# SUNSHIEVEN SPRING 2018

## SUPPORTING OUR HEROIC FAMILIES



Methodist Children's Home

## MCH EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS 2018



BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: Bradford Lewis, Jonathan Olivarez, Paul Fields, Russell Rankin, Michael Lewis, Chris Judy, Tim Brown (president) MIDDLE ROW: Cathy Lawless, Stephanie Cummings, Max Larseingue, Nicholas Molnar FRONT ROW: Sara Beth Stoltzfus, Morgan Lyons, Marchelle Sabido-Villa, Lou Larseingue, LaKiesha Chatman

**NOT PICTURED:** Melissa Arroyo, Dulce Garcia, Stephen Massington, Sarah Musick, Monica Rose, Joe Williams BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: Marjorie Parker, Geoffrey Nelson, Karen Blanco, James Lewis, Tim Brown (president) MIDDLE ROW: Charles Roof, Lindsay Blagg, Diana Luvianos, Josie Rendon FRONT ROW: Stacy Roof, Brooke Davilla, Jeremy Webb, Bryan Dodd NOT PICTURED: Yolanda McClatchy-Adanandus, Jason Davis, Michelle Gunter, Patti Pursley, Anabel Robles, Matt Rodgers, Crystal Motok-Salinas, Jean Wright



BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: Michael McDowell, James Garrett, Tim Brown (president) MIDDLE ROW: Christina Gerhardt, Laura Bonner, Suzanne Frerich FRONT ROW: Pamela Logan, Patti Garrett, Yvonne Jackson, Martha Brown NOT PICTURED: Abbie Garcia, Sheila Kendricks

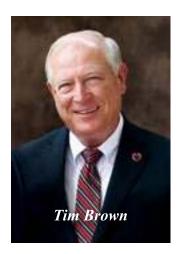
BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: Gary Freeman, Tim Brown (president) MIDDLE ROW: Regina Akers, Denise Nors FRONT ROW: Anna Sims, Bryan Mize NOT PICTURED: Genie Greer, Robert Rice, Sharon Walker



**BACK ROW:** Tim Brown (president) **FRONT ROW:** Judy Broadway, Rhonda Anderson, Judy Sammons

**FROM LEFT:** Tim Fedro, Tim Brown (president), Pat Close

## PERSPECTIVE



In looking at the historical books produced about Methodist Children's Home, I am touched by the number of men and women who came to live at MCH who later served our country in the Armed Forces. For a period of time there was a room at MCH dedicated to honoring these exstudents for their service, some of whom made the ultimate sacrifice.

When I was a boy, duty, honor and country was directly connected to responsibility, freedom and hope. My father-

in-law served in the Navy during World War II and my stepfather served in both the European and Pacific theaters during World War II and ended his career with 22½ years in the Air Force. He had actually lied about his age so he could join the Army Air Corps at 17 years of age. So for me it was sort of a no-brainer that I also joined the Air Force after I graduated from high school. My tour in the Air Force was uneventful compared to the service of my father-in-law and stepfather and that of many of the MCH alumni through the years.

For some of those coming from MCH, serving in the military brought a sense of meaning, purpose and value to their lives. The MCH veterans that I know, and those I have read about, were tough as nails and proved their courage and valor over and over again. There was a sense of honor that was instilled in them. Most of them saw themselves as survivors ingrained with a deep sense of responsibility, determination and courage, charged with protecting their siblings, friends and ultimately their country, preserving the freedoms you and I enjoy today.

In this issue of Sunshine magazine, you will see a spotlight on some of our alumni who have served. You will also read about a growing aspect of our MCH Family Outreach programs which are now making a direct impact on military families in Texas and New Mexico.

I am honored that we are able to serve those who have committed their lives to protect us, and I am proud of the many within the MCH family – including alumni, staff, Board members, Commissioners, clients, and benefactors – who have bravely and proudly served.

Reaching out to those in need is who we are and the need is growing daily. I hope you will help us connect with these families as we continue to seek new ways to offer hope to children, youth and families through our nurturing Christian community of services.

in Beau

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MCH FAMILY OUTREACH OFFICES SERVE MILITARY COMMUNITIES



Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. – Joshua 1:9

When their four nieces needed a safe place to stay, Killeen couple Agustin and Amber opened their home even though they already had three sons, Kaleb, 18, Marcus, 14, and Shyloh, 7. The girls had experienced a tough life in their short years and the couple was ready and willing to show them compassion and love for as long as they needed it. The court placed the girls, ages 3, 7, 9 and 11 in their care in June 2017.

The day after the girls moved into their home, Agustin was deployed overseas with the United States Army, leaving Amber to care for seven children by herself.

Every day thousands of families like Agustin and Amber are making personal sacrifices in service of others. They are a military family; part of a heroic community of soldiers, spouses, children and loved ones who face these unique challenges out of devotion to our great nation.

According to Moe Dozier, vice president for programs at Methodist Children's Home, MCH has an initiative to meet the needs of its communities and recognizes there is a significant military presence in several communities it serves.

"We want to give back to those families who give so much to us, and serve those who serve us," Dozier said.

Currently, MCH Family Outreach offices offer programs designed to support families through case management, parent education, and early intervention and preventative services. The offices in Abilene, Albuquerque, El Paso, San Antonio, and, most recently, Killeen are all located near military bases. Traci Wagner, program administrator for the Eastern region of MCH Family Outreach, believes these programs could be beneficial for military or veteran families due to their demanding lifestyle.

"With several offices situated near military bases, MCH has a unique opportunity to offer support services and walk alongside our nation's heroic families," Wagner said. "Military families sometimes face specific circumstances, including extended and repeated deployment and reintegration, that our client-centered and trauma-informed approach can help address.

"We want to help military families, active and retired, identify strengths and set goals and offer hope to them as they navigate the challenges and celebrate the triumphs of life," she continued.

## BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Agustin and Amber live at Fort Hood in Killeen, a city where MCH Family Outreach strategically opened an office in 2016. Fort Hood is one of the largest military bases in the United States with a supported population of more than 383,000\*.

