



OUTREACH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2017

KRISTI'S STORY

One Woman's Journey to Independence

For Kristi, just one year ago, the thought of living and working in the United States seemed nothing more than a pipe dream. Kristi was born and raised in Albania, and although she didn't have much knowledge of life beyond her home country, she longed for a better life. Determined to gain independence, Kristi applied for a U.S. visa, entering her into a lottery system where a limited number of visas are available to qualifying candidates each year. Despite all odds, Kristi was granted a visa to work and study in the U.S.

Excited to begin her new journey, Kristi packed up her belongings and moved to Illinois, where she would live with her relatives. Although she had to leave her close family members behind, Kristi was confident in her decision.

For the first month in the U.S., Kristi's relatives welcomed her into their home, but shortly after she noticed a change in their behavior. Feeling vulnerable, Kristi spent most of her time outside, away from the home.

Kristi was determined to continue her

education and finish her degree at the College of DuPage. While filling out paperwork before registering for classes, Kristi was confronted with her unhappy living situation, "There was a part where I was stuck," Kristi recalled. "It required my parents' address but since I had [lived here] just six months, I didn't have that information."

Feeling depressed and alone, Kristi packed her bags and convinced herself to move back to Albania. With one foot out the door, Kristi thought back to the college and decided to ask about other options one last time before leaving.

"Before I left, I asked [my counselor] as a personal favor if she knew of any students or websites where I could find a home to rent," Kristi recalled. "When we spoke next, she told me about Outreach."

This referral to Outreach gave Kristi hope when she needed it the most. Kristi met with Wheaton Youth Outreach (WYO) staff and was blown away by the positive support she received. "Everyone I have met at Outreach has been awesome,"

Kristi added. Two weeks after her introduction to Outreach, Kristi moved into Hawthorne House.

Now, Kristi is happy to be in her new home, where she has privacy, independence and community.

Kristi is also enrolled in Outreach's Employment Opportunity Program, where she works part-time at Jubilee Furniture and Discoveries Resale Shop. Outreach provides transportation for Kristi to and from her jobs, a much-needed change from her daily walks to and from work.

Fluent in Albanian, English and some Spanish, Kristi is enrolled in interpreting classes at College of DuPage. She enjoys her classes and her career goal is to become a nurse.

Outreach's transitional housing ministry currently serves young women, who would otherwise be homeless. Last year alone, Outreach provided 9,842 shelter days in total.

SUMMER FUN



Summer programming is underway across Outreach's ministry sites, providing students in 1st-12th grades the opportunity to build on their academic achievements, grow in their faith and have some fun. Staff members and volunteers provide safe places for students to go in the summer, where they can expect to have fun and explore new places and experiences in the safety of Outreach supervision. The organization offers full day programming, allowing parents to keep their jobs and avoid paying expensive childcare during the summer months.

At **Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream** (OCC) and Villagebrook Apartments, the theme is "Allegiant #FearlessLiving." The Christian education program is focusing on Bible characters who showed great faith, even in the face of fear, such as King David and Stephen, the first martyr.

The elementary program's focus is on math and reading in the morning and summer fun in the afternoon, including swimming, special interest classes, group projects and "Fun Monday" stations. In addition, Sandburg and Washington Elementary Schools are hosting their yearly reading program on Wednesday afternoon after the program ends.

In the OCC junior high program, Learn 2 Earn, students focus on academic retention, job readiness and community service. The all-day, eight-week summer program includes math, language arts, nutrition, recreation, optional Christian education, life skills and finance.

To build job readiness skills, students

participate in weekly community service projects through Marklund Children's Home, Peoples Resource Center, Lincoln Marsh, DuPage Care Center, Northern Illinois Food Bank, Feed My Starving Children, Colony Park and Little Angels. These projects are coupled with an entrepreneurship class through junior achievement.

For students in the College Opportunity Program, Outreach offers the Summer Youth Employment Program, where students are provided with valuable life and workplace lessons, going beyond the classroom. The students work within the community at several organizations like TEAM, or within summer programs across the agency.

