60 Years of Friendship House

As we move into 2017, I am reminded of the successes of the past 60 years. The kids you supported, the friendships forged, the lives changed, for eternity. Like Friendship House Alumni Johnny McClusky, a community leader at First Interstate Bank, or Jamacena Morin, a newly minted first generation college graduate, or Tim Mascarena, a successful small business owner. Wow! Be proud of the accomplishments we have achieved – together.

But I am also reminded of the work still needed. Like one young student just this month, who I will call Jamie. Jamie’s family has seen tough times recently. But she told me she had hope. This year would be different, that 2017 would be the best year of her life. Sadly, Jamie’s mom broke her parole and went back to prison. Foster care sent Jamie to another town; far away from south Billings and the care she received each day at Friendship House.

Jamie and her family is just one of many families we serve shattered by poverty’s grip and its ill effects of drugs, crime, and violence. How can we stem this tide and push back against the darkness? You and I need to do more. Our kids need your help. Will you donate today to help other kids like Jamie to find success and wholeness at Friendship House?

Sincerely,

Rev. Matt Lundgren, Executive Director

P.S. To hear what we are planning to make a difference moving forward, I will share some exciting ideas with you in the next newsletter!
Paul Reeder
Executive Director 1975 – 1992

I led Friendship House for 17 years and 4 months, from 1975 to 1992. There were many good years during my time at Friendship House. I came in at a time when many agencies worked together on specific issues that led to several opportunities and involvement together to better kids, families, and the south side.

We began a pre-kindergarten class that developed strengths in students that were recognized by Garfield Elementary School when students entered kindergarten. While we served kids and their parents, many of the parents and adults volunteered and served alongside Friendship House. There were great volunteers and support from the larger community and the south side. The American Baptist Church was a large supporter of Friendship House.

At times, it was difficult to find the right person for staffing. But we did find them and they did a terrific job and knew what needed to be done. They reached out and touched people through the hardships. I was glad of our Christian faith perspective. The grace of God underlined what we did and that we served all different people of all backgrounds.

I would like Friendship House to continue to be aware of the needs of the south side community, and do what they can to address those needs in any positive way they can.

Thank You FOR DRESSING-A-CHILD THIS CHRISTMAS!

Thanks to you, your churches, and your businesses, you dressed all the children in our youth enrichment programs. Pilgrim and Mayflower Congregational Churches and their members contributed funds and time to shop with our children at Shopko. Shopko gave our kids and families the VIP treatment by reserving our very own checkout line with extra employees on hand. Dillard’s shopped for several of our children and families, delivering the new attire at Friendship House. Another business, who wishes to remain anonymous, gave new clothes to the last of our kids and families. Thank you for blessing our children of Friendship House this Christmas!

Your Legacy... WHAT WILL IT BE?

What will your legacy be? The futures of your spouse and your children are most important, as it should be. But once they’re taken care of, who else’s future can you positively impact and be remembered by? Your legacy gift to Friendship House’s children ensure their exit from poverty into prosperity with educational tutoring and character-building mentoring. And your legacy could not be simpler to assure. Simply add Friendship House to your will as a percentage of your estate or a specific dollar amount. Even better, you can cement your legacy forever by naming Friendship House’s endowment, where your gift benefits children in perpetuity. Once you’ve remembered your loved ones, will you take care of countless more children with a gift in your will to Friendship House. What will your legacy be? To the children of Friendship House – your legacy is hero!

YOU MADE OUR KIDS’ Christmas!

Because of your warm outpouring of generosity, Friendship House kids and families had a truly merry Christmas! Every child went home with an overflowing food box for the long break with healthy crackers, soup, peanut butter, jelly, bread, macaroni and cheese, water, and more. On top of that, you gave all our kids presents to ensure they had one to open on Christmas morning. And because of your volunteerism, the kids’ Christmas party was filled with family games, crafts, and activities for them to share. With all this, the kids have something to say...Thank you!
Friendship House kids are asking you to Save the Date! Will you help our “Community Build Day” to construct the new playground, Saturday, April 22, 2016 from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. Food and Drinks will be served.

If you or your group can’t make Saturday, April 22, there will be a need to help us demolish the old and site prep for the new before the build day. See our Facebook page for future details!