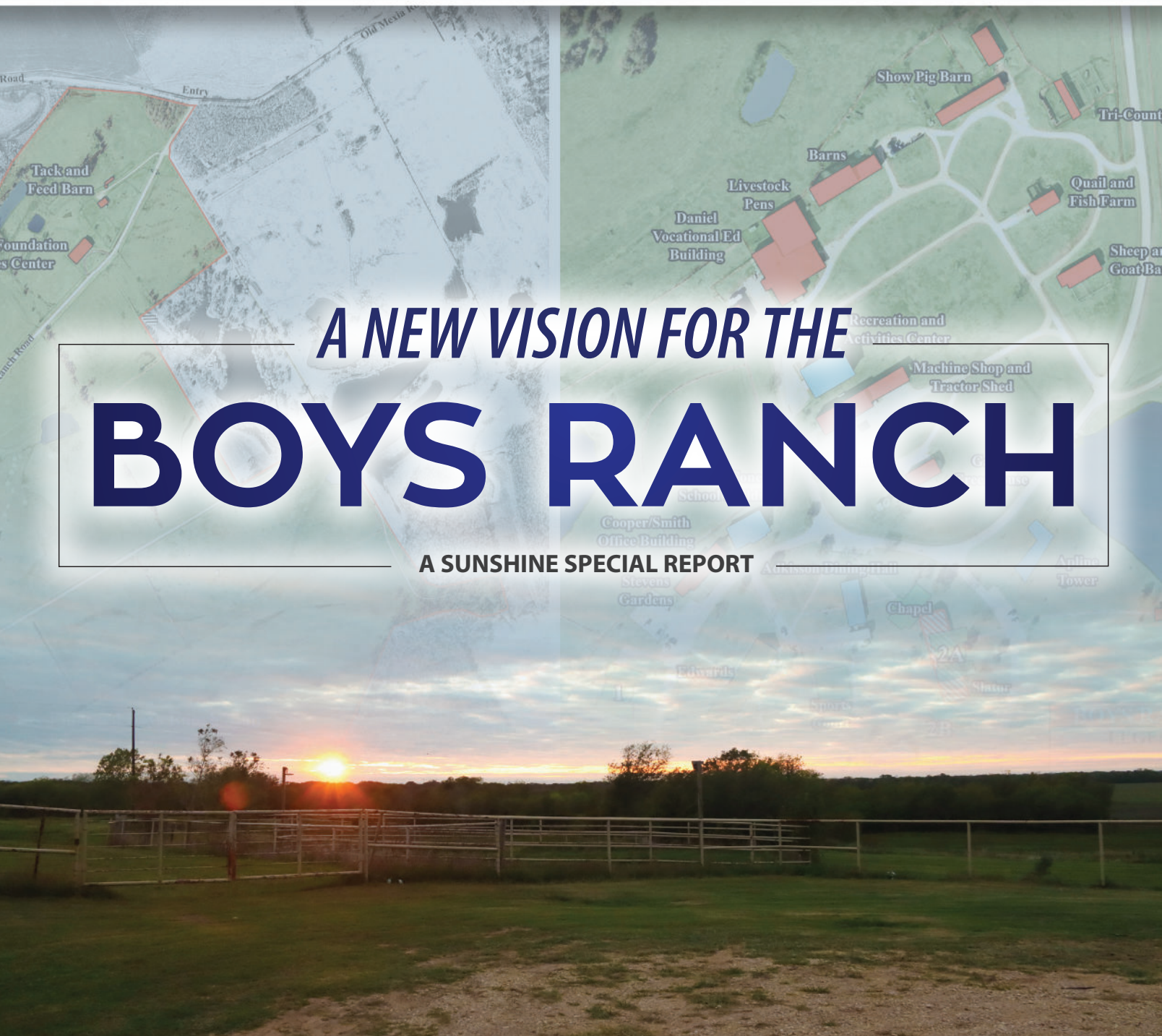


# SUNSHINE

THE MAGAZINE OF METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME | FALL 2023



*A NEW VISION FOR THE*

## BOYS RANCH

A SUNSHINE SPECIAL REPORT



Methodist Children's Home  
Offering Hope Since 1890

# MCH MAINTAINS HIGHEST CHARITY RATINGS

Methodist Children's Home (MCH) once again received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator this fall, the highest distinction given by the nation's largest charity evaluator, reported Trey Oakley, president and CEO of MCH. The organization also maintains the Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of recognition offered by GuideStar, the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations.

"Receiving the four-star designation from Charity Navigator and the Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar affirms the claims we make about MCH being an elite organization," Oakley said. "We take great pride in learning from credible organizations who measure our actions with established best practices across the nation and world."

By shining a light on the health of nonprofit organizations, Charity Navigator serves as a valuable metric for individuals seeking to make well-informed philanthropic decisions. Charity Navigator rates nonprofit organizations on impact and results, accountability and finance, leadership and adaptability, and culture and community. MCH has maintained a four-star rating for nearly a decade and received a 100 percent rating in each category in 2023 – the highest across-the-board rating the organization has achieved.

"We have a collection of strategic commitments at Methodist Children's Home called 'ONE MCH' that bring us together and help us carry out our mission," Oakley said. "These commitments – Five-Star Service, Authentic Accountability, Focused and Flexible Ministries, and Culture of Learning – articulate our pledge to serving at the highest level."

Oakley noted that "very few charitable organizations achieve these designations in the same year. This is a testament to our commitment to regular self-evaluation of our programs and practices for the ultimate goal of being who God needs us to be for the children, youth and families of Texas and New Mexico."



Platinum  
Transparency  
2023

**Candid.**

## NOW OPEN: THE STONE & HARRIS HOMES



Launched in 2015, the Building Hope capital campaign to update the infrastructure of the MCH Waco campus called for the construction of new homes to better meet the needs of today's residential youth.

Mid-2023 saw the completion of the Stone Home and Harris Home. This completes the Building Hope capital campaign's objective to build 11 state-of-the-art homes on the historic campus, driven by the expertise MCH has gained through cutting-edge methods of care. Work continues in 2024 with additional revitalization projects on the Waco campus and MCH Boys Ranch.



BUILDING  
**HOPE**



# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



Trey Oakley  
President and CEO

**T**his is an exciting time to be part of Methodist Children's Home (MCH) as God continues to open doors for this ministry to make an impact on the children, youth and families of Texas and New Mexico. The support we receive from friends like you equips us to offer life-changing ministry as we work to help those in our care flourish and experience life to the fullest.

In the summer 2023 issue of Sunshine magazine, we shared details about our organizational strategic plan entitled "Imagine 2028." An important aspect in that article introduced our plans to launch a new program at the MCH Boys Ranch. We've dedicated a significant portion of this issue to explain more about this program, our motivation for the change and how we will carry it out. I am grateful for the members of my executive leadership team who have prayerfully and strategically directed this planning, further led by the support of our Board of Directors.

I am also pleased to share the news of MCH once again receiving a four-star rating – the highest available – from Charity Navigator, the nation's premier charity evaluator. This is complemented by our Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar, a valuable resource to educate donors on the health and dependency of nonprofits.

I believe in the benefits of this type of third-party designation for a number of reasons. Namely, our staff, donors and Board members expect us to monitor what we do and create systems to measure our effectiveness. Through our pledge to authentic accountability, we don't shy away from areas in which we need to improve.

While we know we are not perfect, this ranking and overall score communicates volumes to those inside and outside MCH that we are who we say we are when we talk about being an organization empowering all we serve to experience life to the fullest.

Thank you for your belief in Methodist Children's Home and the support you give to make our work possible.

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## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Trey Oakley**, President and CEO

**Brooke Davilla**, Vice President for Organizational Effectiveness

**Lyle Mason**, Vice President for Advancement

**Julie Mitchell**, Vice President for Finance

**Traci Wagner**, Vice President for Programs

**Bryan Mize**, Strategic Initiatives Specialist

**Denise Ondrey**, Executive Assistant to the President

**Ahmad Washington**, Lead Advisor to the President

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**Jean Wright**, Organizational Effectiveness Administrator



# A NEW VISION FOR THE BOYS RANCH

## A SUNSHINE SPECIAL REPORT

An unwavering commitment to provide exceptional, Christ-centered services and support to children, youth and families has been at the heart of the mission at Methodist Children's Home since 1890. Over the years, MCH has responded to the evolving needs of youth with compassion and innovation. Today, MCH is a nationally recognized leader in childcare, equipped with expertise and resources to follow God's call to serve the most vulnerable.

The number of youth who have experienced trauma and have elevated, more complex needs is at an unprecedented level and the gap between this growing demographic and caregivers trained and licensed to provide specialized care continues to widen. Without viable options, many adolescents remain underserved and some without placement options at all.

Following prayerful consideration, the leadership of MCH, led and supported by the Board of Directors, has responded to this crisis by expanding services beyond the traditional MCH Basic Care service model. MCH is launching a new program at the MCH Boys Ranch in 2024 tailored to meet the unique emotional and behavioral challenges of youth with higher-level, specialized needs.

By God's grace and provision, MCH continues to be uniquely resourced and positioned to provide

transformative care relevant to the needs of this present-day crisis. Those placed at the Boys Ranch will receive support from professionals trained to cultivate personal growth and development.

As a way to communicate with MCH friends and supporters, members of the MCH Executive Management Team addressed specific questions about the new Boys Ranch programming in a Q&A discussion with Sunshine magazine.

### **SUNSHINE: Why are we launching this new program of service at the Boys Ranch?**

**TREY OAKLEY, PRESIDENT AND CEO:** Since 1890, MCH has responded to the ever-changing needs of children, youth and families. This new initiative at our Boys Ranch continues this legacy.

