SUNSHINE

THE MAGAZINE OF METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME | SUMMER 2020





PLEASE NOTE:

Any pictures where social distancing is not being practiced were taken prior to COVID-19 or before other precautionary practices were established. MCH adheres to COVID-19 CDC best practices.



TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2020

\$500K GIVING DAY

A ONE DAY MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE

Thank you!

Thanks to you, donations were doubled and our matching challenge goal was surpassed with gifts totaling \$504,195. Your generosity demonstrates your commitment to this ministry and heart for each young person and family in our care. We are grateful for your friendship and look forward to sharing how your support will transform lives throughout the year!

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



Trey Oakley

hank you for your continued support of Methodist Children's Home (MCH) through your gifts, prayers and interest in the transformational work of our ministry. The last few months have been challenging for many reasons, but through God's grace MCH is in an even better position to care for children, youth and families from Texas and New Mexico.

I'm pleased to share with you in this issue of Sunshine magazine details of our yearlong process which has produced an exciting and

challenging strategic plan. One of the first commitments I made when I became president of MCH in July 2019 was to initiate a new strategic plan which will serve as our roadmap to help us decide where God is leading us as a ministry.

The priorities, goals and action steps in this plan are a testimony to the great work of those who have gone before us who enabled our current staff to dream big for those we serve. It is appropriate that this strategic plan is titled "Building on a Strong Foundation." The unprecedented events we encountered due to COVID-19 certainly had the potential of derailing our planning process, but it didn't. If anything, it gave momentum and added significance to the work and commitment of our staff and leadership. This strategic plan is not a document created by a small group of individuals sitting in a room together. We had 177 individuals – employees, Board members, volunteers, donors – who contributed to this process. This plan is a cumulative effort of which all MCH can truly be proud.

After we completed the strategic plan, we immediately began a series of learning and training exercises to take our MCH teams on a deeper dive for a better understanding of these new changes and what it means for us as an organization to pursue the goals and action steps outlined in this document. Collectively, we want to continue to identify ways to grow as an organization guided by this plan. It is exciting to see how momentum is already building across MCH.

Highlighting the strategic plan are new vision and mission statements along with a series of strategic commitments called "ONE MCH." These four commitments – Five-Star Service, Authentic Accountability, Focused and Flexible Ministries, and Culture of Learning – are characteristics that bring us together at MCH regardless of our location, tenure or experiences. ONE MCH also defines who we are as a ministry and contributes to the development of a culture that is mission-focused in our commitment to equip all we serve to experience life to the fullest.

Thank you for your support of those impacted by the work we do at MCH. You are helping us make a difference today in the lives of thousands of children, youth and families. I am excited to see how we will accomplish even more in the days to come thanks to this strategic plan and because of who God is through this ministry.

Blessings and Peace,

Juffally

CONTENTS

- 2 **Cover Story** Building on a Strong Foundation
- Feature MCH Welcomes WacoNonprofit to MCH FamilyOutreach Center
- MCH Adapts During COVID-19
 Pandemic
- 9 Transition Services Profile: Where are they Now?
- 10 Celebrating 100 Years of Sunshine
- MCH Family Outreach:
 Stories of Impact
- 14 MCH Class of 2020
- 16 **Youth Profile:**Will: Purposed for Creativity
- 7 Development News & Notes
 - Recognition of Gifts to MCH

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Bryan Mize, *Vice President for Strategic Initiatives*

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PRIORITIES & GOALS

PRIORITY I

CONTINUUM OF CARE

GOAL #1: Develop a future program master plan to meet the demand for services and evolving needs of those in our care.

GOAL #2: Increase effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery through all programs.

PRIORITY 2 —

Organizational Culture and Communication

GOAL #1: Create a culture rooted in unified purpose, employee empowerment and agency-wide teamwork

GOAL #2: Develop professional learning opportunities for employees, the organization and external partners.

GOAL #3: Increase accountability, reporting structures and performance measures throughout the organization.

PRIORITY 3

Funding, Stewardship and Collaborations

GOAL #1: Increase funding from a variety of sources.

GOAL #2: Ensure highest and best use of current resources while increasing future capacity.

