



The Center of Hope, Inc. is a homelessness prevention program and 100% of your contribution is used in direct service to the poor.

The lobby fills quickly with clients seeking help and extends outdoors where the sidewalk is lined with others. They start arriving as early as 5:30 a.m. Unfortunately, this is not an exception but rather a common, weekly occurrence. For many, Center of Hope is truly their last hope!



By George Dinkel, Executive Director

CHALLENGES AND GAME PLAN

We just completed our funding request for United Way this month and I thought it might be an opportune time to share with you the challenges I believe we will be facing and our game plan to meet these challenges. Currently, the majority of our funding (41%) comes from you, our very loyal donor base that sees the beauty and graces that come from sharing your resources with the poor families in our community. But a large component of our ministry to the poor (34%) comes from the United Way.

The United Way has been a great partner in our organization's service to the poor. Since we have such a limited staff, only 4 total paid employees, and we see so many people who are needing assistance, we have virtually no time or resources to do fund raising.

Many Saved From Homelessness

We provided direct assistance of \$860,000 for rent and utilities for 2,891 households this past year. This assistance

kept utilities on for these families and allowed them to stay in their homes at least another 30 days. Only 14.5% of these families we helped were eventually evicted from their homes six months after receiving our assistance and two thirds of these families will not need homeless prevention service in the future.

These are very solid numbers and reflect the hard work and long hours the COH staff and volunteers have worked to help these poor families in their time of need and anxiety. But these numbers do not reflect the 50 to 100 families we have to turn away from our door each week as we do not have the staffing or finances to help them.

The 2008 Census Bureau reports there were 23,800 households, 60,000 persons who live in poverty in Sedgwick County and 53% of these households are headed by females with children with no husband present in the household. In addition, the unemployment rates have more than doubled since 2008, so I venture to guess that the number of households in poverty today far exceed these 2008 numbers.

Some common themes we see in many

of these cases are very broken family relations, no support mechanism, loss of jobs, physical and mental health issues, abusive relationships and transportation problems.

Our Challenges

The challenges I see we are facing are the unprecedented increase in the demand for our service, a continuing volatile stock market, unemployment benefits being in jeopardy, a continuing break down in the family unit which is further fueled by the financial pressures families are facing, and government programs and legislation that do not adequately meet the needs of the poor.

Facing these many challenges we could perhaps plan for a reduction in our service and try to preserve some reserve funds or we could plan to embrace the challenge and meet it head on.

Although we realize that we can never meet the total demand for our service as the need is too great for any one organization, we do believe that we must make an attempt to increase our services during these turbulent times which are taking such a toll on the poor families in our community.

Consequently, we have requested additional funding from United Way for the year 2011 and have challenged our Board to raise additional funding this next year so that we can increase the amount of assistance we provide by \$100,000.

In addition, we hope to have funding to hire a part time case manager to help serve these additional families needing homeless prevention services and another part time case manager to help Sr. Becky provide intensive case management to the families with acute critical needs.

Our hope is to keep families together in the safety of their homes with their utilities on and to ensure families make choices that will bring systemic changes to their lives.

Scripture tells us that the poor will always be with us (Matt 26) so we recognize that poverty is not a problem that can be fixed, but with God's grace, your generosity and with the help of organizations like the United Way, we truly can make a difference in people's lives. May God's blessings and peace be with you!!!

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CENTER OF HOPE, INC.
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Executive Director
George Dinkel

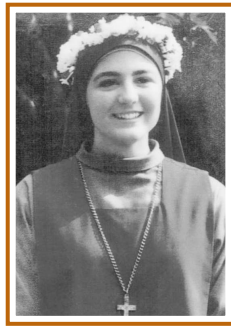
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Final Vows



Many volunteers and supporters of Center of Hope have followed the progress of George and Linda Dinkel's daughter as she pursued her religious vocation. It is with great pleasure that they share the good news that Sr. Mary of the Annunciation professed final vows on Monday, Sept. 13 at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. George and Linda were accompanied by several family members to the ceremony.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT VOLUNTEERS!