Director of MCH Family Outreach in Killeen Violet Read and her team have been working diligently since the opening to build connections and find families who could benefit from MCH services. They have participated in community outreach events for military and veterans as well as joined local alliances such as the Veterans Service Alliance of Central Texas and the Ministry Servant Alliance at Fort Hood.

The MCH team has also built relationships with the Texas Veterans Commission, Child and Family Behavioral Health Clinic at Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, and Operation Phantom Support, a local nonprofit that provides services for active-duty and honorably discharged veterans and their families.

WE WANT TO GIVE BACK TO THOSE FAMILIES WHO GIVE SO MUCH TO US, AND SERVE THOSE WHO SERVE US.

#### -MOE DOZIER Vice President for Programs

Read said one in four families they have served since July 2017 is active-duty or veteran and many more have some connection to the military.

"We anticipate that these numbers will continue to grow as we strengthen relationships with community partners and establish referral sources on base," Read said.

Read also said they are learning more about other resources available to families as a way to find more opportunities to serve the Killeen community.

"There is not a lot of collaboration between military and civilian entities," Read said. "MCH would like to help bridge the gap among providers in the community. Also, many congregations and social service agencies are siloed in their efforts to serve the community. We would love to see increased collaboration among likeminded organizations in the Killeen area."

The benefits of parent education programs offered through MCH Family Outreach are also gaining momentum. Currently MCH is leading parenting classes at the Olin E. Teague Veterans Center for residents in the Domiciliary Residential

Amber and Agustin

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Rehabilitation Treatment Program. These classes include 8-10 veterans from all over the country and has been helpful for participants, according to LaMencia Hill, counselor and local recovery coordinator.

"It helps our veterans see things from a new perspective," Hill said. "There's a lot of interaction. Veterans feel open to sharing personal things and feel safe in this setting."

She said she is appreciative of the investment MCH has shown in sharing trauma-informed curriculum for parents.

"I am thankful that they want to partner with us and the services the agency provides," she said. "People know what they are doing. People are receptive to it and we are grateful for it."

Several registered nurses from New Parent Support, a service provided at Fort Hood to new or expecting parents, attend MCH parenting classes taught at First United Methodist Church in Killeen in order to learn more about the curriculum. They said the material has been helpful for them both personally and professionally and foresee sharing it with clients. Also they will be able to refer to MCH families they are unable to serve due to their children aging out of their program or because a client may have concerns about using a government service, even though matters discussed remain confidential. "I do feel like sometimes the families we see don't want to participate in things that are on post," said Lora Lamositele, one of the nurses participating. "I think it's helpful having the option to go off post and do something where they will still be connecting, but it is not the military so they don't feel like anyone is going to be in their business."

## A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT

MCH Family Outreach in Killeen has found that there is a space for them to serve military and veteran families. Amber and Agustin found MCH Family Outreach through a referral from a counseling service for one of the girls. Although this was Agustin's third deployment, Amber said this time the growth in her family caused her to seek additional support.

"We had a full house and it was very hard at first," Amber said. "I was just trying to balance everything with my husband gone. Being the only adult, it was hard."

For Amber and Agustin, having their MCH case manager, Frankie Cones, there to support Amber during her husband's deployment made a big impact. Cones was able to walk alongside Amber as she advocated for herself and her family through the child



Nurses from New Parent Support, a service for military families at Fort Hood, attend parenting classes in order to gain knowledge for their clients. From left: Paula McMahan, Violet Read (MCH Family Outreach Director - Killeen), Lora Lamositele, Rosemarie Steffers and Jasmine Milledge.



**From left:** Agustin, Marcus, Shyloh, Kaleb and Amber live on post at Fort Hood. (Girls not pictured)

services system, where it was determined that the two youngest girls would need alternative placement.

Cones was also able to help Amber understand that the behaviors she was seeing in the two older girls was the result of trauma they experienced. Cones shared new parenting ideas and approaches with Amber and led nurture group activities for the family that would help them better connect, bond and express their feelings.

Additionally, Cones assisted Amber with finding movers when a larger home on post became available and she worked with Amber during the tedious process of obtaining birth certificates for the girls so that they would be eligible as military dependents to utilize special services for children on base.

Agustin struggled with hearing his wife's stress over the phone and felt limited in his ability to help due to being overseas. He said having Cones there to talk his wife through each challenge gave the family the support they needed during a difficult transition. Now back at home, he has seen firsthand the impact MCH has had on the family. Cones and Amber "were in constant communication," Agustin said. "MCH has the time to invest. I can tell you from the beginning to now with me being here – humongous, huge difference."

The couple reported that the family is now doing well thanks to the support they received from MCH Family Outreach and the military community. Moving on post provided the girls with a feeling of security and stability. Now classified as military dependents, they have access to counselors, are making friends in the neighborhood, and are involved in after-school activities that build self-confidence.

"They have been great with the girls," Cones said. "They love the girls and the girls love them. They have been great with helping them through their healing process and everyone as a unit has grown."

Read said she has learned that many military families like Agustin and Amber are very resilient and resourceful.

"Military families stick together and communities rally alongside military families to extend support," Read said. "They want to provide for their families as best they can amid the unpredictability of their career, and most are proud to be a military family and community."

MCH HAS THE TIME TO INVEST. I CAN TELL YOU FROM THE BEGINNING TO NOW WITH ME BEING HERE - HUMONGOUS, HUGE DIFFERENCE.

-AGUSTIN US Army, MCH Client

## **UNDERSTANDING STRENGTHS**

Dani, a mother in Abilene, is counting down the days until her husband Brandon will return from his third deployment in three years. The couple met at age 17 and were engaged to be married a yearand-a-half later. Brandon signed on to serve in the U.S. Air Force and the couple felt it would give them a secure and comfortable life where Dani could be a stay-at-home mother. However, after attempts to have children failed, the couple decided to look into becoming foster parents with hopes of adoption.



"How I became a mom didn't really matter to me," Dani said. "At the end of the day, our goal was parenting, not pregnancy."

During the process of becoming licensed, the couple felt frustrated when one agency denied their application due to a "lack of family support."

"A challenge as a military family is that we don't have grandma down the road," Dani said. "We don't have any local family."

