

# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

### *Thanks to you, a family can weather a crisis...*

It was 3 o'clock on a cold winter morning when a family in Manhattan heard the smoke alarms blaring, jarring them from their sleep. The house was filling with smoke and they fled the home, leaving all of their possessions in the house which was rapidly being engulfed by flames.

They stood in the snow with only their light coats and the clothes they were sleeping in. All of their credit cards, checks, cash, and other items we take for granted were burned with the house. The firefighters were busy putting out the fire, and the family stood shivering in the cold, watching all of their memories and possessions accumulated over a lifetime disappear and worrying about where they would stay that night.

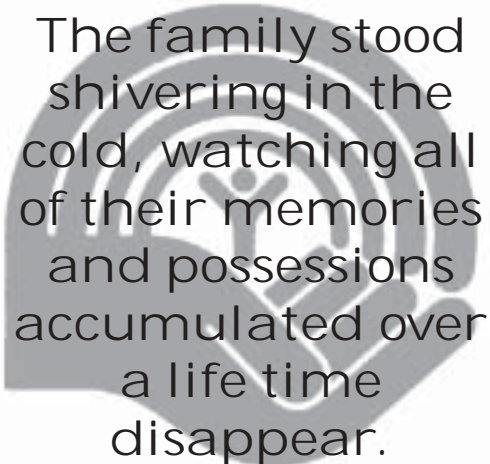
That's when the American Red Cross arrived on the scene with warm blankets and the financial assistance needed to find a place to stay. No one can take away the pain of losing your home, but the American Red Cross was there to listen and provide comfort and emotional support. The family was given food, clothing, and shelter to meet their immediate needs.

The American Red Cross provided the assistance, but it would not have been possible without the generosity of our community. It wasn't just the American Red Cross responding, it was people like you that provide a contribution to the United Way.

### *American Red Cross*

Emergencies and disasters happen when least expected. As a result, experiencing a disaster or emergency is traumatic and can dramatically alter individual, family, and community life. The American Red Cross works to help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies, thus lessening the trauma. Whether the incidents are natural or human-made, personal or community-wide, Red Cross staff and volunteers work to sustain our educational and response capabilities at all times, assisted by your United Way donations.

The Red Cross constantly strives to respond to the health and safety concerns of Riley Countians at home, in school and in the workplace. Red Cross training ranges from first aid, CPR and AED to swimming and lifeguarding; from HIV/AIDS education to caregiving programs like Babysitter's Training. American Red Cross programs help people live safer and healthier lives.



The family stood shivering in the cold, watching all of their memories and possessions accumulated over a life time disappear.

# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Jarrod and Alex can break the cycle of abuse...*

Jarrold and Alex\* grew up watching their dad yell at their mom, sometimes actually hitting her with his fists. The boys began to act out at school, believing their father's behavior was "normal" for everyone. The marriage relationship became such a dangerous situation that Jarrod, Alex and their mother moved out of the home, fearing for their safety. Hoping to stop this cycle of abuse, the boys' mother signed them up to be matched with positive male role models from Big Brothers/Big Sisters. She hoped that this would help Jarrod and Alex learn how young boys are supposed to act, rather than living by the example their father set for them.

Since joining up with a Big Brother for each of them, Jarrod and Alex have brought their grades up to an above-average level. They are two of the best-behaved boys in their classes, and they even open the door for their mom on occasion. Dad is no longer in the home and Mom is now a student at Kansas State University as she studies for a counseling degree.