An appreciation brunch honoring our volunteers will be held

Saturday, Oct. 30
10:00 a.m. to Noon

All current volunteers and anyone interested in learning about volunteer opportunities at Center of Hope are cordially invited.

The brunch will be held at the COH office, 400 North Emporia.

Please pray for C, 37, who lives with his wife and their 11-year-old daughter. C's two-week-old daughter passed away in May. He missed work and had to come up with money for the funeral.

Please pray for C, 63, a lady who lives by herself. C had a high electric bill she could not pay. She is disabled and needs to keep her utilities on. She is receiving home health care and has medical bills.

Please pray for T and his wife and their two children. T lost his job, their home has been foreclosed, and their utilities shut off. The mom is looking for work. Their youngest daughter was born prematurely and has many health issues.

Please pray for L and her husband T. T had a stroke and will have to go to a rehab hospital. He won't be able to work for a long time and currently has some paralysis. He is only 43 years old and they have a three-year-old daughter. L is looking for work, but will have to spend a lot of time taking care of her husband.

Please pray for R, a 22-year-old man who was swimming at the pool at his apartment. He dove in and hit his head on the bottom of the pool breaking his neck. He floated out of the pool, walked up to his apartment to call his mom-his legs were pretty numb. When they got him to

Families We Have Served



the doctor they found he had broken his neck. It was a clean break and no damage was caused so he will be able to return to work. His guardian angel had to be looking out for him.

Please pray for K and her 5 children. K has been homeless the past six months living in her car or with friends.

Please pray for D, a 35-year-old dad who lives with his wife and their 8 children. D lost his job

in June. He is getting unemployment income, but really needs to find work to take care of his family.

Please pray for V, 51, who lives by herself. V suffers from several medical conditions including heart disease. She works, but her monthly income of \$500 is barely enough to cover her rent which alone is \$447 per month.

Please pray for J, a 32-year-old dad who lives with his three young sons and his parents. J's sons are hyper-active as a result of growing up with a mom who was addicted to drugs. J has recently gotten custody of the boys because their mother was unable to care for them. J lost his job because he couldn't let his parents take care of the boys as his parents are in their 70's and his mom is suffering from cancer.

VOLUNTEERS DEDICATED TO THE MISSION OF CENTER OF HOPE

At least weekly, we hear of social service agencies in critical need of funding or perhaps even eliminating programs because staff isn't available to manage those services. Fortunately, the Center of Hope has been able to not only maintain its existing service but actually increase its service through these difficult economic times.

Through judicious use of donations, many more persons have been helped this year than ever before. The free help offered by our volunteers is a true blessing as it has allowed us to handle this increased workload with our existing staff of three full time employees and one part time employee. Without the volunteers, thousands of people would not be benefiting from COH programs.

Although most of the COH volunteers have been with us for several years, some actually go back to the inception of our ministry 28 years ago. Due to the tremendous increase in the demand for our services we need more volunteers to ease the strain currently being placed on our staff and existing volunteers.

Several volunteers have stated that they've noticed a significant increase in the number of clients coming to COH and that many more are people who've never needed help from social service agencies in the past. Retired people are seeking help as they find that their Social Security payments and retirement benefits aren't sufficient to meet their needs. Younger people are not able to find jobs, and if they do, the jobs are typically without benefits and low pay. Many families have lost their jobs and now find their unemployment benefits have expired.

Recently a 75-year-old woman came to the COH for assistance. She was staying in her son's house during the day, but because there are so many other family members in this small house, she was sleeping in the yard outdoors at night. This is a rather unusual situation but one that demonstrates the dire conditions many are facing.

Another client was a young woman who came to the COH for assistance with her three-day old baby who was delivered by C-section. The mother and child were living in a car three days after this serious procedure with nowhere to go and no income.

These are two emergency situations that underscore the extreme urgency of the situations that need to be addressed immediately.

For the first 20 years, the Center of Hope's work primarily consisted of clients calling on Monday to make an appointment for Wednesday. Their information was taken over the phone and verified before their appointment. On Wednesday, when the client came into the office, they were helped with the emergency financial needs and often referred for other services and given food, paper products, cleaning and hygiene products. This system worked well, but the number of people needing help has been increasing significantly each year.

