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#### Our Mission Statement:

Grace Centers of Hope is a non-profit, Christian organization committed to positively changing the lives of the homeless, addicted, and unwanted through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, personal accountability, life skills education, and work-related programs. The foundation of change is the local church which encourages residents to become strong in faith and independence while it lovingly promotes a sense of belonging within a community that truly can be called "home".

#### Values:

- Restoring Lives & Families
- The Gospel
- Time, Talent, and Treasure Partners
- Creating Community
- Integrity

# Boogie Bowl

Striking Out Homelessness!!

Join us for a night of disco themed bowling!!  
Friday March 11, 2011  
Thunderbird Lanes in Troy

**Single bowler on a 6 player team: \$30**  
**Non-Bowler: \$15**  
(Call for participation details)

\*Must be 21 years or older to participate

For information on getting registered or for sponsorship incentives  
Contact Adrian Laux  
248-334-2187 ext 31  
alaux@gracecentersofhope.org



# HOPElines

Grace Centers of Hope Newsletter • Winter 2011



As we begin the New Year, many of us take this time to reflect upon our future goals and our past and present blessings. I want to take this time to introduce you to my son-in-law who has, in the past few years, become a tremendous blessing to me and Grace Centers of Hope.

For years I have been praying for a strong servant of the Lord to alleviate much of the day to day responsibilities of the mission so that I may be allotted more time to focus on "the big picture". Three years ago, that prayer was answered with the Board of Director's unanimous selection of Darin Weiss as the Chief Operating Officer of Grace Centers of Hope. Even though Darin has been diligently working under the radar, the Lord has used him to ensure excellent stewardship in all facets of the ministry. It's for this reason that I believe that it is time that our donors get to know our COO and learn a little more about the behind-the-scenes work that is happening at Grace Centers of Hope.

Darin has not only good business sense, but most importantly, he knows the Gospel and freedom of God's grace, he possesses a heart for the addicted, the homeless, and the hurting, and he boldly proclaims the church and family to be the building block of a strong society.

His presence has allowed me more time to focus on the overall vision for the mission while also ensuring me time to continue staying personally connected with the residents through teaching some of the men's and women's classes. In addition, his leadership has led to vast improvements and growth in every aspect of Grace Centers of Hope's mission.

Darin has contributed greatly to the opening and expansion of three additional Thrift Stores. The proceeds of all these Thrift Stores help provide for the programs and necessities of the Grace Centers of Hope building and its residents. His accomplishments in the past three years have led to a \$1.4 million increase in our annual budget, allowing us to make drastic improvements to the programs and facilities of Grace Centers.

As the COO, Darin has seen to the complete renovation of the Men's Dorm Area, the Men's Recreation Room, and the overall facility improvements of the shelter. He has also implemented two new life-changing programs; "Grace to the Finish", a workforce development program which will certify residents in retail training so as to increase their job marketability, and the "Men on a Mission" Mentoring Program which provides men the opportunity to receive free college and vocational training in exchange for leading residents who are new to Grace Centers of Hope through the most difficult aspects of their rehabilitation.

Without a doubt, the coming years will prove to be tremendously exciting for the residents, staff, volunteers, and supporters of Grace Centers of Hope. I encourage you to read more about Darin on the following page. His vision and passion for Grace Centers has proven to be a tremendous asset and will be in the years to come.

Pastor Kent W. Clark  
Chief Executive Officer

## FROM THE CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

It has been a great privilege to serve the residents and supporters of Grace Centers of Hope as Chief Operating Officer for the last 3 years. It has been such an incredibly rewarding experience and I look forward to many years to come.

I do not view my position as a job, but rather a calling. It is with a tremendous burden that I labor to see the Gospel of God's free grace transform the lives of homeless, addicted and hurting. I believe very deeply that there is no one who has fallen too far for God's redemption.

As we all know, these are unique and challenging times to everyone in southeast Michigan and it is certainly no exception for the homeless. With this stark reality in mind, our team at Grace Centers of Hope will need to create new ways to meet the increasing demand for our vital programs and services. Here are just some of the ways that I envision this happening in 2011.



### Gathering God's People for Mission

Our Lord tells us in the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel of John that just as He was sent into the world, so He sends us into the world. God never calls anyone, except to send them out again to help others.