"We are encouraged by the support we received for our summer scholarships, which provide stipends to students employed in our college preparation program," said Chris Ellerman, CEO of Outreach Community Ministries. "An anonymous matching grant and the gifts it inspired is funding 30 scholarships for high school students enrolled in the program. These students are currently working 15-25 hours per week at minimum wage, learning resume-building skills that will positively impact the trajectory of their professional lives."

At **Warrenville Youth & Family Services**, hosted at Grace Church of DuPage, the Quest program summer theme is "Super Hero Bootcamp: Unlocking the Hero Within." As part of the theme, students are doing a research project on the different cultures in Warrenville/DuPage county.

WYFS is grateful for Grace Church of DuPage's facility donation as well as their participation in the program. "It is so sweet to have Quest in our building as it gives me the chance to meet more of the youth in Warrenville and develop trust and recognition with them so that our church might better serve them," said Nick Conner, youth minister at Grace Church of DuPage. "In some instances, we've even had the opportunity to see youth jump into our community and begin growing in their

faith alongside us and this is the most rewarding of all."

Life skills activities include a money management program in which students learn more about savings, partnering with Family Shelter Services to learn more about safe relationships, organizing a summer fundraiser, daily team building, and focusing on conflict resolution and anger management. Students will also attend field trips to places such as the pool, zoo and forest preserve.

A new element this year, is that student leaders are matched with a mentor. Mentors are working alongside the leaders, helping them overcome any issues they might face. Each leader trains once a week and then tries out their new skills they have learned within small groups."

The **Puente del Pueblo** summer program meets at Wheaton Bible Church and McCaslin Park, and bus service is provided to students living in Timberlake and Main Park apartments in West Chicago.

Activities include academic review, fun extracurricular activities and life skills. Matthew McNiel, director of Puente del Pueblo, is focusing on relationship building and unifying students from Puente's two different sites.

At **York Community Resource Center**, the theme is "Be the Change." Lathie Norton, York site director, says, "We are focusing on helping students make a positive impact in the world around them with weekly themes such as 'Be Welcoming' and 'Be a Problem Solver!'"

Daily programming for elementary and junior high involve academic enrichment activities, life skills, art and other club activities. Other highlights will include visits from the local library for participation in a summer reading program; "Expert Hour," in which volunteers with interesting jobs share demonstrations with students; and weekly trips to the pool, local parks and other off-site field trips.

EVENT RECAP: OCC SPRING DINNER

The 2017 Spring Dinner, benefitting the Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream (OCC), was held on April 20 at the Sheraton Lisle in Warrenville and featured keynote speaker Chaplain Tim Blackmon, who challenged the audience to live out "Dangerous Hospitality."

Guests were greeted by the OCC hospitality team, which was composed of students in OCC's youth development programs. Students visited with tables throughout the dinner service, sharing their personal stories about how Outreach continues to positively impact their lives.

OCC middle school participant Chris and his mother gave a compelling interview along with Monroe Middle School Vice Principal Bryan Buck, Jr. High Program Coordinator Chantel Gamboa and Bilingual Teacher Rebecca Thompson. The panel discussed Chris' positive transformation since attending Outreach.

Twice Is Nice Resale Store was honored for its 25 years of faithful support through College Church. Seventeen volunteers were recognized and Robbie Spehr was honored for her board service and volunteer service since 2000.

The event hosted 533 guests for dinner followed by a festive dessert reception with live music that provided an opportunity for an extended time of community. OCC clients benefit from generous event proceeds demonstrated by 67 event hosts, 17 event sponsors, 47 new OCC supporters and 13 new Partners. Outreach is thankful for the support received through this highlight event that generated \$202,198 for the OCC in Carol Stream.



Wheaton College Chaplain Tim Blackmon at the OCC Spring Dinner

\$25,000 BERSTED CHALLENGE: MATCHED FUNDS TO STRENGTHEN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN WARRENVILLE



Outreach Community Ministries is proud to announce that, through generous donations, the community service organization has met the Alfred Bersted Foundation, Bank of America, N.S., Trustee challenge match. To date, Outreach has received \$38,000 in charitable gifts, meeting the \$25,000 challenge match requirements by June 30. The additional \$25,000 awarded to Outreach will strengthen youth development at Warrenville Youth & Family Services.