But they found understanding through MCH Family Outreach in Abilene when they met director Megan Harbin.

"She was very warm and good at her job," Dani said. "Everything went smoothly and we were licensed within six weeks."

Abilene is one of five MCH Family Outreach locations with a foster care program, along with Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and Tyler. Although MCH is not licensed to facilitate adoptions, they have many foster children who need a safe home. Currently, Abilene has 12 licensed foster families with hopes of growing the program to 20 this year. Harbin said military families have many strengths that make them good foster parents.

"They know how to be flexible and they often understand the importance of rules and structure of foster care," Harbin said. "Typically they have a great support system built in with other military families too."

Dani said fostering was tough at first and she had negative experiences with the first two placements. Even with all the training and counseling provided, WE WANT TO HELP MILITARY FAMILIES, ACTIVE AND RETIRED, IDENTIFY STRENGTHS AND SET GOALS AND OFFER HOPE TO THEM AS THEY NAVIGATE THE CHALLENGES AND CELEBRATE THE TRIUMPHS OF LIFE.

#### -TRACI WAGNER

Program Administrator for MCH Family Outreach

Dani said she felt emotionally exhausted, especially when she had to return her foster child to its parent only days after her husband was deployed.

"Our end goal was adoption and I didn't have a heart for fostering and reunification in the beginning," Dani admits. "I was just looking for our selfish wants. We wanted to be parents, have the perfect kid, perfect family and all those things. I think in the beginning you want to control so much but in the end you learn you have no control."



After taking a break from fostering for about six months, the couple decided to try again. They fostered a little boy for a short time and then got the call about sisters Novaleigh, 7, and Selah, 8. The girls were placed in their home in April 2017 and the couple fell in love with them. Seven months later, they were able to adopt them through another agency.

Dani said Harbin has supported them through the process and has a good understanding of military families.

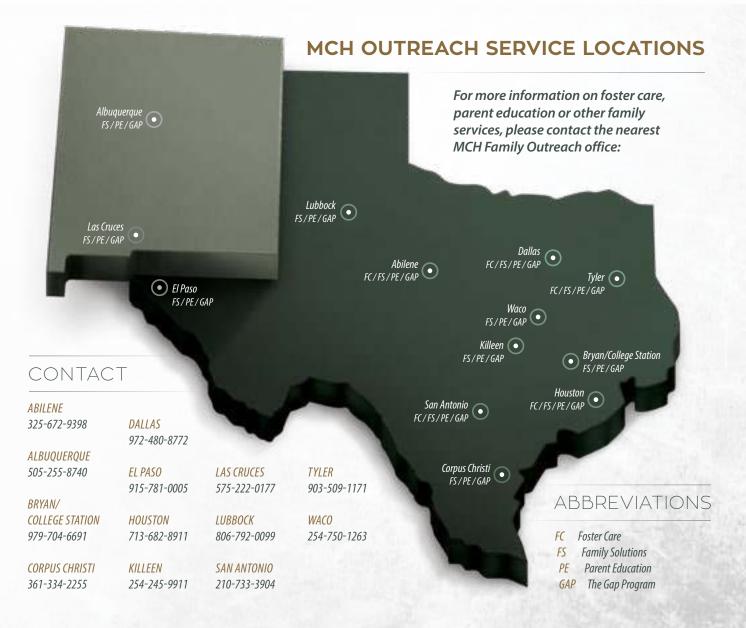
"I think our community is a strength," Dani said. "Living on base is safe. There are guards at the gate, the kids know no one is going to show up at their house. Everything is very uniform and structured. They are around other children whose parents are deployed. Everything is very normal to them.

"I think for them it is cool because they get to be a part of something," she continued. "They love seeing their dad in uniform and hearing the anthem at 7 o'clock in the morning, five at night and nine at night."

Dani said the girls are handling Brandon's absence well as they mark the dates off the calendar until he returns at the end of the summer. She is proud to be a military family and feels it better prepared her as a foster mother.

"Just like being a military family, nothing is easy but there is a reason people do it," she said. "Service is in my husband's heart and to the core of who he is. It is just something that he always wanted to do and he is proud of it." •

\*Supported population includes on-post population, soldiers deployed, employees, contractors, commissaries, and school personnel. Information provided by Fort Hood Fact Sheet, March 3, 2017.



## JIMMY HAMMOND SHARING FROM EXPERIENCE

The life experiences and vocational pursuits Jimmy Hammond can list are extensive and would be exhausting to most people. But sitting at his current station, a shared desk in a classroom in Killeen High School where he teaches criminal justice classes, Hammond breaks out into a wide smile.

"I am living the dream!" he said. "I love my job. I spent 20 years doing a job I loved, went to school and got an upper-level degree and now I'm teaching from all my experiences. There's no way anyone can tell me God didn't orchestrate all this."

There was a time, though, when Hammond would have said God didn't want to have anything to do with him. That would have been when Hammond's mother dropped her teenage son off at Methodist Children's Home in Waco. Hammond struggled with the abandonment, but through the care of staff at MCH was ultimately determined to make something of his life.

Hammond attended Waco High School while at MCH and excelled in academics and athletics.

"I could have had the opportunity to do a lot after MCH – I was a good student and a good athlete," he said. "I spent four years (at MCH) not getting into trouble; I worked hard and stayed on the A/B honor roll. Others really wanted me to go to college, but the Army is what I wanted to do."

Specifically, Hammond wanted to be in law enforcement. While most applicants to the police force have at least an associate's degree from college and are at least 21 years old, "I joined the Army after graduation for the sole purpose of serving as an MP (Military Police) because I didn't want to wait until I was 21 to be a policeman," he said.



While in the service, Hammond met and fell in love with Mary, who also served in the Army. After they married, Mary urged Jimmy to find a career outside of law enforcement following his Army service. As they discussed what that might be, they talked about their shared desire to work with youth.

"Well, for me that meant Methodist Children's Home," Hammond said. In 1998 the Hammonds became the youngest home parents at MCH, caring for the boys living in the Doss Home.

"It was a great time and also had interesting dynamics because there were people there who knew me as a resident – my former case manager was now one of my supervisors," Hammond said, laughing. "I'm sure there were some raised eyebrows when we were hired. 'He's back?""