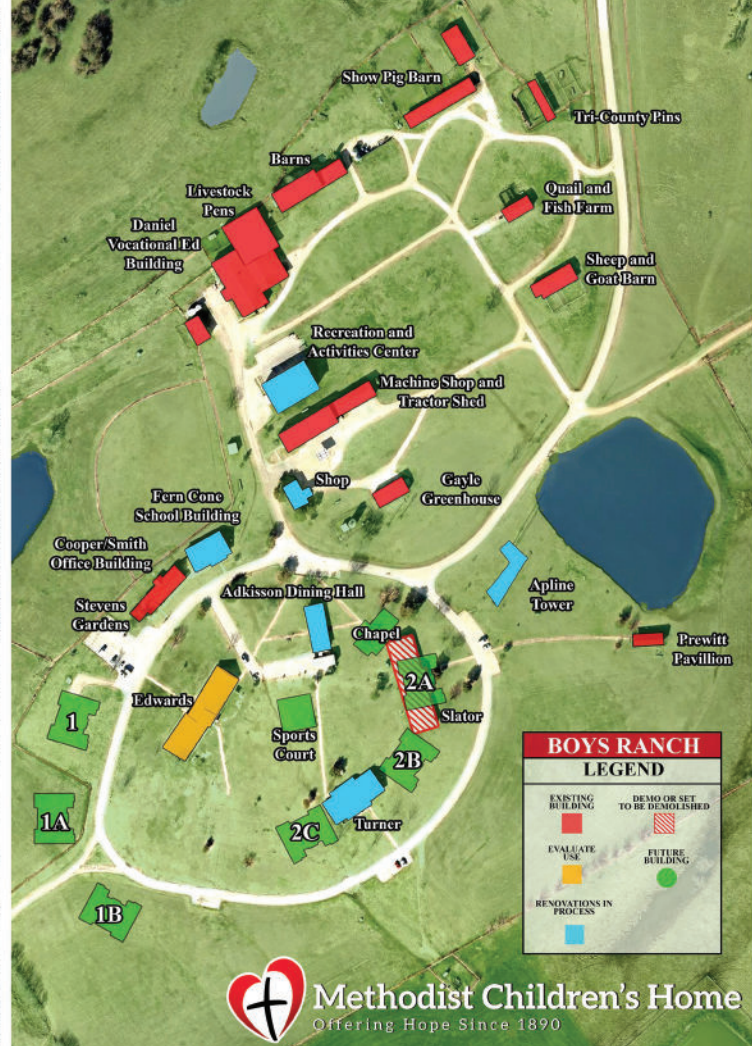
Our current strategic plan builds on the previous plan which challenges MCH to continually examine current services and how they best meet the needs of families and communities. The strategic plan compels us to do more where we can to be a relevant and ongoing help to those who need our ministry most.

Every day we receive inquiries from families who cannot find placements for children with higher levels of need than can be served in their home, a traditional foster home or Basic Care program like we have operated at our Waco campus and Boys Ranch. With the addition of our new homes on the Waco campus, we had to ask some challenging questions about what role we could and should have in serving children who in many cases have nowhere to go based on current behaviors. We covered this in prayer and years of research and planning. We realized the time is now to see if we can be part of the solution for the challenges facing this population. It has been a commitment that has touched every part of this ministry and our leadership team.



*MCH's Executive Management Team with the Boys Ranch Master Plan, which can be seen in full at the top of the next page. From left: Traci Wagner, vice president for programs; Brooke Davilla, vice president for organizational effectiveness; Trey Oakley, president and CEO; Julie Mitchell, vice president for finance; and Lyle Mason, vice president for advancement.*





#### TRACI WAGNER, VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROGRAMS:

According to the Foster Care Needs Assessment performed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS), as of Oct. 17, 2023, there is a need for 348 treatment placements in the state of Texas. Methodist Children's Home has long been aware of the crisis facing children in out-of-home placements that require more specialized services. Given our longstanding success in residential care, MCH can assist in this crisis and has capacity to expand programming to include this population of children. MCH, with its broad continuum of care, will support these children and families well while in care and assist in facilitating their long-term success upon their return home, or find placement in a less-restrictive environment.

**OAKLEY:** This was not an easy decision and the work will be challenging. We will be successful because of who God is and promises to be first and foremost. My confidence also comes from these on the executive team who are leading this effort. These vice presidents and their teams have a level of expertise and commitment that will foster success even when we hit challenging moments – and we will. Our Board of Directors has stood with

us throughout this process and we know we have their support and that of our many friends to make this important step for families and communities.

#### *SUNSHINE: Who will we be serving through this program?*

**WAGNER:** MCH has developed the MCH Boys Ranch Residential Services Program to support our work with children and families that need out-of-home placement for male children either through voluntary placement or TDFPS placement. It will be reserved for male children who require a higher level of care and are identified as a moderate-plus placement.

MCH is dedicated to providing a continuum of care to caregivers/guardians, their children and extended families. The Boys Ranch will continue to provide these supportive and strengths-based services. This includes equipping them with tools and resources that will promote healthy, healing relationships, caregiving practices and interactions, and a connectedness to a network of support. The difference will be the unique characteristics that are often in a child who has experienced the level of trauma that produces more intensive behaviors and responses.





*J.T. Stevens of Arlington (left, with Ranch residents) donated \$400,000 in 1971 to support the establishment of the MCH Boys Ranch. After construction, the first group of young men moved into the Edwards Ranch House in August 1973.*

The end goal will be to help those we serve and their families move toward a healthy, safe and stable family environment. This includes the provision of high quality, evidence-informed services to meet the needs of families and children engaged in MCH services.

**SUNSHINE:** *How will this program differ from ways we have operated on the Waco campus and what we have done previously at the Boys Ranch?*

**OAKLEY:** Services at the Boys Ranch will be extensive and focus on safety, guidance, education, and expert emotional and spiritual support, just as we do on the Waco campus. Our goal in this new initiative is to first and foremost provide a safe, caring and nurturing place for young men whose past experiences and decisions leave them very few, if any, options for placement in a traditional residential program. In doing so, Boys Ranch residents can begin to embrace their God-given potential and flourish through our innovative, trauma-proven services. Even in a more structured program setting, Boys Ranch residents will see lots of recreational opportunities and chances to connect with nature and things special to life on a ranch. Cornerstones of this program will be to provide residents with a chance to encounter a loving God who will never leave them, and acquire the education as well as a trade and life skills that can help them be productive members of their families and communities.

**BROOKE DAVILLA, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS:** There will also be a distinct difference in staffing between the programs. In our Basic Care model, we have a combination of live-in home parents who serve seven days on duty and then have seven days off. We also have a shiftwork model where staff work a traditional eight-hour shift so there is always 24-hour awake staff. We will follow the shiftwork model at the Boys Ranch, along with increased levels of medical and counseling services.

**SUNSHINE:** *Are there reasons for the shortage of agencies willing and able to provide this care? What compels MCH leadership to step into this space?*

**JULIE MITCHELL, VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE:**

There are probably many reasons we could discuss, but one we hear most often is the high cost associated with this work. Our ministry has a record of strong stewardship that has allowed us to be in this place to consider a new program. We know the important decisions made by those who came before us and in recent years have provided what we need to explore and act on big things like this new initiative. With that being said, we still have to be disciplined in our budgeting, planning and implementation.

**WAGNER:** Funding this type of program launch is a great investment and it is hard work. Many agencies with the best of intentions and a heart for this population just don't have the resources. Many doing this work rely on the contract funding that only comes after children are in placement.

**OAKLEY:** Our leadership team and Board of Directors recognize the amazing resources with which we have been entrusted by our generous donors, sound stewardship and what has been accomplished since our founding, especially during recent years. We know much has been given to us and we take seriously the expectation that much is required of those who serve at MCH. There are others who may have the desire, but not the ability or resources to take on a new initiative like this one. We know the work will not be easy, but we have the people, vision and support to do this and do it well for the children, youth and families we have the privilege to serve.

**DAVILLA:** Having seen this from the program side and now in my role with organizational effectiveness – which includes human resources, training and employee culture – I think it can be intimidating to take this step with the challenge of finding the right people to carry out the mission. We continue to be intentional at MCH to do what we can to find the right people who will thrive as employees and then give our very best to keep them encouraged and serving at the highest level.



*Left: MCH President Trey Oakley discusses the Boys Ranch Master Plan with Dr. Dennis Gill, an MCH Board member from Los Alamos, NM.*  
*Lower left: Until Boys Ranch youth began attending the charter school on the Waco campus, academics took place in the Fern Cone School building, which will once again serve as a school for residents of the new program.*



### ***SUNSHINE: What does MCH bring to the table that makes this viable?***

**OAKLEY:** Our commitment to be focused and flexible to the rapidly changing needs communities and families are facing is something that makes MCH unique. This doesn't mean we chase everything out there, but we are also not so entrenched in what has worked that we miss the chance to be innovative and stretch ourselves. We have built this culture over the years. This culture, along with our proven record as a ministry, makes MCH ready to take on this new challenge. Knowing God is leading this, there is certainly a confidence among our team I think will be evident to all we serve and ask to join us.

**LYLE MASON, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT:** We bring encouragement and financial support from our generous donors. Individuals give to MCH because they love our mission, trust our staff and believe in the profound difference we make in the lives of children and youth. This has been the case since our inception and is another reason why we have confidence to

face the challenges of launching a new program. Our supporters recognize the role donations play in the level of care we provide and share our heart to serve the most vulnerable. Offering hope to the young men we will serve at the Boys Ranch is yet another opportunity for our benefactors to make a Kingdom impact. We are extremely grateful for those who join us in this journey.

### ***SUNSHINE: How will this program be staffed?***

**WAGNER:** The Boys Ranch will be operated by direct care staff with support from a case manager, supervisor, program administrator, administrative support, as well as behavioral health and medical teams. Educational needs will be met onsite in the Fern Cone School by our partners at the University of Texas – University Charter School. Spiritual development, basic medical services and recreation will be provided onsite.

**DAVILLA:** We will build on our experience, proven trauma-informed practices and the expertise of peer organizations already operating in this space. We are confident we will provide those in our care with the highest level of services and staff who will deliver those services on a daily basis.

### ***SUNSHINE: Will training be given to get new staff up to speed or is MCH hiring staff already possessing higher levels of training?***

**WAGNER:** Specialized training is required to serve this population of children. For reference, our current direct care staff are required to complete 30 hours of training annually. The direct care staff assigned to the Boys Ranch will be required to complete 50 hours of annual training. There are also specific pre-service training and skill requirements for staff coming to the Boys Ranch.

