

# the Children's Voice

A Publication of the Kentucky United Methodist Children's Homes • October/November 2023



Staff members Rachel Smith and Rhonda McLeod reflect on Chelsea's success on **page 6**.

October 29, 2023

## OFFERING OF HOPE

for 5th Sunday



Bringing Hope to Children Since 1871



## From the President's Desk

by Julie Hager Love,  
President/CEO

*"My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest."*

- Isaiah 32:18 (NIV).

"Do you give second chances?"

Recently, I received an email from a woman asking this question. She contacted me on behalf of her brother, who I'll call Sean. Sean previously lived at our Independent Living program (ILP). ILP provides housing, supervision, life skills, transportation, and counseling for youth aging out of foster care or our residential program. They often come to us when they are 17 -18 and can stay until they are 21.

Sean lived at ILP and decided to leave our care and move in with his sister. However, her home was remote, and Sean didn't have transportation and felt isolated. Our ILP program director, Shannon, called Sean to talk

to him, and his first words to her were, "Ms. Shannon, can I come home?"

Thank you for making it possible for Sean and many other youth to experience a safe and caring home.

As you enjoy this issue of *The Children's Voice*, I invite you to think about what "second chances" and "home" mean to you. Thank you for being so supportive as we continue our mission "to serve Christ by providing for the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of children and families."

## the Children's Voice

### **President/CEO**

Rev. Julie Hager Love

### **Public Relations**

Rebecca Merrill

rebecca.merrill@kyumh.org

The Kentucky United Methodist Children's Homes (incorporated as The Methodist Home of Kentucky) serves children and families throughout Kentucky.

*The Children's Voice* is freely distributed to all interested persons.

Contact [info@KyUMH.org](mailto:info@KyUMH.org) for a subscription or to change an address.

### **Nicholasville Campus**

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Nicholasville, KY 40356  
(859) 523-3001

### **Mary Kendall Campus**

201 Phillips Court  
Owensboro, KY 42303  
(270) 683-6481



## Meet Your Development Team



### John Mark Boes

#### Director of Church Relations

John Mark joined the Development team in August of 2023. He lives in Mt. Washington with his wife, Allison, son, Eli, and dog, Watson. John Mark is passionate about helping churches connect their work inside their walls with the needs of their communities. Connect with him via email at [johnmark.boes@kyumh.org](mailto:johnmark.boes@kyumh.org).

### **Our Mission**

To serve Christ by providing for the physical, emotional, educational and spiritual needs of children and families.

### **Our Belief**

We believe every individual is an individual of worth, entitled to God's gift of wholeness of life.

We serve persons regardless of race, ethnicity, economic status, sex or religion.

# Summer Snaps



Check out what's been happening this summer at KyUMH!



**1-6:** Our youth in residential care looked after a garden this summer. Our food service team, including Skyler Robinson, pictured, prepared the harvest in a variety of ways. Thank you to Christ Church UMC's Lydia Circle and Friendship Sunday School Class for making this garden possible.

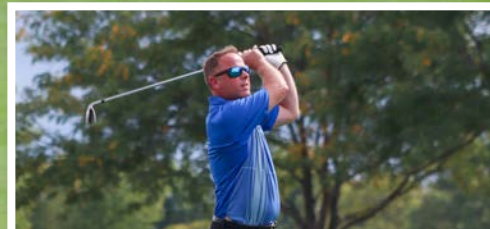
**7-9:** Our staff and residents are enjoying a new six-sided swing set thanks to the hard work of engineers from CLARK Material Handling Company. These volunteers worked cheerfully through the summer heat to create this beautiful structure!

# 40<sup>th</sup> Annual GOLF SCRAMBLE for the CHILDREN 2023

Golf Club of the Bluegrass • Nicholasville, KY



*The 40th Annual Golf Scramble raised over \$30,000 thanks to over 200 golfers and 35 sponsors. The cool, foggy morning turned into a lovely afternoon of sunshine. The staff, volunteers and golfers all agreed it was one of the best scrambles yet!*



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***All Chelsea\*  
needed was  
one caring  
adult.***

\*Name changed to protect privacy. Representative image.

## You gave Chelsea a safe, caring adult presence that changed her life.

When we first met her two years ago, Chelsea (name changed for her privacy) says **she was “living a shell of a life” as a result of multiple traumatic experiences**, including emotional and sexual abuse. “I didn’t have a positive relationship with anyone in my family, and **I struggled with my self-esteem.**”

While in high school, Chelsea was the only adult financially supporting her household, working at a restaurant late at night after a full day of classes. **Chelsea felt responsible for the needs of the adults around her who should have been caring for her.**

Chelsea began to meet for therapy with Rachel Smith through KyUMH’s community-based services. KyUMH partners with school districts to provide mental health counseling and case management for youth and their families. **KyUMH’s innovative**

**programs are designed to eliminate barriers to treatment and meet families where they are.** That is how we met Chelsea.

