



Open House Ministries

Empowering homeless families in our community

900 West 12th Street, Vancouver, WA 98660

(360) 737-0300

April 2008

More than a shelter for families...

Kathy and her two boys parked their car and walked through the doors of Open House Ministries - their hands full of items to donate to the shelter. "I want my boys to know about their community. Can you tell us a little bit about what you do here?", Kathy asked. Here at Open House, everyday we have an opportunity to share our mission to reach out to families in need with someone from the community who hasn't yet heard of the best kept secret in town. And every time I get the privilege of talking about Open House or guiding a tour through our halls, I get the same reaction - "Wow, I didn't know there was so much going on here! Open House really has a lot of programs for the families it serves." YES, we are much more than a shelter and a safe place to live. Let's take a moment to explore a couple of the programs here that deeply impact the lives of the families and are crucial at leading them down the path to independent living!



Pictured here are some of our current counseling interns.

Clinical Counseling and Family Therapy

Counseling, a critical component of Open House Ministries' program, is made available to everyone in the house - adult and child. Each year we are blessed by graduate level interns from Western Seminary, George Fox University and Lewis & Clark College. At no cost to Open House, these young professionals work with our residents on the underlying issues that brought them to their situation.

Stephanie Vos, who is pictured above on the far left, will graduate from Western Seminary this spring. Stephanie sees counseling as a way of helping residents identify what's at the core of their problems. Many adults enter counseling with a lot of anger. They can be resistant to the program because most are not used to being on a schedule and being held accountable to that schedule. Counseling plays a role in softening their hearts and in helping them to see that staff are not out to get them but rather to help them. Stephanie works hard to help the residents see that their time here at Open House is only for a season.

Homelessness is a very cyclical social problem. Counseling is one tool we use to help break through the cycle and keep from transferring it to the children who live at Open House. Children who take advantage of the counseling program have something stable in their lives. Being in the lobby of Open House when a child is waiting for his/her counselor is special. Their eyes light up and they are genuinely excited to spend time with someone who listens with care and love.

Indeed, counseling is a crucial piece of the program at Open House Ministries!



Pictured here is Terry Mash working with two of our residents on fractions.

Educational Enrichment

For the last year and a half, thanks to a partnership with Clark College, Open House Ministries has been able to offer residents Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes on-site. Terry Mash, pictured above with a student, teaches math and reading and Anita Lundy teaches writing to our residents who are working towards attaining their GED. And, thanks to generous donors, when residents are ready, funding for their GED testing is available.

As a retired teacher from the Vancouver School District, Terry sees the Educational Enrichment program as much more than a prerequisite to the GED. "I look for holes in a resident's education and help them face those holes and plug them with knowledge." Terry sees each student as an individual with different needs and he works hard to meet people where they are.

Educational Enrichment is about developing the 'I can do this - I can be successful' attitude. It's about giving parents the tools they need to help their kids with homework and increasing their understanding of what their children are learning. It's about transitioning from fearing math to seeing results. It's about creating a culture that sees education as a good thing and a way of opening doors. And it's about helping people see their potential and develop a confidence in their God given gifts.

When an Open House resident enrolls in ABE classes he/she also becomes a student of Clark College. Suddenly a college education is not the foreign idea it once was! Several graduates of the ABE program are pursuing further education at Clark College!



Open House Ministries

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*Empowering homeless families
in our community*



**We all have an opportunity to
BUILD a brighter future for the
children of Open House!**

An Update on the Kitchen and the Culinary Arts Track...

Last summer we introduced you to the idea of adding a new program to our Work Preparation Program - *The Culinary Arts Track*. Since then, we have received tremendous support from the community in the way of funding, donated services and appliances! On February 28th, Open House Ministries was presented with a **\$15,000** grant from the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington's *Community Giving Fund*. Additionally we were the recipient of a grant from the *Joe & Teresa Pauletto Family Fund* for **\$5,000** and a grant from the *Jane A. Hagelstein Advised Fund* for **\$1,000**. Both funds which are held within the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington. With these generous gifts we are able to finish the work of bringing our kitchen up to Health Department standards and truly launch the program!



The Culinary Arts Track consists of three phases. In Phase I, residents are taught a course on food safety. Already, some Open House residents have completed Phase I and have successfully obtained their Food & Beverage Service Worker's Permit from the state of WA!

Phase II teaches residents information on nutrition and the mechanics of preparing well-balanced meals for their families. We will actually utilize ingredients that can be found on the shelves of our food pantry to help residents prepare nutritious meals in their apartments. For example, they will learn how to build a nutritious meal around the classic food pantry staple, Mac & Cheese.

In the last phase, residents will have the opportunity to receive training for a future career in the food service industry. Here residents will get substantial hands-on experience in food preparation for catering events. Since the food service sector is one of the fastest growing industries in the state, the Culinary Arts Track will give residents the relevant training they need to pursue work in a field that has current demand.

Dont forget your April Shopping List

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> pears | <input type="checkbox"/> peaches | <input type="checkbox"/> apple sauce | <input type="checkbox"/> jelly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> mixed fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> baby fruits | <input type="checkbox"/> carrots | <input type="checkbox"/> peas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> mixed veggies | <input type="checkbox"/> ketchup | <input type="checkbox"/> mustard | <input type="checkbox"/> chili |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hotdogs | <input type="checkbox"/> canned chicken | <input type="checkbox"/> Tuna Helper | <input type="checkbox"/> tuna |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hamburger Helper | <input type="checkbox"/> hamburger meat | <input type="checkbox"/> chowder soups | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cream of chicken soup | <input type="checkbox"/> cream of mushroom | <input type="checkbox"/> toilet paper | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> diapers (sizes 2-6) | <input type="checkbox"/> shampoo & conditioner | <input type="checkbox"/> tampons | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brooms, dust pans, mops for residents' rooms | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing for men - specifically pants in all sizes | | | |



Colton Colbertson volunteers his time to sort through donated items in the clothing closet. Contact Dawn @ 737.0300 for more information on volunteering!

How will you get involved?

* Volunteer your time and skills

* Contribute financially

A great investment at \$13.50/bed night