



# OUTREACH NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2017

## GISELLE'S STORY

### How Jubilee Village Gave One Young Mom the Support She Needs to Succeed

For the typical Outreach transitional housing resident, the hardest thing to adjust to is the rules. But not for Giselle. "It's nice to have security and stability, and have others guide you to the right choices. Especially with us having kids, I think it's important for us to focus on their needs and not so much the wants we have. It's difficult, but it is what's best for the future of our kids. I want Isabella to grow up with structure and rules."

Giselle grew up primarily in Wheaton, attending Lincoln Elementary, Edison Middle and Wheaton North schools. During her senior year of high school, Giselle discovered she was pregnant. Teen Parent Connection offered her support throughout the pregnancy, then referred her to Jubilee Village. "At the time, Isabella's dad and I were broken up, so I was struggling dealing with that. I was living with my mom and her boyfriend in West Chicago. There's just a lot of people there and not all of them are a good example for

Isabella. It's not the life that I want her to see. I want her to grow up in a good environment."

Since moving into Jubilee Village, Giselle has quickly accelerated through the two-year program. As with most residents, Giselle started in a three-bedroom unit with a roommate. Because she's been able to meet her goals and follow program guidelines, she's now in a roommate-free, two-bedroom apartment—her first time living alone. "So it's nice. We're trying to transition Isabella into her own bed. It's a little difficult—she's very stubborn. This is the first time I can really try to raise her by myself."

Jubilee Village is more than just a place to live, however. Giselle meets weekly with Jana, her house parent, as well as with Holly Points, her case manager. "Holly helps me with my finances and just if I need help with school, help doing the FAFSA, with anything, really. They also help me

with any court stuff I have going on with Isabella's dad."

This structured environment is allowing Giselle to create a new future for herself and her daughter. She is working in the cafeteria at the DuPage County Courthouse and while she once dreamed of becoming a sheriff, her work sparked a new passion for cooking. Now, Giselle is taking culinary classes at College of DuPage and plans to graduate in two years. She's focused on learning the basics right now, but says she loves making Mexican food—especially tamales—and hopes to bring her heritage into her cooking.

In the meantime, she's grateful for the stability of her home at Jubilee Village, which is helping her dream new dreams. "My plan is to be the cook where I'm working now, once he retires, and eventually to be the boss."

# MEET PHILLIP

Phillip McClure lived right down the street from Outreach Community Center (OCC) for the majority of his life. Occasionally, his family went to food drives at the center—sometimes to donate, sometimes to receive what they couldn't afford. However, Phillip himself didn't get involved at OCC until his junior year in high school.

Phillip was a bright student. With exceptional grades, he was hoping to attend college. However, as the first person in his family to “go away” to college, he didn't know where to begin.

In search of some direction, Phillip thought of OCC. “They were just part of the community, really visible, and just down the street,” Phillip said. With high hopes, Phillip joined the College Opportunity Program (COP). He came in looking for some college preparation help, and came out with so much more.

“How I was supposed to write all the essays, and pay for everything, and how and where I could find scholarships? The program was very helpful in helping me navigate through all that, and providing a little bit of guidance when my parents couldn't,” Phillip said.

Through COP, Phillip was able to tackle studying for the ACT, writing college essays, filling out the FAFSA form and applying to scholarships. “Help with college and scholarships is what has proven to be invaluable in the end,” Phillip said.

After two years in COP, Phillip was accepted into Duke University. In the last 16 years, Phillip has been the only student from the Wheaton area to attend Duke.

One of the experiences that Phillip is most grateful for from his time at OCC has been his relationship with Gigi Nyesoah, COP coordinator, who became a mentor to him. “I meet with Gigi at OCC whenever I come back here. She is someone who has stuck with me the entirety of this whole transition between high school to college and now from college to the real world. She's been someone who helps me reflect after a long stretch of being at school,” Phillip said. He feels that Gigi has been a guide to him, emotionally, spiritually and mentally.



COP also helped Phillip find an internship. The summer after his junior year in high school, he worked as an office assistant at Outreach's administrative offices. The next summer, he applied for and was chosen to be a marketing assistant at Outreach. While he laughs as he remembers that first office assistant job, and the seemingly endless amount of paper he was tasked with shredding, Phillip truly credits COP for his career success through the years and looking into his future.

Phillip excelled at Duke. Along with a strong academic performance, he was involved in a selective living group, a member of the First Year Advisory Council Board and the Undergraduate Council Board, on the Duke University Improv Team, directed a production, was the lead in the fall play and was the Blue Devil, the school's mascot. Most importantly, Philip learned how to step out of his comfort zone, meet new people and grasp onto new opportunities.

