

December, 2004

President's Note

As the newly-elected President of the Street Teens Board of Directors, I am thrilled to report that 2004 turned out to be an outstanding year for our organization. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I must extend a heart-felt thank you to all of our volunteers and donors that have given so much of themselves to ensure the continued growth and success of Street Teens. Without our volunteers to staff the Sanctuary drop-in center every night of the week, we would not be able to provide the life's essentials that over 650 youth have taken advantage of since we opened our doors in October, 2001.

Additionally, I would like to express my gratitude to our Executive Director, Lisa Preston-Arnold, who will begin her 3rd year with Street Teens in February, 2005. In addition to her regular work day, Lisa has logged over 700 volunteer hours since joining Street Teens. Her dedication and enthusiasm has inspired all of us who work with her to dig, just a little bit deeper, to give more when we didn't believe we had it in us.

While there was some question in early 2004 as to whether Street Teens would receive its remaining Emergency Shelter Grant funding from Clark County, the fact is that we not only received the full amount of our 03/04 approved funding, but our application for 04/05 CDBG funding was approved for the full amount we requested. Street Teens remains grateful to the County for their continued support and for recognizing the uniqueness and necessity of the services and programs we provide homeless and at-risk youth aged 12 through 21.

Due, in part, to the 04/05 County CDBG funds, we were able to hire a full-time employee to provide case management services, coordinate volunteer scheduling and train new volunteers. Additionally this position will be responsible for creating awareness throughout our local middle and senior high schools of our program and the services we provide in order to enable school counselors to refer students to us that are in need. Also, one part-time street outreach worker has already been hired with plans to hire one additional outreach worker to locate and identify youth in need of our assistance.

I look forward to my 4th year working with my fellow Street Teens board members, volunteers, employees and donors, dedicating ourselves to ending homelessness among our valley's youth.

Sincerely,
Patricia Johnston President
Street Teens Board of Directors

Executive Director's Note

Knowing that we open the door at 8:00 pm every night to let the teens back out on the street to fend for themselves all night long is never an easy thing to do. I always have a knot in the pit of my stomach until the following day at 4:00 pm when the kids start coming through the front door and I know that they are safe and that they made it through the night. Often people say to me "I just don't know how you do your job, I could never do it". As with anything in life you always have to focus on the positive.

In February of 2003 I met a young couple who were working day labor jobs, barely making it - I saw determination in them both. Not even 2 years later they are living in an apartment, working full time and enjoying their beautiful 4 month old daughter.

In May of 2004 one of our clients who used to sleep under the bushes at her high school and relied upon her friends to be her alarm clock, graduated with honors from UNLV. She is currently on a full scholarship to the UNLV Law Program.

Not a day goes by that one of the kids doesn't stop by in the daytime to say hello, give me a hug or to bring me good news about a new job or having found a place to call home.

The wall behind my desk is lined with cards, pictures and notes from the kids. The most recent addition to the pictures on my wall is a picture of one of our client's brand new daughter- her name is Lisa Jr.

I have learned so much from these teens. The most important thing that I have learned is that these kids just want someone to love and believe in them. So when people say to me "I just don't know how you do your job, I could never do it" I reply "I can't imagine doing anything else".

Lisa Preston
Executive Director Street Teens

Adoption of new mission statement

This year, some of our amazing volunteers came together and developed a committee to re-vamp the Street Teens mission statement. Together the committee consisting of board members and volunteers verbally defined what the organization stands for. Once the verbiage was complete the committee chairman, Sue Koury, presented the suggestions to the Board of Directors. They unanimously approved. Following is the result of the hard work and dedication of all those involved.

Street Teens is a volunteer based, non-profit organization dedicated to assisting homeless, abandoned, and at risk youth, ages 12-21, in the Las Vegas Valley. Our primary goal is to meet the survival needs of our youth by providing basic necessities in a safe, compassionate environment. We are able to provide access to educational, health care, and employment resource services through our drop-in center and by actively collaborating with community partners. Street Teens does not discriminate on the basis of gender, religious affiliation, national origin, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Street Teens Year in Review

2004 has been a very exciting year for Street Teens.

In January 2004 Street Teens joined the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce

In February Street Teens was the recipient of a, much needed and very much appreciated, 1995

Mercury Villager in February 2004. The van was generously donated to Street Teens by Findlay Used Cars in Henderson.

July 2004 marked the completion of our 1st year of being financially independent. Street Teens had a very successful year and we are looking forward to many more. We have developed many invaluable partnerships with community members that support our efforts in assisting children that have been thrown away, abandoned and/or abused by those closest to them. We have a duty to support and protect these children.

In October, Street Teens was featured on Anderson Dairy's Milk Carton from October 24th through October 31st.

Special Events for Kids

Spring Bar-B-Que at Paradise Park In April 2004 Street Teens held a picnic in the park for all of the volunteers & teens. It was a beautiful day and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Cirque du Monde Cirque du Monde began its first of eight workshops on October 2, 2004. The instructors and teens all had a wonderful work shop this year and we all look forward to next years! A big thank you goes to Cirque du Soleil for donating all of the equipment and supplies needed for the program.

