

SHELTER

RESTORING HOPE TO THE
HOMELESS THROUGH YOU

spirit



You make a difference for families in need

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our volunteers' creativity...page 3

Mom and son are back on their feet,
thanks to you...page 3

A family is given new
hope because of
your investment...page 4



*David,
Donald,
Joshua and
Skyler*

W I N T E R 2 0 1 1



**Arlington
Life Shelter**



Becky Orander, LMSW
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

dear friend,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of the [Arlington Life Shelter](#) throughout the holiday season and in this New Year. When I think about the many families and individuals who are living better lives because of your generous gifts, I am truly overwhelmed.

Although we've entered a new year, the economic situation remains discouraging. The national jobless rate is at a record high, and many people right here in our community are struggling to provide for their families for the first time in their lives.

The need is great – but your faithful support allows us to continue helping those in need. The Arlington Life Shelter's commitment is not only to provide services to meet the basic needs of our community's homeless, but to begin removing barriers and develop the skills required to help these families and individuals become self-supporting. Our 9-week employment program has evolved into long-term services for many residents, providing support to clients with unique challenges for up to two years after they've moved into housing of their own.

Of course, none of this is possible without the continued partnership of friends like you. As you read the stories and see the pictures of real life-change in the pages that follow, I hope you'll be as encouraged as I am by the significant difference you're making in the effort to end the cycle of poverty and homelessness.

I am so very grateful for your support. I wish you and your loved ones a safe and happy New Year!

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Volunteers Make All the Difference

Jana Martin, assistant principal at Morton Elementary School in Arlington, first became connected to the [Arlington Life Shelter](#) through a chance meeting with the shelter's executive director, Becky Orander. Having just finished reading *Same Kind of Different as Me*, a memoir about a formerly homeless man from Fort Worth and his benefactor, Jana was inspired to help those in need. So when she began talking to Becky, she knew this meeting was no coincidence.

Jana now teaches a monthly arts and crafts class for shelter residents. Assisted by her husband John, Jana teaches about 20 students how to make journals, stationery and even self-portraits from recycled materials.

Though she was hesitant about how residents would respond to an arts and



Jana's monthly crafts workshop gives residents a creative outlet.

crafts class when most are carrying substantial emotional burdens, Jana says the feedback has been very positive.

"It's an outlet, an escape for people," she says. "I find so many people are happy when they've been able to express themselves."

Jana says she looks forward to her volunteer time and encourages others to

get involved in the community in any way they can.

"This is not an obligation – it's a reward that I'm lucky enough to get," she says. "Once you see it in action, you know you're making a difference!"

The Arlington Life Shelter is endlessly grateful to Jana and John for their gifts of time and compassion.

You Give Families a Second Chance



Growing up, Kiana enjoyed the security and comfort of a middle-class household run by two well-educated parents.

But when mental illness caused Kiana's mother to lose her job and stop paying the

bills, Kiana found herself working her own way through high school and college. The combined stress of keeping her grades up and paying the bills on time is a lot for any young person to handle, but she did it with grace.

She landed a great job in the financial industry after college, but the economy took a dive after 9/11 and she was laid off. When her savings dried up, she and her young son were evicted from their apartment. She still cries as she remembers sleeping in the car with then 5-year-old Kyron that first night. Fortunately her determination and resourcefulness meant it didn't take long to find a family member willing to let them stay for a while.

But today at age 31, Kiana continues to struggle. The economy has forced her out of a job – and a home – more than once

since she's been on her own. But times have been hard even when she's working. In fact recently, she's been on the verge of losing everything yet again. And that's why she sought the help of the [Arlington Life Shelter](#).

She's just one paycheck away from homelessness and the Arlington Life Shelter has worked tirelessly to make sure she gets the resources she needs to keep her self-sufficiency.

"Homelessness can happen to any of us at any time, no matter how we plan in life," she says.

Kiana couldn't be more grateful for the help she's received – and she knows what a big role you've played.

"Your kindness and generosity changes lives," she says. "It's amazing work!"

THANK YOU

TCU Students Design New Website

Thanks to the students of TCU for designing the Arlington Life Shelter's brand-new website! Check out our new look at www.ArlingtonLifeShelter.org for upcoming activities, success stories and the monthly wish list. Thanks, TCU!

EVENTS

Arlington Life Shelter on Facebook

Arlington Life Shelter residents, volunteers and staff have made their New Year's resolutions on the Arlington Life Shelter's Facebook page - now it's your turn to do your part! Sign on and share how you will help make our community a better place for all of our residents this year. Be our Facebook Fan at www.facebook.com/arlington.life.shelter.

Needed Items!

Help keep our residents healthy and happy this winter by donating cold & flu medicine for both children and adults, tissues, children's footed pajamas (all sizes), children's valentines and candy for teachers. Items can be brought to the shelter's front door Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or to the side door after 5 p.m. Thank you!

Arlington Life Shelter Valentine's Dance

Decorations, munchies, door prizes and a karaoke machine are needed for the shelter's annual Valentine's Dance for the residents. Contact Alex Davis, Volunteer Coordinator at adavis@arlingtonlifeshelter.org for details about how you can help.



Michael, Priscilla and their four boys, David, Donald, Joshua and Skyler.

You Bring Hope to Families in Need

Michael and Priscilla have always worked hard to provide the best for their children. So when tough economic conditions forced them out of their home and left them jobless, their world turned upside-down.

In hopes of finding employment elsewhere, the couple moved with their four boys, David, Donald, Joshua and Skyler to be closer to family and friends in the Mid Cities.

But the family quickly used up their savings along the way. Michael and Priscilla weren't sure where to turn. Every shelter they came across threatened to separate their family, which was simply not an option.

Fortunately, Michael, Priscilla and their sons have found hope and help at the [Arlington Life Shelter](http://www.ArlingtonLifeShelter.org). Thanks to the generosity of friends like you, the family

received warm beds, hot meals and so much more. The couple has found steady jobs, and Michael has even gone back to school. He says the boys are earning better grades in school than ever before. And most importantly, the family has been able to stay together.

And now they're in a home of their own, thanks to the shelter's transitional housing program. Michael credits his family's success story to the Arlington Life Shelter and the compassion of friends like you. He's so grateful for the second chance they've been given.

"Thank you from the very bottom of my heart," he says. "Through your generosity and donations, you've helped me as a father and husband to have the opportunity to provide for my family again."

"Honestly, if it wasn't for your donations, we wouldn't be where we are, working toward self-sufficiency," adds Priscilla.



Together, we shepherd
homeless men, women and
children toward a lifestyle
of self-sufficiency.