Rachel remembers Chelsea only felt comfortable talking about herself for just a few minutes, as she had learned to ignore her own well-being.

**that showed up for her.** She had never known a kind adult who wasn’t looking for something from her.”

One of Chelsea’s favorite memories while working with KyUMH was going to the Cheesecake Factory to celebrate her high school graduation—an accomplishment she had never

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## "The key for Chelsea was a consistent, trustworthy adult that showed up for her."

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**Over time, Chelsea learned to reflect on what she had gone through and name her emotions.** She learned that what she had experienced wasn’t normal, and there was help for her.

Chelsea’s case manager, Rhonda McLeod, recognized the change in her. “She can advocate for herself now. She’s very articulate with a kind and loving heart. She’s going to do so well in life.”

Rachel says, **“The key for Chelsea was a consistent, trustworthy adult**

considered possible before meeting us. Rhonda says, “She was just beaming. She could not believe we were doing this for her.” Chelsea says, “I still think about that cheesecake every day!”

Chelsea is currently living on her own and attending community college. She is pursuing a degree in social work. **Her goal for her future is to finish college and “to help people.”**



KyUMH’s Mending Point Behavioral Health Services has been making a difference for central Kentucky youth and families thanks to our committed staff. Pictured are **Rachel Smith**, Clinical Director, and **Rhonda McLeod**, Targeted Case Manager. Rachel and Rhonda work together to support Chelsea and other clients.

# Be Part of a Movement of Love



by Melinda Ryles-Smith  
Vice President for Development

The children and youth who come to our doors don't know they are worthy of love. Because of their experiences of abuse or neglect, they can't imagine that there are people working together to make a better future possible for them.

I have a question for you, and I promise it's related: **have you ever experienced being part of a movement?**

A movement is one of the most beautiful expressions of love that I have ever experienced. A key component of a movement is that it creates a sense of belonging for all. Here at KyUMH it looks like donors, volunteers, and staff working together so that a young person can have a better future. It also means KyUMH youth experience a sense of belonging. In the words of one of our former residents "... it's kind of nice knowing you're loved."

When you make a gift to KyUMH, you are a part of a movement that helps young people know that they are worthy of love. They deserve a future free from the effects of trauma.

In 2022, together we served 1,433 children, youth and families. One of those youth was Emma\*, who you helped reach her high school graduation. This year we are celebrating her acceptance into nursing school! She's preparing for a future of her choosing and God's design.

Your donation today will help more children and youth like Emma discover that they belong and are worthy of love. **Please join the movement of love for the children and youth of Kentucky by making a donation today!**

I would love to connect with you more about our work and the way you can make a difference. Please feel free to get in touch with me at any time by phone at (859) 523-3001 or by email at [melinda@kyumh.org](mailto:melinda@kyumh.org).

*\*Name changed to protect privacy of individual*

## JOIN THE MOVEMENT!

- 1 Become an Angel Sponsor**  
Angel Sponsors provide a foundation of care for our youth to heal from trauma. Their monthly gifts provide for our youth's daily needs such as food, medical care, education, and spiritual life. To become an Angel Sponsor, visit our website at [kyumh.org](http://kyumh.org).
- 2 Give through your will**  
Leave a legacy of healing by giving through your will. Your bequest may be a general gift or for a purpose you describe in your will. For more information, contact Melinda Ryles-Smith, Vice President for Development, at (859) 523-3001 or [melinda@kyumh.org](mailto:melinda@kyumh.org)

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Trudy Smith

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Marvin & Ann Bare

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## Help KyUMH youth celebrate the holidays!

Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here before we know it! Here are some ways you can help this holiday season:

### Give a Thanksgiving dinner box (Estimated cost \$75)

- Providing a turkey and other items can help a family create joyful memories together. *Contact us at (859) 523-3001 for the full list of needed items.*

### Collect gift cards for Christmas gifts

- Gift cards to Target, Amazon, Walmart, and Meijer give our staff the ability to shop for every child in our care—even those who come hours before Christmas morning! *Please mail or deliver by December 15th.*

### Host a winter coat drive

- Help our youth stay warm this winter! *New or gently used adult sizes are most needed.*

Can't get to the store? Give at [kyumh.org/donate](https://kyumh.org/donate) to support our youth at the holidays.

**Questions? Contact us at (859) 523-3001**

