

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

Brothers in Service

Discovering the joys of service came quickly to brothers Julius and Boris Christensen. As part of their service project at Jesuit High School, the boys were encouraged by their mom to tour Open House Ministries and learn about our organization. "I thought OHM was so special because families get to stay together at OHM," said Julius. "I wanted to support a place that keeps families together and has a faith-based community for my Jesuit service project."

Both boys served on campus in a variety of ways, helping in the day care playing games with three and four-year-old children then shifting to the donations department helping with drop-off donations or working with our maintenance team. They



were able to see first-hand how Open House Ministries operates. Serving at the shelter helped them understand how important it is to never give up and to strive to be better each day.

Touring the clothing areas of our thrift store and working in the donations department had a big impact on Julius and Boris. They were moved by the lack of choices available to high-school aged residents and wanted to do something about it. It wasn't long before they had organized a clothing drive with their friends at school. "It made



Executive Director Renee Stevens joined by Boris Christensen (L) and his brother, Julius (R).

me sad when I visited the clothing shop and the teen options were so limited. That's why I started a teen clothing drive with my brother," said Boris. "We thought that between all our friends and sports teams we could get our friends to donate shoes and clothing for the teen community."

The brothers shared how serving at Open House Ministries impacted them in many ways. They were able to connect with people they would have otherwise never met and learned the residents are people taking action to better themselves and their families. Serving helped them realize how serious the housing and health care issues are in our community and how they can make a difference. They expressed how grateful they are for their own family and how much they enjoyed volunteering at Open House Ministries.

"I loved playing with the kids in the day care," said Julius. "I had so much fun shooting hoops, reading with them, and doing puzzles. The community fair was a memorable day also. It was cool to see so many members of the community come together to support each other."

We are so thankful for Julius and Boris and hope their experience at Open House Ministries will have a lasting impact on their hearts for years to come. ●

GRACIOUS GIVING

Making Great Things Happen

It is important to have an up-to-date Will or Trust. In addition to documenting how your property will bless your loved ones, your Will or Trust can be a meaningful and effective way to support Open House Ministries and our work to provide life-changing help to local families.

There are many benefits to planning a gift in your Will or Trust.

- Assurance. You have provided for others in the way you intend.
- Flexibility. Your gift can be changed during your lifetime if your needs or goals change.
- Impact. Support the work you care about most.
- Influence. Shape your personal legacy and set an example for others.

Your Will or Trust needs to be drafted in accordance with the laws in our state. We can refer you to attorneys who specialize in estate planning and there are even suitable online programs if you have a fairly simple estate. Please contact Open House Ministries or email ross.merritt@sheltered.org if you would like to discuss or would like more information. ●

TOURS & TALKS

Want to see Open House Ministries up close?
First Friday tours are back!
Noon to 1 pm
Contact us for a tour at
events@sheltered.org

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Will we play our part?

There was an interview that recently caught my attention. It was a director making the press circuit promoting his new film. He was joined by one of the lead actors, and together they discussed the film and the process of bringing the story to life. The interviewer then inquired about the director's creative approach to writing and casting the characters. The director's response surprised me. The director mentioned that he had crafted both the movie and the titular character with the actor sitting next to him in mind.

This may be common. I've always heard stories of these big casting rooms filled with desperate actors competing to land a role. Each unsure of how they did until their phone rang with the good news. I often wondered what it would be like to sit in the hall with Tom Selleck and Harrison Ford as they both wait to audition for Indiana Jones. Or John Travolta and Tom Hanks as they took turns auditioning for Forrest Gump. While it may not have happened like this, it's fun to imagine.

In a culture dominated by competition and the fear that one is not enough. ...Smart enough, fast enough, good enough. What an incredible gift being chosen is.

And this made me think. We do not have to audition for a part in God's mission. We never have to audition to determine if God has a part for us. We were created with our place to serve in mind. The question is never, 'Did we get the part?' But 'Will we play our part?' It is never a question *if* we were called to serve, but *where* have we been called to serve?

God is the author of human history. And as the author, He has written a place for each of us to serve. As the Apostle Paul writes, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (*Ephesians 2:10*).

● *Chaplain Jon Nichols*

SUMMER CELEBRATION

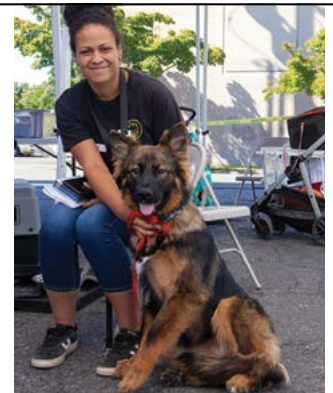
Kid's Carnival Day



Summertime activities at Open House Ministries included a full day of fun carnival games for the kids. We were blessed as laughter filled the campus and kids took turns at the Big Kahuna splash!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Block Party & Resource Fair Success



August 10th marked another great day at Open House Ministries as neighbors and friends joined us on campus for our block party and resource fair. Over 30 organizations shared vital information and services to more than 700 attendees. Guests were blessed with a free BBQ lunch, a thrift store fashion show, carnival games, and ice cream treats from the Vancouver Church Yum Truck. The Humane Society for SWWA cared for

60+ pets, and Great Clips kept three haircutting stations busy all day. This year we expanded our services with the Department of Licensing, who helped people process photo IDs and driver's license renewals.

We want to thank the amazing OHM staff, sponsors, and volunteers who worked tirelessly at the block party this year. You helped make our community feel cared for and loved. *You are a blessing!*

SHELTER NEEDS

Canned fruit • Canned soups and chili
One pound packages of hamburger
Boxed dinners • Bottled water
Baby wipes • Lysol spray
Women's deodorant • Paper towels
Socks of all sizes
Children's toothbrushes & toothpaste



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