After serving as home parents, Mary returned to active military duty and Jimmy found a job working at the Bell County Sheriff's department, only to be recalled to active duty himself after the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Hammond spent the next four years in law enforcement at nearby Fort Hood, as active duty military and then in a civilian capacity.

Hammond was called back to active duty yet again in 2006. This time he deployed to Iraq where he trained Iraqi security forces and was awarded the Bronze Star, a medal given for heroic achievement in a combat zone. Hammond voluntarily returned to active duty in 2013 before being medically discharged because of an injury.

Hammond had steadily worked early in his Army career with an eye to the future – taking advantage of the G.I. Bill to earn an associate's degree. After receiving a medical discharge from the Army, he felt as if his planned trajectory was grounded.

It was then that Hammond reconnected with MCH and received encouragement from MCH staff to pursue a bachelor's degree.

I AM LIVING THE DREAM! I LOVE MY JOB. I SPENT 20 YEARS DOING A JOB I LOVED, WENT TO SCHOOL AND GOT AN UPPER-LEVEL DEGREE AND NOW I'M TEACHING FROM ALL MY EXPERIENCES. THERE'S NO WAY ANYONE CAN TELL ME GOD DIDN'T ORCHESTRATE ALL THIS.

#### -JIMMY HAMMOND

Former MCH Resident and Home Parent

"After being medically discharged from the Army, I felt lost and without a purpose," he admitted. "Getting my education helped bring that purpose.

"I have a lot of good memories of the Home," he said. "It had been about 13 years since we had been back, but the message was still 'We are here for you.""

Hammond continued his studies with the assistance of scholarship funds from MCH, made possible by generous benefactors committed to helping MCH alumni pursue higher education. He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Phoenix as a member of the National Criminal Justice Honors Society and in the fall of 2017 earned a Master of Science in Criminal Justice from Liberty University.

Within four months of graduating, Hammond was hired at Killeen High School to teach six classes in the Criminal Justice track. Through the classes he teaches, Hammond said he tries to show the young people what it takes to have a career in criminal justice, firefighting, nursing or as an EMT, and the honor associated with the roles.

Several times a semester, Hammond takes his students to the Bell County jail and courts to see cases firsthand. Sometimes, the students will see

people in jail or on the court docket that they know personally. That can be eye-opening, he said.

"It's difficult to get an adult to change their mind, but it can be even harder with kids," Hammond said. "To see a lightbulb come on – when the truth shines in – is a great moment."

Hammond said he calls upon his experiences and knowledge from the military and also from MCH in his daily interactions with students.

"I know abuse," he said. "I know what it's like to be abandoned. I was dropped off at MCH by my mom. The kids in this high school need teachers and grownups speaking into their lives just like I did when I was at MCH. I've got troubled kids in my classes; kids who are in foster care. When we talk about issues in the criminal justice classes like crime and domestic violence, it's real.

"The difference that was made for me is that I was accepted by people I didn't know and I was cared for and loved," he said. "I care for these kids. I want their experiences to be positive."

Hammond said that in a way, this is his "thank you" to MCH for caring for him as a youth and for walking beside him at different stages of life. Today, Hammond serves as president of the MCH Alumni Association.



lammond during a tour of duty in Iraq.

"I would tell the young people at MCH today that even if life hasn't gone the way you've wanted it to so far, there's still a lot of love for you and MCH will always be there for you," Hammond said. "MCH will have your back to help you get to where you need to be – in the world and in Christ.

"I sit here today pouring into kids' lives because of MCH," he said. "MCH made it possible for me to do what I love to do." •

## SOLDIERS

#### A HISTORY OF SERVICE

Throughout the history of MCH, many alumni entered the military after leaving campus and many became decorated officers. During times of war, MCH felt the impact on our country not only financially, but also personally as several older residents left home to fight overseas.

During World War I, Abe Mulkey led the effort to teach the children about patriotism. Local newspapers sponsored two "units" on campus that acted as soldiers, wearing military hats, carrying wooden guns and marching in formation. Forty-four boys from MCH entered military service and two died serving their country in World War I.

World War II caused a decline in donations as the cost of goods and services began to rise. Many of the young men on campus left to serve in the military. Young women also left to serve with the Cadet Nurse Corps or work in government offices in support of the war. MCH residents back home did their best to show the soldiers support by buying war stamps and collecting scrap metal. They looked forward to visits from former residents as well as seeing pictures and reading the soldiers' letters written to Superintendent Hubert Johnson which were often published in Sunshine magazine.

Soldiers were encouraged to come back home to the campus after returning from war and often received a hero's welcome. Sunshine magazine continued to highlight trips home by soldiers serving in the Korean War in the early 1950s followed by the Vietnam War spanning the 1960s to early 1970s. During the Gulf War, MCH organized care packages for the soldiers serving overseas.

Today MCH graduates work with Transition Services coordinators to establish a post-graduation plan. When they express interest in serving in the armed forces, MCH is able to assist them in connecting with military recruiters. Throughout history, MCH is proud of its brothers and sisters who have bravely served our nation through military service.

\*Historical information provided from A Legacy of Hope by Bryan Mize; Centennial: An Illustrated History of the Methodist Home by Patricia Ward Wallace; and Sunshine magazine archives.

Sixty MCH children visited the Waco Army Flying School in 1943. *A group of MCH residents tour Connally Air Force base in 1950.* 



## ALBAUGH

During World War II, Wacoan and Air Force pilot Ralph Buchanan Albaugh was struck by a Japanese suicide plane while flying over Iwo Jima in 1945. As a tribute to their son, MCH benefactors Mr. and Mrs. Roy B. Albaugh established a permanent scholarship fund in his name for MCH graduates. The scholarship has blessed hundreds of qualified MCH graduates over the years as they pursue advanced education.

*This photo of boys saluting is from the August 1959 issue of Sunshine magazine.* 

Former resident and Korean War veteran Boyd Jones (left) visits Bridwell resident Bill Harris in 1954 when he returned home after serving in the Army.

