

THE BRIDGE

The O'Connor House Newsletter

"My Baby Saved Me" (A Story by Riley)

My dad was my best friend. My parents divorced when I was young. I moved with my dad in middle school. He lived in Carmel. He wasn't perfect, but I could always see the good in him. He played the guitar and taught me how to play. We shared a love of music. But my dad was an alcoholic and because of that, he was in and out of prison. Even so, I could always see the good things about him and we were so close. He was my dad!

When I was at Carmel High School, he had been going to AA for a few years and had been doing well and was sober. But he had a relapse, started drinking again for a couple of weeks... and then he took his life.

It was horrible for me when my dad died, I was devastated. I guess I handled things the way he did and I started drinking. I quit high school and bounced around staying at friends' homes, and sometimes worked as a waitress. I was in and out of the hospital and almost killed myself by drinking so much. I was on a bad path.

Then I found out I was pregnant. I used to think I'd never keep a baby, but when I realized I was pregnant... it was like a fork in the road.... I knew I had to make a decision.

I started going to AA. I had never prioritized my faith, but going to AA brought me closer to God, and brought me a lot of peace.

My mom lives in Austin, and she found The O'Connor House online. I met with Susan and Jessi and moved in a couple of weeks later.

I am doing a bible study with my mentor, Shelby Heath. It's cool to have a person who's passionate about helping you with your goals.

One of the best things I've learned at The O'Connor House is to be productive everyday. This has really helped me and is another positive step in my growth.



*Congratulations
Riley!*

*We are
so proud
of you.*

When I became pregnant, I thought, I'll never get my high school diploma. But the staff at TOCH encouraged me to go to the Excel Center. I started classes, ... and last week I received my diploma!

I've met with an advisor at Ivy Tech and in January I will attend a one year program to become a paralegal.

I used to look around here, and I'd see people and their houses and cars, and I always just thought those are things that other people have, and that's just how other people live.

I'm looking forward to having my baby girl in early October. And then starting my paralegal classes. Someday I hope to live in a house with my baby girl, and have a car of my own. Thank you.



Recently the store manager at Chick -Fil-A shared that Magda has been the **"best hire in a long time"**. Magda is also taking classes at Ivy Tech. **Keep up the great work Magda!**

Moms are working hard toward goals.

*We await the arrival of two
new infants.*

We have 3 babies and four toddlers!

WE ARE BLESSED!

Thank You to our Volunteers This Quarter!

1114 Total Miles Driven

129 Hours of Babysitting

490 Total Volunteer Hours

WE COULD NOT DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

The Power of Education - A Donor's Perspective

By Rafik Bishara

On a special day as I was continuing to pray to the Almighty God for guidance on how to use the 4T's (time, talent, treasures and testimony) He has blessed me with, I saw an e-mail asking for volunteers and resources for the O'Connor House (TOCH). My first phone contact was with Vicki Yamasaki, the Champion and Director of the Training, Education Academy & Mentoring (T.E.A.M) Program at TOCH. It was clear to me that many of my prayers would be answered if I knew more about the needs of TOCH. Vicki, then arranged for Pat, my wife, and I to meet with Kris Bussick, Co-Founder, Nancy Imhoff, Development Director and herself at TOCH to acquaint ourselves with the home and tour it.

When Pat and I learned about the mission of TOCH we recognized an opportunity to contribute in a very meaningful way, and it has become a focal point of our philanthropic endeavors. Here, we could provide the women of the House with the financial support in order to help them with their education in addition to the safe and healthy environment for mothers and their children as they struggle to get back on their feet from their crises pregnancy experience. We wanted to help the women via trade schools, certificate programs, or a college education to gain the life skills, counseling, and resources that would enable them to overcome biases and circumstances which would otherwise make it difficult to succeed. Armed with a college degree we know that The TOCH women through an education and training will be able to find and maintain meaningful employment.

The most wonderful part of giving is that we experience so much joy when we do. Scripture tells us that "It is in giving that we receive." We've been blessed to experience how true that is.

My father taught me to respect every man as a brother. My mother taught me to look out for every woman as if she was my sister. These teachings, together with trials of life that have been overcome by education and combined with an enduring faith that stresses the value of returning the blessings we receive, drive Pat and I to continue to give generously from the heart. As we do, we hope to provide an example which encourages all of us to live lives of abundant generosity.

Hence, we have established and financially contributed to "Educational Funds" at Ivy Tech Community College and IUPUI for the TOCH graduates of the T.E.A.M Program. It is with gratitude and pleasure I share with you that the lives of five (5) Inspired mothers of TOCH are on track to change and improve as they begin, continue or finish their college education at Ivy Tech this fall.

I Pray and hope that all the readers of this article, the friends of TOCH and their acquaintances will contribute to the education of the Mothers of the House.

Thank you. God bless you.

Rafik H. Bishara, Ph.D.

*Thank You
for giving us a...*
BRIGHT FUTURE!





Welcome
Gabriella Iyana
Born: July 16
Weight: 6lb 8oz
Height 21 inches

Welcome
Nova
Born: July 24
Weight: 6 lb 3oz
Height: 20 in



Have you thought about giving a planned gift to The O'Connor House by remembering our ministry in your will?

A bequest can make a significant impact and change the life of a young mother and her baby. A bequest can also be a blessing by ensuring The O'Connor House is open in the future as a haven of hope.

Any of the following options would be a wonderful way to leave a legacy.

- **A simple bequest** to The O'Connor House is a specific dollar amount of any size.
- **A specific bequest** is made by naming an asset in your will to The O'Connor House, such as securities, real estate, or personal property.
- **A residuary bequest** is a percentage of your estate given to The O'Connor House from the amount that remains after payment of estate expenses and designated beneficiary disbursements.

Thank you for considering The O'Connor House in your estate plans! If you have any questions, or to discuss, please contact Nancy Imhoff at (317) 385-0699. Your information will remain confidential.

If you would like to make a current donation or a year-end gift, please visit www.theoconnorhouse.org



Thank You For Making A Difference!

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