Through this support, the lives of at-risk students are enriched daily-- academically, socially and relationally-- as Quest makes a positive impact, improving the trajectories of each student's future. Last year, 91% of Quest students maintained or improved their overall GPA.

Outreach's youth development programs provide a structured and safe environment for junior high and early senior high school students after school and during the summer, where students engage in homework assistance, one-on-one tutoring, life skills training, recreation and community service projects.

The Alfred Bersted Foundation, Bank of America, N.S., Trustee, established in 1972, supports and promotes quality educational, human services and health care programming for underserved people in DuPage, DeKalb, Kane and McHenry Counties in Illinois. The foundation selected Outreach because of the proven effectiveness of its programs.

Thank you for helping us match the Alfred Bersted Challenge for Youth Development at Quest. Together we can make a difference for our youth.

COLLEGE TOUR: EXPANDING HORIZONS



High school students from Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream and Puente del Pueblo spent their spring break visiting colleges on the annual college tour, as part of the College Opportunity Program. Twenty-three students and 7 adults toured Memphis College of Art, Louisiana State University, University of Houston, and Dallas Christian College. Students also enjoyed fun outings including laser tag, dinners at local restaurants and the beach.

According to Gigi Nyesoah, high school and college programs coordinator, multiple students said they could see themselves applying to at least one of the schools. LSU seemed to be the most popular followed by University of Houston, Dallas and Memphis.

When asked if he would attend a tour again, one student wrote, "Yes, because not only did it help with college, it helped with friendships." Another wrote, "Yes, because it's a valuable experience many kids don't get to have at our age." Another wrote, "Yes, because my family doesn't really travel out of state. So this experience will let me see lots of colleges."

When asked what her favorite part of the tour was, one student wrote, "I loved seeing the colleges! The tour gave me feelings of excitement and I can't wait to go to college."

The College Opportunity Program (COP) removes the barriers that prevent promising young students who come from struggling family or financial circumstances from seeking higher education. COP is a holistic college assistance program consisting of two components: college preparation for high school students (Student Achievement Leadership Program) and college scholarships and support.



MEET THE CLASS OF 2017

Congratulations to the Student Achievement Leadership Team (SALT) program class of 2017! This year, three high school seniors graduated from the high school program at Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream (OCC).

Juan Lopez graduated from Wheaton North High School in May 2017. Juan began attending OCC in preschool. Juan was the recipient of a \$2,500 scholarship from the Wheaton North Alumni Association for his hard work and the substantial change in his GPA this past year. Juan has made school a priority, yet he works long hours at his job and still has found time to volunteer at Feed My Starving Children and the neighborhood food pantry. Juan plans to attend College of DuPage and hopes to study business.

Hmangaih Lal graduated from Wheaton North High School in January 2017. Lal began attending OCC as a junior in high school and has been an active participant in SALT and the community. This past year she worked at Outreach's resale

shop Twice Is Nice, which hired her after her good evaluations as part of the OCC Summer Youth Employment Program. Lal has been accepted to her two top schools, North Park University and Palm Beach Atlantic University, and plans to one day work in human resources.

Jailan Richards graduated from Bartlett High School in May 2017. Jailan began attending OCC as a sophomore in high school. Jailan has worked for the last two years while in school and volunteered at Feed My Starving Children. He plans to attend College of DuPage and then transfer to Moorehouse College to study criminal justice.

All three students are part of the College Opportunity Program at Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream. The College Opportunity Program, unique to DuPage County, consists of two components: a high school college prep course (SALT) and a college scholarship program.

CAREFEST 2017



Wheaton Bible Church recently served Outreach Community Ministries at Carefest, a one-day annual event where church volunteers reach out to the community through various service projects. This year, groups from the church cleaned indoor spaces and did outdoor yard work at Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream, Wheaton Youth Outreach, Jubilee Village and Hawthorne House.

