

WINTER
2016

bridge

Bridging the gap for children and families in need

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A Teenager Finds Healing through Residential Treatment

Imagine that one day you accidentally knock a vase over, smashing it into tiny pieces. What do you do? Collect the pieces and throw them away? Consider the broken mess a total loss?

Or do you pick up the beautiful colored pieces and use them to make something new? According to Ann, who lived a while at the Residential Treatment Center in Farmington, that is exactly what PCHAS did for her: It aided her in picking up the pieces of her life to create a bright, colorful future.

Ann had been adopted as a baby. By her teenage years, in the mid-1980s, she rebelled against her parents. Then as now, rebellion can take the form of alcohol and drug abuse, self-injury, sexual behavior, or acting out in other risky ways. Today Ann says, "At 15, I was self-destructing. I fell victim many times to peer pressure in a desperate need to be accepted. I couldn't express to my parents what was troubling me or trust that they would understand."

The family consulted a psychologist, who referred them to PCHAS. He suggested placing Ann in a residential treatment program.

"I remember feeling hopeless, rejected, terrified and alone," Ann remarks.

It was up to the staff at the treatment center to provide therapy. For months they helped her examine her anger and self-destructive behavior and heal. Ann is thankful to PCHAS' devoted staff who, she said, reassured her that she was safe, secure and loved.

The other girls at the Center were an important part of her healing and growth, too. "The girls at the home had tragic stories of abuse, yet they were determined to succeed, thanks to the tools PCHAS gave them. I was inspired by their refusal to allow their past to destroy their future. They gave me courage."

Looking back, Ann remembers that she developed valuable coping skills that enabled her to move in a more positive direction. She says, "I'll never forget the words of my PCHAS House Parent: You can either be a victim or a survivor in this life. But if you are a victim, you will be in pain and your future will be filled with problems."

Eventually, she was reunited with her adoptive parents. With new understanding and tools for communicating her feelings, she was able to bond with her parents and accept their love and care.

"I am a success story today," Ann states, "thanks to God's Grace, my family, friends, and the staff of PCHAS, who took the time to invest in me. That is what PCHAS does. It invests in the future by investing in children."



Presbyterian Children's
Homes and ServicesSM
of Missouri

MISSION: Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services provides Christ-centered care and support to children and families in need.



a message from

Executive Director Robert Giegling



don't forget!

Don't forget to visit our website and Facebook page for the latest news and stories!

Missouri.pchas.org/news



We pride ourselves on our abilities to really think outside the box and **develop strategies that meet the individual needs of the child and/or family.**



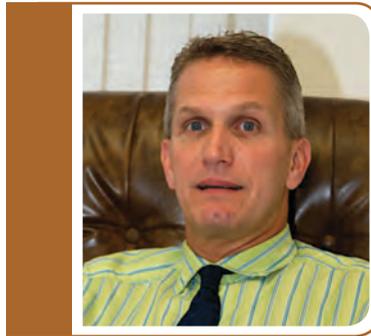
SEEKING PCHAS AMBASSADORS



We seek people who are passionate about our mission to serve as a link between our agency and their church or service organization. PCHAS Ambassadors receive training and support for their special role as PCHAS advocates and liaisons.

Contact your Development Officer to learn more about ways you can help.

[See Page 5 for contact information](#)



Social workers do not always see the full fruit of their labor. A family moves away, a child grows up. So it was gratifying for me to see the past, present and future of our work at Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS) intersect at Hope for the Children luncheons.

