

ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

When you talk to Deanna Carpenter, it's evident that she radiates gratefulness. After living a privileged childhood, Deanna got involved with the wrong crowd, became a drug addict, and ended up at the Gospel Center Rescue Mission. The beginning of her life was nothing like her life now, but Deanna is grateful for the opportunities she has been given.

Deanna was raised by amazing parents who gave her a wonderful childhood. She had never drank or used drugs and was taught important values. However, when she became pregnant at 16, she had to learn to take care of herself. She married her daughter's father right after graduating high school and immediately had another daughter with him. Her marriage ended shortly after, but her husband took their kids almost full-time. This made Deanna very depressed and she began hanging out with the wrong people.

She got married a second time and had another daughter. During her marriage she became addicted to drugs. Though the relationship was abusive, it lasted for 12 years. When they split, she lived in a house with people from San Quentin State Prison. A retaliation broke out against them and Deanna was ran over by a truck.

After coming out of the hospital, Deanna went to live with her mother,

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Deanna Carpenter and her son, Michael



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Rescue Mission Scholarships

In 2018 we launched scholarship programs for both our New Life Program (NLP) students and their kids. Here's an update on these programs:

New Life Program Scholarship (\$5,000) is for homeless men and women who enter our first 6-month or second 6-month NLP. We call them "students" because they are going through a major life change in which God puts them back on track for the purpose-driven and abundant life that He always had waiting for them. A scholarship grantor is paired with a student and can interact with/mentor their student to their extent of comfort and within the student's NLP rules. This relationship can teach our students great family values and healthy work and social environments, and can even extend beyond a student's time at the Mission. I am happy to report that this scholarship program has steadily grown over the past year. By letting our faithful supporters know about this program through this message and other venues, we hope that every NLP student has a scholarship grantor/mentor in 2019.

Kids Summer Scholarship (\$300) is for all NLP students' children to have a summer with at least one fun outing each week. Based on our pilot program last summer, these outings include but are not limited to: swimming pools, waterparks, movies, museums, picnics, 4th of July activities, Stockton Ports baseball games, farms, zoos, and more. Last year we averaged over 30 children every day who call the Rescue Mission their home. On the weekends this number can swell to over 50, as many mothers gain visitation privileges from Child Protective Services. Accordingly, NLP mothers are part of this program. These children often come from terrible environments, so we want to give them a summer that makes them feel like kids again. As a result of a grant from Sunlight Giving Foundation, we have 50 percent of the estimated scholarships already funded!

If the Lord leads you, please consider funding a scholarship by using the enclosed envelop and writing "NLP Scholarship" or "Kids Summer Scholarship" in the comments section. In doing so, we will have the opportunity to teach both adult NLP students and their children the ways of the Lord, as stated in Proverbs 8:10: **"Choose My instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold."**

Wayne G. Richardson

GCRM HAPPENINGS



Thanks to an anonymous donor couple, we were recently able to get a refrigeration truck! This truck will help us transfer food to and from the Mission to continue providing up to 2,000 meals for our students and the homeless in our community. You, our donors, are truly helping us grow our Mission!

which was the only time she had been sober in 20 years. But when Deanna got back together with her former husband, she got back into drugs. She worked as a truck driver, but her addiction was so bad that she couldn't keep her job. Her step-father forced her out of the house, and she was left homeless.

Deanna lived in trap houses, motels, and garages and worked side jobs just to get by. At the age of 39 while Deanna was an addict living on bikes, she found out she was pregnant with her son, Michael, now 6. "I did not know what the purpose of that was. I was going to give him up for adoption," she said.

Deanna and her husband were able to get a house, but sold drugs to survive. She recalls having numerous people live in her house, where fights broke out and police frequently showed up. "By the grace of God I never went to jail," said Deanna.

Deanna's husband became extremely sick and barely had any time left to live. In 2017 he was taken by Hospice; therefore, Deanna no longer had SSI income. She and her son were left with nothing and had to live in an attic of a trap house.

Her breaking point came when she made brownies one day – some with marijuana for her and some without for her son. After eating his own brownies, her son accidentally ate Deanna's and went into seizures. He was taken to UC Davis, where Child Protective Services took him from her. Thankfully,

her father and daughters stepped up to take care of her son so he didn't have to be in foster care.

During this time, she restored her relationship with her family. "I was probably one of the worst moms ever, but my daughters raised my son that year," she said. Now Deanna has strong relationships with her father and each of her children.

Deanna felt that God was leading her to the Gospel Center Rescue Mission. She arrived in February 2018 and immediately knew she was in the right place. "I knew that God was leading my path at that point." She started the Gospel Center Rescue Mission's New Life Program in April 2018, got her son back in August, and graduated in November. Deanna is proud to say, "I am building an amazing relationship with my son. Now I know what his purpose was – he was the one God gave me so that I would get sober."

Following her graduation Deanna volunteered in Recuperative Care at the Mission and started a new paid position as a campus housewoman just a month ago. "I truly believe God led me here to these people who have given me so many opportunities," she said.

Deanna plans to eventually move to Modesto where her family lives and get back into the trucking industry. For now, she has humbled herself to accept anything God puts in her path. "You have to be patient and humble and have an attitude of gratitude. I'm just waiting for God to give me that next step."

IN THE COMMUNITY



The Gospel Center Rescue Mission's focus is not only to help the homeless and addicted, but also extend a hand to other nonprofits in our community. As a Certified Fund Raising Executive with over 20 years of fundraising experience, CEO Wayne Richardson teaches a Start-Up Fundraising Seminar to local nonprofits to help them grow towards their goals. Over 25 nonprofits were represented at January's seminar, which was held at the Family Resource Center in Stockton. Thanks to A.G. Spanos Companies for underwriting the cost of the seminar and the printing cost of the seminar booklet, and to SASS! Public Relations for designing the booklet and presentation.

GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

over 75 years of restoring lives

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Thank you for supporting our students through scholarships!

GRADUATION

We celebrated the accomplishments of 15 students at January's graduation! Glenn R. Shields, Pastor of Progressive Community Church in Stockton, gave the motivational keynote speech. Congratulations to James Adams, Naomi Branson, Robert Donahue, Aisha Duckworth, Maryeliethe Earll, Brandy Hamilton, Lacyne Lucero, Tammy Morales, Tianna Morgan, Milton Sells, Laurie Smith, Ariel Taylor, Claudia Valencia, Kathleen Whiteman, and Alfred Wilson!

We also commended several employees and volunteers at graduation for their heroism. In December, Britton Kimball, Mike Viss, Thomas Mitchell, Elva Garcia, Diana Clay, and Yvonne Farrell took action to prevent an unidentified man from violently harming the Payee Service Staff. In January, Deanna Carpenter, Viola Dinkins, Laurie Smith, and Aisha Duckworth responded to a Recuperative Care client who was found unresponsive and followed the instructions given by the 911 operator until help arrived. Each of these individuals displayed selflessness and their actions reflect great credit on themselves, their families, and the Mission.



January's graduates with Pastor Glenn R. Shields



Letters of Commendation were presented to heroic GCRM employees and volunteers at graduation.