

DENVER
RESCUE
MISSION

Changing lives

DenverRescueMission.org

April 2017

CELEBRATING
125
YEARS

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,
and all these things will be added to you.

Matthew 6:33 (ESV)

FIRST
THINGS
FIRST



“IT FELT AMAZING TO GRADUATE FROM THE NEW LIFE PROGRAM.”

I went from being in constant survival mode to a calm. It was a huge relief off my shoulders to know that although my life looked so bleak just a year ago, everything had changed.”

- Donna



FIRST THINGS FIRST



“Being pregnant on the street was terrifying,” Donna says as she begins to share her story. “I wondered every day if I would lose the baby. I was constantly stressed. I even slept in my car for a few weeks before I was humbled enough to ask for help from anyone.”

Her family wasn't able to help because they all lived in Chicago, and Donna didn't tell them what was going on because she was too ashamed. **She was on her own.**

When she got pregnant, she was working as a bus driver, but **had terrible morning sickness** and was written up several times for stopping on her route because she was sick. Eventually, **she lost her job** and wasn't able to pay her rent or her car payment.

She was **living paycheck to paycheck**, never really taking time to plan for the future, but it wasn't until losing her job that she realized how much of a problem that was. “I got my good work ethic from my mom,” she says, “but growing up we never had conversations about budgeting and spending. Later, I realized that **I didn't take any initiative to learn how to manage my money either.**”

Looking for help, she moved in with a friend in hopes of saving some money and getting back on her feet. It worked for a short time, but then her friend started

doing drugs and kicked her out, taking most of her belongings in the process.

Donna lived at a homeless shelter downtown for three months before she **finally discovered Denver Rescue Mission's New Life Program at Champa House.**

“When I came to Champa House for orientation, they sat a group of us down in the living room and explained the program,” she says. “**I remember sitting there thinking, ‘This is not the place for me. There's too many rules here.** I've lived on my own, I'm an adult, and I don't need anyone telling me what to do. I'll be okay.”

But the more she thought about it, the more she realized that she wasn't okay, and **she needed help.** As a result, she joined the New Life Program in October 2009.



Donna and her seven-year-old son, Bob, stand outside Champa House after a visit earlier this year.

Donna had taken college courses and held a job for quite some time, so she was confident in her ability to succeed. But her life experience and independent strength often got in the way of her learning. **“I’m so thankful for the people who put up with me** during that time,” she continues. **“I was stubborn, but I was learning.** The seeds they were planting were still there.”

At Champa House, she learned how to manage her money, living on just \$364 a month. **She also worked with her case manager and chaplain,** learning many things she needed to know about being a mother and **building a strong spiritual foundation in her relationship with Jesus.** “I learned how to put God first in my life at the Mission,” she says. “There were so many things I didn’t realize were taking the place of God in my life, and when they were gone, I was calling on Him for help.”

CHANGE THE LIVES OF STRUGGLING SINGLE MOTHERS TODAY!

Use the enclosed envelope to mail your donation or give online at DenverRescueMission.org/Donate!

In January 2010, Donna and the staff and program participants at Champa House welcomed her baby boy, Bob, into the world. **“As a new mom with no family around, the Mission staff became my family,”** she says. “I was so scared. I read all the books, but he did everything different, so I would rely on other moms and Mission staff to help me. The Mission really filled that void in my life.”

Several months later, **she graduated from the New Life Program,** and those seeds the Mission planted in her life began to grow. “I got a job as a bus driver for Denver Public Schools, and I started to reflect on the things I learned in the program,” she says. For Donna, that’s when her New Life Program experience began to take root.

Soon, she was back at Champa House, but this time as a volunteer. “I wanted to give back and help mentor the women in the same way I was mentored when I was there,” she says. “I would cook dinner. I taught cooking classes and helped out in child care. I just wanted to stay connected.”

In 2013, she was hired as relief staff at Champa House and later became a facility assistant before becoming the overnight supervisor. **Today, she works in the Mission’s STAR Transitional Program, helping families and individuals transition out of homelessness.** “I really enjoy working for the Mission,” she says. “It’s such a unique opportunity to see where these families start and celebrate with them at the finish line. I love that I can pray with the people we serve.”

As a former program participant and now as a Mission staff member, Donna says she knows firsthand how important our community of supporters are. On behalf of her and all the other families and individuals we serve, thank you! **You are helping change lives like Donna’s every day,** bringing hope and stability to families and individuals lost in a cycle of poverty and homelessness. **Thank you** for being such an important part of this transformational work.



Look for more encouraging stories, news and updates on our Facebook page: Facebook.com/DenverRescue.