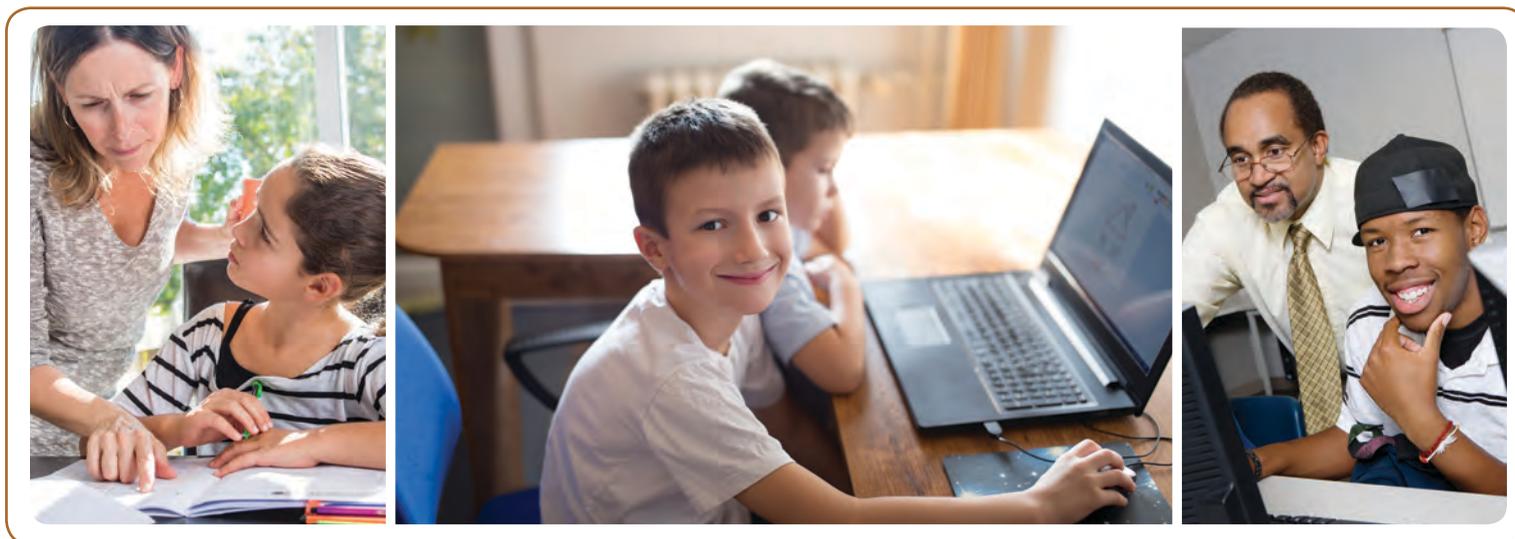
At two of the luncheons last year, we heard from Ann, a PCHAS client who shared her difficult story. Thirty years ago, Ann was a teenager, struggling with feelings of rejection and hopelessness. She was terrified and alone. But when I met her at a Hope for the Children luncheon, she was warm and outgoing. It's exciting to see that PCHAS has made a huge difference to her and to her children. From our conversation I know she practices healthy communication skills with her own children, empowering them to succeed, too.

Another speaker at a luncheon was Josh. He and his wife are foster parents, and he praised the PCHAS Foster Care Case Manager who guided them through the challenges of caring for a newborn with a heroin addiction. Between the infant's withdrawal symptoms and opening their home to two other foster children, Josh and his wife needed a lot of help and encouragement. They could not be happier with, or more grateful for, their Case Manager. In fact they credit their success to the staff member's practical advice - and her emotional support.

At one luncheon, I ate with Tyler, a student at Hancock Middle School. He has been working with Ken, his Therapeutic Mentor, for three years and has transformed from a child with disruptive behavior to a mentor for younger children. "If it hadn't been for Ken," he said, "I'd be headed for juvie (jail)." Empowered by Therapeutic Mentoring and filled with hope, Tyler continues to make progress.

Ann reflects our past; Josh, our present; Tyler is our future. Working together, our staff, volunteers and supporters make their transformations possible.

Building Relationships



School Gives A+ to Therapeutic Mentors

“Over the top incredible!” That’s how Sherry Rischbieter, a counselor at Hancock Place School District in South St. Louis County, describes the positive results from the Therapeutic Mentoring program that started just a year ago.

Sherry knows firsthand how behavioral issues affect the grades of students. As a crisis counselor, she has seen problems with self-control in an elementary school classroom lead to aggressive outbursts. By middle school, youngsters can spiral downward into suspension or truancy.

**“My temper used to be in control of me.
Now I am the one in control of me.”**

But this year, thanks to PCHAS, Sherry says, “We’ve had fewer problems with the students.” Sherry gives high marks to the professional mentors from Presbyterian Children’s Homes and Services for “bridging the gap between home and school.” Parents allow children, ages five to 19, to participate and now see the mentors as advocates for them.

Therapeutic mentors, who are paid, are required to have a degree in one of the social sciences or education. They meet with their mentees at least one hour each week for a year. Even over the summer, they

continue meeting to maintain steady progress. Such a commitment makes a big difference to many families, including Tyler’s.

Tyler demonstrated disruptive behavior by fourth grade. He engaged in fights at school and at home. Now a sixth grader, Tyler says, “My temper used to be in control of me. Now I am the one in control of me.” He credits his mentor, Ken, who taught him how to recognize “triggers” that spark his anger.

Tyler’s mom is proud of him for earning better grades and becoming a leader among other students. “Kids are coming to me for advice on how to handle problems,” Tyler says. “It feels good that they look up to me.”

The Therapeutic Mentoring Program is funded by the Children’s Service Fund of St. Louis County and administered by PCHAS, at no cost to families. Most of them work with mentors at home or in the community, but some meet at school. The program began operating in four school districts last February, and now approximately 200 students participate in the Hancock Place, Bayless, Hazelwood and Riverview Gardens school districts.

To match a mentor with a child in the greater St. Louis area, call (314) 785-0180 or write to Jason.Bead@pchas.org.