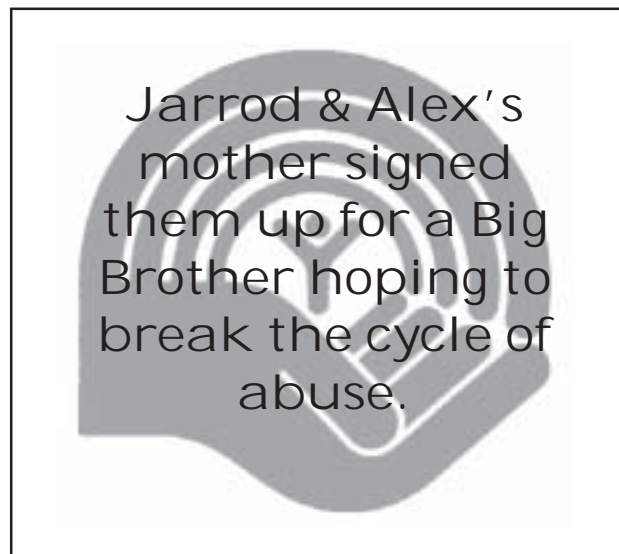
Without a Big Brother, it is very possible that Jarrod and Alex would have continued to model the bad habits of their father, probably carrying these responses with them into their own future relationships. However, the boys now have a positive example of how they are to treat other people. Each month, a case manager checks in with the family and the volunteer to make sure the boys are learning and developing as they become young men.

(\*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.)

### *Big Brothers/Big Sisters*

Big Brothers/Big Sisters has been bringing caring adults into the lives of children for 100 years. Kansas Big Brothers/Big Sisters is the largest provider of one-to-one youth mentoring services in the United States. These quality relationships are built on friendship and trust, and are a proven significant positive influence in the lives of the children and volunteers.

Your United Way gifts help boys and girls, most of whom are considered at-risk and are living in single-parent homes, achieve their full potential through long-term personal relationships with carefully screened and caring volunteers at Big Brothers/Big Sisters. The children and teenagers in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program are 46% less likely to start using drugs, 27% less likely to start drinking, 52% less likely to skip school and 33% less apt to be violent.



# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Jessica has a source of stability in her life...*

Little Sister Jessica G. and Big Sister Lisa M. were matched seven years ago when Jessica was eight years old. Jessica is an only child and lives with her father. Jessica's father applied for a Big Sister for Jessica because she had no positive female role model in her life. Jessica and Lisa enjoyed doing many things together, including spending time at Lisa's farm with her horses.

Through their match, they have weathered many things. Jessica has been removed from the home several times due to lack of supervision and is currently in foster care. Big Sister Lisa has been a constant support for Jessica the whole time. Jessica was once very shy around new people and did not like to talk in front of large groups. Her grades in school were dropping and she was not forming positive friendships. Thanks to her Big Sister, Jessica is a more confident young woman now. She is improving in school and in the quality of her friendships. Lisa has helped Jessica focus more on her schoolwork and how it will help her have a more successful future. Recently, Little Sister Jessica and Big Sister Lisa spoke together to a group about what it was like being matched in an effort to recruit more people into Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

Jessica and Lisa have formed a relationship far beyond a friendship. Lisa has helped Jessica through many situations with her family and her life. Jessica has a brighter future because of Lisa's involvement.

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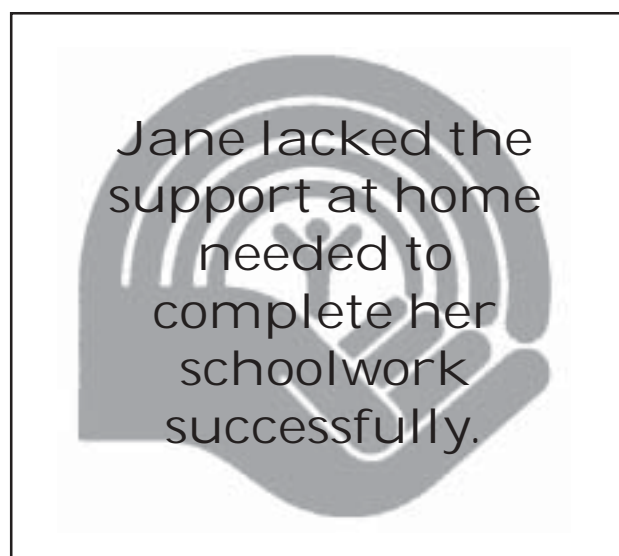
# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Jane is succeeding in school...*

In the seventh grade, Jane\* was doing poorly at school, taking home mostly D's and F's on her schoolwork assignments and report cards. From a non-English-speaking family, Jane lacked the support at home needed to complete her schoolwork successfully. As a member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Manhattan, Jane was able to have a tutor meet with her at the Club during the after-school program's Power Hour. The tutor helped her to improve her English skills and academic performance.