**DAVILLA:** Our Training staff has been hard at work to utilize the most innovative trauma-informed practices in order to serve this new population. The higher levels of training requirements are important in so many ways. We can equip staff with the cutting-edge skills they need to be successful while also using each and every training session to infuse and strengthen our MCH culture.





*Plans for new homes on the MCH Boys Ranch will follow the model taken on the Waco campus with design influenced by research into trauma-informed care. The homes will also feature aspects led by licensing and minimum standards for serving a higher-need population.*

### **SUNSHINE: What changes are being made to the infrastructure of the Boys Ranch?**

**MITCHELL:** We have been hard at work creating and now implementing actions from our Boys Ranch Master Plan (BRMP). The BRMP evaluated every building on a number of criteria. Some changes were needed because many of the Boys Ranch structures are approaching 50 years since they were built. Other changes were required because some things that may have been a nonissue in a home serving children placed in basic care cannot be present serving a population with increased needs. This would include safety features that might not have been available when the original buildings were built.

**MASON:** The construction of new homes, including two scheduled to break ground in January, are part of the Boys Ranch Master Plan. With safety a priority and in accordance with childcare licensing and minimum standards, the homes will include a floor plan and special features customized for youth with higher needs. Although safety is a priority, the beautiful aesthetic will reflect the look and feel you'd expect from a ranch house. We're very excited about these and future capital projects.

### **SUNSHINE: How have donors been involved already and what are funding opportunities in the future?**

**OAKLEY:** Our Advancement staff has been very effective already in securing funding needed to renovate existing structures and provide the new

facilities needed to launch and sustain this program. Our Board of Directors has also unanimously supported the allocation of resources to get the Boys Ranch ready to accept our first residents early in 2024. I know this support from our donors and leadership will continue as we experience everything that will occur in the days to come.

**MASON:** We have secured almost \$3 million in donations toward new capital projects at the Ranch. Additionally, in an effort to expedite necessary renovations and the launch of new programming at the Boys Ranch, our Board directed a significant amount of MCH-designated funds in support of associated costs. This generous response from our donors and action taken by MCH leadership reflect the importance and excitement surrounding our expansion of services. As plans develop, we look forward to presenting specific projects and meaningful giving opportunities to those that share our heart for youth we'll be serving.



*Tony Stewart, program administrator at the Boys Ranch, shows Lyle Mason, vice president for advancement, the work being done to remodel the Adkisson Dining Hall to prepare for the new residents in 2024.*



**SUNSHINE: How quickly will this new program be operational?**

**WAGNER:** Contingent on how quickly the program can be staffed and progress made in renovations, issuance of permit, license and contracts, we anticipate opening for the placement of youth in early January.

**DAVILLA:** Staffing is the ongoing challenge not just for MCH but across the nation. This is especially true when you look at jobs that require direct care with young people who need extra grace and where results often take time. We keep our commitment to do everything we can to only connect those in our care with staff who truly believe in our mission.

**MITCHELL:** I think getting the program started is such a big task with allocation of resources, recruitment strategies, licensing applications and the list goes on and on. Then there is the realization that all of this is just to get to day one and the first placement. But we know our established budget planning practices will help ensure we are in this for the long haul even after the initial launch. And that is what matters.

**SUNSHINE: What will be the measurement for success of this program?**

**WAGNER:** Success will be measured first by how fast and well we can staff the program and then place children at the Boys Ranch. Program success will be measured by: 1. Ensuring youth are safe in care; 2. Youth avoid high-risk behaviors; 3. Youth make spiritual and educational gains; 4. Families, when possible, engage in the care and development of the youth; 5. Youth complete the program as planned and acquire skills that are part of living life to the fullest.

**OAKLEY:** We already have the structure in place to help ensure authentic accountability in the services we deliver. Those templates will be used and modified to speak directly to our successes as well as areas that will need improvement in this new program. We celebrate where we are meeting and exceeding goals and continually press on to ensure excellence here, just as we do in all our programs. Ultimately, our success will be seen in the lives of children who accept the challenge to grow and overcome, pursue educational development, experience the love of Christ, and are equipped to flourish in their next chapter of life. •

**For more information about job openings at the MCH Boys Ranch, visit [MCH.org/career-opportunities](https://mch.org/career-opportunities).**

## QUICK FACTS FROM THE Q&A

### WHAT IS A MODERATE AND MODERATE+ CHILD?

MCH creates an individual plan for every child and family served and firmly believes all in our care are much more than any label placed on them. We share the graphic below to help readers see the difference between the populations that will be served by the Waco campus and soon by the Boys Ranch. The descriptions are a resource from Department of Family and Protective Services using industry-accepted terms to guide who can be placed with particular providers like MCH.

#### WACO CAMPUS BASIC CARE

- Transient difficulties and occasional misbehavior;
- Acting out in response to stress, but episodes of acting out are brief;
- Behavior that is minimally disturbing to others, but the behavior is considered typical for the child's age and can be corrected;
- A child with intellectual or developmental disabilities whose characteristics include minor to moderate difficulties with conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills.

#### BOYS RANCH MODERATE+

- Frequent and/or unpredictable nonviolent, antisocial acts;
- Occasional physical aggression;
- Being markedly withdrawn and isolated;
- Minor self-injurious actions;
- Difficulties that present a moderate risk of harm to self or others;
- Substance abuse to the extent or frequency that the child is at risk of substantial problems;
- A historical diagnosis of substance abuse or dependency with a need of regular community support through groups or similar interventions.

*("Quick Facts" continued on next page)*

# QUICK FACTS FROM THE Q&A

## WILL BOYS RANCH RESIDENTS GO TO CHAPEL?

Spiritual development and sharing the good news of the hope we find in Jesus Christ is at the heart of all we do. Boys Ranch residents will attend a weekly chapel service at the Ranch. Our MCH Spiritual Development team already does a great job of providing creative worship experiences in addition to traditional Bible studies in homes. We will continue this approach in the new Boys Ranch program and are excited about the opportunities.



## WILL STUDENTS FROM THE WACO CAMPUS STILL GET TO VISIT THE BOYS RANCH?



This new program has very specific guidelines about not combining with our Basic Care program. The Waco campus and Boys Ranch will operate under different licenses so they will no longer share some services. With that being said, one of our areas of growth in recent years has been in our Outdoor Education department. Students from the Waco campus will still have outings to our Turkey Trap Lake located at the Boys Ranch, access to our growing horsemanship program and be able to participate in FFA which utilizes show animals kept at the Boys Ranch. Experiences in nature are an important part of our programs and that will continue for all we serve.

## WILL THE BOYS RANCH STUDENTS STILL COME TO CAMPUS FOR SCHOOL?

As part of this newly licensed program at the Boys Ranch, we are excited about our chance to educate students onsite at the Fern Cone School. This will honor the requirement for the programs to be separate while also allowing us to work with our friends at the University of Texas Charter School System to create the specialized education program the residents will need. For many years the Boys Ranch used the Fern Cone School and as a tribute we have revived the Mustangs as the mascot for the new school.





## YOUTH PROFILE

# CARMELO

## SEIZING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

BY RUSSELL RANKIN



**C**armelo hasn't stopped smiling since he arrived at Methodist Children's Home a little more than a year ago, two days after his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Admitting that mistakes and bad decisions led to him being sent to a youth detention facility, Carmelo said he worked as hard as he could to prove he could be trusted with another chance.

"I made it to the highest step of rehabilitation at the facility," he said. "There was nothing more for me to do there, so when my case officer told me about the option of going to MCH, I jumped at the opportunity."

Moving into his home on the Waco campus was better than anything he could have dreamed.

"I was smiling the whole time when I got to MCH," he said, laughing. "I was so happy to be here. One of the guys in my home told me later he didn't quite know what to think about me because I was smiling so much. I just knew that MCH was such a blessing! This place is a God-given opportunity for me, a fresh start, a clean slate. I made up my mind the first day that I was going to make the most of this opportunity."

Carmelo has experienced a new sense of freedom at MCH as he adapted to having his own room in a house full of other boys and participating in events and activities with other youth on campus.

"Carmelo has definitely matured since arriving at MCH," said Leo McLin, a youth care counselor in Carmelo's home. "His self-esteem has grown tremendously, and it shows. At one point he didn't want to go on any outings or go anywhere with youth outside the house. Now he is always wanting to be out and doing things."

Carmelo said staff at MCH consistently speak positivity into his life and motivate him to be a stronger man.

"They stay on me," he said with a grin. "They see the potential in me and want me to succeed."

McLin said Carmelo exhibits compassionate leadership, so much of which is rooted in his determination to overcome his past.

"Some of the other kids complain about their circumstances being here, but they don't realize the amount of time MCH staff put into teaching us, walking with us, loving us," Carmelo said. "I've been able to share with them about my story and where I've been; it really helps open their eyes and helps them appreciate what they have here."

"He has so many great qualities," McLin said. "The greatest is that he cares about others. He is always doing things to make someone's day a little easier."

Carmelo acknowledged the presence of family in his life, but admitted he only had himself to rely on for years.

"I love my family, but I needed to be motivated for myself," he said, emphatically patting his chest. "I knew if I wanted to get better, I need to do it for myself, no one else. I have always had a heart of gold, I just found myself in bad situations. I've known there is something better for me, and MCH has helped make that clearer."

Carmelo learns further discipline by holding an off-campus job and looks forward to graduating high school in 2024. He acknowledged MCH has helped him realize he can flourish and achieve great things in the future.

"My plan after graduation is to keep working, be dependable in my job and move up in pay and management responsibilities," he said. "I'd love to work for a year and then apply to college to study software development."

Carmelo wanted nothing more than a chance to prove himself. What he received at MCH is so much more.

"MCH taught me that people care," he said. "They have shown me what love is – I've experienced pure agape love from the whole of MCH. I never had that much love and trust from anybody in my life." •



# BUILDING COMMUNITY:

## *Spiritual Development & Horsemanship Programs*

BY SARAH BELLAFFIORE

People were made for community. Research cited through the Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development shows without healthy relationships, a child's emotional development declines and can further lead to complex behaviors and mental illness.