GOAL #3: Increase investment of resources in collaborations with like-minded, transformative organizations.



MATTHEW 7:24-25 ———

BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

MCH Unveils New Strategic Plan

ethodist Children's Home has ministered to children, youth and families for 130 years. Throughout its rich history, MCH has adapted programs and services to stay in tune with the needs of society and in faithfulness to God's calling. Demonstrating a willingness to change enabled MCH to build a strong foundation of ministry to withstand the tests of time.

MCH began the next chapter of its legacy with the unveiling of a three-year strategic plan in July. The theme of the plan is "Building on a Strong Foundation."

When Trey Oakley became president of MCH in July 2019, he charged Bryan Mize, vice president for strategic initiatives, to oversee the year-long planning process. More than 170 employees, Board members and Commissioners, who serve as volunteer church representatives, participated in focus groups during the first phase.

"The strategic planning process gives us an opportunity to evaluate where we are and where we could be," Oakley said. "We have been intentional

about providing opportunities to hear many perspectives throughout the planning process. Our strategic plan will push us forward while allowing us to always remain in a state of ongoing evaluation to identify and address priorities."

Focus groups addressed organizational culture and communication, funding and stewardship, external factors and trends, and continuum of care, which refers to the programs that enable MCH to serve children and families throughout various stages of their journey.

Focus group feedback was analyzed through a SWOT analysis, a tool commonly used during strategic planning to determine an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The SWOT analysis was compiled by Rebekah Powell and Jean Wright, strategic initiatives officers at MCH, who assisted with organizing and facilitating the planning process.

The SWOT analysis was used by the strategic planning leadership team to develop priorities and goals, some of which were new while others were

carried over from the previous plan. The leadership team consists of the president, vice presidents and lead advisor to the president.

"The accomplishments of our last strategic plan showed us we can dream big and think big," Oakley said. "They set us up to make sure this new strategic plan is more than just words on a page. Like the plans in the past, this strategic plan will lead to challenging but achievable outcomes for MCH."

Following the development of goals, 48 employees worked in planning groups to formulate action step recommendations to help MCH achieve the goals. Recommendations were evaluated by the leadership team to finalize the plan, which was presented and approved by the MCH Board of Directors on June 26 for implementation on July 1.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the planning process, it only altered the way groups communicated, Mize said. MCH utilized its technology resources to develop the plan completely through online collaboration.

"I am proud of the way agency leadership and employees responded to the challenge of developing a strategic plan during COVID-19," Mize said. "We never considered postponing the planning process even though we faced the social distancing mandates and other limitations that prevented employees from meeting in person."

The strategic plan includes three priorities and eight goals to guide the ministry in the coming years. New vision and mission statements for MCH were also introduced. MCH last updated its mission statement 15 years ago and the ministry has experienced significant growth in that time. The

Our Vision

We empower all we serve to experience life to the fullest.

Our Mission

We equip children, youth and families to flourish by offering hope through Christ-centered relationships, services and support.

OUR STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

We created a collection of strategic commitments that we call ONE MCH. We believe ONE MCH brings us together as a ministry and is vital to developing the culture needed to achieve the important outcomes contained in our strategic plan.



The ONE MCH logo (pictured above) was inspired by the vibrant stained-glass window of Jesus the Good Shepherd (right), located at Harrell Memorial Chapel on Waco campus. The chapel has been part of MCH history since 1941.

vision statement reads: "We empower all we serve to experience life to the fullest." The new mission statement is: "We equip children, youth and families to flourish by offering hope through Christ-centered relationships, services and support."

The term "empower" was chosen for the vision statement because MCH works to give those it serves tools to become stronger. "Life to the fullest" stems from John 10:10 in the Bible: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

"This is a difficult time to be raising children," Oakley said. "The world promises many remedies and escapes. Our vision is to meet all we serve where they are and trust in God's unfailing love that can bring about real change."

An initiative consisting of four strategic commitments, called "ONE MCH," is also a component of the strategic plan. Oakley said ONE MCH is a way to bring staff together by developing a culture necessary to achieve the important outcomes contained in the strategic plan.

