

reACH



MARCH 2020 ISSUE

Justin's Journey

Your generosity gives hope to those aging out of foster care.



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CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT

Moving forward...always.

Welcome to the new *reACH* newsletter. With all that is going on at ACH, we felt it's best to provide you with more timely, quarterly updates on where we've been and where we're headed.

As this issue went to publication, Our Community Our Kids (OCOK), a division of ACH, welcomed a new team, with many of this team coming over from Child Protective Services (CPS). OCOK pioneered Community-Based Care in Texas and is now the first contractor to advance to Stage II. We're proud that the State has trusted us to assume conservatorship case management in Region 3b, a responsibility previously managed by CPS.

We will now be able to engage both the child and the biological family early on. Our hope is that addressing the child's trauma while also providing various services for families will create more opportunities for children to safely return home, or to other permanent home options such as relative placements (kinship) or adoption.

Our Residential Treatment Center welcomed its first residents last year, including one young lady who at first said she didn't want to come. During a tour, we could tell she was impressed by the facilities, but she wasn't budging. Then she saw that one of her past counselors was on staff...and she couldn't wait to come! It was the trusting relationship that made the difference.

During the holidays, one resident wrote a letter about a field trip a donor had arranged. "...I've enjoyed my time here so far, but one of my favorite things is our time spent on outings. Recently, some of us were able to go to Ice at The Gaylord Texan and we had an absolute blast! So, I just wanted to say a big 'Thank you' for all that you do. Your help has given me a lot to look forward to."

I couldn't have said it better. Thank you to all who have such a positive influence on the lives of so many children and families.

Wayne Carson

Wayne Carson, Ph.D.
 Chief Executive Officer



Justin's Journey in The LIFE Project

The story of a young adult navigating his way through life while in extended foster care

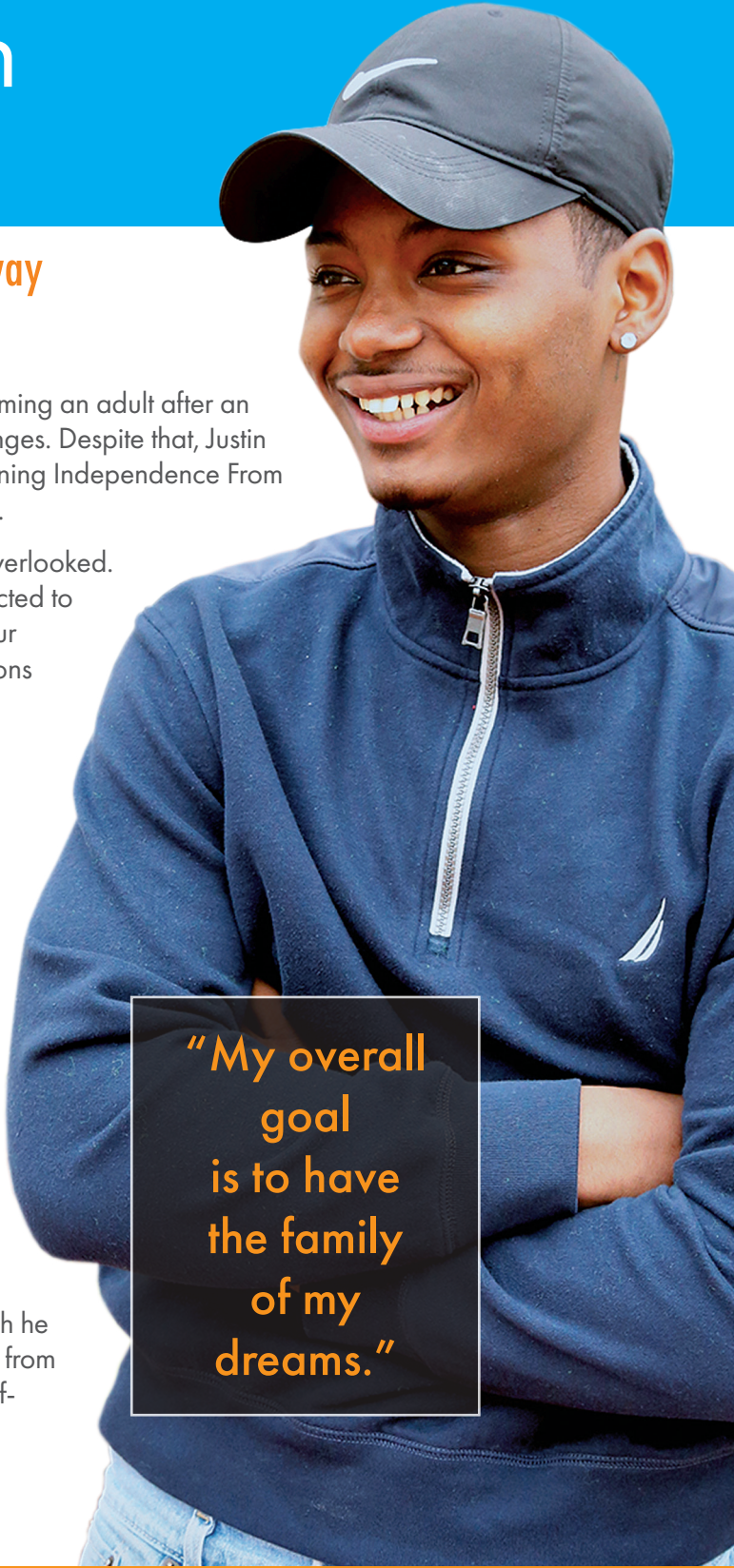
We all know entering adulthood can be difficult. But becoming an adult after an unstable childhood presents a whole set of other challenges. Despite that, Justin continues to persevere with the help of ACH's LIFE (Learning Independence From Experience) Project, a Supervised Independent Living program.