DISCOVERIES CELEBRATES 15 YEARS IN WARRENVILLE



Discoveries Resale Shop celebrated its 15th anniversary in Warrenville on May 11. Over the past 15 years, Discoveries has contributed close to half a million dollars of net revenue to Warrenville Youth & Family Services (WYFS) programming.

WYFS Director Angela Mains says, "Discoveries could not have been so successful without the hard work of so many committed volunteers and the strategic leadership of Chris Ellerman and the Discoveries Action Board. We are grateful to have this social enterprise in the Warrenville community and look forward to working together for many more years to come."

GIVING LOCAL



Erik and Amy Heavey first heard about Outreach nine years ago when Amy, a fluent Spanish-speaker, was asked to volunteer at Outreach Community Center's (OCC) annual Christmas Store. After serving at the Store every year, connecting with some of Outreach's other ministries, and seeing change in their community over the years, the couple was ready to step up their game.

"We live close to OCC and I work with a lot of families who use the resources the Center provides," says Amy. "Over the years, we've seen permanent change happen in people's lives and negative cycles broken. We love being involved with Outreach, and it just felt like we were at the right stage and time in our life to join on as Partners."

Partners are Outreach supporters who make a minimum annual commitment of \$1,000, which provides funding that strengthens all facets of counseling, case management, youth development and transitional housing programs. Funds are directly invested in the lives of those served that result in life-changing outcomes.

Outreach's local impact on the many lives in Erik and Amy's own backyard is just one of many reasons they decided to financially support Outreach's mission.

"We are really passionate about global missions but lately have felt like we should be supporting and helping more local ministries," says Amy. "We decided giving to Outreach would be our first step in that direction."

For more information on giving or to become a partner, visit outreachcommunityministries.org/give

EVENT RECAP: GOLF, FOOD & WINE EXPERIENCE

ONE-DAY EVENT RAISES OVER \$400,000 FOR SCHOLARSHIPS



The sixth annual Golf, Food & Wine Experience was held on Monday, June 19 at the Butterfield County Club, located in Oak Brook. The event raised a total of \$404,109 (net), which will provide scholarships for Outreach's transitional housing, college and career and employment opportunity programs. This annual event raises support to provide life-changing opportunities for vulnerable young people in DuPage County.

This year, Outreach welcomed an unprecedented number of event attendees with 152 golfers and 417 dinner guests. Guests who attended the evening reception were greeted with live music and fare from local eateries to kick-off the event.



The silent auction was held in the newly restored library, which offered guests a quiet place to survey the specialty items, which included a baseball bat signed by the 2016 World Series winning Cubs, 2018 Day at the Masters, signed 14-15 Stanley Cup winning Blackhawks Jersey, an astronaut experience and more. Inside the Butterfield room, visitors took part in tasting various wines and trying their luck at Pick-A-Square.

After the evening reception, guests were invited to hear a brief word from Outreach CEO Chris Ellerman and Golf, Food & Wine committee Chairman Charlie McKenna, where they were inspired to support Outreach's transformative programs. Charlie McKenna hosted the evening's program and commended foursome captains, sponsors, dinner hosts and guests for making this year's event the best attended to date.



This year's live auction featured a private culinary experience with Chef Heidi, a trip to New York to see Hamilton live on Broadway and speciality getaways to Bali and Italy.

To learn more about Golf, Food & Wine Experience, visit www.golffoodwine.org.

BOOKS FOR BIRTHDAYS LAUNCH SHARING LIBRARY

HEARTS OF GRACE MINISTRY SEEKS TO INSPIRE YOUNG READERS



Books for Birthdays team members pictured from left to right are: Linda Spires, Kaye Filkin, Barb Wisdom, Tina Keenon, Bonnie Pihl, Bonnie Malcolm Chrisman and Jubilee Village Director Michelle Demuir.

The Books for Birthday team launched the sharing library at Jubilee Village in April. The library is composed of gently used books that were donated for moms

to share with their children along with additional books for moms to enjoy.