"For me, ONE MCH shows that we value diversity, the need for different opinions and a variety of expertise," Oakley said. "No matter your job description or experience level, these commitments are made across our ministry. These are things that bring us all together. It is our approach to carrying out our vision and mission – our commitment to each other, those we serve and our supporters."

The four commitments of ONE MCH are: Five-Star Service, Authentic Accountability, Focused and Flexible Ministries, and Culture of Learning. Five-Star Service refers to the commitment MCH makes to serve at the highest level by giving people personal attention.



FIVE-STAR SERVICE

We commit to serving others at the highest level.
We provide personal attention and expertise
from the point of contact until the need is met
– regardless of job title and role. We commit to
going above and beyond to meet a family's needs.
We serve others in ways that reflect how Christ
models service for us.

"When a person contacts us, they may be in crisis and it should not be up to them to figure out how to navigate our system," Oakley said. "We need to make sure we walk them through the process, handing them off from person to person until they arrive at their ultimate destination to make sure their needs are being met. Even if MCH is not the place that can help, we want to connect the family to those who can best meet their needs."

An extension of Five-Star Service is the recent addition of the Staff On Standby (SOS) team. Employees who work in administrative departments volunteer to perform additional duties to support the childcare program. MCH awarded a Five-Star Service Bonus to 15 employees nominated and then selected by a committee of their peers for going above and beyond their duties during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The second commitment, Authentic Accountability, continues an important trend of

transparency at MCH by measuring outcomes, setting goals and documenting successes for daily operations.

AUTHENTIC ACCOUNTABILITY



We commit to measuring outcomes to hold ourselves accountable for identifying areas of improvement while celebrating our strengths. The MCH Core Values and Life Skills are guiding principles for our interactions with supporters, colleagues and those we serve. As a learning organization, we are committed to continuous quality improvement to achieve strategic and intentional growth.

"If we are always hitting our goals, then our goals of service and ministry are not big enough," Oakley said. "We are serving in areas where our work can be difficult, and we do not always get to see the fruit of our work. Our ultimate goal is to make ourselves better for our children, youth and families. This type of goal is often hard to measure in a graph or annual report."

Oakley believes this commitment to always improve can help ensure that MCH strives to build on current strengths and learn from unforeseen or new opportunities. The knowledge gained during COVID-19 shows great value, and necessity, in having this mindset, he said.

The next commitment, Focused and Flexible Ministries, describes efforts to be open to adjusting programs and services as needed, while making sure MCH stays true to its vision and mission.





FOCUSED AND FLEXIBLE MINISTRIES

We commit to achieving our strategic plan, guided by best practices, to ensure we remain focused on our vision and mission. While we are committed to planned change, we are blessed with expertise and resources that enable us to respond quickly to unanticipated challenges and new opportunities in communities throughout Texas and New Mexico.

"We do not chase every opportunity that comes our way," Oakley said. "However, we developed a strategic plan that allows us to be flexible to the changing needs of society and children and families from diverse communities in Texas and New Mexico. We are proud of our 130-year legacy in ministry, but we also understand the importance of being able to adjust and adapt quickly to meet emergency needs or rapidly changing trends in our communities, schools and churches."

Finally, MCH is committed to creating a Culture of Learning to remain relevant by continually striving to improve and collaborate with likeminded agencies to meet unique needs and challenges families are facing.



CULTURE OF LEARNING

We commit to being relevant as we continually learn and collaborate to meet unique needs and challenges of families and communities in Texas and New Mexico. We seek diverse insights and opportunities to grow in our mission. There is no chain of command on ideas at MCH in order to create a free flow of learning.

"For many years MCH has taken pride in being a leader in the childcare field," Oakley said. "While this is still in place, we also recognize how much more there is to learn from other agencies, community partners and new upstart ministries. This mentality drives our ministry to always learn so we remain introspective, continually evaluate ourselves, find ways to get better, and never become satisfied with where we are."

The strategic planning process involved more participation than other strategic plans developed during Oakley's 20 years at MCH, and he is excited about where the ministry is headed.