Youth aging out of the foster care system at age 18 are often overlooked. Like Justin, these children come from hard places and are expected to face adulthood without a support system. "That's something your typical young adult doesn't have to worry about," said Transitions Program Manager, Nick Little. "This population needs caring adults in their lives as well."

Justin agrees, saying "I've seen the difference between a home where the parents care about helping kids and others where you're just in the house, doing your own thing."

The LIFE Project offers support and guidance for foster youth ages 18-21 and assists with finding and maintaining employment, enrolling in school, learning how to create structure for themselves, and other necessary adulthood skills. Since joining The LIFE Project, Justin thinks about how far he's come with the help of staff mentors like Thad McCall. "Mr. Thad found out I didn't have an I.D., so I wasn't able to get any jobs. Within two weeks of being here, he made sure I had one," he recalled. "I'm legally an adult. He could've told me to figure it out on my own, but he didn't, and I just really appreciated that."

Justin believes the LIFE Project has allowed him to see how much he can succeed and to plan where he wants to be, not just months from now but years down the line. He hopes one day to become self-sufficient as an entrepreneur and have the family of his dreams.



"My overall goal is to have the family of my dreams."



Hear more about Justin's experience in foster care, his thoughts on the importance of mental health, and much more by following *Community Conversations: A Podcast by ACH Child and Family Services*, available on the PodBean app and Apple Podcasts, or listen online at ACHservices.org/about-ACH

Connections for LIFE Mentors help kids like Justin develop self-confidence and self-sufficiency. You can become a positive role model for these young adults aging out of foster care today. Learn more by visiting ACHservices.org/volunteer

The **LIFE** Project

ACH in Action

Hoot 'n Holler

This past fall, guests of our annual Hoot 'n Holler event kicked up their heels at Reata Restaurant. Many thanks to presenting sponsors GM Financial and Jerry and Melinda Johnston, and our Event Committee who helped raise over \$255,000 for ACH residential programs.



Left to right: Caren Parten, Rebecca Hillard, Anna Melissa Philpott (co-chair), Michelle Purvis (co-chair), Melissa Kirtley

Top Golf

yACH, ACH's young professional group, hosted a night of fun, food and golf at Top Golf. All proceeds from the event benefitted ACH.



Young Men's Service League

A big thank you to YMSL Keller Chapter for sprucing up our Families Together building by giving it a fresh coat of paint and bringing warmth to their home with decor. Our families had a great time playing and interacting with this group.



Christmas

From Deck the Halls to Toyland—with the most toy donations ever—to the Autobahn Christmas party, ACH made sure to spread the love during the holidays. Thank you to all the groups and individuals who helped make this time special for the children and families in our care.