## SERVICE

MCH is proud of our many alumni who served and continue to serve our country. Below are just some of those from MCH who have answered the call.



During World War II, benefactor Joe Perkins gave MCH a metal service plaque on which the names of MCH boys who entered the service could be placed. By the end of the war, the plaque held the names of 266 former residents.



#### MARK AMBROSE

2001 MCH GRADUATE; SERVED IN THE ARMY FOR MORE THAN NINE YEARS, SERVING IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

#### CHADD JACKSON

1991 MCH GRADUATE; GUNNERY SERGEANT IN U.S. MARINES



#### CARL MILAM

MCH RESIDENT FROM 1945-1955; U.S. AIR FORCE AIRMAN SECOND CLASS (A/2C); SERVED FROM 1955 TO 1963

#### The Milam Brothers:

All four brothers served in the U.S. Air Force. Pictured right – James, Carl, John and Jerry Milam pose for the April 1947 cover of The Sunshine Monthly.

#### NOT PICTURED:

JOHN MILAM MCH RESIDENT FROM 1945-1957; U.S. AIR FORCE AIRMAN FIRST CLASS (A/1C); SERVED FROM 1957-1961



JAMES MILAM MCH RESIDENT FROM 1945-1960; U.S. AIR FORCE COLONEL; SERVED FROM 1965 TO 1991



#### JERRY MILAM

MCH RESIDENT FROM 1945-1961; U.S. AIR FORCE COLONEL; SERVED FOR 42 YEARS, 34 OF WHICH WAS ON ACTIVE DUTY



#### DAN MOORE MCH RESIDENT FROM 1988-1991; SERVED IN THE NAVY AS A PN2(SW), PERSONNEL OFFICER (NON-COMMISSIONED) FROM 1994-1998

#### **DOUG PHILLIPS**

2005 MCH GRADUATE; FIRE CONTROLMAN 2<sup>ND</sup> CLASS, SERVING FOUR YEARS IN THE NAVY



#### CALVIN RICHARDSON

2012 MCH GRADUATE; **U.S. ARMY SPECIALISTS PROMOTABLE AIRBORNE TROOPER** 



#### **Essence Stowe**

2011 MCH GRADUATE; PRIVATE FIRST CLASS IN THE **ARMY NATIONAL GUARD** 

Sunshin

#### **BOBBY VANCE**

MCH RESIDENT FROM 1934-1944; SERVED IN THE ARMY FOR 26 YEARS AND **RETIRED AS A MASTER SERGEANT** 

**CEDRIC WILSON** 

2015 MCH GRADUATE;

VETERAN OF U.S. ARMY,

**PRIVATE FIRST CLASS** 



#### JORAE VASQUEZ

2016 MCH GRADUATE; SERVING IN THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



### **CORY YEOMANS**

2003 MCH GRADUATE: **ARMY SERGEANT SERVING SINCE 2005** 

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## **TRANSITION SERVICES:** PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Transition Services at Methodist Children's Home has a long-standing history of supporting and meeting the needs of youth who are transitioning into independence.

As far back as the early 1920s, MCH recognized a need to give college assistance to young adults graduating from the MCH program. As the need was recognized and assistance was given, by 1970 a College and Vocational Services program was established to provide scholarships to students pursing a college degree.

Taking notice and adjusting to the needs of the soon-to-be graduates, in 2007 the College and Vocational Services program adapted into an intentional and formal program called Transition Services (TS).

TS provides direct services to MCH residents and day-students attending



#### DREAM:

To attend Sam Houston State University to study psychology in hopes of becoming a music therapist.

"I want to help kids someday realize what they have. I want to help them like MCH and psychological services helped me."

#### **THOUGHTS ON TRANSITION SERVICES:**

"TS has been very helpful. They've been a big eyeopener and have supported me by walking with me and guided me through this process." I THINK FOR US, IF YOU LOOK AT TS (TRANSITION SERVICES) FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT CREATING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS. EVERYTHING GOES BACK TO THE RELATIONSHIPS WE WORK TO BUILD.

-CHRISTINA GERHARDT Director of Transition Services

the charter school on the Waco campus, as well as foster children served by MCH Family Outreach. The TS program supports these young people through advanced education, independent living as well as aftercare services.

The program also works with the student, staff and school officials to explore and determine plans after high school graduation, taking into account the interests of assigned juniors and seniors. Various options include vocational school or college, military service or directly entering the workforce.

Independent Living (IL), a supplemental program that was added to TS in 2012 was added for young people who may not have an outside support system and are in need of additional assistance after graduation. IL gives youth the opportunity to live in on-campus housing that is designated for MCH graduates or at Clay Commons, an MCH-owned apartment complex in Waco.

The most recent updates made in the program include working with seniors on a monthly basis with a set curriculum to teach them skills they will need once they leave MCH, and working with juniors throughout each semester. This year there are 24 juniors at the charter school and 32 seniors.

According to Jeff Creel, program administrator for the school and transition services, TS is more than a helpful assistance to young adults, it is also another place MCH staff can engage youth in healthy and intentional relationships.

#### JAELYNE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2018

#### DREAM:

To attend McLennan Community College and Tarleton State University to become a neonatal nurse.

"One thing I know for sure is that people are always going to need healthcare. I can see myself working with kids. It is so special to watch them grow."

#### THOUGHTS ON TRANSITION SERVICES:

"I know that MCH is behind me. MCH and the Transition Services program have done their job and have worked to prepare me for this since I first arrived. My motto is 'The only way to be on time is to be ahead.' MCH has helped me get ahead and to map out a plan for my future and to be as prepared as possible."

"We try to walk through the transition process with the students," Creel said. "Instead of telling a student, 'This is what you need to do, go do it,' we share the message of, 'let me walk through this experience with you."

The TS team works diligently to understand the needs, interests and desires of each student in hopes of helping them achieve future success.

"Our goal is to have all students transitioning from care to be prepared for independence," Creel said. "We want them to have stable housing, employment and to have a supportive network of individuals to help them be successful."

Christina Gerhardt, director of Transition Services at MCH, believes this program helps the organization continue its legacy of building meaningful connections.