Jane is now a successful student, on the honor roll at Manhattan High School and involved in a variety of extracurricular activities.



(\*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.)

### *Boys & Girls Clubs of Manhattan*

Boys & Girls Clubs of Manhattan provides a safe and fun place for young people of all backgrounds to develop the qualities needed to become responsible and productive citizens and leaders. For children and youth ages 6 to 18, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Manhattan provides youth development services and an alternative to being home alone or on the street in the after school hours.

Donors giving to the United Way help support the Boys & Girls Clubs' four locations in and near Manhattan whose programs last year provided hope and opportunity to over 1,200 children and youth.

# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

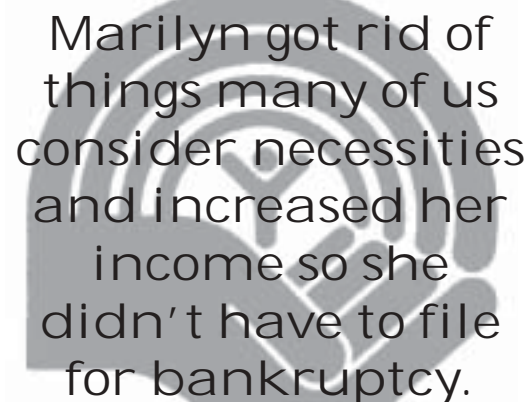
*Thanks to you, life is running smoother for a young mother...*

Marilyn was a young mother of two when she came to Consumer Credit Counseling Services. She had married at 18, the young couple had made foolish mistakes that the inexperienced can make with money management, and now Marilyn was in the process of a divorce.

She did not want to file for bankruptcy, but was trying on her own to improve her life and the lives of her children. She desperately wanted to provide them the stability of a home, but if she filed for bankruptcy, she felt this dream would be wiped away.

Marilyn's first visit with a credit counselor was informative, but discouraging. Her expenses exceeded her income. Marilyn searched her soul and came up with a plan. She got rid of many things most of us consider necessities, such as telephone service. She increased her income by renting out her basement to her brother and working an additional job cleaning houses.

It took her two years, but Marilyn completed the debt management program at Consumer Credit Counseling, paying back all of her creditors and avoiding bankruptcy. The next year, she purchased the home she so desperately wanted to provide to her children.



Marilyn got rid of things many of us consider necessities and increased her income so she didn't have to file for bankruptcy.

### *Consumer Credit Counseling Services*

Your United Way donations help Consumer Credit Counseling Services provide the needed knowledge to help consumers cope with financial setbacks, reach their financial goals and solve related problems with dignity.

Their fully certified counselors provide group presentations and individualized comprehensive financial counseling and as-needed follow-up sessions. The goal is to have their clients understand credit and debt management, have a workable family budget that meets specific individual needs and feel confident in taking control and making sound financial decisions.

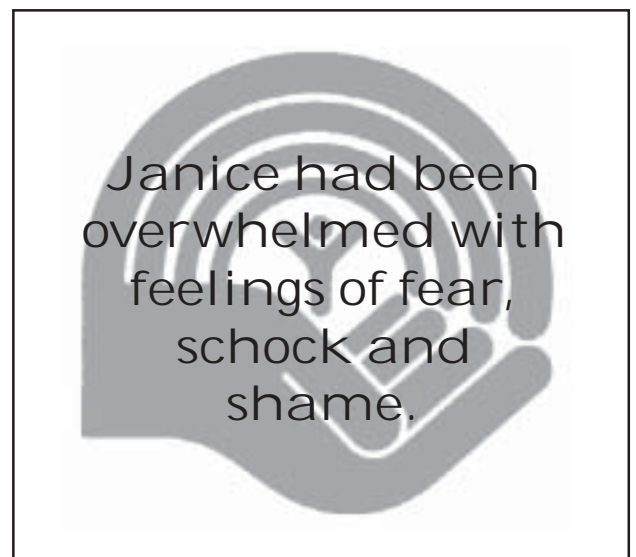
# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Janice can escape abuse and move forward with hope...*