"We are grateful for the commitment of time and honest feedback from our employees, Board members, Commissioners and other supporters throughout this process," Oakley said. "This level of participation and the creativity of our staff have me confident that this plan is going to be a great resource for us to become who God is calling us to be as a ministry." •

2019-2020 STRATEGIC

PLANNING TIMELINE

October 2019 – *February* 2020

Conducted focus groups that included 177 participants consisting of employees, the Board of Directors, donors and Commissioners.

March -

Used focus group feedback to create a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats).

April

Used SWOT analysis to develop Strategic Priorities and Goals.

Developed new Vision Statement and proposed Mission Statement.

May

Employee planning groups helped develop Action Steps to support Priorities and Goals. Action Steps focus on continuum of care, organizational culture and communication, funding and stewardship, and community collaborations.

Proposed Mission Statement presented to two employee groups representing diverse jobs and perspectives at MCH.

June

Strategic plan completed and presented for approval by the Board of Directors on June 26.

July

Strategic plan implemented.

Employees will participate in an ongoing strategic planning process througout the duration of the plan.

MCH WELCOMES WACO NONPROFIT TO MCH FAMILY OUTREACH CENTER

n June, The Cove – Heart of Texas, Inc., moved its operations to the first floor of the MCH Family Outreach Center at 524 W. Waco Drive.

Methodist Children's Home acquired the building and moved its Waco MCH Family Outreach team to the second floor of the facility in January 2019 while considering options for the more-than 5,000-square-foot first level.

With a common focus to equip and empower youth, sharing a building with The Cove "whose commitment aligns so closely with that of MCH was a natural decision," said Trey Oakley, MCH president. "This collaboration of two strong and focused organizations will strengthen both of our nonprofits and the Waco community at large."

For The Cove, a teen-nurturing center in its fourth year of operation, leasing the space means growing in a variety of ways. With nearly double the square footage of The Cove's previous facility, the new location gives the organization the capacity to serve more youth experiencing homelessness, prepare meals in a commercial kitchen, and further develop community partnerships, according to The Cove's executive director Kelly Atkinson.

without their generosity and leadership, this new chapter for The Cove would not be possible."

Oakley noted that collaborating with The Cove fulfills a previous strategic goal for MCH and serves as an example of how the ministry will operate in the future.

"When we opened the MCH Family Outreach Center in Waco in 2019, a goal in our previous strategic plan was to build a facility to support and broaden our programs and open new opportunities for collaboration," Oakley said. "This space has allowed MCH Family Outreach to increase its impact on families through trainings, meetings, community events and other gatherings in a unique and transformative way."

The collaboration further exemplifies MCH as a focused and flexible ministry, a key point in the new strategic plan of the ministry, Oakley noted.

"Our expertise and resources make it possible for us to respond quickly to needs and opportunities in our communities, sometimes in ways we have never done before," he said.



MCH ADAPTS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

n March 2020, the nation was virtually shut down by the COVID-19 pandemic. As stay-at-home orders were put in place, people altered their way of life. Methodist Children's Home staff quickly adjusted its services to give many in its care a muchneeded feeling of safety and security during an unpredictable time.

"I am so proud of the innovation and dedication shown by our staff," said Trey Oakley, MCH president. "This is the case day in and day out at MCH, but has been on full display the past few months. Our staff continue to place the needs of our children, youth and families first. They trust our leadership is doing everything possible to adjust to a rapidly-changing situation and implementing what is needed to keep everyone safe and our ministries moving forward."

Through the spring and into the summer, many activities for residential youth were hosted outdoors in smaller groups including Bible studies, music lessons and recreational activities. The new "SOS – Staff on Standby" team, consisting of non-direct care employees who volunteer for special activities, delivered donuts to homes to thank staff taking on the additional role as educator during distance learning. End-of-the-year celebrations such as award ceremonies were adjusted to maintain social distancing guidelines while still recognizing students. Seniors were celebrated by the MCH community during a parade on the Waco campus. Graduation was broadcast live for family and friends

to watch digitally, with seniors being spaced out in the audience. Presenters wore face masks while delivering diplomas and other awards.