Building community is at the heart of the mission at Methodist Children's Home. The ministry's programs offer safe, trauma-informed spaces, full of acceptance and God's love for all served.

"My hope for the children, youth and families we encounter – whether it's through residential care, Independent Living and Transition Services or Family Outreach – is that they feel a sense of belonging and accomplishment and they achieve things they can be proud of," said Traci Wagner, vice president for programs.

"We can do everything under the sun, but if we're not equipping our youth for their next chapter and pointing them to the hope that only comes from Jesus, then we're really missing the mark," she added.

At MCH, youth come together in community with staff and live out God's commandment to love one another as He loves them.

"Everyone is welcome across all of our programs," said Dorothy Phillips, residential services program administrator. "We provide a wide array of opportunities for our youth because we have such a diverse population. They know there is always somewhere or someone to turn to for support. We ensure all of our youth are in a place where they can be comfortable, happy and thriving."

For some students, that sense of belonging and empowerment comes from bonding on an athletics team or cheer squad. For others, it comes from sharing music in the Spiritual Development (SD) program or riding horses together.

Both the SD and horsemanship programs recently underwent extensive assessments in which program leadership and staff reviewed all aspects of their departments and produced adaptations to ensure authentic accountability.

"The SD and horsemanship programs have been huge parts of MCH for a very long time," Wagner said. "It would be easy to get stagnated, but our staff are innovative and open to change while adhering to our core values. I'm proud of our teams for not accepting anything less than our very best. Our teams introduce new, creative and fun opportunities that capture the hearts of our students. That's a pretty big challenge and our staff do that every day. They move mountains every day."



## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

As a faith-based organization, MCH continues to provide opportunities for youth and families to grow in their understanding of God's love and flourish in their talents. With a combined 39 years of service at MCH, the Spiritual Development team is the face of the church for the MCH community.

"It is our hope that everyone we are blessed to interact with understands they have a God who is loving, good and will always sustain them," said Kim Clark, director of spiritual development. "Hope for the future is a really big gift we can offer our youth. We give our students voice so when they transition to their next phase of life, they know how to find other like-minded communities."

All MCH students and Independent Living residents have the opportunity to attend Sunday worship services. About 65 residents and Day Students currently participate in SD activities such as handbells, worship choir, praise band, creative arts in worship, worship planning team, voice and piano lessons, guitar class, open mic nights, and fall festivals. A Wednesday night youth group called "Amen" launched this semester, along with weekly in-home Bible studies led by SD ministers and one-on-one meetings with Independent Living residents. While the SD team offer spiritual guidance and support to students and staff, they agree God is at work throughout the entire ministry.



"It absolutely takes all of MCH to create Christian community," Clark said. "We see tangible examples of the Holy Spirit moving here. For instance, when a youth is in crisis at the charter school or when they can't go to sleep, other staff support our youth in those moments and help them feel safe."

Creating and sustaining healthy, positive environments for all is paramount across MCH. Ron Britton, spiritual development minister, said youth looking to become involved in SD activities go through an interview process.

"We expect all our students to maintain and uphold our expectations and values," Britton said. "We absolutely have zero tolerance for bullying, especially since our youth share intimate parts of themselves while singing or playing an instrument."

"We want our youth to encourage each other," he said. "They are very good about reinforcing our expectations. It makes them feel secure knowing their peers are there to support them. We understand our youth are not perfect by any means. However, it is our priority to provide a safe place where youth can try, fail, succeed, and grow."

That support can be seen as students take on leadership positions and work closely with their peers to improve their skills. The SD team recognized these emerging leaders and created the worship planning team in 2018. The team meets once a month to plan worship services, devotionals and rehearsals and organize events alongside the spiritual development ministers.

"The worship planning team is made up of student leaders involved in other activities so they really speak to our bigger MCH population," said Jill Sims, spiritual development minister. "They have an ear to their peers and we are really good about honoring their suggestions, even if they aren't traditional."

"We foster discernment by encouraging our students to ask questions, study and find their own faith and voices," Sims added. "We allow our youth to have their own space and it's amazing to witness how eager they are to step into leadership roles and new challenges."

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*Top left: Asha expresses her artistic talents through creative arts in worship every week. Students are given a subject matter and tasked to create their own art through painting and drawing.*  
*Bottom left: SD staff encourage student participation throughout Sunday worship services at the Harrell Memorial Chapel. Saylor reads a Scripture passage during a chapel service.*

Landen is a 17-year-old senior on the worship planning team. He came to MCH in 2020 and has grown into a confident musician through SD activities.

"I have always loved to perform for people," he said. "I received my first guitar when I was 7. When I play and sing, I get lost in the music – it grounds me. Being able to make music and perform with others is something special."

It is special, too, watching Landen teach his peers in guitar class and help others in rehearsals, the SD ministers agree.

"Landen is such an integral and fantastic part of our program," Britton said. "His communication has improved a lot. He didn't talk very much when he first came to MCH – now he's helping me teach guitar class."

Landen said he loves leading others in praise songs. He has played 68 times during Sunday worship services – and he's still counting.

"All of those performances helped me learn practice does make perfect," Landen said. "I know now everything in life requires some sort of training or practice."

"I'm grateful to have this community to practice my musicianship with," he added. "I have also found my faith here. Before I came to MCH, I was angry with God. I didn't understand why He put me through

the situations in my past. I'm slowly accepting God more into my life with the help of the SD staff and my friends."

LeRay is a sixth grader who said she has found safe places in SD where she can share her feelings and beliefs.

"There truly are people at MCH who help us with our struggles and goals," LeRay said. "I've been sharing more about my past with others and that's been freeing."

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“ Each of our youth has inherit worth. We hope they trust they are capable of so much more than they can **dream or imagine.** ”

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LeRay said she loves sharing her talents for God and continues to improve her skills in various activities.

"We are empowered to do what we love here and to try new things," she said. "I hope to continue sharing my faith and encouraging people through my music."

Beyond their structured program activities, SD students also grow in their relationships through community outings and events. In recent years, students attended Baylor University choir concerts and performed with Baylor choir members, sang at local churches and nursing homes, performed Christmas carols at various locations, and enjoyed a Christian worship concert in Dallas, Texas.

"Our kids were blown away by that trip," Sims said. "Experiences like that open up a whole new world to our youth. They learn those kinds of opportunities are accessible and will never forget experiencing them for the first time."

The SD staff wants every youth to grow in confidence and learn to experience life to the fullest while they're at MCH.

"We hope each of our students grow to have genuine faith – that they would have something real and sincere to always fall back on no matter where they are," Britton said. "Each of our youth has inherit worth. We hope they trust they are capable of so much more than they can dream or imagine."



*Landen leads the congregation in a worship song at the Harrell Memorial Chapel. Residents and staff attend Sunday chapel services where spiritual development staff share the Word of God and the praise band shares encouraging music. Several staff including MCH President and CEO Trey Oakley and Lead Advisor to the President Ahmad Washington preach during services throughout the year.*





*Left: The advanced Free Rein class has created special relationships with each other and their horses. Tim Price, director of outdoor education and recreation, and Claire Edwards, outdoor education coordinator, are proud of the progress their students have made alongside their horses. Top: Saylor enjoys learning about riding techniques with her horse, Athena. Students take turns practicing in the horse pavilion at the Boys Ranch.*

## HORSEMANSHIP

When driving onto the 500-acre MCH Boys Ranch, eight horses, a donkey and other livestock can often be seen in the first set of buildings, barns and fenced fields. Among those buildings is the PSH Activities Pavilion. The space is used for equestrian, agriculture sciences and recreational activities, as well as occasional outdoor Sunday worship services. The pavilion was a gift from the PSH Foundation and Hand Foundation of Houston and was dedicated on April 8, 2003.

The pavilion is integral to the horsemanship program, initially created and implemented in the early 2000s to provide youth another set of opportunities for healthy connections and life lessons. Like other programs at MCH, the horsemanship program has adapted over the last two decades. Today, students learn the skills of caring for and riding horses under the supervision of trained equestrian professionals who incorporate trauma-informed principles into activities.

All residents and Day Students have the chance to ride horses at the Boys Ranch. The Outdoor Education department recently introduced the Free Rein Equestrian program specifically designed for students looking to further their horsemanship skills. The goal “is to build connection, trust and independence through horsemanship for all participants,” explained Tim Price, director of outdoor education and recreation.

“The program allows students to form respectful relationships with horses as they learn to work with

them to achieve team goals, both inside the arena and beyond. We promote skill progression through safe and fun lessons that compassionately remove direct support and drive independence, mastery and advancement.”

Price and Claire Edwards, outdoor education coordinator, bring decades of experience as they lead youth, families and community partners in horsemanship activities at MCH. Edwards was specifically tasked with creating the Free Rein Equestrian program where students advance their skills in grooming and riding horses. Each participant is ranked on a four-tier skill level system. According to program leadership and staff, the ultimate hope is for students to ride and show horses in competitions.

“Our horsemanship program really fits well with the mission of MCH,” Edwards said. “Working with horses teaches people a lot of valuable skills like communicating with a 1,200-pound animal that does not speak our language. They learn about leadership and teamwork with their horses.”

Beyond the individual rider-and-horse dynamic, staff said Free Rein continues to build a community “where youth find a place to belong.”

“Our students are pushed outside of their comfort zones during lessons,” Price said. “Those shared experiences grow their confidence and comradery. We help our youth develop interpersonal skills through horsemanship and those same skills can be applied to create healthy, connected relationships with people.

Edwards said a large part of Free Rein lessons comes down to teaching riders about advocacy and empathy.





"Our students are more likely to be patient and empathetic toward horses than they are to themselves," Edwards said. "They love to find their own stories in the horses they work with. Our animals are always going to meet our youth with unconditional love and acceptance."

"It was our goal to create a program with those same values that our students can call theirs," she said. "In learning to connect and advocate for their horses, our students in turn begin to show themselves more grace, self-love and self-respect."