Mercedes-Benz Day of Caring

We are so thankful to Mercedes-Benz for considering us on their Day of Caring. We appreciate all their hard work and time given to keep our campuses clean.



Thanksgiving

Thank you to everyone who helped assemble Thanksgiving baskets filled with Turkey day essentials. A heartfelt thank you to Lhoist North America and Pat O'Neal whose generous support provided these beautiful baskets. Your gifts have made all the difference for our families.



NEW LEGISLATION COULD AFFECT YOU!



The SECURE Act went into effect January 1, 2020. Perhaps the most impactful retirement legislation of the past decade, the SECURE Act may change how your current financial planning works.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SECURE ACT

The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act (SECURE Act) is the most impactful legislation affecting retirement accounts in decades. The SECURE Act has several positive changes, like eliminating the age restriction for contributions to qualified retirement accounts.

However, perhaps the most significant change will affect the beneficiaries of your retirement accounts. The SECURE Act requires most designated beneficiaries to withdraw the entire balance of an inherited retirement account within ten years of the account owner's death.

Under the old law, beneficiaries of inherited retirement accounts could take distributions over their life expectancy. Under the SECURE Act, the shorter

ten-year time frame for taking distributions will result in the acceleration of income tax due. This could cause your beneficiaries to be bumped into a higher income tax bracket, thus receiving less of the funds contained in the retirement account than you may have originally anticipated.

Proper estate planning considers much more than just reducing taxes. You might be concerned with protecting a beneficiary's inheritance from their creditors, future lawsuits, or a divorcing spouse. In order to protect your hard-earned retirement accounts and the ones you love, we encourage you and your professional advisor to review your estate plan considering the SECURE Act.

Making a gift from your most highly taxed assets can be a smart financial move. Utilizing Qualified Charitable Distributions from all or part of your retirement assets to support your favorite charities allows you to make a difference TODAY. The portion or amount given to charity avoids income tax. What's more, leaving heirs other assets that aren't retirement accounts alleviates the risk of leaving them with a heavy tax burden.



The Lend a Hand luncheon will play an integral part in preparing for a community-wide awareness campaign during Child Abuse Prevention Month. The goal is for every participant to make a commitment to address child abuse and neglect in Tarrant and the surrounding counties.

Lend a Hand Luncheon
Thursday, April 2
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Let's get together, get informed, and get involved.
Table sponsorships available at: ACHservices.org/lend-a-hand

Make a Gift to ACH That Pays You Back for Life



Did you know that ACH is now equipped to issue Charitable Gift Annuities? This powerful charitable planning vehicle can be used in a variety of situations with donors from a wide range of economic circumstances and can benefit you in many ways while supporting ACH:

- Receive an immediate tax reduction
- When created with appreciated securities (or other appreciated assets), you will have the opportunity to defer capital gains and estate taxes
- Receive a regular source of fixed income from your gift for your lifetime, and/or that of your spouse
- Fund your gift with as little as \$25,000 in cash or securities
- Choose when your income begins – at 65 or later
- Create a legacy of hope by putting resources in motion for filling unmet needs and creating new opportunities to protect children and preserve families.

Please consider having a conversation with your advisor about whether a Charitable Gift Annuity is right for you. To learn more about making a charitable gift annuity to ACH, please contact Dixie Mullins at 817.886.7115 or Dixie.Mullins@ACHservices.org.



ACH SUPERHERO FAMILY FUN FEST

Join us for ACH's Super Hero Family Fun Fest on April 4. Bringing awareness to Child Abuse Prevention Month, this event is designed for families to come together and celebrate the heroes in their lives.

Saturday, April 4
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.



- Kids can wear their favorite superhero costumes
- Games, music and activities
- Carnival food and sweet treats
- Superhero characters and photo opportunities
- Raffle and prizes
- All kids can join the parade!

FREE with registration at: ACHservices.org/super-hero



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April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Last year, 5,536 children were abused or neglected in Tarrant County.

Get involved this April by:



Wearing blue on April 3rd



Attending our Lend a Hand Luncheon and buy a t-shirt



Attending
our
FREE
Super Hero
Family
Fun Fest

See inside for
details or visit:

ACHservices.org/lend-a-hand
ACHservices.org/super-hero