



2016

*Merry Christmas, Season's Greetings
and Happy New Year from The
Henry and William Evans Home for
Children!*

Dear Friends,

Thank you! It is hard to know how to thank the people who make your world possible, and that is what you do. You have allowed us to share another year in the lives of extraordinary children. Whether your contribution came in the form of cash, services, goods, or your time, the following is a testament to the love and magic that you have inspired.

This has been a challenging year, hasn't it? With an ugly political contest bringing out some of the worst in us, perhaps temporarily ending friendships or halting communications within families, what positive outcomes have we reaped? Maybe we have been able to examine our own priorities. Our values and concerns. I know I have grown even more impressed with the resiliency of my children, described for you here, who have known true adversity -- not perceived, impending, read about or threatened, and who have lived to begin to rebuild their lives on the other side. Thanks to the love and support made possible by you.

Some of them come to us because they have been in the foster care system, having been bounced from home to home unsuccessfully for years. Others have been placed with us by homeless parents in order to provide safety and prevention of foster care while their parents endeavor to work heroically toward improving their circumstances and reuniting their families.

It is an honor and a privilege to share in the lives of each of them. And we cherish every moment and every dream. Not all of them will be completely successful, but all will have that potential, and all will become part of the legacy of the Evans Home, thanks to the lovely support of their peers, staff, and patrons including you. This year's children (names changed) are described on the following pages.



Dana

13 year-old quiet observer, wicked sense of humor. Rigid sense of fairness and rules. Kind of a natural social scientist: quick to use family meetings to call out unfairness when she sees it, and just as quick to apologize if her observations are proven to be taken out of context or otherwise mistaken. In many ways, she presents as quiet and shy around people she doesn't know very well, but when we asked her to entertain our guests at the Christmas Open House with her viola, she was sensational! Likes to be around and involved, but not necessarily getting the attention. Won't go sledding, but wants to watch. Won't go tubing, but wants to be on the boat. Worth it to her to go through the haunted house so she could see her housemates freak out because they are terrified at the sight of clowns with chainsaws!

Raymond

11 year-old brother of Dana. This kid can absolutely rock Legos. He came home one day and told me a song on the bus made him cry. I asked him what the song was. We played it on my phone. He cried again, holding my hand. I love this kid! He also loves to read and discuss what he's read, and ask questions. Lots of questions. Moves slow, talks fast. Sometimes he's hard to understand. Doesn't faze him at all. Restates the question exactly the same. Never a new hint, change in inflection or re-phrase, just the exact same "Can I zerbitureea-turedu?" I usually look at another kid after 2 or 3 repetitions, who gives me a casual translation, then I give him a quick apology


for not understanding, a smile and an answer . . . and we're cool.

Marvin

Speaking of cool. Shoulders back, swagger in his step, I'm KING OF THE WORLD. (And I'm 4'11" and 13 years-old). Definitely has the potential to go places, and probably will! He left us last year to reunite with his Mom. This little guy has a warm, infectious smile, and eyes that twinkle as though he knows something you don't and you should want to. At 13, he's the guy who would wind up talking solo with the prettiest older female teenaged volunteers who came over to help in the garden. It was impressive to watch him work.

Kyle

"God gave me so many talents, I don't know which ones to pursue!" This is how Kyle greeted me one afternoon as I walked into the living room. I couldn't agree more. A couple of years ago, (Kyle is 17 and has been with us for 4 years) I sat down at the piano (I punish those around with about 5 memorized songs once in a while), and this time he joined me. So instead of playing, I showed him how to find sounds that go together and left him to it. Two days later he showed me two songs he had written, original to him, with two totally different moods. And a third he was working on . . . one of mine. We had a magician visit the home and Kyle was hooked. He bought a book and magic kit at the mall. Later we got him into a magic group and he's really good! He's taught himself to juggle, breakdance, and do skateboard and sport



bike tricks. Most recently he's asked Mike to teach him a few basics on the guitar and he spends a lot of time practicing in his room. Sometimes I get the feeling that his divergent talents do frustrate him, leaving him afraid to pick a path and miss out on the glorious potential outcome of another.

Joleen

I am always careful to preserve our children's anonymity when in public. So when we were guests last year at a volleyball game put on at James Wood to support the Home and the kids were invited, I cautioned the hosts that I would ask the kids first if they wanted to get be in a picture in the student scrapbook for the project or not. When I arrived, our group was already there. Joleen came bounding down the bleachers. After a quick hug, she screamed, "THIS IS AWESOME! WHERE ARE THE KIDS WHO PUT THIS ON? WE NEED TO THANK THEM RIGHT NOW!!" A lover of animals and being the center of attention, and possessor of an infectious smile, she was with us for just under a year and left for an independent living program. She recently turned 18 and got her learner's permit!