Virginia, called Ginny by her friends, is a humble leader in Free Rein. The 16-year-old junior joined the horsemanship program with previous experience, having trained in the rodeo world. Those environments tend to be harsher, Edwards explained.

"I definitely saw that negative self-talk in Ginny," Edwards said. "She is more compassionate toward herself now and is more flexible. As one of my student workers, Ginny helps encourage other riders and is starting to trust herself, her knowledge and her abilities more."



*Left: LeRay establishes a connection with her horse before her lesson.*

*Top: Claire Edwards, outdoor education coordinator, guides Raelynn and her horse, Speedy, through an obstacle course set up in the horse pavilion. Students learn techniques to better communicate with their horses and to achieve team goals.*

That includes setting an example for her peers, as well.

"It's really nerve-wracking sometimes because I know it's really important to set an example," Virginia admitted. "I've never had anyone look up to me. I have always been the one looking up to others."

Tony, a 15-year-old freshman, is one of the students taking advice from Virginia.

"I still can't believe I can actually ride horses," he said. "I have definitely grown in my skills since the first time I got on a horse here. Free Rein has helped me become a better brother, too. We have to be patient with the horses and I've learned to extend that patience to my younger siblings."

MCH staff concur that offering life-changing experiences to children, youth and families, and to community partners at no cost is priceless.

"I love we are able to offer people their firsts in life, like riding a horse," Price said. "We give our kids the ability to be kids and participate in things they otherwise may not have been able to do. The skills and memories our students gain will stay with them for the rest of their lives."

Like Spiritual Development, the Free Rein Equestrian program enjoys group outings and events that further students' overall growth and education. The team attended the Bluebonnet Challenge in Taylor, Texas, where dozens of riders across the state competed in horsemanship events. MCH students said they bonded over the trip that inspired them to become better horsemen.

"I have found another home and community in Free Rein," Virginia said. "I'm looking forward to what our team builds together."



# DESTINY

## A RESILIENT VOICE

BY SARAH BELLAFFIORE

**G**rowing up can be challenging and it has been especially hard for Destiny, a 16-year-old junior attending the University of Texas–University Charter School on the MCH Waco campus.

“I wasn’t safe and didn’t have friends for so long,” Destiny said. “Now I’m finally comfortable, safe and happy where I am.”

Through a collaboration with a local like-minded organization, Destiny enrolled in the Day Student program at MCH and has caught up on her academic coursework. The trauma-informed classrooms and staff at the charter school are also supporting Destiny as she learns to advocate for herself.

“I have definitely grown a lot as a person since I became a Day Student,” Destiny said. “I’m not as nervous to be myself around others and I’m able to share my interests.”

She’s not afraid to share her voice anymore, either – something Day Student program staff said is key in Destiny’s continual growth and healing.

“Destiny used to be very quiet and didn’t speak up,” said Amy Grisham, director of school support. “Now she comes to us if she wants to address something. She initiates conversations with her peers. Destiny knows how important her voice is and I’m glad she’s found it.”

Destiny described how she has also found another home within the Day Student program.

“Everybody here treats me like family,” she said. “Students don’t have to come with their guard up. Staff treat me with respect and don’t look at me any different because of my past. They only want to care for me.”

That care extends to students’ families, as well. MCH believes it is important to build connections with families and to meet the needs of the whole student, not just in the classroom.

“We have talked a lot with Destiny’s aunt, who is very invested in her education and well-being,” said Allyson Welch, Day Student case manager. “Our work to connect beyond the classroom also shows youth and their families there are people here who care for them. There is a whole community of people who want the best for our students and families.

“I am a firm believer that it really does take a village to help youth flourish,” Welch added. “Destiny’s story is one of many that proves what we are doing here with our partnering organizations works.”

After graduation, Destiny hopes to attend Texas Southern University to study business administration.

“I want to be my own boss,” she said. “I think I will be able to run a business smoothly. I enjoy hairdressing, so I’ve thought about owning my own beauty salon where I can rent out spaces for others to use. If it weren’t for my grandmother and aunt, I wouldn’t be where I am today, dreaming big.”

In offering hope through meaningful and life-changing support, those closest to Destiny said she is flourishing “and knows where she is going in life.”

“It means the world to me to see Destiny’s transformation,” Welch said. “It took strength and resiliency to get to where she is today.”

“Destiny continues to prove she can overcome anything,” Grisham said. “She was a totally different person when she walked through our doors. Destiny has learned to trust again – that takes a lot of courage.”

Flashing her “award-winning smile,” Destiny shared she hopes to apply that same courage while embarking on all sorts of adventures in her future.

“I want to travel,” she said. “I want to do crazy, fun things like bungee jumping. I want to taste foreign foods. I want to truly live life so when I’m older, I can look back and say I did those things.” •

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*MCH launched the Day Student program in 2012 for students in Waco and surrounding communities needing a smaller academic setting. Day Students are eligible to participate in all extracurricular activities such as athletics, summer camp, homecoming, and prom. Day Student graduates also have access to Transition Services and Independent Living resources, including scholarships for college or vocational school. The program maintains a 100 percent graduation rate.*

*For more information about the Day Student program at MCH, call the school office at (254) 750-2600 to speak with Clarence Degrate, Day Student program coordinator, or Allyson Welch, Day Student case manager.*



# Permian Basin Outreach Office Introduced

BY SARAH  
BELLAFIORE

The new MCH Family Outreach office in the Permian Basin is open for business at 706 Adams Ave. in Odessa. Methodist Children's Home recently hosted a luncheon introducing the ministry and services to the community. More than 160 people attended, representing agencies, community organizations and churches in the area.

"MCH Family Outreach in Permian Basin started out just as an idea in early March 2020," said MCH President and CEO Trey Oakley. "What I love about our ministry is we have many people with expertise who take ideas and put them into action. That's exactly what happened in Odessa.

"Our staff in the Programs, Advancement, and Human Resources departments and the Executive Leadership Team came alongside likeminded organizations in the Permian Basin to fulfill God's plan for our 14th Outreach office," he said. "Looking at the attendees at the luncheon brought such joy and gratefulness as I reflected on how God ordained these plans and relationships."

Jeremy Webb, chief advancement officer, was part of the team cultivating relationships in West Texas over the course of several years.

"We are excited to join these communities in mission to give families hope who may otherwise have none," Webb said. "We are so humbled and grateful for all who attended the luncheon. It's encouraging for us since we're the 'newbies' in the area. It's our heart and our hope to come alongside others to do whatever it takes to serve."

Traci Wagner, vice president for programs, offered more insight at the luncheon into the services offered through MCH Family Outreach.

"Each of the communities MCH serves is unique and has specific needs," Wagner explained. "We are blessed with resources to provide the highest quality programs and services for children, youth and families across Texas and New Mexico. Our staff is committed to five-star service throughout their walk with families – whether that's teaching a grandparent how to build better relationships with



*From left to right: Allison Allen, advancement coordinator; Sarah Bellafiore, public relations officer; Traci Wagner, vice president for programs; Dana Bearden, program and services specialist; De'Aundre Williams, program administrator; Lyle Mason, vice president for advancement; Jeremy Webb, chief advancement officer; Trey Oakley, president and CEO; Stephanie Janes, director of MCH Family Outreach Permian Basin; Shannon McCuaig, advancement officer; Kelly Lawson, advancement administrator; Celeste Reyes, case manager for MCH Family Outreach Permian Basin.*



their grandchildren who are now in their care, or helping provide a family with beds or clothes.

"As a TBRI Ambassador Organization, MCH also equips fellow agencies and organizations through trauma-informed trainings, which further expands the network of community resources available to families," she added.

Wagner also introduced the Programs staff involved with the Permian Basin office. Stephanie Janes, director; Celeste Reyes, case manager; De'Aundre Williams, program administrator; and Dana Bearden, program and services specialist, are all equipped with expertise to help families in various situations through trauma-informed programs, Wagner noted.

"It gave me such great happiness to see familiar and new faces from our community at the luncheon," Janes said. "We have really hit the ground running and are incredibly grateful for the collaborations we have already started and for the partnerships to come. I am overwhelmed with thankfulness as we officially open our office in Odessa and for the support from our community."

Reyes, the first case manager hired for the Permian Basin office, is a native of Odessa.

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**"When all of these  
components come together  
around a shared mission,  
special things happen."**

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"I am so honored to give back to my community in this way as the first case manager at MCH Family Outreach Permian Basin," Reyes said. "Our efforts at MCH to serve really mean a lot to our area and to me personally."

Oakley said he is excited about future work that will be carried out by a "great mix of veteran staff members and those who are bringing in new energy and perspectives."

"When all of these components come together around a shared mission, special things happen," he said. "Countless children and families are going to be blessed because of the work we're doing in the Permian Basin." •



*(1) Jeremy Webb, chief advancement officer, with Paul and Ann Townsend of Big Spring, Texas. (2) Paul Lucas, Odessa market president of Frost Bank and MCH Board member; Trey Oakley, president and CEO; Celeste Reyes, case manager for MCH Family Outreach Permian Basin; and Stephanie Janes, director of MCH Family Outreach Permian Basin. (3) Stephanie Janes greets community partners from Family Promise of Midland (left) and Thriving United (right). (4) Dana Bearden (far left), program and services specialist, Jeremy Webb and Lyle Mason (far right), vice president for advancement, greet Reflection Ministries (RM) CEO and Founder Lisa Bownds and other RM staff.*

# NEWS & NOTES

## MCH STAFF ATTEND WACO CAREER EVENT

Administrators, supervisors and human resources staff from Methodist Children's Home attended a career expo at the Waco Convention Center to share about the variety of employment opportunities at MCH. The event was open to the community, but marketed toward veterans, service members and families seeking employment.

"Events like these enhance our visibility while also connecting

MCH with community members that might not come across our online job postings," said Traci Wagner, vice president for programs, who attended the hiring fair. "Veterans, especially, have already committed to something larger than themselves and have acquired skills that could translate well to the child and family welfare field. Their background, coupled with a sense of duty and commitment

to the mission of MCH, is a win-win for us all."

Brooke Davilla, vice president for organizational effectiveness, added that MCH is taking a collaborative approach toward recruitment and hiring.