"I think for us, if you look at TS from the very beginning, it's always been about creating strong relationships," Gerhardt said. "Everything goes back to the relationships we work to build. In strong healthy relationships we see more success. Once you have that relationship, you can intentionally guide, direct and best support these young people."

For more information on our Transition Services program, please visit **MCH.org.** 

## TRANSITION SERVICES

#### 1920

College assistance started for graduates.

#### • 1970s

The College & Vocational Program created to offer college scholarships.

#### 1997

2009 .

2015 •

2017

<

•

The College & Vocational Coordinator and School Administrator begin overseeing the College Scholarship Program.

Two additional Transition

Services Coordinators are

MCH purchases the Clay

Commons apartment complex in

downtown Waco, expanding the

Independent Living Program as

directed by the Strategic Plan.

Senior meetings transition

traditional senior events, such

being focused on independent

living skills and preparations

for advanced education.

Transition Services plans

on working intentionally

with younger students.

The Strategic Plan calls for

to be created for freshman

and senior meetings.

Transitions Services curriculum

and sophomores in addition to what is being used for junior

**FUTURE** 

as prom and senior trips, to

from being focused on

added to the team.

### 2007 A Director and two Transition

Services Coordinator positions are created for an official Transition Services program. Transition Services receives its own office location and includes Advanced Education and After Care services.

#### 2012

Independent Living Program is added. Doss and Birdsong are designated as homes to serve the program.

#### 2016

Transition Services Coordinators start meeting twice a semester with graduated students who are in advanced education. Skype and other technologies are introduced to allow for more direct care for student clients attending school out of state.

#### 2018

Senior meetings are held monthly and are more in-depth with a set curriculum. Transition Services Coordinators begin to meet with high-school juniors.

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## YOUTH PROFILE

## FAITH DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

Those closest to 17-year-old Faith do not have a shortage of positive words to describe her. Thoughtful, driven, amiable, dedicated, flourishing, and authentic are just some of the descriptors given to the teenager.

During her time at Methodist Children's Home, Faith has grasped on to opportunities and has joined choir, worship choir, the worship planning team, and drum line.

Before MCH, Faith was not afforded such opportunities. Early in Faith's life her family had financial struggles and a stint of homelessness.

Faith was initially placed in foster care and moved around frequently. Desiring to be closer to her mother and younger sisters, Faith reached out to those advocating for her, which led to the opportunity to move to MCH in 2016. Two of her sisters soon followed in 2017.

"When I first came here I was mad," said Faith. "I had always been mad. Mad in the sense of asking, 'Why? Why am I always in situations I can't control?' At one point it felt like my world had been pretty much crushed."

As Faith was angrily questioning her situation, she also started to attend church at MCH. According to Faith, it was when she started working with Spiritual Development ministers and learning how to communicate better that her eyes were opened to hope and possibilities for her future.

"I went in blind not really knowing what I wanted," said Faith. "But over time I realized that I wanted to really start paying attention and communicating with the group. Baby steps [in participating] have brought me to where I am."

In the fall of 2016, Faith accepted Christ into her life during an MCH Spiritual Development event on the Waco campus.

"I now have a stronger bond with everything around me," she said. "I feel peaceful. I'm now more open with others. I have found life and have learned to love again, not hate like before."

During her journey at MCH, Faith deeply connected with music and the stories that can come from it. As she has grown spiritually and worked on her communication skills, Faith has started writing and sharing pieces of her story through rap music.

Faith has now written and performed her first rap and is now working on her second song.

Her first song focuses on her decision to hand control over to God, surrendering herself and her dreams and allowing God to lead. The second song addresses the abandonment she has felt in her life and she discusses her revelation of the sufficiency of God and how He is her real father figure.

"MCH has given me the courage and freedom to discover and be myself, and be able to verbalize that," said Faith. "I now have a space to grow and learn and ask any type of question."

Kimberly Bobbitt, MCH recreation director, said she has seen the growth and change in Faith's life.

"Faith not only takes on challenges offered to her, but is diligent in the way she approaches each area she has committed to and invests fully of herself once committed to something," said Bobbitt. "She has a determination that will not easily be shut down."

Jill Sims, MCH music minister, agrees and said she believes that Faith is set apart as a leader who can inspire others and truly make this world a better place.

Faith said she believes MCH has changed her life and for that she is thankful.

"Faith is trying things that fall outside of her comfort zone, and in doing so, finding herself and her gifts," said Kim Clark, director of Spiritual Development. "I have no doubt that God created and equipped her for great things." •

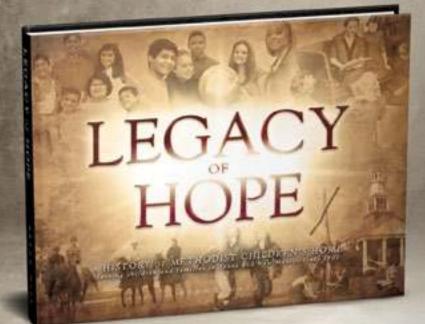
## DEVELOPMENT NEWS

## TOP 20 CHURCHES FOR DIRECT GIFTS AND TOTAL GIVING IN 2017

<b>DIRECT GIFTS</b> Offerings and donations received directly from churches		<b>TOTAL GIVING</b> Direct gifts from churches plus church credit requests from individual's donations	
1. First UMC - Rockwall	11. Matador UMC	1. St. Luke's UMC - Houston	<b>11.</b> First UMC - Fort Worth
2. St. Luke's UMC - Houston	<b>12.</b> Grace UMC - Copperas Cove	2. First UMC - Big Spring	<b>12.</b> First UMC - Graham
3. First UMC - Grapevine	13. First UMC - Mansfield	3. First UMC - Rockwall	13. First UMC - Boerne
4. First UMC - Center	14. Coker UMC	4. First UMC - Waco	14. New Home UMC
5. First UMC - Sulphur Springs	<b>15.</b> First UMC - Graham	5. First UMC - Grapevine	<b>15.</b> First UMC - Richardson
6. First UMC - Boerne	16. The Woodlands UMC	6. University UMC - Fort Worth	<b>16.</b> Coker UMC
7. First UMC - Corsicana	<b>17.</b> First UMC - Marble Falls	7. First UMC - Los Alamos	<b>17.</b> First UMC - Sulphur Springs
8. Mt. Zion UMC - Panola	<b>18.</b> St. Stephen's UMC - Houston	8. First UMC - Center	<b>18.</b> Highland Park UMC
9. First UMC - Georgetown	<b>19.</b> First UMC - Frisco	9. Christ Church UMC - The Woodlands	<b>19.</b> Kingwood UMC
<b>10.</b> University Park UMC - Dallas	<b>20.</b> Fellowship UMC - Trophy Club	10. The Woodlands UMC	20. St. Luke's UMC - Midland

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Throughout its history, Methodist Children's Home has adapted programs and services to meet the changing needs of children, families and society. Legacy of Hope documents important transitions in the program of care and highlights significant events and achievements in the life of this ministry.