Janice\* was 21 and pregnant when her husband first struck her. She was 24 and pregnant again when she called the Crisis Center's toll-free number at the urging of her doctor. Within an hour, she was meeting with a Crisis Center advocate, taking the first painful steps toward a life of dignity and hope for herself and her children.

Like most domestic violence victims, Janice had been overwhelmed by feelings of fear, shock and shame. She had come to believe she was alone. Intensive work with her Crisis Center advocate, participation in weekly support groups, and reunion with her family helped her to find the strength to make plans and move forward. She found permanent housing and resumed her education. She is now eight credit hours from a baccalaureate degree.



(\*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.)

### *Crisis Center*

The Crisis Center has provided free, confidential services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims and their children since 1981. United Way funding helps to sustain core services for victims: toll free crisis hotlines, 24-hour crisis intervention, individual and group counseling, advocacy, and safe shelter.

# United Way of Riley County


## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Kendra has reconnected with her mother...*

The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program facilitates visits between incarcerated mothers and their daughters and engages them in social and educational activities designed to foster positive familial and personal development.

Kendra, a 15-year-old girl in the Beyond Bars program, didn't want to be involved at first, but warmed up to the idea of spending time with her mom. Seeing her mom trying to get better made her feel better about the future. "I now trust her more than I did before and I think that it will help us as a family," Kendra says. "None of this would have been possible without the Girl Scouts. My relationship with my mom would not be where it is today; she would not be trying to get better without the Girl Scouts."

Kendra's mother also hoped the Girl Scouts might help her and her daughter. "I didn't think I had a chance," she said, "but I joined anyway, and boy, am I glad I did. Girl Scouts gave back something I consider priceless—a relationship (with) my daughter...rebuilding what was torn down, building steps, guiding us to a better understanding of each other, but mainly working with one another to gain what my addiction and absence stole away from us. Now that I can look back, I can see so much I lost and missed out on, never to get back. But now, I have the future to look forward to. I've learned skills that can help guide me, help me be a better mom, help me get better results, show us how to spend time with each other without conflict, and to help me understand what my daughter is going through as well as how to listen to her. Without Girl Scouts I would have never gotten to see my daughter at all. We're both grateful for that alone, but there are no words that could explain what Girl Scouts has done for us."



" Girl Scouts gave back something I consider priceless -- a relationship (with) my daughter."

-Kendra's mother

### *Girl Scouts of Kaw Valley Council*

Girl Scouting is a values-based organization whose mission is to help girls grow with the highest ideals of character, conduct and citizenship. The Girl Scout program can change the way girls see the world and their place in it. Girls learn the importance of personal responsibility, the value of goal setting, the spirit of teamwork, and the thrill of accomplishment. All girls, from ages 5-17, can discover the fun, friendship and power of girls together through myriad enriching Girl Scout experiences, including community service projects, cultural exchanges, sports skill-building clinics, and environmental stewardships.

United Way donor dollars help Girl Scouts of Kaw Valley Council provide the benefits of Girl Scouting to every girl, everywhere, regardless of her financial situation, through scholarship and outreach programs.

# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Mary has helped her sons stay on the right track...*

Mary\*, a local mother, enrolled in Kansas Children's Service League's Active Parenting of Teens Program. When her sons were using drugs and getting into trouble with the law, this parent came to learn how to better parent her two teenage boys. Upon completion of the class, she had learned about "teen" issues, including strengthening their relationships and becoming an "askable" parent. This opened the door of communication between them. Mary says, "These strategies really work! All you have to do is try, and you will be surprised."

Mary still feels strongly about the strategies she learned in class several months ago and the positive impact this had on her family. She has continued to connect with parents in the group as they were a great source of support and shared many of the same concerns.

