people with disabilities and engages the community with the world of those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

"THEY'RE ABLE TO SHOW THEIR POTENTIAL, THEY'RE ABLE TO SHOW HOW GOOD THEY ARE, AND I THINK THEY ARE VERY TALENTED."

The menu and the walls are full of pictures of hand signs that come in handy for customers who don't know sign language. This way they are able to more effectively communicate with their servers while also learning a little sign language.

"They're able to show their potential, they're able to show how good they

are, and I think they are very talented," said Manikumar to KLTV. While he is not deaf himself, he knows sign language and understands the hurdles deaf people have to overcome to get the service they deserve. He first came up with the idea of a restaurant when he was a server and met a deaf diner

whom he felt wasn't being treated fairly.

While the restaurant can present a challenge to customers who are not familiar with the deaf community, it is a unique opportunity for people to experience

the deaf culture and environment.

(Source: Goldberg, Eleanor. "Restaurant Employs Deaf Servers, Gives Them Access To Industry They Were Once Excluded From." *The Huffington Post*. TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc., 5 Aug. 2014. Web. 18 May 2016.)



PHOTO: CHI students in the cafeteria.



PHOTO: Tyler Garlets receiving Star Achiever Award.

Tyler Garlets Is A Star

CHI student's success in the program

When asked about starting CHI, Tyler Garlets, a 21-year-old CHI student, remembers with a shaky smile, "I was a little nervous, but I got better after a while."

Tyler first came to Providence Place a few months ago and enrolled in our CHI program. Before CHI, he had been found by the state living in a bad situation. Tyler was homeless and came to us with only the clothes on his back, but that smile on his face never seemed to fade.

Today, you can see him on campus with his Hello Kitty backpack laughing with his friends Ross and Elizabeth, two other CHI students. The progress he has made since those first few days has been astounding. He has learned how to do his laundry, how to be hygienic, how to handle his finances, how to ride the bus, and many other skills that are making independent living more of

a reality for him. He was even recognized as a Star Achiever in April for "his flexible attitude, the improvements he has made in adjusting to the program, and for his willingness to listen and learn." His kind eyes and contagious smile are a reflection of the positive impact Providence Place has had in his life.

When Tyler is not with friends or in class, you can find him playing Roblox, an online game, on one of our dorm computers. He is fascinated by the online game and was even able to build his own game thanks to the online platform Roblox

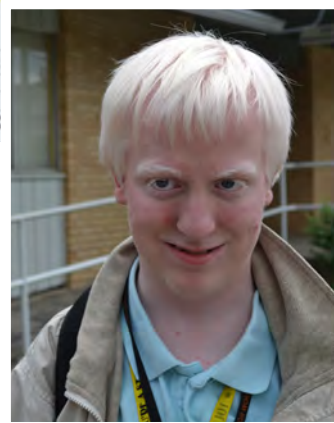
HIS KIND EYES AND CONTAGIOUS SMILE ARE A REFLECTION OF THE POSITIVE IMPACT PROVIDENCE PLACE HAS HAD IN HIS LIFE.

provides. Tyler hopes to one day work with computers and learn how to code.

When asked about his family, he mentioned his younger siblings Michael and Hailey. As a big brother, he "takes care of them" and jokingly refers to himself as just an "ok big brother". When he graduates from CHI, he hopes to

reunite with his family and be able to take care of his brother and sister.

Tyler has high hopes for the future. His goals include, "being able to earn money, help others, and own [his] own house." Soon, he'll have the tools necessary to move forward and start a new life on his own terms.



Star Achievers

1st Quarter 2016

- Juan Castro
- Raven Adams
- Ryan Meidinger
- Elizabeth Scholl
- Tyler Garlets
- Jose Vergara
- Sadman Faruque
- Ben Heyser
- Lisette Luera
- Chris Gonzalez
- Oliver Maestro
- Rocky Moers
- Hannah Watson
- Kim Clarke
- Ross Traa
- Keaton Ray
- Alex Dziminski
- Luke Gonzales
- Ashley Berthe
- Avry Kitchen
- Nick Thompson
- Chris Brazil
- Jonathon Banz
- Harrison Vera

Campus Happenings...



Weekly Services

Thanks to our Chaplain, Carrie Land, we now hold weekly services in our Chapel. Every Thursday at 3:30 PM, staff, students, volunteers, and anyone on campus is encouraged to attend and foster our sense of community. Feel free to stop by and attend one of our services!



Girl Scout Troop Beautifies Oasis Garden

On May 14th, the Girl Scout Daisy Troop 1064 volunteered at the Oasis Home garden. The young ladies weeded the garden, transplanted and planted mint, cucumber, peppers, cilantro, tomatoes, and rosemary. After they completed their work, they hosted a lovely picnic for the Oasis Home students.



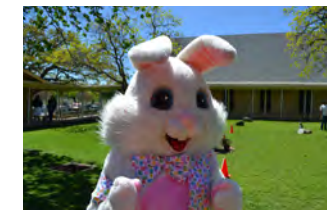
Frost Bank Financial Literacy Classes

For almost a year, Frost Bank staff has volunteered to host a financial literacy class for CHI students. Once a month, they come to our campus and play fun games with our students to teach them about money management skills, fraud protection, writing checks, using debit cards, and bank account management.



Work Training Center Renovation

The Work Training Center (WTC) was in need of a renovation. The initial group of volunteers was from Williams Inc., a local energy company. As the project continued, students from both CHI and Oasis, CHI staff, NOMADS, and Trinity University volunteers pitched in to lend a hand throughout three-day project. During the renovation, the volunteers were able to remove the paint on the floor, refinish and reseal the floors, frame and paint the walls, bathrooms, and closets. The renovation gave the WTC the professional look and feel it needed.



Easter Bash

In March, we hosted an Easter Bash on campus. Staff, volunteers, students, and people from the community attended a Church service and then enjoyed games, an Easter egg hunt, cascarones, and prizes that were donated!



Upcoming Graduation

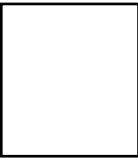
Don't forget Graduation is on June 24th at 10:00 AM! This year, 29 of our students will be graduating. We are all very proud of their hard work and are elated by the opportunities that they will have after graduation.



Teaching, Adopting, Caring
for God's Children

6487 Whitby Road
San Antonio, TX 78240

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In Honor...

Thank you to the following donors who provided a contribution. Your charitable donations are appreciated and have a meaningful impact to our community.

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In memory of Billie
Nordstrom

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and Gladys Gray and
Bill and Chris Pool

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In memory of Mary Coke

Jewell Pardo
In memory of
Charles Pardo

Gerald Williams
In honor of Mathias May

Phyllis Bode
In honor of Priscilla
& Clarence O'Rear
and Donna Burton

Helen B. Hollis
In honor of Karalyn
Marie Hollis

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Mc Cauley

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Hilary, RJ and Deena

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In honor of Chris Culpepper

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In memory of
Bessie B Dillow

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