



INSIDE Story

WHEELER MISSION MINISTRIES *Help. Hope. Healing.*

FALL 2014

"MY LIFE WAS *Lonely* & HOPELESS"



Jacob was just 24 when he realized how isolated his addiction to drugs had made him.

"My life was lonely and hopeless. I didn't have a job or any money," he says. "I didn't have any friends. I lost everything, including all my relationships."

His addiction was such a powerful force that it led him to hurt the people he loved most. **"My family was going to file a restraining order so I didn't steal from them or hurt them again,"** he says sadly. "I was just at the end of my rope."

Growing up in Indianapolis, Jacob had heard about our long-term men's addiction recovery program – in fact, he knew a family friend who had graduated from it. He decided to see if Wheeler Mission could help him, too.

"I knew I needed to be here," Jacob says. "I couldn't quit on my own, and I realized the damage I was

causing my family."

As Jacob healed from years of addiction, our staff and the other men in the program encouraged him to also care for his spiritual health – something that Jacob hadn't thought about in a long time.

"I grew up in church, but by my 20s, I didn't believe anymore," he says. "But here, I developed a relationship with the Lord. **I've learned how to handle life – and disappointment – in a healthy way now.** Before, I would just go get high."

After graduating from the program, Jacob spent a year ministering to other men in our Servant Leadership Training (SLT) program. "You learn that you lead by example, by serving others first."

Today, a graduate of SLT, Jacob is very involved at a local church, helping with their music ministry – and also works as a case manager at Wheeler Mission!

"I have a purpose and a direction in my life now. My relationships that I destroyed have been restored," he says. **"God is clearly working at Wheeler Mission. He's constantly restoring lives and redeeming people who are lost and far from Him."**

A Message From Rick Alvis



My grandson is just under a year old, and named after my own father. Each time I hold him, he reminds me of the Lord's blessings throughout the generations of my family.

And when I look at his tiny face, his perfect fingers and toes, it's not hard to feel protective of this wonderful little guy. I want to do everything I can to make sure he's safe, cared for and never alone.

There are 20 children living at our Center for Women & Children—children who deserve the same care and protection my grandson does. So I'm grateful for your support because it gives these children the stability they need: nourishing meals around a table...a safe bed to be tucked into each night...an extended Mission family that helps them, loves them, watches out for them.

Over 900 children are homeless in Indianapolis on any given night. Our Center is a haven for kids like Brandi's (*her story is on page 3*) when there is nowhere else for mom to turn.

Brandi's children, and those like them, are a few of the many reasons to keep our community's most vulnerable children in your heart and in your prayers. Together, we can make sure they're safe, cared for and never alone.

Rick Alvis
President/CEO

\$45,487 in 30 days!

A group of passionate, generous golfers raised a total of \$45,487 for our 4th annual 100 Holes for the Homeless event – an amount that exceeded our fundraising goal!

A special **THANK YOU** to the 33 golfers who spent 30 days fundraising and then came out to Broadmoor Country Club to golf for nearly 9 hours.

Out of 33 golfers, 24 of them hit their goal of raising \$1,000 – and the donation total was up 45% from last year. In just 4 years of existence, this event has raised around \$130,000 to help homeless people!

This year, five celebrities came out and played with some of our top fundraisers: Todd Klaassen (RTV6), Dana Huntsinger-Benbow (*Indianapolis Star*), Kurt Wallace (88.3 Shine.FM), Troy Kehoe (WishTV8) and Kyle Knezevich (ESPN Radio). Our main event sponsors were 88.3 Shine.FM and Mats International.



Bob Desrosiers, our top fundraiser, had the privilege of playing with Todd Klassen from RTV6. Bob raised \$4,165 for this event!



The top golfer at this year's event was Brock Ward.

Each dollar raised by our golfers helped provide food, shelter and care during the summer months, when donations drop off, but the number of people coming to the Mission doesn't!



The Wheeler Mission Thrift Store sells gently used clothing and household items while providing work therapy for men and women in Wheeler's programs. All profits benefit Wheeler Mission. Specials include 50% off everything in the store on the second and fourth Thursdays of every month, 50% off on books every Tuesday, and 25% off everything for Senior Citizens (age 55 and older) every Wednesday. The Wheeler Mission Thrift Store creates a friendly and comfortable environment with evangelical outreach as an integral part of its purpose. Thrift store info: 2730 S. Madison Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46225. Phone: (317) 791-9186.

50 tons of food!

83,000 meals. That's 99,600 pounds of food – nearly 50 tons! That's how much food Wheeler Mission will serve to hungry men, women and children this Thanksgiving season.