Jennifer

I am so proud of Jennifer! She has been with us now for just over 4 years, and she continues to almost always be up for anything with a great attitude! From helping to plan and execute an elaborate party for another resident, which involved turning the house into Hogwarts castle from Harry Potter (complete with candles floating above the dining room table), to wearing a home-

made poodle skirt to school for Spirit Week. She is on the Honor Roll and takes leadership in lots of community service projects at school and here at the Home. And she adores her dad, who she sees regularly and often, plus another family friend who is important in her life as well. It amazes me how all of these kids can fill so many roles. All kids do, ours just so many more.


Stewart

Stewart was like a sweet older brother to our group. He wasn't with us long, but he was kind, sensitive, big, and big fun to be with. He played football at Handley, and he joined us because his mom didn't have a safe place to stay. After 6 months she was able to take him home, and we said farewell. So proud of his athletics and his huge academic improvements while living here, and the wonderful memories and laughs we shared. So proud of his mom and glad we could help in this special way!

Sal

I can't get the picture of this kid riding a member of Oglesby Sunday School class's scooter around Braddock Street Church out of my head. When her husband told me, I could just see him bookin' it towards the stairs. A healthy, food-driven, 13 year-old who grins a lot, this kid loves an audience. He also has an amazing sense of empathy for such a young age. I've seen him slide a colored marker to a younger child who was getting really frustrated because he couldn't find his own to complete a homework assignment, or offer just the right encouragement to someone when they needed it





most (when a family member couldn't make a visit). He is 13, however, and I've also seen him use that amazing sense of what other people are feeling to offer tactfully negative instigation with a single, perfectly timed phrase to stir things up for his own entertainment. Still, when he's on his game, he is the life of the party and extremely sweet natured.

Amy

I don't remember when I hired another staff member, but she swears I did. Amy is a popular, charming, extremely ambitious 16 year-old girl. She has a job in the community, balances a busy academic and social schedule, and is very active in the Evans Home world. From house meetings to outings that call for participation and even choices of activities, Amy is right there. She does need to be reminded from time to time that she is not responsible for the actions of others, except as they affect or influence her, and that she can model for, but not parent the younger kids. One thing challenging about this girl is that she can cast her compelling spell so easily on the adults in her life that she winds up spending a great deal of energy keeping up appearances. When a life event happens with her, she tends to get on the phone, email, fax, walkie-talkie or carrier pigeon to give her side of the story to everyone she knows, regardless of how things might unfold. Sometimes this gets fun, making small issues big pretty quickly.

Cory

Holy Mackerel, who forgot to sound the tornado alert? This little 11 year-old guy came to


us after too many placements to count over a very short life. He came last May and started out testing right away. But when we wouldn't push him away or judge him on his behavior, just reward or withdraw privileges without emotional response, he began to turn around. In fact, within months he was doing extremely well, both at school and at home, until it was determined, and he was told, he would be moving again. The move may have been planned for all of the right reasons, but for him the news was completely destabilizing and the tantrums returned. Times 10. We wish him every success, and do hope he finds peace and stability soon.

David

This 16 year-old young man came to us from a residential school just last month. A tall, handsome, athletic young man, he plays football and basketball and talks as comfortably with adults as he does with other kids. He easily makes friends, and he is as gentle as he is imposing. And for now, at least, he talks a good talk. If he keeps his eye on the prize (positive goals and sorting out his future one step at a time), it will be a wonderful adventure helping this guy into adulthood.

Sam

Sam is back! He was with us 3 years ago as an iddy biddy. Now he's our youngest again at age 9. With a soft voice but a loud personality, he has no problem being the family little. He can beat me at checkers. Every time. I'm pretty sure he cheats but I can't prove it yet. He likes to be read to at night. He also likes ghost stories. But if you tell him a ghost story before bedtime, you'll be reading to



him until morning. This kid is so popular at school we had to bring in extra seating to fit his teachers at our Christmas open house party - they love him (and so do we)!

In September, we said goodbye to long-time (14 years!) family member, Kris Short. We threw her a party, and she's been back to visit, but we miss her terribly. Thank you Kris, for all you did for us!

In January, we will change again. Mike and Winona Powers, house parents for the past 15 years, will retire. What a huge part of the history of the Evans Home they have become! We lovingly wish them every warm memory and happy experience in retirement, and look forward to many and frequent visits as promised.

It is difficult to describe the profound privilege we adults in the Evans Home feel about the time we share in the lives of these children. They are our heroes. They inspire us by virtue of their perseverance, resilience, and their capacity for joy. Because of these qualities, ours truly is a family atmosphere, full of love and laughs and celebrations of talents, potential and dreams.

You are their patrons. Without your support, none of this would be possible. On behalf of the adults and children of the Evans Home, I thank you once again, and I wish you the happiest of holidays and a wonderful New Year!

Sincerely,



Marc Jaccard
Executive Director



Evans Home Staff: Marc Jaccard, LaMishia Allen, Liz Brenner, Winona & Mike Powers, Nile & April DeShong

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