



**OPEN HOUSE
MINISTRIES**

www.sheltered.org

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*So if the Son
sets you free,
you will be
free indeed.*

John 8:36

Connections

July, 2019



Natasha and Ramon's Story

Newlyweds Natasha Tworek and Ramon Ruiz have been living at Open House Ministries for the past eight months. Life is looking up, but it wasn't always.

The couple was plagued by years of addiction and homelessness. In addition, Ramon was close to death because one of his heart valves was compromised due to a blood infection. He underwent open heart surgery and a valve replacement, and received a pacemaker.

"I was addicted to meth, and Ramon was addicted to meth and heroin. Then, his health took a really bad turn for the worse. Everything was falling apart," says Natasha.

Ultimately, the couple's three young children were taken away from them.

"We lost our apartment and lived with friends. They were evicted and we were on the streets. Eventually, we were just exhausted and strung out, and ready for a better life," says Natasha.

Natasha's mother encouraged the family to move from California to Washington to be near her. Spots at Open House opened up, and Natasha and Ramon started the program immediately.

Today, the couple is working hard in the Open House program including outpatient addiction classes, Bible studies, chapel, job training, parenting classes, and counseling sessions. Learning to love, accept and trust God is also moving them toward complete healing.

"Honestly, every staff person is wonderful and caring. We love Pastor Mark so much and



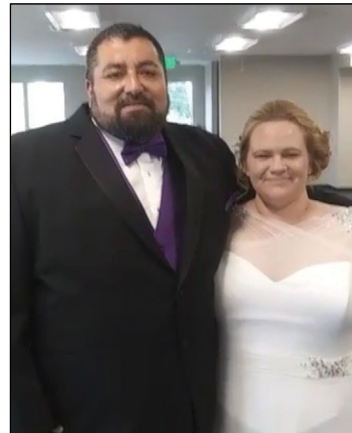
Jodie is our amazing case manager. Even the residents are supportive and helpful. They understand our path since they've been there and help us learn and move through our journey with Christ," says Natasha.

Pastor Mark married the couple this past April in a blessed ceremony and reception on the Open House campus.

With the help of God, Natasha and Ramon have been reunited with their children. Both are gainfully employed and the family is now looking for permanent housing as their Open House journey comes to an end.

"Open House continues to strengthen us in the Lord and teaches us how to be better people. It's the most amazing place I have ever been. My kids love our new life with Jesus and having sober parents," says Natasha of 8-year-old Chris, 6-year-old Alejandro, and 5-year-old Adrian.

"Anything is possible with Jesus and love of life," says Natasha. ❤️





Yearning

Chaplain's Corner - July, 2019

My wife and I recently welcomed the arrival of our newest grandson, Jude, to our family. We watched attentively as he tuned into this strange new world, which in turn, began to imprint images into his very soul. We engaged with this treasuring of new life and enjoyed the deep waters of love cascading within us.

This deep yearning is a type, an example, of God's affections for us. I was widowed in 1995, when my late wife Audrey died after a seven-year illness. Facing the prospect of parenting 8-year-old and 7-year-old daughters, I was more than overwhelmed. I prayed, "Lord, I barely know how to father; and I do not know how to mother these girls." In response, He taught me via Psalm 103. Here, the theme of God's steadfast love is repeated, while God deepens our view of His love for His children.

God's yearning toward His children is seen in the Hebrew word, *rehem*, translated as "compassionate, merciful and gracious." In I Kings 3, King Solomon faced two women arguing over who was the mother of one baby boy, after another baby boy died in the night. Solomon's wisdom was masterful: He ordered to literally divide the baby between the two women—

using a sword! Hearing this edict, the real mother relinquished her son to the other woman, out of *compassion, mercy and grace (rehem)* for the baby's very life.

Solomon now knew the real mother. And this word, *rehem*, reflected God's yearning for my daughters, too. It is both *paternal and maternal*.



"As a father shows compassion to His children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him" Psalm 103:13 ESV

This loving image of God's yearning is foundational to Open House Ministries. Far too often, generations of families have been greatly influenced by brokenness in the home of origin. Thanks be to God, who meets our mothers, fathers and children, and rewrites images of dysfunctional homes and bad parenting. In God's grace, these healing hearts become the seedbed for a fertile future of growth. We see that God's truths for our life go far beyond "simple" salvation, and into the regeneration of life together in God's family.

Thank you for making it possible to have the time, place and resources for this critical work. You are loved!