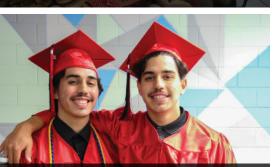
"Student events, recreation and spiritual development staff came together very quickly, along with support from others such as athletics and the school to revamp spring activities," said Traci Wagner, vice president for programs. "Many precautions were taken to keep everyone safe while offering some fun activities and honoring our seniors. I am proud of the way many people came together to help create some sweet memories in this season."

In MCH Family Outreach offices, staff supported families by meeting on porches, wearing masks and being sure to stay six feet apart. Wagner said staff increased support for families and offered resources supporting education and activities in the home.

Oakley said the pandemic also revealed learning opportunities at a time when MCH was developing its new strategic plan.

"This has already changed us," Oakley said. "We now talk about having very focused but flexible ministries. COVID-19 showed we can and must be willing to adjust to rapidly-changing and sometimes uncontrollable circumstances around us for the good of those we serve. This will be of great benefit to us as we move forward implementing our strategic plan and determining who God wants and needs us to be in specific situations and in an ever-changing world."





Joseph (left) and Johnnie pose for a picture before heading to their live-recorded graduation ceremony.



Youth at MCH Boys Ranch enjoy burgers and

barbeque while camping at Turkey Trap Lake.



outh from the Bowen Home enjoy a walk around campu/ while following safe social distancing guidelines.



MCH SOS members Katie Stephens (left) and Lyle Mason (right) deliver donuts to homes at the Boys Ranch.

TRANSITION SERVICES

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

ethodist Children's Home has one

of its own on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Tenika lived at MCH for four years and graduated from Waco High School in 2001. Today she is a mother of two boys, ages 13 and 4, and spends her nights working as a nurse in the neuro-intensive care unit at a hospital in Houston. She has witnessed firsthand how the coronavirus impacts the health of those infected.

Tenika is responsible for two COVID-19 patients at a time, along with her other patients. When dealing with COVID-19 patients, nurses wear full personal protective equipment before entering the room, where they spend an hour or more administering medication, turning the patient to encourage their lungs to function better, and making sure they have what they need. Nurses are limited in the number of times they can enter a room due to the high risk of contamination.

Tenika has had patients of all ages and has seen several lose their battle to the virus. She said the hardest part has been witnessing patients fight on their own, sometimes unsuccessfully, since visitors are restricted.

Tenika said treating COVID-19 patients "has taught me patience and it has taught me so much more about our bodies. Even when we want to give up, our bodies continue to fight. I've seen patients who have been down the whole time suddenly take a breath by themselves or go against the ventilator – which is a good sign because that means they are trying to breathe on their own. It gives me chill bumps."

"Every time we see a patient leave that was COVIDpositive we tear up because of where they were a couple of days before," she added. "It is emotionally tiring."

Tenika and other healthcare staff working with COVID-19 patients must be tested frequently. She said she had a scare early on before people knew the severity of the pandemic. She had spent her four-night shift without a face covering or other protective gear treating a patient recovering from a spinal procedure. He was running a fever and coughing and later tested positive for COVID-19. As a result Tenika had to self-quarantine away from her children for 14 days.

"It was extremely scary," she said. "My mom came over to care for the kids and I could hear my 4-year old at the door saying, 'Mommy I want a huggie.' It was heartbreaking."



Tenika takes extra precautions after her shift by changing clothes and shoes in her garage before

entering her home.

"I think it is important for people to understand that COVID-19 is real and we are doing the best we can to get this disease under control," she said. "We are risking every day."

Tenika appreciates the support shown for healthcare workers and urges people to take precautions and comply with recommendations to wear face coverings in public and avoid large gatherings.

"I want everyone to do what they can to keep themselves and others safe," she said. "You never know what the person next to you has."

Her experiences the past few months also inspired her to continue her education. Although she already holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, she decided to pursue a master's degree to become a nurse practitioner.

"After seeing everything that happened with COVID-19, I wanted to do more," Tenika said. "There's so much that nurses do already – we are in it; we are dedicated and very hardworking when it comes to the patients. But seeing how the community reacted and continues to react, I felt like I could be more of an advocate if I obtained a master's degree."