For information about ordering your limited edition copy of Legacy of Hope for \$30, please contact us at Development@MCH.org or call us at 1-800-853-1272.

#### CELEBRATING

A LEGACY OF CARE

On November 28, 1941, Methodist Children's Home dedicated five buildings on the Waco campus. The Williams Home (later renamed the Williams-Craig Home) and Bridwell Home were two of the buildings dedicated that day witnessed by several thousand Methodists from Texas and New Mexico who had come for the special occasion. Also present were five bishops of the Methodist church and the Governor of Texas, the Honorable Coke Stevenson.

Bishop Ivan Lee Holt, the main speaker for the day, said, "On days like this at the dedication of buildings for the homeless, we can thank God and take courage. Today you have come from all parts of Texas and New Mexico and more distant places to honor these donors and to take counsel on our faith in the future."

Throughout the years, the homes have provided a safe haven for hundreds of young people as they experienced growth and renewal. As MCH strives to better meet the needs of children and youth today and in the future, staff and alumni celebrated the contributions of the two homes during the annual Alumni Homecoming weekend. The two homes will be removed this spring to make room for new state-of-the-art homes. Funds for the Bridwell Home were donated by Mr. and Mrs. J.S. Bridwell of Wichita Falls, Texas. Mr. Bridwell was one of the state's leading churchmen, cattlemen and oilmen during his time. The couple, married in 1919, were active in their church and had two daughters.

The home was built in Adam design with neoclassic furnishings, and Bridwell took great interest in the first group of boys who lived there. Each Christmas, Bridwell's employees provided gifts to the boys in honor of their employer.

The plaque inscription for the home was written by Bridwell with assistance from his pastor, who later became Bishop Paul E. Martin. It read, "This home was given with the hope that the boys who live here may learn the dignity of labor, the virtue of honesty, the grace of gratitude, and dedicate their lives to the glory of God and the service to humanity."



WILLIAMS-CRAIG HOME









The building of the Williams Home was made possible by funds donated by Mr. and Mrs. H.A. Williams of Fort Worth, Texas, who dedicated the home to the memory of their only son, Dr. Wingo Williams. Dr. Williams attended the University of Texas and received his doctor's degree in 1913. However, he passed away just weeks before completing his internship. After his passing, the Williams family put their interest in assisting young people through school who otherwise would be unable to attend and dedicated their trust fund to the children of Methodist Children's Home.

The home for boys was built in a colonial design and was fireproof throughout. The couple died before the dedication of the home, but were represented by several family members during the dedication. In 1988 the home was renamed the Williams-Craig Home in acknowledgement of a significant restoration funded by The J. Paul Craig Foundation of Amarillo, Texas.

The plaque inscription read, "Dr. Wingo Williams Memorial Dormitory; Provided for before their death by Mr. and Mrs. H.A. Williams, Fort Worth, Texas; Now dedicated by them through their trustees to the memory of their son Dr. Wingo Williams, June 21, 1941; 'Whosoever shall receive a little child in my name, receiveth me.' Luke 9:48" •

## **NEWS** & **NOTES**



## MCH STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN 2018 MCLENNAN COUNTY LIVESTOCK SHOW

Methodist Children's Home students competed in the 2018 McLennan County Junior Livestock Show with six students receiving scholarships and five animals progressing to the sale. A total of 24 students from the charter school's FFA program showed livestock and eight students submitted a total of 10 projects to the Ag mechanics contest.

The show took place Feb. 6-9 at the Extraco Events Center in Waco with FFA and 4-H programs from schools around the county competing. Throughout the year, Ag teachers Steve Kruse and Kevin Gibbs work with the students on showing techniques and how to prepare the animals for livestock shows.

"Mr. Gibbs and I would like to thank everyone who came out and supported the students and for our great MCH Ag boosters who help make all this possible," Kruse said. "I had many compliments on the behavior of the students which proves we are all doing something positive to mold young men and women. Most of all, thank you to the students for the hard work, and to God for watching over us all week." See below for a list of results:

Market swine: BOYB – Noah (5th), Adam (6th), also participated – Julio, Danny; York – Ladarius (10th), also participated – Bryce; Duroc – KK (9th), Noah (10th), also participated – Roger, Blake; Hamp – Philip participated; Cross – Anthony (10th), also participated – Sam.

Steer: Galen (8th in class one), Marisa (8th in class three).

Goats: Lucas (7th), Triston (8th), Dustin (9th).

**Sheep:** Hair sheep – Layla (3rd), Duane (3rd); Sheep – Adriana (2nd), Sai (3rd), Juliana (4th), D'Nayjah (4th), Dathan (9th), Jaelyne (10th).

Ag Mechanics projects: Scholarships to Texas State Technical College received by Galen, Noah, Marisa, Chandler, Danny, and Julio.

Gate made by **Danny** and **Julio** – Blue quality, 1st in division, Reserve Champion; Electric shop bench made by **Galen** – Blue quality, 1st in division, Champion division; Lamp made by **Marisa** – Blue quality, 1st in division, Reserve Champion; Reclaimed table – Blue quality, 2nd in division; BBQ combo made by **Danny** and **Chandler** – Blue quality, 2nd in division, Reserve Champion; Hay spear made by **Danny** and **Galen** – Blue quality, 1st in division; Coffee table made by **Jaelyne** – Red quality, 2nd in division; Other projects – Cedar bench made by **Adam**, Creep Feeder made by **Galen** and **Noah**, Fire pit made by **Julio**.