"It takes the support of both our HR and Programs teams to ensure we are identifying highly skilled, mission-oriented individuals who represent the vast needs of all we serve," she said. •



*Far left: MCH staff attending the career fair include Traci Wagner, vice president for programs; Melvin Carter III, director of Transition Services; Tony Stewart, Boys Ranch program administrator; Callan Glascock, HR coordinator; and Marissa Smith, Outreach program administrator. Left: Melvin Carter shares about employment opportunities at MCH with an attendee of the career fair.*

## FOSTER/ADOPTION STAFF GATHER FOR TRAINING



MCH President and CEO Trey Oakley (far left) and Vice President for Programs Traci Wagner (far right) join MCH staff at the Statewide Foster Care and Adoption Training, held Nov. 14 in Abilene. The training gathered program administrators and staff from the four MCH Family Outreach offices offering foster care and adoption services - Abilene, Dallas, Houston, and Tyler, as well as Laura Bonner, compliance administrator; Dana Bearden, program and services specialist; and John Warren, training specialist.

Wagner said the training was an opportunity to put all of the internal experts in the same room to share updates and refreshers about these services. The team spent two days in Abilene with a packed agenda full of standards, policies and procedures, best practices and activities aimed to strengthen the connection of the team, as well as MCH foster care and adoption models of service delivery. ▲



## HOMECOMING AT MCH

Students and staff at the University of Texas – University Charter School (UT-UCS) celebrated homecoming in October with themed costume days, a pep rally and homecoming court during the Friday night football game.

The MCH Admissions department also hosted a tailgate party for families before the football game with food, face-painting and games. The Bulldogs football team defeated St. Mary's 68-20 for the homecoming win, which was also the 100<sup>th</sup> win for the six-man football program. ▶



*Above: Cesar and Elizabeth are crowned king and queen of the homecoming court.*

*Above right: Admissions Coordinator Zhari Cooper applies face paint at the family tailgate before the homecoming game.*

*Right: Londen breaks free for a big gain during the homecoming football game.* ▶



## TYLER FAMILY OUTREACH EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

The staff of MCH Family Outreach in Tyler participated in several community events and collaborations this fall. Staff participated in the Shine Conference for Women, attended training at the East Texas Network for Children Conference and provided a presentation of services at the missions fair at First Baptist Church of Bullard.

"I am thankful to work in a community that understands our mission and embraces MCH,"

said Kristy George, director of MCH Family Outreach in Tyler. "We have wonderful community partners who allow us to share the hope we have for children and families with those they serve. Together, we all play our part in strengthening the Tyler and surrounding communities." •



▶ *The MCH Family Outreach Tyler staff attend community events along with Traci Wagner, vice president for programs. MCH Family Outreach is proud to collaborate with various likeminded organizations to provide focused and flexible ministries to families across Texas and New Mexico.*



# NEWS & NOTES

## MCH STAFF RECEIVE TRAINING ON DIGITAL WELLNESS

In September, more than 120 MCH employees participated in a training both in-person and virtually by Talk More Tech Less, an online safety and digital wellness organization. Dawn Wible, the founder of Talk More Tech Less, is a certified digital wellness educator and advocate who trains organizations and students how to identify and combat harmful online activity and break free of digital addiction.

"Kids today are asking the questions: 'Who am I?' and 'Where do I belong?' and they're looking for

answers on social media platforms, most of which are often feeding negative answers," Wible said. "If kids can align their values with who they really are, they can be better equipped to combat the negative voices." Quoting author Gretchen Rubin, Wible described technology as "a good servant, but a bad master." With the increase of social media platforms and rise in cyberbullying and online predatory engagement, parents, teachers and caregivers need to be educated and vigilant about creating good channels of communication with

children about the healthy use of technology and the dangers facing them.

"Learning about and approaching this topic in a good way helps kids feel safe, which helps them make healthy, wise decisions," Wible said. "When kids are learning what it looks like to be safe, the healthier they become."

Kevin Brown, director of training at MCH, said Wible's training is a valuable reminder for MCH staff that "it is imperative that organizations like MCH be equipped with this type of information and knowledge. We are grateful for resources like Talk More Tech Less that position us to better serve the children, youth and families in Texas and New Mexico."



*Above: Staff discuss issues of online security during the training.*

*Right: Talk More Tech Less founder Dawn Wible leads MCH staff in the training.*



*Below: Charmoine Nelson, Killeen case manager (left), and Nancy Lechuga, administrative secretary in Killeen (right), greet MCH First Lady Karen Oakley, who attended the special needs conference.*

## KILLEEN FAMILY OUTREACH PARTICIPATES IN SPECIAL NEEDS CONFERENCE

MCH Family Outreach in Killeen participated in the 2023 All Together Special Needs Conference hosted by Temple Bible Church. Staff shared about the support and programs MCH can offer to families with special needs children and also connected with other community organizations.

"Having a child with special needs, I personally understand many of the struggles families endure daily and have a unique

opportunity to connect with caregivers on a more personal level and speak from the heart about support that MCH Family Outreach could potentially offer," said Charmoine Nelson, case manager at MCH Family Outreach in Killeen. "Our goal is to walk alongside and offer support to strengthen the whole family. Some of the ways MCH offers support to the family include working with the family on things like issues



around homelessness, budgeting, family conflict, employment, family connection, and parenting support. We work to tailor goals to help families foster a healthy and thriving environment that encourages them daily to experience life to the fullest."



# ADVANCEMENT NEWS

## GIFT ANNUITY PROGRAM

A charitable gift annuity provides a way to benefit future generations while also increasing your income and decreasing your tax bill. Our charitable gift annuity program was created as a service to our many friends who have expressed a desire to make a gift of significance, while still retaining income from the gift property during their lives. A charitable gift annuity is a contract in which you exchange a gift of cash or securities for a guaranteed, fixed income each year for the rest of your life.

*Payments are made quarterly; one-life or two-life annuities; cash or securities to fund your gift. Cash gifts allow maximum tax-free income; gifts of securities allow you to minimize capital gains taxes. Methodist Children's Home Board policy states that an individual wanting to participate in the gift annuity program must be at least 55 years of age and make a minimum donation of \$5,000. MCH does not accept real estate or property to fund a gift annuity.*

To receive your personalized proposal, please contact Lyle Mason, Vice President for Advancement, at 800-853-1272, or by email at [LMason@MCH.org](mailto:LMason@MCH.org).



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*Avoid taxes on transfers up to \$100,000 (\$200,000 for married couples) from your IRA to support our cause.*



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*Make a gift that is not subject to the 50 percent deduction limits on charitable gifts.*



*Use your rollover to make payments on an existing pledge to us.*

# KATHERINE

## CLAIMING HER FUTURE

BY JEAN WRIGHT



**S**itting adjacent to the George W. Carroll Science Hall on the campus of Baylor University, Katherine talked about the path that led her to Methodist Children's Home. Baylor students know the building as the setting of the final scene in the hit movie, "Where the Heart Is." For Katherine, the building represents something more – a safe place where she has freedom of thought and expression as a professional writing and rhetoric student.

Born in Jeffersonville, Indiana, Katherine spent time in and out of foster care until she was adopted and relocated to Texas at age 3. In 2006, she visited the MCH Waco campus where her biological sister spent her adolescent years.

"I still have a picture from my first time on campus," Katherine reflected. "It was a heavy day, where everything shifted for my family and me."

Although she bonded with her sister through heartfelt gestures like sharing teddy bears and writing letters, the separation weighed heavy on her heart. Katherine silently suffered as she developed feelings of loneliness and self-doubt and experienced abuse as a youth.

After high school, Katherine was accepted into an academic institution in rural Appalachia, Virginia. She quickly discovered success and was presented with the Freshman Academic Excellence Award and President's List and Dean's List distinctions her first year. This experience helped Katherine begin recognizing signs of her past trauma and realize the importance of self-advocacy.

"I started to accept myself in college by being honest about my past and finding my freedom," she said.

Katherine unfortunately lost funding to continue school as well as access to necessary mental health resources. She relocated to Waco in 2020 where she reconnected with her sister after being separated for 13 years. Although Katherine hoped the move would improve her circumstances, she struggled to secure safe housing and found herself in a women's shelter two years later. It was at that time she discovered MCH's Independent Living Program (ILP) where she obtained housing, scholarships and friendship.

"The support and stability MCH provides has been a privilege," Katherine said. "I have a real community here

where I can connect with other women and commune and fellowship with people who care about me."

Katherine continues to make the most of her opportunity by working hard to meet program goals. Through scholarship support and personal determination, Katherine transferred to Baylor in 2023 where she discovered her voice through a passion for writing and rhetoric.

"I've learned that self-advocacy is a form of self-love," she said. "Writing helps me be gentle with myself while also inspiring me to claim my own potential by analyzing situations and expressing my ideas."

School taught Katherine to think for herself by asking questions, challenging systems and making compelling arguments through her academic work.

Alyssa Lopez, ILP case manager, said Katherine strives to find a balance between work, school and daily living.

"The young woman I met in 2022 would be shocked to see what she has accomplished today," Lopez said. "We are cheering her on as she works toward completing her degree and reaching her goals."

Katherine keeps an active schedule outside of Baylor, working at a pottery store, volunteering at her local church and writing grants for a foster care placement agency. In each of these endeavors, Katherine enjoys using her creative liberties to give back and make a positive impact on her community.

Katherine's aspirations extend beyond her degree. She envisions a future in law or public policy to improve housing rights and the foster and adoption system. In this field, Katherine desires to inspire others to secure their future by educating on human rights and utilizing resources to the fullest. In doing so, she hopes others will realize their circumstances do not disqualify their potential.

Katherine's story is a testament to the power of personal perseverance and support offered by Methodist Children's Home ministries.

