

the VOICE

APRIL 2019



I'm Strong



WAYMAK
Miracle Workers
PROMISE KEEP
I FIGHT IN THE DARK
MY GOD THAT IS WHO YOU A

Meaningful Mentorships

Your support gives our guests the opportunities they need to thrive



Christ Centered. Client Focused. Community Connected.



Whoever is kind to
the poor lends to the
LORD, and He will
reward them for what
they have done.

Proverbs 19:17

Transforming Grace



When I first saw this picture of my grandson, (shown above) naturally I cried. But the tears were not just the tears of a proud grandmother, they were something more – tears formed by the deeper meanings of service and sacrifice. They were the same tears I shed when thinking about the sacrifice my Savior made for me – the King who came as a child to serve us. My grandson might not have known the complex aversions and stigmas most adults would feel in this circumstance, but that might just be the beauty of the action. He leapt in immediately, not because of a well-formed sense of altruism, but because he had seen it done before, by his mother, his father, those around him. Looking through the watery film covering my eyes, I saw something more than my grandson helping a homeless man with his socks and shoes. I had seen this done before. It was done years ago when Jesus came to Earth, when He washed His disciples' feet, when He humbled Himself to the injustice of the cross, and it was done for me. It's the kind of action we are all called to – sacrificially serving those in need. Not because we've determined it's what we ought to do, but because we've seen it done before, by Jesus, the one I strive to imitate in my life. This picture of transforming grace reminds me of His words, "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matt. 25:40).

Sincerely,
Candi Hughes, Chairman of the Board

Candi Sue Hughes

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Melodee Anderson



Melodee Anderson carried around a filled-out volunteer form in her purse for two years – tattered and worn, but always with her. Back in 2015, she read a nondescript article about the need for children’s chapel volunteers at Simonka Place for Women and Children, and she wanted to act.

Teaching was her passion, but that path never materialized. “I ended up in finance,” she says. “When I saw the blurb in the newsletter I thought, ‘I have so many responsibilities, but here is a need. I could do this.’” Frustratingly for Melodee, the timing back in 2015 didn’t work out. She carried that filled-out form in her purse for over two years until circumstances shifted just enough to allow her to pursue her passion.

Her first weeks working with the children at Simonka Place were eye-opening. She remembers the astonishment of one young boy who realized the playdough she had brought them was from Walmart and not the Dollar Tree. “My snobbery of not wanting to be at Walmart was put on blast by the Holy Spirit,” she says. “I’m so spoiled. We are so spoiled. I realized my ‘less than’ was their ‘more than.’ It was humbling.”

Melodee is not shy about the challenges of working in children’s chapel. Many of the children are affected by developmental delay, past trauma or unstable circumstances. Classes are often a test in flexibility and compassion. “I have to redefine my own terms of what ‘success’ is in the 30 minutes I get with these kids,” she says. “No matter how chaotic it can be at times, if they can walk away feeling the love of Jesus, that is my new definition.”

The change Melodee has experienced through volunteering isn’t something she has witnessed only in her own life, but also in the life of her eight-year-old son Jaden, who volunteers with her for an hour every week. “There are times when my effectiveness is completely hinged on him being willing to get up and dance,” she says. “He gets it – it’s a ministry and he has to be a leader. I’m proud of him.”

Melodee often wonders if her son Jaden isn’t a piece of why she had to carry around that crumpled up volunteer form for over two years, unable to jump into serving back in 2015. “He would’ve only been five, and he’s eight now. He can walk in and step into the role of leading by example,” she says. “The opportunity Simonka Place provided is part of my responsibility as a mom to raise godly men. For Jaden, Simonka Place has been pivotal.”

“Serving changes who you are. It changes your DNA. It makes you see the world from a different perspective.”

Fully recognizing the growing need for volunteers, Melodee also acknowledges that the experience is far different from the expectation. “Serving changes who you are. It changes your DNA. It makes you see the world from a different perspective,” she says. “If we are a bit more willing to lay down our busyness, our agendas, our finances, our lives, for something that is outside of what will benefit us, somehow we are the ones who end up growing and benefitting.”

Meaningful Mentorships



Nick & Frank

Frank helps guide Nick to his chair, taking his bag for him and setting it down on the table between them. Nick takes a seat, folding up his white cane and holding it in his left hand. Nick is Frank's mentor – a term he believes is insufficient concerning their relationship. After only a few minutes conversing with the pair, it was easy to see why.

They first met while helping to feed the homeless with a group from the church they both attend. They got along instantly. As a part of the New Life Fellowship recovery program Frank belongs to, each program resident is required to have a mentor. With no one specific in mind at the time, Frank put in his general request to be placed with a mentor. At the same time, Nick had just been informed that his scheduled mentee had withdrawn from the program.

"It's crazy how God works," Nick says. His pastor approached him with another opportunity. "He said, 'I have another guy. Are you willing to mentor him even with an age difference?'" The person in question was Frank. "It was awesome because we already got along," Nick says.