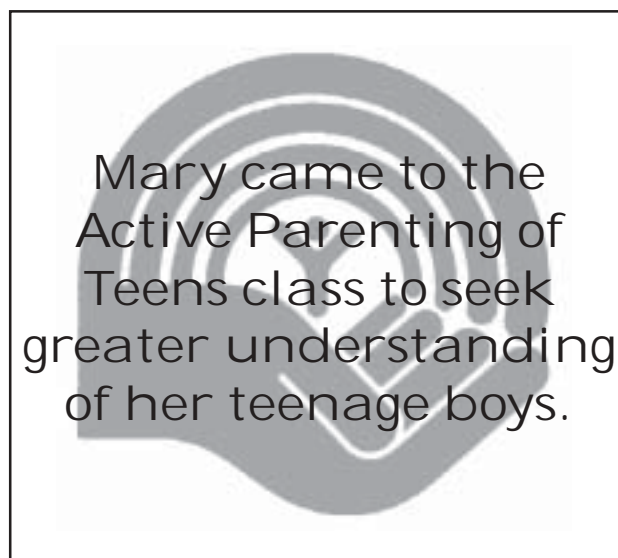
Not only are participants grateful for the service provided by KCSL and United Way, but they want to come back and continue to learn more as parenting holds a lifetime of learning and commitment.

(\*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.)

### *Kansas Children's Service League*

Kansas Children's Service League is a private, not-for-profit agency serving children and families in Riley County. KCSL provides a continuum of programs and services that advocates for children and collaborates with other private agencies. Their agency is dedicated to protecting and promoting the well-being of all Kansas children by strengthening the quality of their family life. This strengthening is accomplished through the provision of prevention, early intervention, treatment, advocacy, and placement services.

Your United Way dollars help KCSL provide vital parenting education to Riley County families.



# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Giselle was given a second chance...*

Giselle\* married in Europe and moved to the United States with her new husband. They had four children, who were all under the age of 8, when she and her husband began to have marital problems. She was the victim of several severe beatings, but stayed in the marriage both because of religious convictions and because her children were all U.S. citizens; her husband had told her he would have her deported without her children if she ever tried to leave him. He eventually evicted her from their home and tried to keep the children. She was close to despair when someone told her that the Kansas Legal Services staff could help her.

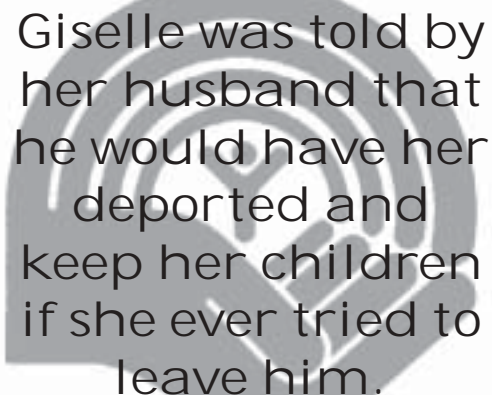
Once Giselle discovered that she had access to the courts to request custody of her children and some financial support to care for them, she had new hope and rapidly applied herself to making a safe and comfortable, though frugal, life for herself and her children. Kansas Legal Services obtained temporary orders of protection and child custody, filed her divorce petition and referred her to the SRS office for financial assistance. She received public assistance for one month while she secured a job, low-income housing and subsidized child care for her children.

Giselle actually received short-term help from four United Way agencies; first the Manhattan Emergency Shelter, then the Crisis Center, Manhattan Daycare & Learning Center and Kansas Legal Services. Now, several years later, she is volunteering at a United Way agency because she recognizes what a difference the agencies make in the lives of our citizens.

(\*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.)

### *Kansas Legal Services*

Your United Way contributions help Kansas Legal Services provide equal access to justice for persons not able to pay for legal and other essential services. They address the social problem of poverty by providing high-quality legal assistance to people living in poverty in the areas most relevant to them: income maintenance, family law, housing law, and consumer protection.