Tenika was awarded the Albaugh Scholarship from MCH for the 2020-21 academic year, a scholarship given to the top-performing students served through the Transition Services program.

Tenika remembers her time on campus fondly. She said she had her ups and downs while growing up but learned the true meaning of family through the bond she developed with peers and staff members at MCH.

"In our family as children we weren't really allowed to discuss our emotions or things we were going through," Tenika said. "It was great being in the MCH environment, where we could have group time and talk about what was going on with us. It taught me structure and positive habits I still use today. MCH taught me growth and independence, and it got me prepared for living on my own."

CELEBRATING

YEARS OF SUNSHINE

n November 1920, Methodist Children's Home Administrator W.F. Barnett proposed the production of a monthly paper, entitled The Sunshine Monthly. Two thousand copies of an eight-page magazine appeared with the byline "Done by the students of the Methodist Home."

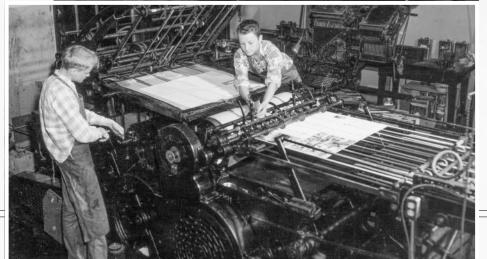
The magazine sold for \$1 for a three-year subscription. As MCH created a vocational training program in the 1920s, an on-campus print shop provided the opportunity for youth to develop printing skills by producing The Sunshine Monthly and other jobs.

The name of the magazine was changed to Sunshine in November 1956. In May 1972, MCH printed its last issue on campus due to worn out equipment. Today, Sunshine is published quarterly and mailed to nearly 50,000 readers throughout the United States.

Sunshine has served as the flagship publication for MCH since the first issue rolled off the presses in 1920. Through the years, the publication has shared a message of hope to readers through stories and photographs that communicate the life-changing mission of this ministry. While the front covers have featured a few First Ladies, actors, politicians, athletes, and entertainers, the most important subjects for cover photographs have always been the children and youth. •

The two Methodist Home presses, named Betsy and Elmer, joined the staff of the Home in 1926. Together they faithfully helped rear several generations of children. Their special service was to keep the people of Texas and New Mexico close to the activities of their children at Methodist Home. Betsy and Elmer knew the name and face of every child, director, staff person and the thousands who came each year to visit for 46 years. But rearing a big family takes its toll. After 46 years, they talked it over with the Board of Directors and all agreed they should retire. They did not want to relocate. Instead they will be melted down and reshaped for another useful purpose.

(Sunshine Monthly, June-July 1972)



Sunshine Through the Years

It is estimated that more than a billion two hundred million rays of sunshine have been shed by Sunshine Monthly.

> - Sunshine Monthly. November 1944



The first issue of The Sunshine Monthly came out in November 1920. The front page of the next issue, printed in December 1920 is pictured. This is the oldest issue in the archives of MCH.

FROM LEFT:

April 1925 April 1936

March 1939 January 1949

April 1954



sunshine Ala

FROM LEFT:

April 1959 September 1960 October 1973

April/May 1986

FROM LEFT:

May 1990 March 1997 December 2002 Summer 2008 Fall 2015



September 1975

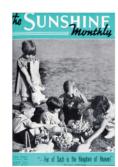




Sunshine Month























STORIES OF IMPACT

LAS CRUCES, NM

Mid-March 2020 marked a new beginning and a new norm for MCH staff and families due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For many, the pandemic brought on the closure of a normal office setting and the beginning of work through telecommuting. This prompted staff of MCH Family Outreach in Las Cruces to become creative and discover new ways to stay connected and adapt to the situation at hand. Staff were able to continue face-to-face home visits as needed while adhering to safety regulations mandated by the state, Centers for Disease Control and MCH. The Las Cruces staff quickly responded to the urgency of the pandemic and immediately sent informational packets to more than 120 families. The packets contained educational information regarding COVID-19 health precautions and a list of emergency resources in the community. Staff also included family activities and provided snacks. With limited face-to-face interactions, MCH staff began hosting parent education classes virtually to keep up with families' needs and education. They also recognized several families struggling with food insecurities and made a decision to collaborate and volunteer with the local food bank to assist MCH families and individuals within the community struggling during the pandemic. In addition, the Las Cruces office worked alongside several organizations to promote Child Abuse Awareness Month and other prevention campaigns. •