"All of my experiences have been necessary and purposeful," Katherine stated. "Above all, I have learned I have the choice to not let the trauma of my past control my future, while acknowledging the truth and giving myself grace to heal." •



# GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORIAL GIFTS

GIFTS MADE FROM JULY THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2023

## HONORARIUMS

### **Patsy Barnes**

Joe Lewis Family

### **First United Methodist**

#### **Church Belton**

Trey Oakley

### **Mrs. Mitzi Boeselt**

Herbert and Virginia Adcock

### **Breakfast Bible Study Group**

#### **First Methodist Corsicana**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **A.C. Cade IV**

Rick and Susan Cade

### **Jane Callaway**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Susan and Gary Campbell**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Carroll Choate**

Julie and Maro Johnson

Krystal Porter

### **Christian Adults Class**

#### **First Methodist Corsicana**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Circle 1 Methodist Women**

#### **First Methodist Corsicana**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Dawn Clay**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Peaches Conway**

Nolan and Miles Summers

### **Jose and Josefa Cordero**

Thomas and Ester Seawright

### **Cordova Family**

Anonymous

### **Evelyn Daniels' 91<sup>st</sup> Birthday**

Dr. Jack Daniels

### **Dorothy Duncan**

Mary Kay McCollum

### **John Farrell**

Hank and Kathryn Coleman

### **The Gaston-Allen Family**

#### **Reunion**

The Gaston-Allen Family

#### **Reunion**

### **Genesis Class**

#### **First Methodist Corsicana**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Eleanor Ginn**

Nolan and Miles Summers

### **Frank Greenwood**

Deon Standlee and Joe Ann

#### **Standlee**

### **John and Cheryl Greenwood's**

#### **30 Years of Marriage**

Totsy Cunningham

### **Tommye Hall**

Methodist Men of First

#### **Methodist Church of Center**

### **James Hatfield**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Jo Ann Hawk**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Donna and Jerry Head**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **John August Henke**

Susan Prugel

### **Robert and Sheila Herod**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Donna Hodges**

Judy Patrick

### **Howard Family Legacy**

Charles and Ann Cantrell

Randy McPherson

### **Suzanne Ihlo**

Roy Blackshear and Liz Burke

First Methodist Church of Center

### **Reverend J. Byron Jarratt's**

#### **85<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

Richard Rosenbaum and

Lu Ann Busse

### **Reverend Tom and Mrs.**

#### **Janet Kennedy**

Nolan and Miles Summers

### **Pastor Mike and**

#### **Dianne Kerzee**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Kelly E. Lawson**

The Strebecks

### **Les Leskoven**

Laura and Nick Ackerman

### **Les and Karen Leskoven**

Trey and Karen Oakley

### **Rob and Amy Lloyd**

Mary Lois Irvin

### **Vernon and Jewel Lockridge**

Ms. DeLeah Lockridge

### **Maggie's Bake Sale**

Anonymous

Maggie's Bake Sale

Pellicore and Rowley Families

### **Lyle Mason**

Lori Wilhite

### **Lyle and Denise Mason**

Steven and Bonnie Mason

### **The Lyle Mason Family**

Bill and Susan Birdwell

### **Shannon McCuaig**

The Strebecks

### **Methodist Children's Home**

#### **Advancement Team**

Trey and Karen Oakley

### **Methodist Men of First**

#### **Methodist Church of Center**

Steve Tinkle

### **Melodie Miller**

Barry and Carolyn Faulkner

### **Rosalyn Mitchell**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Bryan Mize**

James and Laura Milam

### **Dr. Bob Monk**

John and Jan Lineweaver

### **Anita and Kenneth Murray**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Shirley Nussbaum**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **The Oakley Families**

Mr. and Mrs. Lon Oakley, Jr.

### **Trey Oakley**

Rev. and Mrs. Thomas Nagle

### **Martin and Dora Orozco**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Charles Patterson**

Gerald and Nancy Reynolds

### **Carolyn Leskoven Pena**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Don and Joyce Pike**

John and Brenda Stephens

### **Egidio Mario Previtera**

Herbert and Virginia Adcock

### **Sarah Mae Price**

Dale Miller

### **Kenneth and Velva Riddle**

Ann Ramminger

### **Charmelle Garrett and**

#### **Jack Rouse**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Harper and Griffin Sedberry**

Bryan and Carol Sedberry

### **Rodney S. Smith**

Anonymous

### **Charles Szalkowski**

Sue and John Farrell

### **Courtney Thomas**

Sally Baron

### **Phyllis Thomason**

Anonymous

### **Olivia Turner**

Robert and Janine Turner

### **Vacation Bible School**

#### **Workers of First Methodist**

#### **Church of Center**

Nolan and Miles Summers

### **Carol Voigtel**

Totsy Cunningham

### **Sandra Wallace's Birthday**

Dr. Lowell and Betty Carraway

Mrs. Jack Stoesser

### **Sandra (Stoesser) Wallace**

Nancy Salmon

### **Ron and Tracy Watson**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Vanessa Werlla, M.D.**

Charles Werlla

### **Carolyn Westbrook**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **Lori Wilhite**

Don and Kathi Lee

Layne and Sue Rita Myatt

### **Robert and Lori Wilhite**

Vicki Steller

### **Pastor Wayne Williams**

John R. and Sandra L. Haldeman

### **Women of Grace,**

#### **Grace Church,**

#### **Alamagordo, NM**

Mike and Cheeta McMurry

### **Stella Campbell Wooten's**

#### **95<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

Patricia Chenault

### **Gilda and Charles Worsham**

Les and Karen Leskoven

### **John Yates**

Les and Karen Leskoven

## MEMORIALS

### **Arnold and Wanda Alberts**

Gary and Mary Alberts

### **William "Bill" Crane**

#### **Alexander**

Christine Alexander

### **Marguerite "Rita" Allen**

Barry and Suzanne Willis

### **Sally Burch Allsup**

Anonymous

### **Betty Nell Avery**

Marc and Becky Clark

### **Andy Harrison Ayers**

Carla Cothran

### **Reverend John Paul**

#### **Aymond, Jr.**

Lucy Aymond

### **Nile Lovelace and**

#### **Lena Hamby Bailey**

Nila Allen

### **Thomas L. Barrow, Sr.**

Linda Barrow

### **Charlotte Barton**

Thomas and Laura Stluka

### **Lowrey and Roy Baskin**

Leland Baskin

### **James Carrol Beard**

Anonymous

# MEMORIALS

## **Lawrence and Verna Beer**

Lee and Karen Beer

## **Eddie Bengé**

Mrs. Anne Bengé

## **Amalie and Weldon Bigony**

Vicky and James Peters

## **Jim and Miriam Billings**

Karen Billings

## **Ken and Nonnie Bird**

### **Memorial**

Nancy B. Evans

## **Kathryn and Herman**

### **Blackwell**

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Carter

## **Corey D. Blubaugh**

Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Blubaugh

## **Sue Boland**

Bill and Beth Calvert

## **Robert "Bob" E. Bonneau**

Suzanne Goodenough

## **Monty Boozer**

Robert and Lori Wilhite

## **Floy Bousman**

Mrs. Margie Berger

## **William Peter Branch**

Candy Branch

## **Linda (Gaisser) Branson**

Joan Leskoven

## **James (Jim) Braziel**

Diana Braziel

## **Agnes Britt**

Susan Cole

## **Rebecca Brockett**

Candy Branch

## **Harold and Billie Jean Bruns**

Tommy and Theresa Bruns

## **Carla Buchholz**

Alice Sappington

## **Jenny Carleston**

Milton Lee and Jessica

Joy Carleston

## **Dorothy Carr**

Joan Wu

## **Mary Jo (Andrews) Carson**

Anonymous

## **Harmon Chappel**

Michael Allen

## **Joyce Marie Kilpatrick Choate**

Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Grantham

The Porters: Krystal, Jacob,  
Alex and Cora

Sheryl Preslar

## **Sherwood Clark**

Bubba Clark

Marc and Becky Clark

## **Jason Daniel Cotten**

Elizabeth C. Specht

## **Mary Eugenia Cowan**

Gaston-Allen Family Reunion

## **C.M. Cox, Jr.**

Bobbie Cox

## **Robert Creech**

Bob and Annie Minchew

## **Mr. Gerald Creel**

Dr. and Mrs. Marcus E. Young

## **James "Jim" Grace Crump**

Frank Busch

## **Wilburn Curnutt**

Travis and Nancy Stone

## **Robert Davis**

Caryn Owens

## **Jimmy Dibello**

Joy Dibello

## **Ron Dickson**

John Buehner

## **William C. Diem**

John and Julie Diem

## **Bobby Lee Dinsmore, Jr.**

Barbara Dinsmore

## **Bobby Charles Dodge**

Judy Hughes

## **Jimmie Lee Dooley "Neenie"**

Joyce Hancock

## **Elizabeth, Fischer, Benjamin**

### **and Hayes Dowdy**

Julie and John Diem

## **Chase Wesley DuBose**

Mrs. Bobbie DuBose

## **Christie Ann (Ownsby) Duke**

Toby and Meredith Settle

## **Jean DuLaney**

Robert and Lori Wilhite

## **Mary and Jack Dwyer**

Judy and Jim Dwyer

## **David Eager**

Anonymous

## **Katherine and Boyd Eaker**

Judy and Jim Dwyer

Linda Eaker

## **Linda Edwards**

William Edwards

## **Bonita Elliott**

Karen Adams

## **Reverend Alfred "Len" Evans**

Alfred V. Evans, Jr.

## **Ruth Downes Evans**

Alfred V. Evans, Jr.