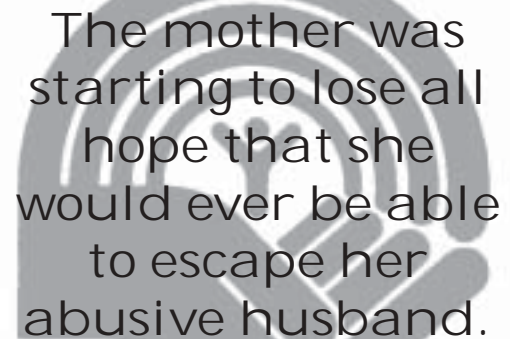
Giselle was told by her husband that he would have her deported and keep her children if she ever tried to leave him.

# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, a family was able to leave an abusive home...*

One winter day last year, the Manhattan Day Care & Learning Center received a call from the Crisis Center. A woman who had been badly beaten by her husband was trying to find a way out of her unfortunate situation. She desperately needed to get to Topeka to take an employment test that would enable her to obtain a job. The job would give her the money she would need to get her and her two children out of the abusive house. They had called all over Manhattan, hoping to find a child care center that would care for the children on a short-term basis so that the mother could get to Topeka and take the employment test. She was starting to think that finding a sitter and taking the test were impossible and she would never escape her abusive husband. Their last call was to Manhattan Day Care & Learning Center, which reserves places at one of its centers so that help is available in a crisis situation. Both children were able to attend Manhattan Day Care & Learning Center while Mom went to Topeka to take the test. Ultimately, she got the job, and she and the children were able to move away from the abusive situation.



The mother was starting to lose all hope that she would ever be able to escape her abusive husband.

### *Manhattan Day Care & Learning Center*


On a regular basis, Manhattan Day Care & Learning Center provides child care to the “working poor,” allowing them to join the workforce and contribute to instead of draw from the economic well-being of the state. Unlike many other centers, MDCLC allows an unlimited number of children subsidized through SRS, will take children in a short-term crisis situation, and allows part-time Head Start children to attend. Your United Way contribution helps to ensure that quality child care is available for those who need it.

# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Tiana was able to find a home and focus on the future...*

Five-year-old Tiana\* appeared at the Manhattan Emergency Shelter with her family, requesting emergency shelter. Her parents and sibling were living with family members when the relatives decided that they no longer had the room to house them. Tiana's mom was working to get her enrolled in school and trying to find other programs to fill her spare time. Tiana had missed out on a lot of the things in life most of us consider "normal," but all she wanted was to go to college and be a cheerleader. The MESI staff was touched that a 5-year-old was already thinking of college and how to pay for it. Staff members found a cheerleading class for Tiana's age group and located a donor to send Tiana to camp, where she could have a break from her family's adult-sized concerns and learn some self-confidence in the process. Thankfully, her family was able to move into the Emergency Shelter's transitional living and then public housing, and they continue to appreciate the help they received.



Tiana had missed out on a lot of the things in life most of us consider "normal."

(\*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.)

### *Manhattan Emergency Shelter, Inc.*

The Manhattan Emergency Shelter serves individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. MESI does this by providing temporary shelter, food, clothing, case management, and basic need items. In addition, MESI provides homeless and/or economically disadvantaged individuals and families an opportunity to regain their dignity and independence through comprehensive "wrap-around" services. Your United Way donations help families and individuals find a safe place to stay while regaining their footing.

# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Johnny was given the chance to realize his potential...*

It was summer 2004 and all of the fifth graders who would soon be in sixth grade were excited about becoming new members of the Ogden Youth Center. The staff and volunteers were preparing for the newcomers when a phone call came in.

“You know that ‘Johnny’\* will be a new member at the Center this year? Just watch out—he doesn’t listen and he likes to start fights.”

The Ogden Youth Center staff listened, but heard a cry for help instead of a warning.

On his first day at the Center, Johnny was smiling from ear to ear, talking with the staff and volunteers, always saying please and thank you, and asking if they needed help cleaning up at night. This continued for weeks and months. One night, Johnny just wasn’t ready to go home, but he did feel like talking.