ABILENE, TX

When MCH staff received word that in-person trainings and visits would be suspended due to COVID-19, MCH Family Outreach in Abilene was in the middle of its pre-service training for foster parents. There were four families in training and all were eager to finish up and become licensed. Thanks to the technology tools MCH provided, the training delivery was modified to utilize an online format. Although this was a change from the traditional approach, it was well received by participants and staff. With the online format the Abilene office was able to offer a variety of days and times to best meet the needs of the families in training. Abilene has now licensed three new foster-to-adopt families, two families have completed foster care training, and four families finished training in mid-June. Staff said although they miss the face-to-face interaction, it has been nice not needing to ask families to find childcare for training, or in some cases travel into Abilene. •

TYLER, TX

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Marvin United Methodist Church reached out to MCH Family Outreach in Tyler to see how they could help. Needs of foster families and other families served ranged from baby formula to cleaning supplies and toilet paper. Marvin UMC supported MCH by providing all supplies requested and more during three different deliveries. "We are so very blessed to have a partnership with a church that responds to our families' needs in such a quick manner," said Kristy George, director of MCH Family Outreach in Tyler. "We were able to get supplies dropped off to foster parents and clients through porch visits in order to help protect staff and clients alike during this unprecedented time. We are thankful to have partners in the community assist us with client needs as we continue to keep families together during this time." •



Marvin UMC member Joseph Mitchum delivers supplies to the MCH Family Outreach office in Tyler.

HOUSTON, TX

Matthew and Tonya have been foster parents with MCH for almost nine years. Since that time, they have fostered 21 children and provided respite care as a support to other MCH foster parents. Paisley was placed in their home as a voluntary placement in June 2015, when she was 3 days old. The couple started the adoption process for her in September 2019 with hopes of providing Paisley with a stable, loving home and making her a permanent part of their family. Although the COVID-19 pandemic brought a lot of uncertainty, Matthew and Tonya were able to continue with the process. "With everything that was going on it felt like things had slowed down tremendously," Tonya said. She also stated that she was thankful to the birth mother for her selfless act of wanting to provide Paisley with a forever home by relinquishing her parental rights. Paisley's adoption was finalized on May 2, 2020, through court proceedings conducted via Zoom. Paisley turned 5 years old on May 29. The couple also has three adult children and two minor children adopted from China in 2009 and 2010. Tonya expressed how grateful she and her husband are for the support of MCH during Paisley's adoption process. Their case manager, Ramonia Ross, who has worked with the family since 2011, said, "Their love for children is amazing. Their commitment to making sure the child's best interest is top priority is just one of the many things I admire about them. Whenever a child is placed in their home, I know they are going to ensure he or she feels loved and a part of their family." •

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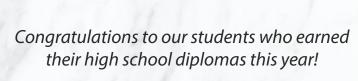
Ally graduated from Baylor University with a dual master's degree in Social Work and Theology. She plans to take her licensure exam and will be applying for jobs in her field in the Waco area.



Ashley graduated from McLennan Community College with an Associate of Arts degree. She has transferred to Tarleton State University through the University Center at MCC, where she will study Child Development and Education.







Class of 2020

We had 21 students graduate from the MCH charter school located on the Waco campus and operated in partnership with The University of Texas – University Charter School system.





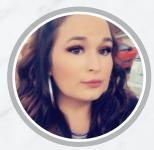
TRANSITION

raduates

Rainn graduated from Navarro College with an Associate of Arts degree. She is currently working and in the process of applying to the University of Texas in Arlington.



Raven graduated from Texas A&M Corpus Christi with a bachelor's degree in English. She is working and plans to pursue a teaching certificate.



Savannah graduated from Ogle School in Ft. Worth. In her spare time, she practices cosmetology and enjoys helping others feel better about themselves.