Caring Congregations



Generosity Comes in Many Forms

Churches around Missouri share their blessings in a variety of ways. We are grateful for their tangible gifts as well as their time and labor.

The good folks at **Dardenne Presbyterian Church** hosted our Hope for the Children luncheon last fall (see photos). The Presbyterian Women, Elzea Circle and Mission Committee gave their free time to make the event in St. Charles County warm and welcoming. Their support helped keep our expenses low. In just its second year, the luncheon raised over \$50,000.

Special thanks also go to **First Presbyterian Church of Dexter** in southeast Missouri. This small church has been donating \$1,000 to \$1,500 to PCHAS of Missouri annually for many years. This amount of support is quite large -- given that there are fewer than 50 members in the congregation!

The church holds a large garage sale with the proceeds from the sale going to PCHAS of Missouri. It seems that the entire town of Dexter gets involved. People there recognize it's a worthy cause and donate their items so that the church can raise funds for PCHAS clients, hurting children and families.

According to Kay Wooley, Clerk of Session, there isn't a day during the year that the church isn't in full "garage sale mode," whether it's stockpiling items and planning for the big sale, putting on the event, or planning the following year's event. "This is truly a labor of love for everyone involved," she says.

For 79 years, **First Presbyterian Church of Columbia** has been holding a gift service for the children there and in Farmington. Each year, PCHAS provides the church with wish lists from the children. The members create and hang tags, wrap their gifts in white paper and then, during the church service, come forward to place gifts under the tree. They call this lovely practice their White Gift Service.

PCHAS manages a Transitional Living house in Columbia. Because the residents are aging out of foster care, they do not have the support that young adults need to start college or set up an apartment. They were thrilled to receive both practical and emotional support.

Erin Frasier, the Development Officer in Columbia, attended the most recent White Gift Service. She recalls, "It was extremely moving to see so many kind people doing so much to ensure that our residents have a wonderful Christmas. It's more than that, though. Their long-standing tradition of providing prayer and financial support creates a robust sense of hope for these hurting children throughout the entire year."

The volunteers and contributors from these three churches are an integral part of our growing success. In our next newsletter we will share the efforts of other congregations. To learn how you, your church or civic group can make a difference, please contact your Development Officer today (see page five for contact information).

Why We Give



Floyd and Martha Sweeney became acquainted with Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services more than 25 years ago. The couple visited one of the campuses and saw the genuine affection between the children in care and PCHAS program staff. They agreed that PCHAS was something very special, doing very important work, and set out to support the agency in every way they could.

Since then, the Sweeneys have donated generously and named PCHAS in their will. Floyd served on the Board of Trustees in the early 1990s and remains involved

as a Trustee Emeritus. Martha is a PCHAS Ambassador, representing the agency at their church, Ladue Chapel.

"We don't like knowing there are kids suffering," says Floyd. "We only hope what we are doing is enough. Martha and I see the need and we're fortunate to be able to help." Martha adds, "It would be impossible to tell you how much it has meant to Floyd and me to be a part of the PCHAS family. I don't think we have ever been associated with a more dedicated, loving, caring group of people."

"We feel good knowing that once we're gone, we'll continue helping."

The Sweeneys share our dedication to serving children with love and compassion and our belief that every child is precious in God's eyes. To further this work, they are providing for PCHAS through a bequest donation. "We feel good knowing that once we're gone, we'll continue helping," says Floyd. PCHAS thanks them for creating this legacy of faith which will help children in need for generations to come.



If you itemize your taxes and made a contribution to PCHAS last year, remember to claim that on your tax return.

This is especially important if you contributed \$500 or more to our agency in one year. You are eligible for tax credits in addition to the deduction you receive for charitable giving. The state's Department of Economic Development gives a credit through the Youth Opportunities Program (YOP) to individual and corporate donors. Contributions of \$500 or more may be made by check, credit card or stock transfer.

These tax credits are available on a first-come, first-served basis. We're happy to

guide you through the process or explain further at any time.

Last year we served more than 2,200 children and family members in Missouri through our core programs:

- Family Solutions for Kids
- Foster Care Case Management
- Therapeutic Mentoring
- Residential Treatment
- Transitional Living

Your gifts, immediate and deferred, empower our clients to heal their physical, emotional and spiritual wounds. Would you like to change the life of a child or a family? Please contact a member of the Development Team today.