“I can’t thank you enough for listening to me and helping me with my homework every day,” he said. “It means so much to me that you play video games, basketball or just take a minute to watch television with me. I don’t get that from very many people. They all just think that I am a no-good kid who likes to cause trouble. I know that you don’t feel that way about me. You have made me feel like I can do what ever I want to in my life and there is no one who can hold me back! You are my family. Well, I will see you tomorrow,” he said as he left.

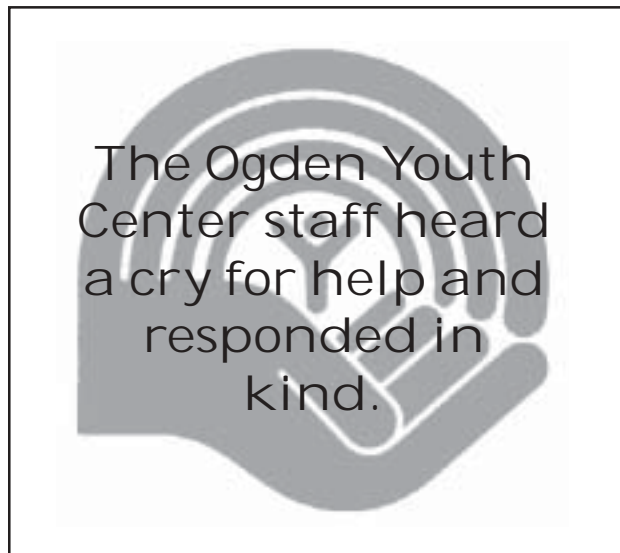
“What Johnny said to me has made me realize why I enjoy working with kids so much,” says Ogden Youth Center director Mariah Bracebridge. “All he needed was someone to listen, someone to care about him and someone to help him realize his potential.”

To this day, Johnny still comes to the Center on a daily basis. Not only has he improved in all of his classes, but he has also gotten involved in school and local organizations.

(\*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.)

### *Ogden Youth Center*

The Ogden Youth Center was established to provide youth in grades 6-12 a safe and environment where members can prepare for academic and leadership success. Your United Way donations help all Ogden Youth Center members receive opportunities to enrich their personal development and become positive community contributors.



# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Esther isn't alone any more...*

Esther Adams, 80, is a volunteer with the Riley County RSVP program. Eleven years ago Esther was struggling with the death of her spouse. She had taken care of her cancer-stricken husband in their home for five years. Following his death, Esther felt alone and helpless. She had no reason to get up in the morning; she didn't feel like doing anything. After three months she decided she needed something to do, and noticed an article in the Manhattan Mercury about volunteer opportunities with RSVP. Esther called the RSVP office and met with the director. From that point on she became the Volunteer Coordinator for RSVP and works Tuesday mornings and all day Thursdays. Esther says, "This gave me a reason for living. I've met so many people and it's a whole new life".

Esther also provides bereavement counseling to others who are facing the challenges she has experienced. She is currently providing bereavement counseling to a woman who is having a hard time coping with the loss of her husband. According to Esther, "I am there to listen. She needs to be able to go through the grieving process and I work with her to see her through it".



" (RSVP) gave me a reason for living."

- Esther Adams  
RSVP Volunteer

### *Riley County Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)*

RSVP provides meaningful volunteer opportunities for persons 55 years of age and older to help meet the needs of all persons in Riley County. Some of these include delivering meals to the homebound, providing transportation, mentoring elementary school children, assisting patients at the hospital and much more.

United Way donor dollars support the on-going services of nearly 500 senior citizens in Riley County. Each year RSVP volunteers provide over 100,000 hours of volunteer service.

