



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2018

HOPE RESTORED
HEARTS RENEWED
LIVES TRANSFORMED

Director's Message

Dear Friends and Partners of the Downtown Hope Center,

Once again I find myself sitting at my desk reflecting on the past year and I am reminded of how grateful I am to all of you who have chosen to give of your time, finances, and prayers so sacrificially throughout 2018. Without your support we would be unable to provide services to those in our community that are struggling with hunger, unemployment, abuse, poverty and numerous other barriers to a thriving life. What a gift you are to the community of Anchorage and those who find themselves coming through our doors to utilize our services.



The Downtown Hope Center has found ourselves going through some growing pains this year as we have continued to expand our programs. We have felt heart ache as we have said good bye to several very dear staff members and friends, and rejoiced as God has brought other gifted staff members to carry on the ministry. We have had beloved volunteers move out of state and others who have passed on, but God is ever faithful to bless us with new volunteers enthusiastic to serve. God has been so faithful to bring us partners that share our heart for ensuring everyone in our community is afforded basic comforts and the opportunity to improve their circumstances.

Feed Me Hope Culinary School has completed its second year with 86 total graduates.

We are appreciative of local businesses willing to hire our students as line and prep cooks, bakers, waiters and waitresses fresh out of Feed Me Hope Culinary School. Each student becomes so dear to us, a part of our family.

A picture I often have of our students is of a seedling, during the time we have them with us we are planting, watering, fertilizing and watching them grow...God daily reminds us of this, 1Cor 3:6-9 states "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's garden, God's building."

It is a relief to know that God is the One who is responsible for our students growth. We have the privilege of planting the Word in them, watering it daily in life skills and watching them grow as they learn new skills and receive the truth of God's love for each of them.

In the Women's Shelter, Soup Kitchen, and Shower house, we hear words of gratitude and appreciation from people who are in the midst of heartbreaking circumstances and trauma. However small a simple cup of soup, hot shower, or safe shelter may seem, it is providing our guest with humanizing comforts that remind them that they are valued, loved, and respected. If you are a member of our staff, a volunteer, or a donor, I am so grateful that you have chosen to offer up your time and resources to share God's love with all who enter the Hope Center. Acts 10:4 states, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God". May the peace of the Lord rest on your homes and families as we celebrate this Christmas season and the birth of Jesus Christ.

With Gratitude and love,

Sherrie Laurie
Executive Director

How Did Feed Me Hope Transform Your Life?

Feed Me Hope Student Interviews 2018

On October 25th, we celebrated the two-year Anniversary of Feed Me Hope Culinary School! We've had over 86 students graduate and successfully move on to new jobs, housing, or reconciliation with their families. We're proud of all our students, and grateful to the former students who agreed to share their stories.

Brystal

FMH Class 5

Feed Me Hope gave me the chance to stop using and start to feel. I still get emotional when I talk about it. It was an environment of feeling whatever I needed to feel because I was numb and lost. This program helped me return to being a 'normal person'. It was like a family and it was secure. I got everything I needed: clean clothes, a bed to sleep in, and I was out of the big, scary world. It was huge for me, and helped me build relationships.

Baking taught me grace. They didn't hold it against me how many times I messed up, and they helped me become more responsible. I found a routine, and not one that is over my head.

Chris

FMH Class 4

When I speak of my culture, my culture is prison. Feed Me Hope has helped me leave the 'convict code' behind and learn to live in society. It's helped me filter through the everyday stuff that I would react to in prison, and learn how to react in the 'free world'. Feed Me Hope helped me figure out who I am out here.

I've learned how to love people and how to care for people. I mean, I cared for people on the inside, but that's different than having people love me just for me. And I've learned that I can be loved and cared for in return.

Sugar

FMH Class 7

When I came to Feed Me Hope, I already had a little faith in my life, but Feed Me Hope - the curriculum, the staff, the individuals going through it with me - helped build my faith up. It helped me transition back into society and not go back to old behaviors. Genesis and Life Skills helped me understand that I'm not the only one with the issues I have and that I'm not alone. Feed Me Hope helped me get in touch with my emotions, and helped me manage my emotions. I started going to church, and I still do outside of the program.

Alex

FMH Class 6

Feed Me Hope has made me better at communicating. Before I'd sit back, waiting to be told what to do. Here, I began going up to my instructors and asking for another task. Instead of waiting around, I ask, "is there anything that needs to get done?"

Feed Me Hope definitely taught me some leadership skills. I'm put in situations where I have to help out my classmates. I also learned humility, and how to be receptive to correction. I've had to change my approach so that I can work better as a team with everyone else.

Introducing...

We've unfortunately had to say goodbye to many valuable members of our team this year: Joyce Matthews, Shower House Director; Vicki Martin, Kitchen Director; Richelle Estes, Development Director; Julie Martin, Shelter Manager; Stephen Hughes, Feed Me Hope Employment Specialist. They're irreplaceable members of our team, and it was hard to see them go.

Fortunately, we have been blessed with some amazing new team members! They're all selfless, hard workers, and we're so grateful for the skills and gifts they bring to our organization!



Chef Greg Ridgway Feed Me Hope Instructor/Chef

Greg is a Le Cordon Bleu trained chef. He has been a wonderful asset to our kitchen, and to the education of our FMH students.



Monica Martinez Shelter and Shower House Director

Monica has an extensive background in management. She's efficiently carried on Joyce and Julie's legacies and kept our Shelter and Shower House in tip-top shape.



Alex Kapotak Operations Assistant

Alex graduated from FMH Culinary School earlier this year. We were so impressed with his work ethic that we just had to hire him!



Cynthia Skidmore Operations Assistant & Volunteer Coordinator

Cynthia is another graduate of FMH. She's such a joy to have in the kitchen and wonderful communicator! We're grateful she has stepped up as volunteer coordinator.

2018 STATS

130,000
CUPS OF SOUP

25,550
SHELTER DINNERS

1500
BEDS PROVIDED

13,200
WARM SHOWERS

22,800
LOADS OF LAUNDRY

86
FMH GRADUATES

GIVING CORNER

By Lorraine O'Neal, Board Member

"Oh, the joys of those who are kind to the poor! The LORD rescues them when they are in trouble. The LORD protects them and keeps them alive. He gives them prosperity in the land and rescues them from their enemies. The LORD nurses them when they are sick and restores them to health." Psalm 41:1-3

Do you know this joy? What wonderful promises are afforded to those who show kindness to the poor.

In order for the Hope Center to exist, time and money donations are needed! Our operating funds come from people like you. If you are not already a monthly donor, would you consider doing so? Any amount you can afford is appreciated. Our budget goal requires 1000 people in Anchorage to contribute \$100 a month.

Please tell your friends about us and encourage them to take part in this life-transforming ministry.

MAIL-IN

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ONLINE

GIVE.MINISTRYLINQ.COM/DHC

TEXT

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



SHOWER HOUSE
9 AM - 12 PM

SOUP KITCHEN
9 AM - 2 PM



SHELTER
5:45 PM - 7 PM

Pick.
Click.
Give.

240 E 3RD AVE, ANCHORAGE, AK 99501
(907) 277-4302
WWW.DOWNTOWNHOPECENTER.ORG

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