Although the two politely, though perhaps adamantly, disagree on their first meeting as mentor and mentee – Nick assures Frank it was at the YMCA and Frank assures Nick it was on a walk through the park – they both agree that it didn't take long to get to know each other. "We walked and talked for hours," Frank says, "just asking real questions."

Whether it was their first or third meeting, the walk lasted over three hours. By the end, they had covered 8 miles of ground and years' worth of life stories. The age difference hardly mattered. "He knows the Bible better than I do," Frank says, "and that's what matters to me. His heart is bigger than I could ever imagine, and everything he's been through is such an inspiration to me."

Nick is blind. Two weeks after graduating from high school his sight began to deteriorate. Shortly after, he spent five years on dialysis, eventually leading to a full kidney transplant. "It wasn't until my trials hit that He drew me to my knees," Nick says. "I consider it a blessing to be able to wake up each morning, being able to do what I can do –

mentoring Frank and connecting with all of the guys at UGM, because I didn't learn everything overnight."

"His story nailed me to the wall," Frank says. "After hearing it, I knew why he could mentor me. I went through little things in comparison. He went through life change. Age difference is nothing to me in comparison to the difference of what we've gone through."

Neither of them took a smooth path to where they are now. "Ten years ago, this was the last thing on my mind," Nick says. "It wasn't until I lost my sight that I found my way to encourage people. What I considered my biggest loss, helped me gain more than I could have ever imagined."

"He's a miracle just standing here," Frank says. A comment Nick is quick to make sure I write down verbatim as the two share a laugh. "I didn't know God ten years ago," Frank continues. "I just found him here through UGM."

Frank credits having Nick's mentorship for much of his development and success in the NLF program, and he believes that his success comes from something deeper than a relationship of authority. "Mentorship is not just a teacher-student relationship," he says. "I have plenty of those – they're called tutors. This is a friendship."

Nick and Frank truly are more than mentor and mentee. You see it in their eagerness to compliment each other, in the sincerity with which they pray together, even in how they joke about which of them cried after doing sit-ups at the YMCA – another detail

on which they adamantly disagree.

They do agree that a mentoring relationship, like any deep friendship, takes empathy. "During my own trials, I just wanted someone to listen to me," Nick says. He encourages others not to engage in mentorship with the expectation of authority and one-sided benefit. "Listen first, without expectation," he says. "Because when you're listening, and they are talking, God is going to reveal where you can draw from the Word to speak to their circumstances."

"Nick is there for my highs and lows," Frank says. "He listens when I need someone to talk to. And if I don't need someone, that's fine. We just laugh and have fun. He helps me grow."

Nick is quick to point out that personal growth is not confined to Frank's experience. "I may be Frank's mentor, but it's a mutual encouragement," he says. "Instead of just looking at it as me helping him, if I take a step back, he is helping me as well. It used to be that I would mainly pray for him, but now he's initiating. Seeing what God is doing in and through Frank is incredible. He doesn't even know there are times when I've been down, and he just says something that picks me up."



"A lot of the people at UGM are broken," Frank says. "When you are this low, you lose your friends – you lose everything. You have no one. For me, having a mentor means having at least one friend that I can go to every week. That's one friend that you can guarantee you're not going to lose even if you say something wrong because they are there to help you."

"Nick is not just someone here to judge or condemn me, Nick is my friend." Frank says one last time as he grabs Nick's bag from the table between them. Nick unfolds his white cane and Frank gently comes alongside. We shake hands and they head slowly for the door, keeping pace with each other. They're going to get food – once again, adamantly disagreeing on where to go – but wherever they end up, they're walking together.

If you are interested in learning more about what it takes to become a mentor, please contact Johnna Norton
jnorton@ugmsalem.org



Q&A

Hannah & Johnna

Community Engagement

Q: Tell us a bit about what you do.

Hannah: I am the Community Engagement Coordinator and I primarily do the fundraising events for UGM. We have three major ones each year and a couple of others here and there. I also coordinate community engagement efforts like tours, speaking engagements and I oversee the volunteer pool.

Johnna: My official title is Community Engagement Assistant. While Hannah primarily handles events, I take on a lot of the volunteer coordinating: engaging with prospective volunteers, finding the right opportunity at the right site and making sure it's all scheduled. I thank God every day that Hannah works with me! She's a fount of information.

Q: What is community engagement, and how do you two work together?

H: It's sharing our story with the community and bringing them in to understand what happens inside our doors. We often do that through fundraising events, where we hope to share our story as well as raise money. Garnering sponsorships for events is a big thing as well. It's another way to let our community be involved in what we're doing. We want to share our story with more people, because I believe there is a general lack of understanding concerning how expansive our programs are. Almost every time we speak somewhere we hear, "wow, I had no idea you did so much!"

J: Literally every time.

H: We're trying to get people involved, whether that's

through donating, volunteering, praying or whatever it may look like. Johnna and I have soft roles. I'm more events, she's more volunteer coordinating, but we talk together about pretty much everything. If you don't hear from one of us, you'll hear from the other.