Wow! That seems impossible. But with your help, it will happen.

It costs just \$2.25 to feed one hungry person. Just \$2.25 to provide an entire meal of wholesome, home-cooked food...a meal that may not only help that person end a life of homelessness, but a meal

that may be the start of a new and better life through the love and grace of Jesus.

Your gift today to our 2014 Annual Thanksgiving Campaign will go a long way toward filling the Mission's pantry and providing the care hungry, homeless men, women and children will need this Thanksgiving season and beyond.

Just a reminder: The Mission receives NO government funding. So we really do need your help to cook and serve more than 83,000 meals. Please, give generously. Thank you!





Did you know...

...in 2013, the state of Indiana saw a 12% increase in the number of homeless veterans; **in Indianapolis, that number increased by 21%**

Wheeler Mission's STEPS (Steps Towards Economic and Personal Stability) program provides housing and meals while helping veterans **apply for and receive benefits.**

Brandi's family found a place to call home

Brandi, a single mom trying to support her three young boys, had been struggling to make it on her own. Eventually, she found herself homeless. She never dreamed her family would have to set foot in a shelter, but with no place else to go, she reluctantly called Wheeler Mission – and there was one room left.

Brandi and her sons moved into our Center for Women & Children, joining our Family Development program. “I learned how to mentor my children through God’s Word,” Brandi says, “and to spend my money on things I needed, not just things I wanted.”

After a year of classes in parenting, money management, and computer training, Brandi felt ready to live on her own. But soon, she encountered some real challenges, especially with her children’s father. As Brandi says, “I went back into the world, and I didn’t allow God to nurture me.”

When her lease was up, **Brandi knew she could turn to Wheeler Mission once again for help.**

Brandi joined the Working Moms

program, designed to help women with jobs gain greater independence through individualized case management and employment training. She made a point to take advantage of every opportunity offered through the program so that she would be ready to confidently live on her own again.

She also made it a point to share how God has worked in her life. “God allowed me to mentor other women here in similar situations,” Brandi says. “I tried to encourage them...I could relate to what they were going through.”

Under the program’s guidance, and through her job as shift manager at a clothing store, Brandi saved up enough money to rent a safe, affordable apartment.

Today, Brandi’s family has a happy, stable life! Now, her next goal is a nursing degree. But even on her own, she keeps everyone at Wheeler Mission close to her heart. “I love the staff and the residents,” she says. **“They’re very loving and caring, and will go out of their way to help you make ends meet.”**

Strength In Our Streets

Central Indiana CrossFitters raised \$30,000 in a one day competition to support the ministries of Wheeler Mission and Outreach!

On June 28, we had our first Strength In Our Streets event. CrossFit IndyShield and the Indianapolis Department of Public Safety (Fire and Police) hosted this one-day Affiliate Competition and were onsite with first aid and community outreach. The last challenge of the day was a hero workout in honor of David Moore, a fallen police officer and passionate CrossFitter. His parents were present to accept a plaque in his honor.

The winner of the first challenge, which was fundraising, was CrossFit Dog Fight. They raised \$8,120. The ultimate winner of the event was CrossFit Dash/Castlewood.

Hungry for Change?



National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week, Nov. 16-22.

We all want to end hunger and homelessness.

Here's your chance to bring together your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, people from your church, school or civic group to lessen the hardships that hungry, homeless men, women and children face each day.

- » Volunteer here at the Mission
- » Organize a drive
 - Canned food
 - Clothing, especially coats & jackets for cold weather
 - Hygiene items
 - Socks and underwear
 - Sheets and blankets
- » Skip coffee and donate the money to the Mission

For more information, call **(317) 635-3575** or e-mail us at **volunteer@wmm.org**. Thank you!

Are You Ready? 2014 DRUMSTICK DASH

That's a lot of dashers – nearly 19,000! Our Drumstick Dash was recently named the second largest running event in the state of Indiana! It's exciting that our streets are packed with people who are running for a reason on Thanksgiving morning.



Celebrate our 12th annual run on Thanksgiving morning. Join us at the starting line at 9 a.m. on Thursday, Nov. 27. Move your feet so others can eat...and catch Jerry Gobbler while you're at it!

We love our volunteers! You can also volunteer – we're expecting thousands of people to participate, and we'll need more than 1,500 volunteers during the month of November to help this event run smoothly!



To register for the race or to volunteer, visit **DrumstickDash.org**.

Check out our collection drive "how-to" flyer: WheelerMission.org → Get Involved → Collections & Drives