Congratulations to our students on a great show! For more information on becoming an MCH Ag booster, contact Allison Crawford at **acrawford@mch.org**. •



## XAIVIER SIGNS WITH TEXAS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

It was a thrilling National Signing Day at MCH as friends, MCH staff and members of the media watched Xaivier sign his letter of intent to play football at Texas Wesleyan University! Xaivier was a prominent member of the MCH Bulldogs sixman football team that won the TCAF state title in November. He received 1st team all-state and all-district honors at wide receiver and defensive back and is the first MCH football player to sign a letter of intent to play at the next level! Go Bulldogs!

### MCH HOSTS CEREMONY FOR TEXAS STATE SENATOR BRIAN BIRDWELL

MCH President/CEO Tim Brown recently presented Texas State Senator Brian Birdwell with the "Champion for Children" award on behalf of the Texas Coalition of Homes for Children (TCHC) for his work advocating in the Legislature for faithbased foster care initiatives in Texas. The presentation took place at our new John E. Hilliard Home on the Waco campus and included local officials, MCH board members, staff, and member-agencies representing TCHC.



## MCH FAMILY OUTREACH LEADS PARENT EDUCATION FOR RESIDENTIAL STAFF

Methodist Children's Home staff are working together to share knowledge in order to better serve children, youth and families. Staff from MCH Family Outreach in Waco are currently leading a Circle of Security (COS) parenting course for home parents from the MCH Boys Ranch to provide them with more insight and understanding as they care for youth in the residential program.

"This is an effort to better support our direct care staff and give them more tools to help them be more effective," explained Moe Dozier, vice president for programs. "It also includes components of self-care which will be helpful for staff."

Dozier said the idea to train residential staff in COS came about last fall when they identified that residential caregivers deal with a lot of the same issues parents do. They first shared the model of care with unit managers. Home parents from the Boys Ranch began the training in December 2017, and classes for Waco campus direct care staff will commence in 2018.

MCH Family Outreach began implementing COS in 2016 as an additional parenting education model. The model includes an eight-week curriculum based on attachment theory and research that shows "secure children exhibit increased empathy, greater self-esteem, better relationships with parents and peers, enhanced school readiness, and an increased capacity to handle emotions more effectively when compared with children who are not secure."

"Our hope in sharing COS with residential and ranch staff is to create a space for staff to reflect on their caregiving experiences, become more attuned to the attachment needs we all have and further support the utilization of Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI)," said Brooke Davilla, director of MCH Family Outreach in Waco.

"As an agency we are fortunate to be exposed to many quality trainings and want to ensure that we maximize those opportunities by sharing with any staff who would benefit," Davilla said. "We have greatly enjoyed the experience of building relationships across our MCH departments."



Home parents have shared positive feedback about the classes and collaboration with MCH Family Outreach staff. "I really enjoyed doing the activity that helped us identify and relate to things from our childhood and how they affected us growing up and still today," said Vivian Thomas, home parent at the Boys Ranch. "The activity brought to the forefront some issues which definitely helps me relate to everyday emotions I see within the youth we work with."

## OUTREACH NEWS

### NEW PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES FURNITURE FOR MCH FAMILY OUTREACH FAMILIES

Aletta, a mother in Bryan, Texas, who is supporting 16-year-old twin daughters and a 10-year-old daughter, recently received a couch and matching chairs for her new apartment thanks to a partnership formed between MCH Family Outreach in Bryan/College Station and FEMA. Aletta has been working to improve her family's situation and said the furniture was a helpful addition.

"I was very surprised," Aletta said. "Really, I am blessed. I have been blessed with everything that has happened with MCH from the beginning."

Aletta has been working with MCH for five months and through the support of her daughters and MCH case manager, Kelsey Taylor, has made positive changes.

"Change can be hard but when you have someone who knows you can do it – someone that really believes in you – that makes you want to go for that change," Aletta said. "It is the extra voice that really helps. This program has been life-changing."

The furniture Aletta received through FEMA was used in portable homes taken to disaster areas for families to live in while their homes are repaired. Once they are done with the homes, FEMA cleans and preps the hard-surface furniture and homes for the next use. However, any "soft" furniture, such as couches or fabric chairs, cannot be reused at sites and is donated to nonprofit organizations.



**From left:** Kelsey Taylor (case manager), Aletta, and Ted Randall (Bryan outreach director) at Aletta's new home.

Bryan/College Station case manager Susan Hays said she learned about the FEMA resource from friends at another local nonprofit and contacted them to inquire about furniture for MCH clients. This call resulted in a collaboration that has greatly benefitted MCH families working to get back on their feet, according to Ted Randall, director of MCH Family Outreach in Bryan/ College Station.

"This partnership has met a significant need for some of our families," Randall said. "We have families who were living in substandard conditions and are able to move, but could not afford new furniture. This partnership has allowed us to supply furniture to these families. We have also been able to provide beds or pull-out couches to families who did not have enough sleeping areas for all of their family members."

Randall said FEMA allowed them to walk through the staging area where furniture is stored to pick items that could be used by their families. They then store the furniture in the office until they are able to deliver it to families.

"Most of the furniture we get looks brand new," Randall said.

He said they have received couches, chairs, bed frames and FEMA even received approval to donate mattresses still in its original plastic wrap that were in a home sent into the field. So far the furniture has blessed a single mother of six children as well as Aletta's family.

"My story, it's been a road to get here," Aletta said. "But there is momentum. It is going good; it is going more than good." •



## MCH FAMILY OUTREACH IN SAN ANTONIO HOSTS OPEN HOUSE

Recently our team in San Antonio celebrated moving into their new office space (4606 Centerview Dr., Suite 100 / San Antonio, TX 78228) by holding an Open House reception. We are so thankful for the growth of this ministry as a result of the generosity of our faithful supporters and the many who work to serve children, youth and families across Texas and New Mexico.

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GIFTS MADE FROM JANUARY 2018 THROUGH FEBRUARY 2018

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