## **Kenneth and Virginia Evers**

Dr. Doug Davis and Denise Evers

## **Dr. Carroll Fancher**

Ann P. Fancher

## **Bonnie and Herb Fisher**

Lisa and Robert Smith

## **Reverend James W. Foster**

Rosemarie Williams Foster

## **Alán Garcia**

Eunice Garcia

## **Bobby Gilliam**

Jennifer and Luke Gilliam

Linda Gilliam

## **Richard Arnett Gilliam**

Linda Hester

## **Sharon and Fred Goble**

Gary and Cheryl Rodgers

## **Ryan Eugene Grace**

Beverley and Craig Grace

## **Bobbie Tyler Graham**

Rebecca Bowden Narramore

## **Richard "Dick" Maxwell**

### **Grandy**

Barbara Grandy

## **Larry Green, Sr.**

Larry and Jan Green

## **Gail Linn Grisham**

Bob and Rubyetta Cain

## **Harry Allen Gump -**

### **Father's Day**

Richard Gump and Carol Clay

## **Rebecca Ann Hagood**

Charles and Carol Brown

## **Charles Raymond Hall**

Roy Blackshear

Liz Burke

First Methodist Church of Center

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Tinkle

## **Donald Hancock**

Joyce Hancock

## **John Robert Hannah**

Dr. and Mrs. Fletcher Lee

## **Herb Harding**

Anonymous

Allison Hamby Allen

Joy and Sam Allen

Lance and Susie Beatty

Wilma Blanks and Family

Ken and Kathy Breitreutz

Christie Bunkley

Trina Coggins

Cindy Fadal

Kaden and Kenadee Fisk

Pat and Kendall Nowotny

Josh and Amber Park

Leah Shrinivas and Family

Michelle Sims

Ryan and Reagan Stanton

Wally and Christi Stanton

Joyce and Bert Ward

## **Gene Hargrove**

Janet Hargrove

## **Cliff and Nelda Hazlewood**

Dr. Kallie and Mr. Colton

Covington

## **Nelda Hazlewood**

Cathy Herzog

## **Michael James Hebert, Sr.**

Mr. and Mrs. Orville Wilson

## **Jackie Vanderhoff Henry**

Anonymous

## **Les Ann Hernandez**

Mervin R. and Denise Billings

## **Mary Blanche Turner Hext**

Ralph Turner

## **Bill and Mary Heyduck**

Richard Heyduck

## **Elizabeth "Betsy" Hilfer**

William and Sharon Constantine

## **Ed Hinson**

Anonymous

Tim Abney

Jeff and Ellen Allen

Mrs. Jane Cravens-Clements

Gina Gervino

Granite Harbor Advisors

Phyllis and Lane Keller

Kelly E. Lawson

David and Grace Ligon

Connie Mann

Diane and Earl Peck

Conner and Debra Stamper

Norman and Carli Stovall

Carole Street

Doug and Ann Stroud

Jerry and Pam Weant

Candace and Dale Wilson

Vicki Zowarka

## **Donna Hodges**

Judy Patrick

## **Frances C. Holdeman**

Ann Holdeman

## **Alice Sue Howard**

Leroy and Carol Newman

## **Dr. and Mrs. Lloyd A. Hughes**

Carolyn Hughes

## **Tyler Lee Hunter**

Suzanne Hunter

## **H. Kelly Ireland**

Nancy Ireland-Thomas

## **Connie Jensen**

Judy Rheder

## **Glenda and Gary Johnson**

Pam Johnson

## **Michael "Mike" F. Jones**

Tina Jones

## **Norma Jones**

Carol Golding

## **Randall Jones**

Reverend Ellen Ely

## **Wynema Sue Jones**

George Jones

## **Dale Kane**

Charles Miller

## **Bobby Rhea "Bob" Kessler**

Bob Campbell



**Gloria "Coca" Kimbrough**

Richard and Pat Shirley

**Charlie King, Jr.**

Charles and Marilyn King

**Jim and Joy Kirby**

Remona Wing

**James and Marion Kisling**

Dr. David and Rosemary Kisling

**Doris Otilie Knoll**

Pete and Darlene Smith

Peggy Fisk

**Roy Koonce**

Charles and LaRue Pierce

**Elizabeth Louise Koss**

Julia Kilchenstein

**Mary Ellen Stevick Lathan**

Dr. William Lathan

**Sue Rose Lauer**

Anonymous

**Carroll Leavell**

Alice Sappington

**Bobby "Bob" Lee**

Carolyn Lee

**Jimmy W. "Jim" Leskoven**

Joan Leskoven

Les and Karen Leskoven

**Darren Alexander Lewis**

Pam Goergen

**Mrs. Sandy Lewis**

Mrs. Jami Lovelady

**Joey Linder-Potter**

Charles and Carol Brown

**Eva Mae Livingston**

Kathy Woods

**Darlene Lockwood**

William and Ann DeForest

**Ezerlean Thompson Manuel**

Mr. and Mrs. Neeley Lewis

**Mr. Gary Mason**

Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Klahn

**Edward C. Matza**

Martha J. Matza

**Katherine Annette "Ann" Maze**

Anonymous

**Reverend John Patton "Pat"****McClatchy**

Patricia Kenrick

**Joyce J. McCleery**

Joey Groce

**Jo Ann McClendon**

David McClendon

**Anna M. McCoy**

Thomas W. McCoy

**Barbara June McDonald**

Melissa Smith

**Theresa Lynn (Headrick)****McKinney**

Debra Headrick Droughton

**Reverend Joseph Barnett****McReynolds, Sr.**

Anonymous

**June Merrell**

Leigh Marks

**Marilyn and H.W. Miller, Jr.**

Phyllis M. Miller

**Lee Moore**

Patsy Barnett

William Cole

Crop Insurance Professionals

Association (CIPA)

Mary Louder

Tanya Unfred Thomas

Randy Unfred

Leland White

Lyme, Bob, Katie and Cookie

**Linda Morrow**

Mary B. Mitchell-Ellis

**Abraham (Abe) Mulkey**

Anonymous

**Glenda Mulkey**

Dale Mulkey

**Rex and Elizabeth Murphy**

Karen Savage

**Harold Aubrey "Bubba"****Norcross**

Ruth L. Wilkins

**Barbara "Bubbles" Nowlin**

Leslie and Candy Mallonee

**John E. and Clela (Sharp)****Ortloff**

Joan Steinhoff

**Reverend B. J. Osborn**

Mr. Lionel W. King

**Jo Anna Parker**

Les and Karen Leskoven

**Linda Carter Pearlman**

Linda Delaney

**Bobbie Perry**

Carol Schuelke

**L.F. Perry**

Carla Perry

**Mr. Bookman Peters**

Neeley and Becky Lewis

**Dorothy Phillips**

Melvin and Linda Bruggman

**Raymond Phillips**

Julie and Maro Johnson

**Fred Glen Ramey**

Ms. Jami Lovelady

**Milton H. Ramsey**

Jordan Stokes

**Mellie Vern (Green) Reed**

Mickey and Linda Bailey

**Karen Richards**

Daniel Hollingsworth

**Mr. Jim Ridge**

Dr. and Mrs. Marcus E. Young

**Clemente (Clem) Rocha III**

Chris Mora Fernandez

**Mildred and Elmer Rodgers**

Gary and Cheryl Rodgers

**James Stanley Roper**

Greg and Donna Jensen

**Waldine Rudloff**

Michael Rudloff

**David Ruiz**

Charles and Marilyn King

**Bishop John William Russell**

Mary Layton

**Rosemary (Cowser) Sancton**

Anonymous

**Gerald and Etna Scott**

Roy Speer

**Tom and Mary Seawright**

Thomas and Ester Seawright

**Herbert and Eris Shelton**

Jim and Lynn Stuckey

**Kenneth Simpson**

Kim Simpson

**Bill P. Smith**

Reesa Roberts-Smith

**Denny Smith**

Elzy and Cynthia Prater

**James Carlton Smith, Sr.**

Mrs. Dorothy Ann Metting

**Jan and Glenn Smith**

Anonymous

**Luis and Minerva Soto**

Sonya Morrison

**Emma Lillian (Mitchell) Staggs**

Dolores Staggs

**Ava Nell Stewart**

Jimmy Cole Stewart

**Linda Joy Stovall**

Reverend Ellen Ely

**Thomas "Tommie" and****Johnnie Lou Suits**

Mike and Julia Maher

**Edith (Fatheree) Sutherland**

John Fatheree

**Edward "Eddie" Francis Tate, Jr.**

Key and Hank Richardson

**Yvonne C. Taylor**

Diane Dercks

**Kay H. Terrill**

Chris Terrill

**Billy Bob Thomason**

Donna Thomason

**Zona Barfield Thompson**

Sherry and Aaron Alford

Martha Best

Jim and Beverly Graham

Pat D. Green and Family

Griffith Family

Karen Ramsey

Rose Lynn Russell

Scott and Amanda Sanders

Carol J. Smith

Margie and Johnny Youngblood

**Carroll and Sue Todd**

Robert C. Todd III

**Plez and Adele Todd**

Jerry Todd

**Mark Trautmann**

Keith and Pamela Trautmann

**Dixie Lynette Tucker**

Shiner First United

Methodist Church

United Women of Faith,

First UMC of Shiner, Texas

**Mrs. Helen Turner**

Dr. and Mrs. Marcus E. Young

**Sherry Vaughan**

Virgil Vaughan

**Sue Waggoner**

Norman and Carli Stovall

**Elizabeth Wallis**

Robert Wallis

**Joe Wayne Warren**

Dub and Rebecca

Bowden Narramore

**Reverend Bob and****Violet Waters**

Larry and Anita Beaumont

**Reverend Jerry Weaver**

Celia Weaver

**Barbara Gayle (McNeely)****White**

Leland White

**Keith Coleman White**

Connie Smith

**Bill F. Wiese**

Reverend Sharon Wiese

**Linda Wild**

Ricia Kerber

**Cleo and Herbert Wiley**

Gary and Cheryl Rodgers

**Dr. Charles and****Merle Williams**

Rosemarie Williams Foster

**Gene Paul Williams**

Charles and Carol Brown

**Lee Brooks Wilson**

Dr. Elsa Soto Leggett and

Rev. Richard L. Leggett

**Gerald Wimpee**

Max and Susan Spencer

**Jimmy Allan Winters**

Gladys, Henry and Teresa,

Patrick and Consuelo Garner

**Rick and Kaye Wolfe**

Wes and Wendy Green

**Levi Leib Wuenschel**

Tom and Mary Anne Leib

**Ryan J. Zeeck**

Charles and Vi Zeeck



# Merry Christmas

*From Methodist Children's Home*

Methodist Children's Home is grateful for our faithful friends who contribute to a season of joy for our children and families. We are honored to have your support as we create special memories for our children. Your gifts bless those we serve during the Christmas season and throughout the year.

**Annual Christmas Offering | Christmas Donations | Secret Santa Program | End-of-Year Gifts**