Zeke’s Transformation...

Zeke wanders away as his class lines up from their recess. Ms. Erin calls out, “Zeke, come on, we have to go in,” but he pretends not to hear, just like every other day this week. As Ms. Erin can’t leave her class, she calls for Ms. Jessica who talks with Zeke for well over an hour, taking Ms. Jessica away from her other needed responsibilities. Today, Zeke chooses to return to his class. Other days, he acts out, requiring us to call his parents. Zeke is a good kid. But it’s clear he’s struggling on the inside with something.

Soon, Zeke and kids like him will be able receive the help they need! Friendship House has some amazing news to share! Because of partnerships with the M.J. Murdoch Charitable Trust, St. Vincent Healthcare Foundation, and Montana Healthcare Foundation, we will transform our volunteer counseling program by hiring a full time licensed therapist. The therapist will meet kids and their families struggling with family dynamics, mental, emotional, and spiritual health, and learning disorders. Poverty places too much turmoil in lives like Zeke’s. He and the others must learn skills to help cope with the turmoil. Not only will a licensed therapist be a turning point in our programs, it will be a turning point for Zeke and his friends.

New Friendship House Board Member
Kristin Rapacz

Scan to donate online
To Friendship House!

How Do You Spell Success?


I like to measure success one life at a time. In this case, I spell success A-r-c-i-e-l-a. When I first came to Friendship House, “Arcie” was a 5th grader in our Youth Afterschool Program. She had been in our program for years and was really doing well. She excelled during homework time, enjoyed visiting with her mentor and really liked spending time in the garden program selling vegetables at the park. She even went the next mile – literally as she and her mom regularly came to Boot Camp Exercise classes in the evenings. Arcie was a success in our Youth program.

Last month, success happened again when we hired Arcie to join the staff at Friendship House. This means that she will now be giving back to kids – tutoring, mentoring, leading, and caring. Arcie is a testimony of the success of our Youth program. She is re-investing her God given skills and talents into the kids in her neighborhood.

Because you care enough to support our work, we really owe the success of Arcie -and countless others like her - to you! You make it possible for us to build leaders!

Thank you for helping us to be self replicating and successful.

Sincerely,

Rev. Matt Lundgren,
Executive Director

www.friendshipmt.org
ALUMNI Spotlight

Rev. Curt Haney
Executive Director 1993-2000

I began my service with Friendship House on the Board of Directors, and I was honored to become Executive Director following Paul Reeder’s lengthy service. As the second pastor to serve in this position, I found this to be a vital servant ministry. We grew the public image of Friendship House within the city. One Billings official said, “This organization is rooted in the Southside community like no other.”

One program I’m proud we launched was called “Work-Life.” This venture identified ambitious teens and matched them with businesses, for part-time mentored employment. This was an initial experiment that worked well. It changed many family’s histories of unemployment. Another success was beginning a lengthy relationship with the Jesuit Volunteers Corps, a national service organization of highly gifted Catholic university students and graduates.

As always, coworkers make one’s leadership look good. I was blessed with a committed Board of Directors, Program Director Carman Gonzalez, office staff and volunteers. They took on unique responsibilities and surmounted the challenges of inadequate funding, with perseverance and grace.

Thank you Rev. Curt Haney for your years of service and continuing support!

YOU MADE OUR KIDS’ Playground Dreams COME TRUE!

Our kids want to say (or rather...SHOUT) something to you – “THANK YOU!” You have made our kids’ playground dreams come true! Because of you, our kids were thrilled to play on new playground with attractive colors and engaging play features. And it’s big – doubling our old playground capacity!

Because you exceeded our $50,000 goal, you helped exchange our old swing set with a new one: added an outdoor cement basketball court; replaced fencing; and swapped the shredded rubber surfacing with wood fiber. Your generosity to our kids of Friendship House is astounding!

And to those individuals and groups who helped us tear down the old and construct the new, you are too numerous to count! WE THANK YOU!

NURTURING THE FUTURE GENERATION...

You may know that Friendship House kids have planted a community garden for years now. The garden promotes healthy eating for families, science education to learn about plant growth, and entrepreneurship as we sell the produce to our south side neighborhood. So much learning in one community garden!

What you don’t know is that the garden has expanded with an added greenhouse! In partnership with the South Side Task Force, the South Side Community Center, and Healthy by Design, our kids and south side elderly neighbors will come together to grow fruits and vegetables. Thanks to the Kresge Foundation for funding this opportunity.

TO PURCHASE OUR YOUTH’S YUMMY PRODUCE

Visit the South Park Gardeners Market
THURSDAYS • 4:00 TO 6:00PM
June through September

60 YEARS OF Thanks TO YOU!

Our 60th Birthday is all because of you and your commitment to south side children and families. We thank you for making our 60 years of Christian programming a remarkable success! You should know, every few months, a former Friendship House kid, now an adult, tells us, “Thank you! I went to Friendship House, and it saved my life!” But it is not us who saved their lives, it’s you!

Without you, there is no Friendship House. By the time you read this, another former Friendship House kid will have come to us saying, “Thank you, you saved my life!” You should know, every one of these blessings of thanks are not for us, but for you!