



OCTOBER 2023



Compassion Around the Corner

Monthly Newsletter

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Our Mission

Sharing God's love with inner-city children through Biblical principles, with physical and spiritual solutions.

Our Vision

To meet the physical, emotional, and educational needs of inner-city children by instilling hope in a safe, Christ-centered environment.

Our Motto

Help for TODAY, Hope for ETERNITY!

Contact Us:

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Office Hours: M-F 9 AM-3 PM
Program Hours: M-Th 5 PM-8 PM

Scan for more information about Rock House Kids



Board of Directors

- Mark Morris, *President*
- Barry Kramer, *Vice President*
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- Bob Mellon
- Dee Lacny, *Executive Director*

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

Where has the year 2023 gone? Honestly, I am ready to move on to 2024. In January, at our first staff meeting, I told our staff to hold on. Every part of my being felt that 2023 would be a rough year. Oh, how I wish I had been wrong.

We began the year with many health concerns among the staff, volunteers, and kids. They continue to be ongoing. We also had staff changes. One position has been vacant since May.

Then, there is the construction project. We have been working on this project since 2020! We were sure the construction would be complete by now, but unfortunately, we are still in the pre-construction phase.

In our evening programming, we had to shut down our Thursday teen nights due to a lack of volunteers, and, as you may know, we lost one of our sweet babies to violence in July.

These are just a few of the situations we have been dealing with.

When you feel like there is bad news at every turn, you have a choice to make. Do you call it quits because it is too hard to keep moving on, or do you buckle up for a fight? There were times this year I felt pushed to my limit and was going to run. Then came glimpses of hope.

Past teens came back and talked about the importance of RHK: what it meant to them and their memories of their time here. The one comment each one shared was that RHK was and still is home to them.

One spoke about how RHK made the time bearable while one of their parents was in jail. They knew they had the love and support of their RHK family. They felt loved, not judged.

Another one mentioned that they would not be alive today without RHK because we never gave up on them, and they always knew they were welcome back despite their mistakes.

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"HOLDING ON" continued...

Too many times, we want to see evidence of progress or "success" quickly. I call this the microwave effect. We don't like waiting.

Galatians 6:9 says, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

We are learning a lot about waiting for the Lord's timing through the construction process. We must remember we only see a small portion of the big picture, but the Lord sees the finished project. It is like we are looking at the bottom of a needlework project with all the knots and messiness. But, the Lord is looking at the front and seeing the beautifully completed project. If we don't wait on His timing, we could make a mess of His beautiful ending project.

We are excited to announce the city has approved the drawings for the construction area. The hope is to have the new space up and running at the beginning of 2024, which is RHK's 25th anniversary!

We have also been able to open Thursday evenings for the teens. The shutdown was actually a blessing in disguise. The teens appreciate having two nights again. They were taking RHK for granted, and when they had to miss Thursdays, they saw how they missed being with everyone.

With the death of our child, RHK has received a new fight to give every child who needs it the opportunity to have a safe place they can come.

Thanks to the amazing support of our donors, community, and volunteers, we continue to fight for the kids. We can stand in the gap, keep the doors open, and give the kids a place they can call their second home.

Thank you for your continued support.

Blessings,



Dee Lacny

Executive Director, Rock House Kids

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT - JANELLE PROCOPIO

Hi, my name is Janelle Procopio or "Ms. Jae." I took a nickname at Rock House Kids because there was already a volunteer named Janell. I always wanted a nickname and am trying to convince my family they should call me "Jae." I have been volunteering at RHK since 2014. Most of those eight years have been with the 5th and 6th grade girls on Monday evenings.

Shortly after moving to the Rockford area, I learned about RHK at Northeast Church. It wasn't until years later, when I missed my children being small, that I prayed about how to spend my time in the evenings, and RHK came to mind.

I have been married for 36 years and have nine children. I took time off from volunteering to babysit one of my grandsons. (In October, I get to start babysitting my 3-month-old grandson a few days a week.) I returned to RHK after taking over a year off because I missed all the Rock House "kids."

I would encourage everyone to visit and see the faces of these precious children made in God's image. The staff at RHK make it so easy. I show up and smile at the kids. The staff prepares everything and provides us with the lessons and activities. I cannot hear very well, even with hearing aids, but I love seeing their faces and telling them about Jesus.



END OF SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

With school getting ready to start, we squeezed in a few last field trips to round out the summer fun. Our grade school kids had an event hosted by Life Church and went to Sapora Playworld. The teens returned for the last Food Truck night at Nicholas Conservatory, and some learned to water ski with the Rockford Ski Broncos.

FIELD TRIPS

Life Church Event Night



Sapora Playworld



Ski Broncos



Food Trucks



Our 5th & 6th grade kids took their annual camping trip on September 15-17, 2023. They enjoyed getting out of Rockford for a few days and having the opportunity to learn more about nature, be challenged in their relationship with God, and try new experiences like ziplining and archery.



5TH & 6TH GRADE CAMP

WELCOME, NEW RHK VOLUNTEERS!

Jashayvia Cooper-Mangruem
Shanticia Ferguson
Nancy Mickle

JOB OPENING

Rock House Kids is looking for our next
Office Coordinator.

Do you know someone who is:

- A strong Christ-follower (top priority),
- Possesses excellent customer service skills,
- Is fluent in Microsoft Office,
- And has experience in technical or grant writing?

If so, this may be the job for you. To apply or find out more information, contact Dee Lacny at dee@rockhousekids.org.

MONTH AT A GLANCE

772

TOTAL ATTENDANCE/
MEALS SERVED

NEW KIDS

20

26

RETURNING KIDS
(AFTER 6+ MONTHS ABSENT)

TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

138

1

VOLUNTEERS (NEW)

VOLUNTEER HOURS

930

October Stop:

RHK BIG EATS TOUR

Lucha Cantina

October 25,
2023



If you like Latin-Mexican fusion, you are going to love this month's stop on the Big Eats Tour. We're heading to Lucha Cantina!

Mention this Rock House Kids' fundraiser when you place your order and 15% of your bill will be donated to benefit our kids.

Where: Lucha Cantina
1641 N Alpine Rd, Rockford, IL 61107

When: 4-8 PM

We will see you there!

October at RHK means we start planning for colder weather and Christmas for the kids. Cozy fleece blankets are much needed and appreciated by our kids.

Donations can be dropped off at our office from 9 AM to 3 PM (M-F) OR order through Amazon or Walmart and have them delivered to us at 1325 7th Street, Rockford, IL 61104. Please include your name on the receipt so we know who to thank.

Thank you!!



OCTOBER

Wish List

- Blankets (light to heavy)
- Walmart Gift cards \$25
- McDonalds Gift Cards \$10-\$15
- Fruit cups
- Individually wrapped freeze dried fruit
- Bags of individually wrapped candy
- Cereal cups/boxes/pouches



Thank you for supporting our kids!