Our 2004 Thanksgiving Dinner was provided by Bobby & Shannon Faulkner.

Teen Angel program

Over the holiday season, Street Teens asked the community to "adopt" a teen and help bring some holiday spirit to the lives of our young, homeless people.

Each teen completed a wish list, including clothing sizes and gift ideas. Street Teens volunteers purchased the gifts for all of the teens. On Christmas Eve, we distributed the gifts to the teens that would not otherwise be remembered during the holiday season.

Volunteers

Being a Volunteer at Street Teens

When I tell friends that I volunteer with a group called Street Teens, a drop in center for homeless and at-risk teens, most of them look at me like I'm crazy. Teens in general get a bad rap. They are difficult, rebellious, argumentative and manipulative, just like many adults. Then to top it off we are dealing with teens that have, on the whole, had a very difficult time during their childhood. Many have learned that they cannot trust adults. That is one of the things that make Street Teens such a special place. Here, the teens can drop in one night and not come back for a week or a month. They have basic rules of civility but are welcome to come in, have a hot meal, take a nap, get on the computer and talk or not talk to volunteers. There is nothing quite like hearing one of the kids ask for help in figuring out how to get a job, talk about getting a GED or finishing high school or work towards getting an apartment. When you know you have made a difference for one of these teens you receive a warm fuzzy

feeling as well as a sense of accomplishment you rarely receive anywhere else.

Pam Mohr

My Street Teens Experience

It was this time last year when I first thought about volunteering in some capacity. I was not sure where to go or who to talk to you, so I decided to get on the internet to see what opportunities were out there for me. Now that a year has passed, I feel so fortunate that I was able to navigate my way to the Street Teens website. I knew I had found a place where I could make a difference for some kids who needed help. Street Teens touched my heart in many ways. Many years ago, I was one of those kids who ran away from home because of an unsafe environment. I knew exactly what these kids were going through. I had finally found my place and was very excited to start helping the kids. I started volunteering in March 2004. To me, the definition of a volunteer is someone who wants to help people unconditionally. I enjoy preparing meals for the kids, stocking the shelves with the food and clothing donations and doing whatever else needs to be done at the center to help the kids. I enjoy conversing with them about their lives and looking for opportunities where I can share my own positive life experiences in hopes of them gaining a higher level of confidence in themselves. I have learned that often times the best way to serve a youth in trouble is to simply listen and to show them that you care. Young people really don't care how much you know, they need to know how much you care!

Recently, I received a letter from one of our kids at Street Teens. It was a letter of thanks to the volunteers at Street Teens for everything that we

had done for this teen and all the other teens at the center. It was an emotional, thought provoking letter that absolutely validated why I volunteer at Street Teens. We touch many kids in many different ways and this experience is teaching me everyday that one person can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Lisa Dunlap

Message from a Teen

My name is Justice and I have been coming to Street Teens for four years. In that time I have been homeless and now I have a one bedroom apartment. I've had several jobs in order to maintain through these years. I've also acquired a lot of knowledge even though I haven't been to college or completed high school. I'm now enrolled in a program that will allow me to get my high school diploma. I've also been able to receive any help available, through Street Teens. I have gotten hygiene products, food, water, phone cards, bus passes, food vouchers, bus tokens, school supplies and a health card voucher, just to name a few. These things were actually given to me. I'm basically a walking testament to the Street Teens organization. I am so grateful that the staff has been here to support us as well. Also, that Street Teens has been here as long as it has. I am truly blessed to be able to come to a place where I'm not looked down upon for being in the position that I'm currently in.

Love Always,

Justice

Financials

Events held by community partners to benefit Street Teens

In July, 2004 Nevada Corporate Headquarters held a Bowling Fundraiser to benefit Street Teens at the Orleans Hotel & Casino.

On September 11, 2004, Jim and Joan Hammer and Randy and Kathy Black hosted their First Annual Summer's End Fundraiser to benefit Street Teens.

The evening began at the entrance to Red Rock Country Club Estates, where tiki torches lined the circle drive, steel drummers performed and models wearing tropical attire placed authentic orchid leis on the women and pucca shell leis on the men.

The courtyard of the home was decorated with sand, seashells, beach buckets and other items. Beach signs pointed to the libation locations, all donated by Southern Wine & Spirits of Nevada.

The Remy Martin & Cigar Bar & Putting Green offered an authentic cigar roller and a Remy girl dressed in all-white to serve cordials and cognacs.

The Beach Club featured a massive screen highlighting all of the activities of the evening, including memorable speeches by two teenagers who have made it thanks to Street Teens.

Speeches were followed by a dramatic video with appearances by celebrity sponsors Danny Gans and David Copperfield.

Thank you to everyone involved in these benefit events for your commitment and support.