"We are thrilled to launch the sharing library," said Sue Herrmann, Hearts of Grace co-president. "Our goal in this ministry is to encourage children to become excited about reading. It's incredible to see the way their faces light up when we hand them a birthday bag, filled with a Bible and treat and a new book of their choosing."

Books for Birthdays, created by Hearts of Grace, is a project that provides every child in OCC's elementary school program and toddlers at Jubilee Village a new book and treats on his or her

birthday.

"This is a ministry that completely relies on volunteer support," said Bonnie, vice president of Resource Development. "We are in constant need of Bibles, books and volunteers to arrange and deliver the bags. Donating a book or your time will directly benefit these young children."

To learn more about Books for Birthdays or to support the ministry, visit www.outreachcommunityministries.org/heartsofgrace. Questions? Call us at 630.682.1910 or email us at RDAdmin@outreachcommmin.org.

COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

Local Junior League Chapter Serves Jubilee Village



The Junior League of Kane and DuPage Counties (JKLD) generously donated time and gifts to Jubilee Village. The league recently purchased and installed curtains for 11 transitional housing apartments. A number of the women, and a few men, installed the curtains at Jubilee Village on January 21.

"Our single moms were delighted," said Michelle DeMuir, director of Jubilee Village.

While the installation was taking place, another group of women provided breakfast for residents in the basement. They also supervised a fun project for the young moms and kids, which they thoroughly enjoyed.

On February 18, another group of women came to Jubilee Village to offer their services. The group cleaned and sterilized Jubilee Village's babysitting room as well as restocked the cleaning supplies.

"We at JKLD are grateful for the opportunity to support the women at Jubilee Village," said Angela David, junior league president. "It is our pleasure to take part in the good work that is happening through Outreach Community Ministries."

DuPage Foundation & Snodgrass Family Fund Award York \$150,000 Grant



Pictured left to right: Megan Shebik, DuPage Foundation Trustee; Bonnie Malcolm Chrisman, Outreach Community Ministries; Ruth Ann Snodgrass and Jim Snodgrass, donor-advisors; Chris Ellerman, Outreach Community Ministries; Ruth Carlson, DuPage Foundation and Grant Committee member.

The DuPage Foundation along with the Snodgrass Family Fund recently awarded Outreach Community Ministries with a \$150,000 grant. These funds will support York Community Resource Center's after-school and summer programs, serving Lombard, Villa Park and Oakbrook Terrace, equipping at-risk elementary, middle and high school students for future success.

Outreach was one of 37 nonprofit organizations to receive a grant at the DuPage Foundation's Spring Grant Awards breakfast held on June 14 at Glen Oak Country Club in Glen Ellyn. The DuPage Foundation awarded more than \$800,000 in grants to organizations working in the area of health and human services and local collaboratives focused on improving kindergarten-readiness in DuPage County.

Chris Ellerman, Outreach Community Ministries CEO, says the funds will address community needs by supporting the expansion of the York Community Resource Center's after-school and summer programs and underwriting the new site director position. "When Outreach assumed full responsibility for the York Center in June 2016, we were serving 22 elementary students," he says. "This award will help launch a full range of services so that the York Center will be positioned to serve 67-70 students on a daily basis. These essential programs will equip at-risk middle and high school students for academic success, improving their life options and changing the trajectories of their future."

Outreach thanks the Snodgrass Family Fund for investing in the children, youth and families served at the York Community Resource Center, and to the DuPage Foundation for facilitating this award that will transform many lives.

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



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. Thank you for your support!

Upcoming Events

September 8

Jubilee Village Leadership Network
Chicago Golf Club

October 13

Hearts of Grace Luncheon
Special Guest: Lisa Beamer
Embassy Suites in Naperville

November 3

WYFS Fall Dinner
Pipers Banquets

December 2, 9 and 16

Christmas Breakfasts
Chicago Golf Club

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 or 630.682.1910.

SERVE + IMPACT

As we prepare for fall, we hope you're considering a volunteer team this school year! Serve your community and make a lasting impact by volunteering at one of Outreach Community Ministries' sites. 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.

