



Jeremiah's Promise Quarterly Newsletter

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What Skill Can You Offer?



Find out how you can share a special talent, skill or words of wisdom at our Life Skills Class!

A Strong Beginning



As the holiday season approaches, the girls here at Jeremiah's Promise are excited for a break. For most of them, these past few months have been their first at Jeremiah's Promise, and they have been adjusting to new routines. Their lives are kept busy with

schoolwork, jobs (or looking for jobs), community service, attending life skills classes, and time with friends. This semester, they have continued to make progress in all these areas, and we are proud of their persistence.

In our last newsletter, you got a snapshot of each of the girls' lives and of the legacy that they hope to leave. For this newsletter, we would like to share with you a glimpse of some of the staff and volunteers at Jeremiah's Promise.

→ Note a New Intern: Mindy

My name is Mindy Schrag, and I'm the newest addition to Jeremiah's Promise. I'm a senior at Stanford University, majoring in Psychology, and I have been interested in working with foster care since high school. After volunteering with orphanages in Central Africa, where I lived with my parents who are missionaries with Wycliffe Bible Translators, I realized that my heart broke for children who didn't have parents to take care of them and love them. This experience inspired me to learn more about the foster care system in the U.S.



[Click here to find out how!](#)

At Stanford, I took a class called Children, Youth, and the Law, which led me to write a detailed research paper about the issues facing emancipated foster youth. Through that research, I learned about Jeremiah's Promise, since it is one of the few places offering housing and support for former foster youth. I knew I wanted to learn more about these issues and get some experience working with the system, so I contacted Jeremiah's Promise to see about the possibility of becoming an intern here this year. So far, it has been one of the best parts of my senior year! The girls are welcoming and friendly, and I have already learned so much from them. The staff has also welcomed me in and given me freedom to explore my gifts and interests. I enjoy the flexibility of my job description, which includes teaching the girls the realities of budgeting by grocery shopping with them, writing this newsletter, data entry, running errands, organizing paperwork, and building relationships. I am excited to see how this year at Jeremiah's Promise will shape me and teach me.

→ Staff Snapshot: Bonnie



If you have ever volunteered with Jeremiah's Promise, you have probably interacted with Bonnie Vanek. Like all the staff at Jeremiah's Promise, Bonnie wears many hats, but her primary responsibility is recruiting, training, and working with

volunteers.

Bonnie has worked at JP for one and a half years, since she noticed the position on Craigslist and felt it would be a good way to meet her desire to minister to women. Her background in business and child and family development has also been a useful contribution to the JP staff.

When asked about a typical day at work, Bonnie answered:

"Honestly, there has not been a typical day at this point, except that there is typically a lot happening. I might be having lunch with a volunteer and the girls, sourcing from our talented volunteer community for JP's Life Skills program, or providing a volunteer training session, or overseeing weekend overnight coverage. There are many office tasks to take care of as in a

small business, and I work to help Kim keep all of the balls in the air. All of JP staff is mindful to start our days with a quiet time to keep our focus.

The joy I receive is working with the volunteers and girls--not to mention a great staff. Conversations and time with the girls, as well as volunteers, have been precious. The girls so much desire the direction and attention many of us can provide, even if they seem unresponsive at times."

→ Volunteer Snapshot: Rosa

While we are blessed to have an experienced, talented, dedicated and hardworking staff, there is no way we could offer the depth of assistance to our young residents that is required without our volunteers. One of our behind-the-scenes supporters is Rosa Alcazar, a post-doctoral scholar in Biology at Stanford. Rosa has been involved at JP for the past year, and this is what she has to say about her experience:



"I was excited about JP because I have been on my own from the age of seventeen, and I know firsthand how important having a safe place to live and some adult guidance can be. These young women stole my heart from the first time I met them.

What is my role? I am currently providing lessons on leadership and self-awareness. I believe in personal transformation. I believe that I can best help them by showing compassion, sharing the truth and establishing the fact that, if they choose, they can become women of outstanding character. I see the difficult road ahead for them. They have the usual problems most young people have with the additional difficulty of lacking the parenting that most kids have had by their teens and early twenties. Imagine the difficulties of any teenager asked to hold a job, pay rent, manage relationships, get credit and go to school. Unlike kids with strong family bonds where the family might have an influence, these girls make decisions based solely on their limited experience.

This is why Jeremiah's Promise is such a blessing. It provides girls with time to learn, mature and be prepared for a productive role in society."

→ How Can *You* Get Involved?

Volunteer Needs



One of the strengths of Jeremiah's Promise is the wealth of knowledge that our volunteers offer. We especially need volunteers to facilitate our weekly Life Skills sessions, which entails leading a 60-90 minute workshop activity about any topic that would be applicable

to the girls' lives. Some ideas include: nutrition, conflict resolution, careers, workplace protocol, financial management, etc. If you have any of your own ideas or any area of expertise that you would like to share, contact Bonnie Vanek at bonniev@jeremiahspromise.org.

Financial Needs

Thank you for your support through these difficult economic times! Here are some concrete ways your giving can continue to directly impact the girls' lives:

- \$100 pays for a girl to see a counselor for one month. This is an important service, as many of the girls have deep emotional pain to work through.

- \$100 pays for groceries for one month for one girl. The girls receive a stipend every two weeks to buy their own groceries, and we hope this will help them learn budgeting and food management skills.

- A gift card of any amount to an office supply store or drugstore provides much-needed school supplies and toiletry items for the girls.

For a more complete list of what your gifts can accomplish, see our website (<http://www.jeremiahspromise.org/hope.html>)

Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to stay up to date on the amazing happenings at Jeremiah's Promise. You have made a difference already... please don't stop now!

Sincerely,

The Jeremiah's Promise Team
Jeremiah's Promise, Inc.



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