Phillip graduated from Duke University in Spring 2016 with a major in English, a minor in economics and a certificate in journalism and media studies. He feels blessed with the opportunities, both financially and otherwise, that he has been provided with through Outreach. “I've graduated university with minimal loans because of all the help I've received,” Phillip said.

Post-college, Phillip landed a job in the ACE Marketing Program at Microsoft. In addition to marketing, he says that he feels a call to comedy and theater, and hopes to pursue one or both of these things in his future.



# Counseling and Connecting

When WYFS Bilingual Youth & Family Therapist Diane Tabilo began meeting with an eight-year-old girl named Jane,\* she was struggling with problems at home. Jane's mother requested counseling to help deal with Jane's anger, which often manifested in tantrums and aggression toward her mother and siblings.

Diane, who has been meeting weekly with Jane, her mother and two siblings for 10 months, is happy to report great progress. "She no longer has any anger problems at home, no more aggression or tantrums," she says. "Her mother has expressed that she and her family feel very supported by me. The family is eager to greet me when I arrive at their home and are very attentive during our time together."

Jane's mother expressed her gratitude by surprising Diane with a Christmas gift—a scarf she knitted in Diane's favorite color. "She explained how thankful she was for my help as she and her husband have seen a drastic and sustained change in their daughter since I started working with the family," says Diane.



"It's a joy to see the difference counseling can make not only in one life, but in an entire family!" she says. "I'm thankful for the relationships we've developed. It's a pleasure for me to work with this family and it will be sad when it's time to say goodbye."

*\*Name changed.*

## BOOKS FOR BIRTHDAYS

### A New Ministry Service Project Celebrates Outreach Students

Hearts of Grace, the women's network of Outreach Community Ministries, successfully launched Books for Birthdays at Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream (OCC) on January 13. Throughout the year, the Books for Birthdays project will provide every child in OCC's elementary school program a new book, personalized birthday card, birthday bag and treats on his or her birthday. Toddlers at Jubilee Village, Outreach's transitional housing for single, formerly homeless young mothers and their children, will also receive birthday gifts. In the first year of the program, every child will also receive a storybook Bible.

According to Bonnie Malcolm Chrisman, Vice President of Resource Development, Books for Birthdays fulfills the Hearts of Grace mission of carrying out acts of service for the women and children nurtured through Outreach programs financially supported by Hearts of Grace. "Studies show that a family's socioeconomic status is linked to access to books and reading proficiency," says Bonnie. "Without books at home, students cannot

practice reading and lag behind their peers. Books for Birthdays directly addresses this need and reminds each child of their worth in God's Kingdom."

At the January event, six students selected a new, age-appropriate book of their choosing from a birthday cart donated and built by Junior League of Kane and DuPage Counties. They were also thrilled to receive personalized gifts and fun surprises in their birthday bags like silly string, fuzzy mittens and bubble gum. Barb Wisdom, Hearts of Grace Action Board member, said, "Seeing the smile on the kids' faces as they picked out their new book was priceless! You could feel the energy in the room from the anticipation and excitement of the kids."

**New books are needed! Find out more about Books for Birthdays and view our wish list at [heartsofgrace.org](http://heartsofgrace.org).**



## HERE COMES THE BRIDE: SHIRENE'S STORY

Congratulations to Shirene, a Jubilee Village alumna, on her recent wedding! Shirene and her husband, Ben, were recently married at Chicago's City Hall in front of about 20 guests. Jubilee Village Director Michelle de Muir and Wheaton Youth Outreach Director Gail Hoffman attended.

Michelle says she was honored to be included and is grateful for her relationship with Shirene. "When Shirene left the program after four incredibly challenging years at Jubilee Village, we stayed connected," she says. "She continued to grow and mature, and she began making really healthy choices. When Shirene contacted me about her wedding in December, I was delighted!"

According to Michelle, although the wedding was small, it felt elegant and joyful. "I have never seen a happier bride!" she says. "It touched my heart that the groom was so choked up with love and emotion, that he could barely complete his vows!" The love and joy continued after the ceremony, as Shirene and her son, Paul, kept hugging Michelle over and over.

"It's such an encouragement to see how God uses Jubilee Village to significantly impact the lives of the young single moms who enter our program," says Michelle. "I'm so grateful for all who support Jubilee Village to make this ministry possible."

Following the wedding, the couple and Shirene's son move to Israel, which is where the groom is from.



## Congrats, Grads!

Congratulations to Alberto Ayala and Zack Gentle, two College Opportunity Program (COP) students who recently earned their college degrees! Alberto, pictured top right, graduated in December 2016 from University of Illinois with a degree in computer engineering. He is currently working at iTouch Biometrics but looking for a job in embedded systems. Zack, pictured middle right, graduated in December 2016 from Aurora University with a degree in criminal justice. He's currently waiting to hear if he'll be hired as a juvenile detention officer. Meanwhile, he is volunteering for the DuPage County Sheriff's office as a patrol officer and working at Jewel.