J: I think it helps people feel cared for and supported when they know there's a team working with them, appreciating and maintaining those relationships.

Q: What are some of the biggest volunteer needs?

J: Children's chapel. It takes experience, and you definitely have to like kids. You also have to know how to structure lessons – something that appeals to kids of all ages.

H: Openings for leading chapel at the Men's Mission. Learning Center teachers and tutors. They have to have some form of teaching experience, so it's tricky to find those people. We usually have just barely enough, so it's nice to have one or two extras who we can call on if needed.

J: Volunteers are great at bringing us their own ideas too.

Q: And that's something that you're open to?

J: Absolutely. If they've got a great idea, our usual response is, "how can we make this work?" We have barbers, and the dental guy brings his van. We have a church group that comes to Simonka Place and celebrates kids' birthdays.

H: We have a yoga instructor who comes twice a month. We have someone who brings their therapy dog. We have all manners of specialty niches, and we love it.

Q: Do you have a "dream" volunteer opportunity?

What Happens After I Submit my Application

STEP 1

Application Received



STEP 2

Background Check



STEP 3

Phone Interview



STEP 4

Orientation, Placement & Training



YOU'RE A VOLUNTEER!

H: Yes, I do.

J: Oh, she does!

H: We would love a few people who can help with speaking to businesses and garnering sponsorships. We have one person who is great at that and we so utilize him! But he's just one person.

Q: What does this mean to you?

H: When I get to interact with guests, hear their stories and see the ways their lives have changed, that is so motivating. But also getting to see the volunteers, and their hearts and their stories is incredible. We get this backstage look at the people who come in to serve and try and link the two together – the guests and the community.

J: I just like the idea that we are a place where people can come who want to share of themselves and make a difference in their community. UGM is here, with its resources, to make that possible.

H: I think it's encouraging for people to come here and be a part of the solution. It's not just temporary help. They can help change someone's life – from homelessness to having a home, being sober, being successful, having Christ in their lives. These are the people Jesus loves. They're just as much

his children as you and me.

J: If you want to model Christ in your life, you have to find some way to engage.

Q: What does UGM look like without community support?

H: No Bueno.

J: No Bueno. I don't think we'd even be dreaming about expanding.

H: No, and we certainly couldn't do all the ministries that we do every day without them.

J: Many of our programs wouldn't even exist. Besides, I get paid to do this. It's a different kind of relationship when you can say, "I'm here simply because I want to be, for no other reason than just to help you."

Q: Do you have a message for your volunteers?

H: We're so thankful for you. We want you to know that we don't see you as another number in the system. You matter to us. Your presence is speaking life, hope and love to people who need to hear it.

J: The fact that you're here because you want to be, changes things for people, and you will be changed too. I can't believe that you will spend any time in any of our facilities and not have a life-changing experience. Truly, without you, none of this happens.

Corner Campaign



HOPE | BUILDER
matching challenge

Will you provide **HOPE**?

All capital campaign donations received between now and May 31, 2019 will be matched, dollar for dollar, up to \$1.5 million.

visit <https://ugmsalem.org/capitalcampaign/>
or email Lacie: lwheeler@ugmsalem.org



Saturday, JUNE 1

Minto Brown
Island Park
9:30am

1 TAKE A STEP

Register to walk, run or volunteer online at ugmsalem.org/walkforhope

2 GET INVOLVED

Make a team, raise support and compete to win the trophy presented to the top fundraising team

3 CHANGE A LIFE

Every dollar raised supports life-changing services for our homeless neighbors

Upcoming Events

Discovery Lunch Dates

Thursday, April 4
12PM - 1PM @ Ritter's (102 Liberty St NE)

Thursday, April 25
12PM - 1PM @ Men's Mission

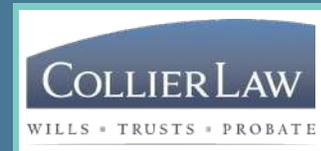
Join us for lunch and learn more about the Hope Has a New Address capital campaign.

RSVP: contact Lacie at 503.967.6388 or lwheeler@ugmsalem.org

Estate Planning Seminar:

Tuesday, May 28
11:30AM - 1PM
1020 Liberty St SE (lunch provided)

PRESENTED BY



RSVP: contact Lacie at 503.967.6388 or lwheeler@ugmsalem.org

HOPE by the NUMBERS

| | Feb. | YTD | | Feb. | YTD |
|------------------------|--------|---------|-----------------------|-------|--------|
| Meals Provided: | 18,079 | 104,900 | Gained Employment: | 6 | 49 |
| Shelter Nights: | 7,728 | 46,899 | Secured Housing: | 14 | 85 |
| Learning Center Hours: | 1,098 | 4,853 | Volunteer Hours: | 4,559 | 28,646 |
| Counseling Sessions: | 970 | 5,840 | Professions of Faith: | 5 | 116 |



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