Letter from the CEO



Dear Friends,

As I write this, there are wildfires streaking across Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Why do I mention this? Well, it is on my mind for two reasons. The first is that my parents had to flee their home in southwest Kansas. They drove their car through flames that were leaping across a two lane highway, and made their escape to safety. They are in their early eighties, and this was no small feat. Their home was somehow spared, but other friends in their ranching and farming community were not so fortunate.

Secondly, the day before my parents fled their home, my daughter-in-law's brother, who ran their family ranch in Texas, was tragically killed in a wildfire along with two others trying to save cattle from the flames. He was 35 years old, his wife was pregnant, and they had two small children. His death is a painful reminder of the strength of nature and how it can impact all of us.

Grief like this is hard to even comprehend, and the sadness I feel for his family tears at my heart. Many of the people we help face similar grief and life struggles. Their pain is beyond what anyone should have to bear. Over the last several years, you have read stories in our newsletter about folks who come to us in pain. These stories of hope that we share have an overriding theme. They are stories of program participants whose lives have been changed at the Mission—who now have Christ to help them walk through their pain and provide hope for tomorrow.

We all experience pain, whether from wildfires, tsunamis, tornadoes, floods, or other circumstances of life. Frankly, I cannot imagine how hard this life would be without Jesus to lean on. Thank you for making it possible for us to come alongside others with Christ's love when they are hurting.

God Bless,

Brad Meuli
President/CEO



Volunteer Appreciation Week

At the Mission, volunteers like you make ministry happen, and April 23-29, we want to celebrate YOU.

Volunteer Appreciation Week is a special time when we get to shine a spotlight on all you do to change lives in our community through the time and energy you give to the Mission. To sign up to volunteer throughout the year, go to DenverRescueMission.org/Volunteer, and remember to look online using #SERVEDenver to see how you and others are making an impact in our community.

Thank you for volunteering!



Thank You for Serving!

Every year, we invite local community partners to join us at our Presidents' Day serving event. We'd like to thank them for serving with us this year!

Left to right: Brad Meuli, President, Denver Rescue Mission; Keith Molenhouse, Owner, H2O Power Equipment; Tami Door, President & CEO, Downtown Denver Partnership; Keith Molenhouse, Owner, H2O Power Equipment; Greg Chestnut, President, El Paso Glass - Denver, Inc.; Kelly Brough, President & CEO, Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce; Bruce Glazer, EVP/CFO, Kroenke Sports & Entertainment; Jim Martin, President & CEO, Kroenke Sports & Entertainment; Dick Monfort, Owner & CEO, Colorado Rockies; Jim Kellogg, VP of Community & Retail Operations, Colorado Rockies

Easter Celebration



When:

Friday, April 14
11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

Where:

Lawrence Street
Community Center
2222 Lawrence Street
Denver, CO 80205

Thank You for Serving!

Carol and her friend Sharon have volunteered at Champa House for the past 20 years teaching New Life Program women how to sew quilts, and providing encouragement and wise support. Thank you for your many years of faithful service to our community, ladies!

If you are interested in volunteering your skills like Carol and Sharon, visit DenverRescueMission.org/Volunteer.



Statistics

How You Help

February

YTD (fiscal year)

Meals provided

60,234



548,461

Nights of shelter provided

28,006



228,980

Chapel attendance

3,604



23,163

Clothing distributed (lbs.)

43,690



260,922

Clinic services provided

392



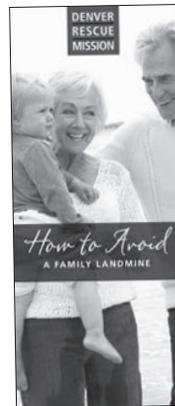
3,135

How to Avoid a Family Landmine

Everyone wants to experience peace in their family. We can help you identify and avoid potential relational landmines before they even have a chance to appear!

Request your free brochure entitled:
“How to Avoid a Family Landmine”

- Check the box on the enclosed reply card to receive your copy.



Denver Rescue Mission Outreaches

Lawrence Street Community Center

Meals, restrooms, showers, washing machines and dryers, clean drinking water, and access to Mission staff for encouragement and guidance

Lawrence Street Shelter

Overnight shelter for men, chapel and health clinic

Champa House

Residential facility offering long-term help toward self-sufficiency to single mothers with dependent children

Harvest Farm

Rural rehabilitation program near Fort Collins

Fort Collins Rescue Mission

Meals, shelter and transitional programs

The Crossing

Transitional program for families and rehabilitation program for men

Ministry Outreach Center

Central warehouse facility including food, clothing and furniture distribution

Administration & Education

Entry point for Mission programs and home to the Mission's administrative and development staff

Family Services

Transitional program, assistance for permanent housing, and mentoring

Changing Lives is the monthly news publication of Denver Rescue Mission.

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CARING CONNECTION