We are also pleased to congratulate Jessica Beamon, COP alumna, on her acceptance to the Presbyterian College School of Pharmacy in Clinton, South Carolina. Beginning in fall of 2017, Jessica will enroll in the four-year doctoral program. Presbyterian's campus will be a familiar place for Jessica, as she

completed an undergraduate internship in the school's lab during the summer of 2015. Presbyterian was Jessica's first choice, and she is the first in her family to pursue a doctorate. Jessica's goal is to become a clinical pharmacist, working either in pediatric care or emergency care. Her ultimate dream is to work in sports pharmacy.

"We are incredibly proud of Alberto, Zack and Jessica," says Gigi Nyesoah, COP coordinator. "It's been our privilege to come alongside these outstanding students and support their individual goals as they pursue their dreams and passions."

COP, a program of Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream, removes the barriers that prevent promising young students who come from struggling family or financial circumstances from seeking higher education. COP includes college preparation for high school students and scholarships and support for college students.







## A NEW VIEW

Jubilee Village dedicates new windows, thanks to the support of local donors

Jubilee Village, Wheaton Youth Outreach's transitional housing program for single, formerly homeless mothers and their children, thanks local donors for outfitting its building with new windows. The 175 old windows, which were original to the 40-year-old building, were replaced in early October and a dedication ceremony was held on Tuesday, November 15.

Funding for the new windows, a \$155,000 project, was donated by First Presbyterian of Glen Ellyn, Junior League of Kane & DuPage Counties and generous friends of Outreach. Waterman Brothers graciously secured the windows and provided installation at a discount.

"We're so thankful for new windows that save money and have modern safety features, which is so important for a building with young kids," says Michelle de Muir, director of Jubilee Village.

"I work with young single moms who don't always know they're valuable and loved," she adds. "When people give generously so the girls can live in a building with beautiful new windows and curtains, it encourages them to believe that they have great worth in the eyes of God and in the hearts of so many donors. Thank you!"

"The Junior League was honored to contribute to the new windows for Jubilee Village," says Jessica Jecmen, president of the Junior League of Kane & DuPage Counties, Inc. "Our community focus is supporting women and children, ages 0-5, who are living in poverty in Kane and DuPage Counties through programs focused on education, health and family stability. Being able to contribute in a meaningful way to Jubilee Village—a place that so beautifully aligns with our focus—is a delight."

"For more than 40 years, area churches, civic organizations and individuals have faithfully supported the mission of Outreach Community Ministries and its programs and that legacy is continuing today through the window project," says Chris Ellerman, CEO of Outreach Community Ministries. "It takes a special person or group to recognize that investing in practical necessities, like new windows, enables real life transformation to happen."

Those who donated windows join several other key investors who are funding much needed improvements at Jubilee Village: Blanchard Alliance Church, Cornerstone Foundation, Epaphroditus Foundation and a number of anonymous donors.

# SUPPORTING THE MISSION

## WHY WE SUPPORT OUTREACH

### Meet the Sheltons

Scott and Amy Shelton (pictured top) first heard about Outreach when their church, Wheaton Bible, held gift drives for the annual Christmas Store at Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream. "The first year we attended WBC, we were excited to get the kids involved in selecting and helping to purchase gifts that we saw on the back of the church program," says Amy.

As their family learned more and more about Outreach, they were impressed with the number of different ministries and needs that Outreach serves as well as the impact they have in the community. They have had an opportunity to tour some of the sites and interact with those who have been blessed by Outreach.

Amy and Scott were also impressed with Outreach's partnership with local churches and stewardship of resources. "It is a creative model to support your own organization through ministries such as Jubilee Furniture," says Scott, "and the partnerships with local churches are amazing."

They decided to become Partners, investors who give a minimum of \$1,000 each year, to support Outreach's vital work in the community and help make a difference. While they're excited about all aspects of the ministry, the family is particularly passionate about Puente del Pueblo and Hearts of Grace "since they both help create a brighter future for families and give people life skills and support."

The Sheltons hope to stay involved for years to come. "Outreach truly strives to be the hands and feet of Christ," says Amy. "We enjoy seeing and hearing the stories of lives that are being

impacted locally, and knowing we're a part of it."

### Meet the Varvaros

Charlie and Bette Varvaro (pictured bottom) have always had a heart for the vulnerable. "I used to tutor in Lawndale, Chicago, in the evenings when I was still working," says Charlie. "When the program changed its meeting time to afternoons, I could no longer tutor. A friend of mine (Pete Peters) told me that Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream (OCC) had a tutoring program at night, and I started to tutor 22 years ago. Bette has tutored for 19 years."