It has been my experience that there are thousands of people in southeast Michigan who desire to live that mission and fill the need of those hurting within our communities – the problem is how. So many don't know how to get involved in a productive way that will meet the demands of those who are struggling.

This coming year, it is my goal to create new ways to recruit, train and get our volunteers involved within our programming like they have never had opportunity before. Whether it is within our emergency shelter program, new daycare facility or other areas within the organization, I want you to have the opportunity to live out God's call in your life. Together, we can make a difference in the lives that come through our doors.

### Women and Children's Program Expansion

Turning away women with their children is probably the hardest task a staff member at Grace Centers of Hope will ever have to perform. Because of the ever increasing numbers of women and children presenting themselves for help, we will be making the necessary adjustments to provide 25 additional beds to the women and children's program this year. Our goal is to have these beds and services ready within the first quarter of this year.

### Thrift Store Expansion

The troubled state of the economy has brought a unique challenge to our mission at Grace Centers of Hope. We have an ever increasing demand for our services which creates the need for additional revenue to meet these demands. Consequently, my goal for not only this year, but over the next 5 years, is to continue expanding our Thrift Store ministry. This will not only create new streams of revenue for the organization, but it will also create more opportunities for our graduates to obtain gainful employment and to experience hands on retail training. Many of our supporters may not be aware of the key role our thrift store ministry plays in the lives of the residents we serve.

These initiatives are part of our plan to be the good stewards that God has called the leadership team at Grace Centers of Hope to be. Whether it is monetary donations, volunteer efforts or our residential programs, it is paramount that we direct these initiatives to produce the best outcomes for the people we serve.

I look forward over the next year to meet many of our valued supporters personally. If you have never visited Grace Centers of Hope, I would like to personally invite you to come out and see the incredible ministry that God has built through your help and support. If you do, please don't hesitate to stop by my office so I can tour you through.

In His Grip,

Darin L. Weiss

## GRACE TO THE FINISH

This past November Grace Centers of Hope rolled out our new retail training program "Grace to the Finish" for participants in our Life Skills and After-Care Programs. With funding from the Walmart Foundation's State Giving Program, we will combine our 68 years of experience in helping the homeless, along with our reputation as one of the largest thrift store retailers in the tri-county area, to provide a platform at each of our four thrift stores for men and women to gain valuable work skills that are needed in today's economy.

The program provides men and women with job readiness training and ongoing case management support. This includes recognition for excellence in job performance, rewards for length of service and the opportunity to develop critical life skills. These skills help each participant learn responsibility within a work related environment such as team building and interaction with co-workers and customers.

In addition, educational opportunities through accredited college classes and retail seminars will provide participants with essential training for future job growth within the Thrift Stores or the retail service industry at-large.

Thank you to the Walmart Foundation for recognizing the Grace to the Finish Program as an opportunity to improve the lives of the homeless in our community.



**communityfoundation**  
FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

### Community Foundation Challenge

Grace Centers of Hope, one of southeast Michigan's largest homeless shelters, has been selected as a recipient of the Community Foundation Challenge – Emergency Food & Shelter. The Challenge is coordinated by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, with support from the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation. The Challenge will match new gifts to Grace Centers of Hope - to a maximum of \$30,000 - to be used for operations at the rate of 1-to-2, or a match of one dollar for every two dollars of new gifts raised and received.

You may donate online towards the Community Foundation Challenge at [www.gracecentersofhope.org](http://www.gracecentersofhope.org) or call the development department at 248.334.2187 ext. 35

## Become a HOPE Partner

Hope Partners is a community of people who have the desire to give financial support each month. These members ensure that GCH has a regular, dependable flow of income all year—even in the lean months when our donations drop—so that help is always available for those who need it.

Hope Partners offers the convenience of monthly giving through **Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)**, in which your monthly pledge is automatically debited to your credit card or withdrawn from your designated bank account. This saves time and money spent writing and mailing checks every month.

#### Your benefits:

- Reduced mail
- Know that you are making a direct impact in the lives of the poor and needy
- Receive monthly E-newsletters from Grace Centers of Hope
- Convenient, automated monthly giving options of EFT or credit card
- Special invitations to Grace Centers of Hope events

#### Grace Centers of Hope's Benefits:

- Consistent and dependable financial support from friends of Grace Centers of Hope
- We can plan better. We know we can count on your gift each month to help provide critically needed meals and other help
- Your gift will go even further as paperwork and staff time are greatly reduced