Fondly,
Mark Roskam
Chaplain



RACE FOR THE HOMELESS

A Race With A Purpose • Benefiting Open House Ministries

Saturday, August 3, 2019

O.O. Howard House • 750 Anderson St. • Vancouver, WA 98661

Why We Race

The Race for the Homeless 2019 will run for its 20th year in Vancouver, Washington. Once again, 100% of the race fee will benefit Open House Ministries. Last year, \$9,000 was given to this organization to help homeless families regain their independence.

Registration and more information available at <https://newheights.org/race/>.

Growing Hope Together Benefit Luncheon

JUNE 6, 2019

Even as the doors opened at 11:00 a.m. there were a number of eager attendees gathered for the annual **Growing Hope Together** luncheon at Warehouse 23 in Vancouver. This is the single largest fundraising effort of the year to help Open House Ministries cover the expenses of the services we provide.

Upon entering the event center, guests encountered large displays of the major ministry components at Open House, including Wheel Deals Bike Shop, Second Hand Solutions Thrift Store and Common Grounds Coffee Shop. Even some of the children were involved, demonstrating their awesome dance moves learned through Dance Evolution.



Further into the building were dozens of fantastic raffle prizes on display with enthusiastic, hopeful winners lined up to purchase and deposit their raffle tickets for the drawings held during the luncheon.

As they enjoyed the joyful atmosphere of the occasion, two of the attending community members were asked about their reasons for participating in the festivities. Both replied that they, “Love supporting Open House because it is an effective way of giving back to the community in so many different ways.”



In all, 289 tickets were purchased by community members along with volunteers and staff of Open House. Those present enjoyed a delicious meal of salad, roasted salmon filet with sweet chili and grilled asparagus over house made rosemary au gratin potatoes. The desserts were house-made carrot cake and berry panna cotta with lemon. As good as the lunch was, however, the presentations which followed were arguably better.

The new video called “Growing Hope Together” was played for the audience. Throughout the video, the mission and vision of OHM were demonstrated by real people who were beneficiaries of God’s grace delivered through the selfless efforts of the many staff and volunteers who serve at Open House.



Keynote speaker Launda Carroll and staff member Leslie Cook delivered moving testimonials about building hope in the lives of others through the use of our individual gifts and the intervention of Jesus. Launda emphasized that: “Hope



is greater than loss, and faith is bigger than fear.” She went on to explain that those present at the luncheon joined together to “build hope in the lives of those who come to Open House.” Leslie reinforced this message saying, “Through our time, talents and treasures, we can impact our community and society to have hope.” Adding, “By working together, we can grow and build up others.”

Executive Director Renee Stevens concluded the uplifting hour with heartfelt thanks to the dozens of individuals and organizations who made the event possible with contributions of their time, talents and treasures. She repeated the recurring theme of the event by pointing out that, “we all have special gifts that can be used in a wide range of life-changing endeavors for those around us, providing hope through Jesus Christ.”

If you are interested in creating hope for others, you are invited to visit www.sheltered.org. You, too, can make life-altering differences through your support of OHM. ❤️

Breaking the Cycle of HOMELESSNESS



Follow brothers Mike and Mark Roskam as they peddle their way on a fundraising bicycle ride this fall. For more than a month, the cycling enthusiasts will ride 2,300-plus miles along historic Route 66 from Chicago to Santa Monica, California. All funds raised will go to Open House Ministries to help end the cycle of homelessness, while ALL expenses will be funded by the cycling team.

"God has given us our good health and stamina to do this. He is in us and with us every mile on the road," says Mike of the duo's goal of raising \$66,000 for Open House.

To support Mike and Mark on their quest to help break the cycle of homelessness, call (360) 737-0300.



Thank you to our Growing Hope Together luncheon sponsors!



Pacific Lifestyle
HOMES

Riverview
COMMUNITY BANK



August 13, 2019

Camas Meadows • 1 pm

Scramble for the Kids Golf Tournament
Sponsored by Liberty Bible Church

Golf for four, carts, dinner and a great day of golf supporting orphans, foster kids and homeless kids!

Registration available online at
<http://www.lbnaz.org/liberty-blog/scramble-for-the-kids>.

Volunteers Needed!

Please consider volunteering in our thrift store. Apply on our website or call Claudia Merritt, our Volunteer Coordinator, at 360-737-0300.

SHELTER NEEDS:

Paper towels, razors, Kleenex, size 4 and 5 diapers, quart- and gallon-size zip-close baggies, boys and girls socks and underwear (all sizes), day bus passes, copy paper.



Please consider Open House Ministries in your will or trust.