Today, we help not only those calling in on Mondays, but the many who daily come to our door with eviction notices or shut off notices. People referred by other agencies or social workers are also seen throughout the week. This additional activity of allowing the daily walk-ins keeps the staff and volunteers extremely busy every day.

The line for emergency services forms early as those needing assistance are desperate for help. Often clients arrive as early as 5:30 a.m. to be first in line hoping to get in for assistance. It's not uncommon to find 40-50 people in our small lobby waiting for help.

In addition to the emergency financial assistance given clients, Center of Hope also provides income tax preparation, case management services, and homeless prevention services for those needing extended services through a joint venture grant with the United Way and the City of Wichita, and serves as a Prairieland Food distribution center.

Volunteers have helped meet this surge of clients move more effectively through the process. If you're wondering what volunteers actually do, here's a partial list of tasks:

- Serves as greeter or receptionist
- Completes forms for clients and photocopies documentation for files
- Verifies client information with landlords, utility companies, etc.
- Answers phone and explains documentation needed to receive assistance
- Prepares state and federal income tax forms
- Receives donated food and household supplies and stocks the supply room
- Makes home visits for subsidized low-income housing program
- Helps with filing and recording information in the database

Of course, there are other jobs to be tackled as the need arises, but this gives you an idea of the volunteer work available.

Most volunteers are retired because they have the time during the day to help, but students have volunteered, as have stay-at-home moms and people with part time jobs. Some volunteers have a professional social service background, but most just have a desire to help others less fortunate than themselves.

If you have an interest in helping Center of Hope through some volunteer work each week or as a substitute, please attend the Volunteer Brunch on Saturday, Oct. 30, at the COH office, 400 North Emporia. It's a good time to learn more about volunteering. If you can't make the brunch, you can call George Dinkel, Executive Director, at 267-3999 and leave a message.

Thank you to volunteers Jim Dale and Martha Flaherty for their help in the preparation of this article.

HONORARIUMS

DR. GREGORY DUICK
SR. STELLA
(BIRTHDAY)

MEMORIALS

DORIS JAAX
SR. TRISH MCCONNEL
BETTY DAWSON

Center of Hope, Inc.

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“Life is a gift that God gives to the universe and to humanity.” Acts of the Adorers’ 18th General Assembly

CENTER OF HOPE, INC. MISSION STATEMENT

The Center of Hope listens to the cries of the poor with compassion and love, and without judgment, seeing all who present themselves as Children of God. A loving presence to those in need and advocates for the powerless, we offer hope to families, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or gender, as they deal with life's daily challenges. We help them with emergency financial support for rent and utilities, provide case management toward resolutions of on-going difficulties, and assure the dignity and self-respect of each individual.

VISION STATEMENT

Offering hope for tomorrow through assistance today

CENTER OF HOPE, INC.

Celebrating 27 years of service to the Wichita community



This past fiscal year, the Center of Hope prevented 2,891 families (a 13% increase over prior year) from having to experience homelessness. Included in those families were 4,319 children. \$862,465 was dispersed for rent, utilities and emergency needs. On average, \$298 was spent per family.

In addition to the financial assistance paid to landlords and utility companies, families were given food and other personal care products from our storeroom, provided

budgeting assistance, and counseled for special needs. Many thanks go out to all the parishes, business, and individuals who brought blankets, canned and boxed food, paper products and personal and home cleaning products. Most recently, Kyle Jacobs, Marcia Morales, Barbara Peters, Sally Stump, Rosemary Wells, Sr. Loretta, St. Cecelia Parish, and St. Francis Parish have blessed us with 157 bags of food and supplies.

Annual Benefit Dinner...Feb. 20, 2011

Save the date for the 2011 Benefit Dinner scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 20 at Dugan Library and Conference Center on the Newman University campus.

Watch future Hopelines for more information!



Editor, George Dinkel
Coordinator, Mary Jobe-Waddill