The couple attended a dinner to benefit OCC and discovered the many needs at the Center and all throughout the organization. It was then that they started supporting Outreach as Partners. "We were amazed at all the programs they have for all ages," he says. "Outreach offers excellent programs that change lives, and we wanted to be a part of it."

In addition, the Varvaros became more involved in other areas at Outreach such as the Christmas Store and Jubilee Village (JV). "I became involved with Jubilee Village and saw the many needs the young women had as they tried to get an education and a job while trying to raise their children," says Bette. "Along with my circle at First Presbyterian Glen Ellyn, we supply gas cards and other items as they are needed." Charlie pitches in at JV with a group of men from church by painting apartments before a new resident moves in.

In more ways than one, both Charlie and Bette have supported Outreach and helped it thrive. "We feel this is a strong organization with good, faithful people at the helm," says Charlie. "We're happy to contribute to its mission, and believe Partners make a significant difference to the strength of the organization through gifts and prayers."

**Find out more about becoming a Partner. Visit [outreachcommunityministries.org](http://outreachcommunityministries.org) or call Bonnie Malcolm Chrisman, VP of Resource Development, at 630.682.1910.**





# CELEBRATING & SERVING

## A Birthday Party with a Twist Brings Hope to OCC Youth

When Evan Singley started thinking about his 31st birthday, he knew he wanted to host a party and celebrate with family and friends. But instead of simply receiving gifts this year, he chose to give back; he planned a day of service at Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream (OCC).

"Few things bring me more joy than fellowshiping with my closest friends and family," says Evan. "But I've realized over the years that the highest form of fellowship comes from engaging with fellow believers in purposeful, kingdom-driven missions. My hope for this year was to celebrate with those close to me in a way that would elevate our level of fellowship."

Evan, who has financially supported Outreach for about a year, thought his birthday was the perfect time to start volunteering. "After being introduced to Outreach, my family was immediately touched and impressed by the incredible work it's doing in our community," he says. "Part of the motivation to put the service day together was to donate to Outreach in another way. I wanted to use my passions and do my part to introduce as many people to Outreach as possible."

The birthday party was a huge success. Evan's friends and family—just under 40 adults and 27 kids—cleaned, organized, inflated basketballs, replaced basketball nets and made Valentine's bags for students and adults that OCC serves.

"The experience was great!" says Evan. "Everyone enjoyed serving in a tangible way alongside so many friends. There was a job for everyone but we made quick work of the list. It really is true that many hands make light work. The kids enjoyed putting the Valentines bags together and then we let them unleash some energy in the gym."

Evan couldn't have been happier with the event and has aspirations of making it an annual tradition. "I hope we did some good work and look forward to taking advantage of more opportunities in the future," he says. "Additionally, I hope to do my part to grow the support base for Outreach."





# Outreach

## Community Ministries

Restoring Hope, Providing Opportunities

Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream • Warrenville Youth & Family Services • Wheaton Youth Outreach • Outreach Community Counseling Centers  
Serving at Puente del Pueblo in West Chicago and York Community Resource Center • Resale Centers: Jubilee Cars, Jubilee Furniture & Discoveries Resale



## Calendar of Events

Plan to join us at an upcoming event! Event proceeds assist our DuPage County neighbors in transforming ways and are opportunities to introduce new friends to the mission of OCM.

For details, contact Event Manager Mindy Inman at [minman@outreachcommmin.org](mailto:minman@outreachcommmin.org) or 630-682-1910.

### April 20

Spring Dinner supporting Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream  
– Sheraton, Lisle

### June 19

Golf, Food & Wine Experience  
– Butterfield Country Club

### October (Day TBD)

Hearts of Grace Luncheon  
– Venue TBD

### November 3

Fall Dinner supporting Warrenville Youth and Family Services  
– Pipers Banquets

### December 2, 9, 16

Christmas Breakfasts  
– Chicago Golf Club

## SUPPORT OUTREACH

Through your giving to Outreach, you demonstrate the importance of investing in Christ-centered programs that bring about Kingdom changes in the lives of those we serve and the communities where we serve.

Your gift today will...

- Infuse needed funds in our sites' youth development programs.
- Help stabilize families through case management and counseling services.
- Provide support for older adults who are vulnerable.
- Give young women who are homeless a place to call home.

Outreach Community Ministries is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Gifts are tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the extent provided by law.

Donate today using the enclosed envelope or visit our secure website at [outreachcommmin.org/give](http://outreachcommmin.org/give). Thank you for your support!

## SERVE + IMPACT

Whatever your time or talents, we have a volunteer opportunity for you. Current opportunities include one-on-one tutors, classroom assistants, mentors and front desk receptionists. Or, volunteer at our resale centers as a store clerk or warehouse assistant. To get started, visit [outreachcommmin.org/volunteer](http://outreachcommmin.org/volunteer).