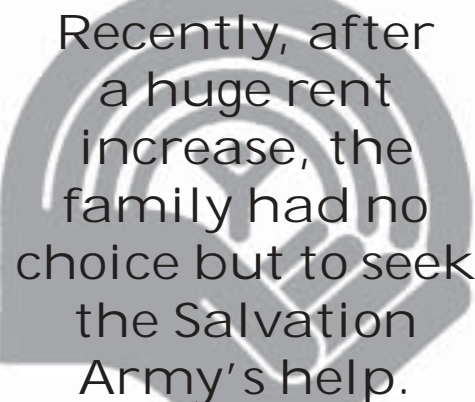
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## Producing Results...

### *Thanks to you, a single mother can finish her schooling...*

The Salvation Army assisted more than 5,000 Riley Countians last year, many who were close to desperation. One single mother with a teenage boy is trying to finish her degree as a non-traditional student, while also looking for permanent employment that will allow her to attend class. Currently she can only work part-time jobs around her school schedule.

“I am telling this story from my heart,” she said. “There have been a few times in my life where the financial stresses have been so great and complex that, as hard as I tried to be self-reliant, I really needed help, in particular with heating bills. Recently, I had a huge rent increase that gave me no choice but to seek the Salvation Army’s help. I was helped with gas and electric bills so my little means of living could keep a roof over our heads. I cried with gratefulness, and hope to express how very much we appreciate and need these opportunities to have help at certain times in our lives. I can remember back 30 years ago when my mother cried for the same reasons, and somehow you all helped then too. Thank you for caring.”



Recently, after a huge rent increase, the family had no choice but to seek the Salvation Army’s help.

### *Salvation Army*

The Salvation Army’s main mission is to be on the front lines of meeting and alleviating human suffering. The organization does this by helping with utility costs, prescriptions, emergency housing assistance, and other social service needs. The Salvation Army - Manhattan Corps also maintains a thrift store for the entire community to use. Your United Way contributions ensure that help is available when those who are struggling need a hand.

# *United Way of Riley County*

## Producing Results...

*Thanks to you, Grace found a family...*

Grace\* started her life addicted to drugs, but that wasn't the greatest challenge she would face in her young life. She entered foster care on her third day of life, directly from the hospital where she was born. Early on, Grace suffered from seizures and was eventually diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

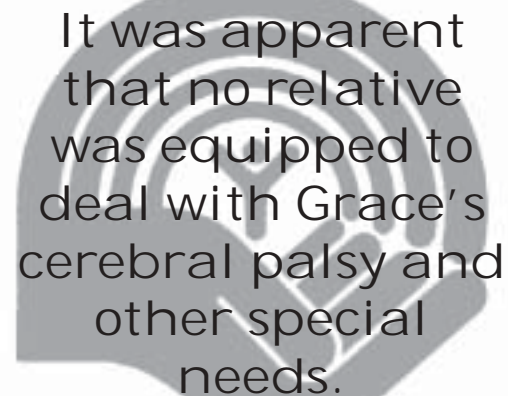
From birth, Grace was assigned a CASA volunteer to look out for her interests during the inevitable court proceedings. Grace's mother entered a drug rehabilitation program and for some time, it seemed she would be able to parent Grace. However, she soon relapsed and started to skip visits with Grace. The judge determined that Grace's mother would not be able to parent her and severed the mother's rights. Grace was now available for adoption.

Her foster family had provided for all of Grace's special needs, and wanted desperately to adopt the child they had come to love. It was apparent early on that no relative was equipped to deal with Grace's cerebral palsy and other medical concerns. Grace's CASA volunteer worked hard to ensure that Grace would be adopted by her foster family – the only family Grace had ever known. In 2004, Grace's adoption was finalized and she joined her foster family permanently.

(\*Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.)

### *Sunflower CASA Project, Inc.*

Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) are trained volunteers who advocate for abused and neglected children in the court system. Sunflower CASA offers training three times a year to increase their volunteer pool and those volunteers work directly with the most vulnerable children. Volunteers spend time each week with their assigned child or children. They investigate the circumstances of the child's life and provide information to the judge for each hearing in the form of a written court report with recommendations for the child's best interests. Two volunteer supervisors provide the support needed for this difficult volunteer work. United Way provides funds for these essential positions within the agency.



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