M'Kenzie





Nehemiah





* Reggie





Solomon





Tianna



Seleehom graduated from The University of Texas at San Antonio with a master's degree in Psychology. She plans to move to Austin, find her dream job and pursue another master's degree in Business Administration.



Stephanie graduated from Tyler Junior College with a LVN certification in August. She will continue in the nursing program to work on her RN certification.



Vanessa graduated from McLennan Community College with an Associates degree. She plans to continue her education at Tarleton/MCC through the University Center to pursue a bachelor's in education.



DEVELOPMENT NEWS

METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME AGAIN RECEIVES HIGHEST CHARITY RATING

Methodist Children's Home once again received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator, according to Trey Oakley, president of MCH. The four-star rating is the highest designation given by the nation's largest charity evaluator to organizations demonstrating strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.

"We are committed at Methodist Children's Home to providing innovative, top-tier service in all that we do," Oakley said. "This commitment extends through all our programs and services for children, youth and families across Texas and New Mexico, and in the way we honor the faithful benefactors who support our ministry. Receiving this recognition from Charity Navigator is an acknowledgment of our commitment and further communicates to the public that

we hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity."

According to leadership of Charity Navigator, only 20 percent of evaluated charities have realized the distinction of at least four consecutive four-star ratings as MCH has achieved.

"Attaining a four-star rating indicates Methodist Children's Home exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in this sector," said Michael Thatcher, president/CEO of Charity Navigator. "Only a few of the charities we evaluate have received at least three consecutive four-star evaluations, indicating that Methodist Children's Home adheres to best practices and executes its mission in a financially efficient way."

Thatcher explained that donors today desire greater accountability, transparency and concrete results



from charity evaluators, and "the intent of our work is to provide donors with essential information to give them greater confidence in both the charitable decisions they make and the nonprofit sector."

"Because of this designation, our faithful supporters can partner with us in confidence and trust," Oakley said. "We are grateful for this affirmation of our ministry." •

ill is known at the MCH Boys Ranch for his creativity and friendly personality. He is an avid reader, a talented artist and a walking encyclopedia of classic rock music.

"When I first came to MCH a year ago I was in a low place and did not want to accept anyone's help," he said. "But I started opening up to staff and they really listened. MCH has helped me build trust and work through a lot of my experiences."

Max Larseingue, Will's home parent, remembers when Will arrived at the Boys Ranch as a very self-aware young man.

"Will is an intelligent young man; a deep thinker," Larseingue said. "When he opened up to me about his life experiences, he clearly said he wanted a reset. He has made good progress and has grown so much."

Will has an off-campus job at a local restaurant and enjoys participating in extracurricular activities

such as drumline and worship arts. On his own time he enjoys photography and writing short stories.

Maegan Molnar, residential case manager at the Boys Ranch, said she has seen growth in Will during his time at MCH.

"Will has formed trusting relationships with his peers in the home," she said. "He easily connects with people and is quick to find common ground with people his age."

Will is scheduled to graduate in December and is interested in both psychology and criminal justice. His goal is to attend college and eventually go to law school.

"I want to be a voice for others," he said. "Through my own experiences I know I have not always been heard, so I want to be someone who can advocate for others." •

NEWS & NOTES

2020 MCH STUDENT ACADEMIC AND ACTIVITIES AWARDS

In the spring, students received awards for outstanding performance in academics and program activities. Both events took place in the Fellowship Hall on the Waco campus and staff were able to tune in and watch through a livestream. Teachers, coaches and program

leaders showed their support in person or through recorded video messages for each student receiving an award.

Congratulations to our MCH youth! We are proud of your accomplishments. •



Triston holds a certificate commemorating his hard work in FFA Agriculture Mechanics.

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Nell Casparis

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Betty Rosenbaum

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Jay and Tonya Johnston

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Nicole Jones

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Reverend Bruce Douglas Aalbord's Marriage

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Lucy Bunch Long

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McGlone

Maisel J. McGlone

Phyrne O'Day

Lonnie and Suzanne Elliott

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Steven and Tere Garlington

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Reverend and Mrs. Don McAvoy

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