Development Team

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SAVE THE DATE

HOPE FOR THE CHILDREN LUNCHEON

Wed, April 27
Columbia, MO

Highlights and Insights

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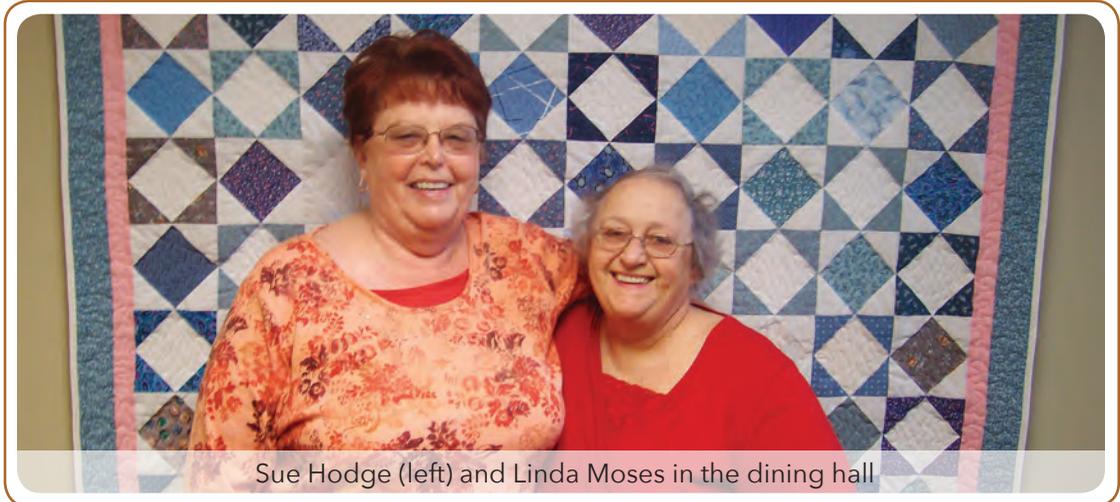
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St. Louis, MO



Sue Hodge (left) and Linda Moses in the dining hall

Sue Hodge and Linda Moses Retire from the Residential Treatment Center in Farmington

Carolyn "Sue" Hodge was well known on the Farmington campus. As kitchen supervisor, she was much loved by staff and residents alike. She knew all the residents by name, watched out for their food allergies, and took into account their "teenage appetites" when planning meals.

Over the years, Sue has helped many residents gain vocational skills by working in the kitchen with her and served as a role model for Christian values. She has also been a resource for many staff and residents who have needed prayer and support. In January, after 19 years on her feet, Sue retired.

Another longtime employee, Linda Moses, has also retired. During her 18 years of tenure, Linda worked as a Child Care Worker in various areas on campus

touching the lives of many children, many of whom still call back to talk to her. Then, as a nurse's assistant, she handled everything from abrasions to Z-packs. The staff and residents thank both of these loyal employees and wish them a happy and healthy retirement.



Thank you for your leadership

Recently four board members finished their terms of service:

DR. NANCY E. HOLMES

MR. BRUCE WILLIAMS

DR. WILLIAM D. REARDEN

MR. GENE TREVINO

All of them served PCHAS for multiple, sometimes consecutive, three-year terms. We thank them for their dedication.

Re-joining the board is Mr. Lawson Calhoun of St. Louis. New members of the board are Mrs. Vera Brandt of Imperial, Mr. Byron Taylor of Farmington, and Ms. Amy White, J.D., of St. Louis. Welcome!



Kids Corner



Children Take a Field Trip to the St. Louis Art Museum

A group from our Residential Treatment Center in Farmington took a trip to the St. Louis Art Museum with the Center's staff. The staff encouraged the youngsters to voice their own interpretations of the artwork then read

the museum curators' descriptions of the works. The teens enjoyed the experience of seeing a variety of paintings and sculptures. Some of them were even inspired to pose.



Many Hands Make Light Work at Ashley House

In Springfield, the young women at Ashley House worked with a large group of Sunrise Rotary Club volunteers to clean up the grounds. About 50 volunteers, fueled by coffee and donuts, cut up a fallen tree, trimmed and cleared branches, and provided kindling for the girls' fire pit. They cleaned up the garden, raked and bagged leaves, and trimmed the rose bushes. Some volunteers

cleaned all the windows, inside and out; others painted the foyer and three bedrooms. By evening, the residents and volunteers were really pleased with what they had accomplished together. Many thanks to all who helped make Ashley House a more beautiful place for the girls in our Transitional Living Program, a program for girls who have "aged out" of foster care at age 18.

Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services of Missouri is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. All gifts are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. We do not render professional tax advice.

If you are receiving duplicate mailings, wish to make a change of address or no longer wish to be included on our mailing list, please contact our headquarters at 800.383.8147.

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bridge

Bridging the gap for children and families in need

Your gifts may qualify under the Youth Opportunities Program

Would 50% tax credits make giving more fun?

Youth Opportunities Tax credits have become very popular in recent years. Currently we have tax credits available for this year but they won't last!

Call us for more details on how to qualify at 1-800-383-8147.



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of Missouri

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