

Compassion In Action Good Newsletter

Winter Edition 2018

When life hurts, Just Keep BREATHING...



Community Partnerships WORK!



2017 was an amazing year with miracles popping up all over the place. Of course, there were some really rough bumps in the road, but each time, something good came out of the bad. Since our building was seriously vandalized in February 2017, we were not able to have our RAW DAWGS Youth Corps Gang Prevention Program meet during the summer as usual. Therefore, we planned a

Christmas party to bring our members and their families together and hopefully, recruit new members for the next season. Officer David Preston Jr., Captain Kanger and Captain Mark Mancuso of the Omaha Police Department were informed and all wanted to be involved. Captain Mark contacted Rich Settje & Family/aka, the Community Bike Guy, a partner with a family, committed to securing, restoring and donating bikes to children who need them. **Every Child received a Christmas gift and a bike!**



Captain Kanger brought desserts and drinks for the festivities and UNMC College of Public Health donated funds to cover the rest of the preparations, which included Time Out Chicken, and Christmas gifts for all the children who attended. In addition to that, we were able to bring our boys back into their RAW DAWG House which has been restored with a new coat of bright yellow paint, to represent "Sun Shine" and brand new carpeting. That's right former City Councilman, Franklin Thompson, made contact with another concerned citizen and brought him up to CIA to hear about our mission. He generously donated \$8,600+ worth of new carpeting from Nebraska Furniture Mart for our entire building. Community Partnerships coming together makes it work! PRAISE THE LORD!!!



Compassion In Action Inc.

Special Points

- > RAW DAWGS 2018
- > CIA going to NUSA 2018
- > \$50,000 matching grant
- > CIA & Creighton University
- > Mission Church & CIA
- > First Book "WHAT IF?"

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RAW DAWGS COME BACK—Needs Your Help



"I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord, the humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked to Him and were radiant and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried out and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. Psalm 34:1-6

The RAW DAWGS Youth Corps Gang Prevention Program operated successfully for 3 years before some changes began to take place. Commander Lucas Mickles, who was our original navigator of the club became a new father and had to seek employment elsewhere with benefits to cover his growing family. Anyone who knows Commander Lucas witnessed the dedication and commitment of an amazing young man who loved the boys and they all grew very close to him. Yes, he will be a very tough act to follow. However, we are committed to keep this program moving and bring even more boys on board.



Commander Lucas passed the baton onto Ja'Nique Johnson to pick up the pace at least in the Spring and get the RAW DAWGS back on course with regular meetings and scheduled activities. Both are the CIA director's grandsons which makes the transition easier. However, we still need more young men to assist in order to facilitate the program in the excellent standard of service that makes it work. We are seeking funding for three additional staff members and since these positions are all part-time, committed volunteers would also work. It has been our experience that working with these boys and



witnessing their enthusiasm and growth has been very rewarding for anyone involved.

Future RAW DAWG

The next season, CIA is in partnership with MID-America School of Martial Arts and will be connected with actual College ROTC members who will run the military drills for our boys. There is no organization in the State of Nebraska that offers these opportunities, specifically to boys between the ages of 5 and 13. We are honored to have this partnership and excited to get the ball rolling.

The RAW DAWGS Youth Corps Gang Prevention Program is an incentive, military type program for boys 5 to 13 and as the members grow past the age mark, they become leaders and do not move out but advance up. You have heard of the phrase, "pipeline to prison" for some specific people groups. Well, it is our intention to plug that pipeline and turn our boys in an entirely different direction. Through our RAW DAWGS, we see scholars, artists, entrepreneurs, civic leaders and community champions. Our RAW DAWGS program is breaking the cycle from cradle to crime and we have only just begun. There is still so much to do.

We Need YOU!

Our RAW DAWG'S van needs repair on the passenger's door and probably a tune-up. If you know anyone willing to donate at least two vans to transport our boys, that would be a total blessing. We also need volunteers (young men) who can donate at least 8 to 10 hours a week to work with our boys. Their service can turn into paid positions as we raise the funds. If you would like to donate to our RAW DAWGS Youth Corps Gang Prevention Program, \$150 sponsors one member for a year or you can give monthly. We appreciate and are thankful for all who have been partners with us so far. Thank You!

Students Call it "QUITS"

Professor Dawn Irlbeck of Creighton University invited the Compassion In Action director to speak to her class about the population that CIA serves. The students had different majors they were striving to complete, all either referred to the law or social issues. Director Teela Mickles has been asked to speak to a number of classes at UNO and Creighton University, mostly in the same subject areas.

At the beginning of each session Ms. Mickles always asks each student to give their name and the reason they chose that particular class to advance their education. There is always a variety of responses: I'm curious about Criminal Justice—I would like to help with social problems—My parents made me do it or My dad, grandfather and his father were all in this field. The list goes on and on but no matter how many different or similar responses they give, one is always missing. "I want to help people".

That's the leeway for Ms. Mickles to open her presentation. CIA not only helps people left in the shadows of prison but all people. Our mission is focused on 'personal validation' for all our people, children and families in every level of service. It's surprising how many students never considered the mere concept of 'helping people' as the motive for their career choice. Perhaps that is their underlying purpose and they just don't see the need to express it. Which leads to the next speaking point. What do you know about the people who would be in need of criminal justice or would be potential future clients for social services or mental health? Most rely on their professors, their text books, research, the media and other such norms for education and career development. The suggestion presented to them, is to simply contact and listen to the population they are apt to serve.

Needless to say, the class received an 'eye opening' compassionate presentation which was thought provoking and inspired them to continue in their pursuits to make a positive difference in society. The director was included in a very special project that Professor Dawn had already presented to her class. What an honor!



We're Moving Forward!



The topic of violence in their past was brought up and Professor Dawn asked the class if they had memories of abuse, violations or violence in their past. Much to her surprise, most of the class did, so she made it an assignment and asked them to write the memories down on paper. They selected a date when they would make a little ceremony to burn those memories as a class and move forward. Ms. Mickles was asked to participate in the burning and she complied. In fact, she was humbled and thrilled to be included in something so very significant and personal when this was the first time meeting with this class. The waste can was prepared and the school fire marshals were at hand.

It was a blustery cold day with quite a bit of the wind blowing, so everyone was bundled up. Once the memoirs were placed in the can and Professor Dawn set them on fire, there was total silence as they burned. The moment was somewhat surreal as the students watched their memories burn. Then someone said, "now what do we do?" That's a no brainer for Ms. Mickles and she offered to pray and her prayer was warmly accepted and appreciated. In fact, the students expressed their appreciation to Professor Dawn as they actually felt the warmth, power and love that should come from prayer. It was a great day!

Ready or Not....HERE THEY COME!



Compassion In Action has been invited to present at the 2018 Annual National Neighborhood USA Conference in Birmingham, Alabama in May. This is the fourth consecutive year we have been invited to participate in this prestigious international event.

People from all over the nation and other countries come together to share ideas, successes, challenges and resources for improving, repairing or rebuilding neighborhoods. There are different areas of interest that are presented in workshops with a wide variety of material and information to glean and take home.

The first presentation CIA made was in Houston TX, entitled "The Forgotten Population". We represented the people we serve in prison, reminding those at the conference that 96% of people confined in the department of corrections will one day return to their

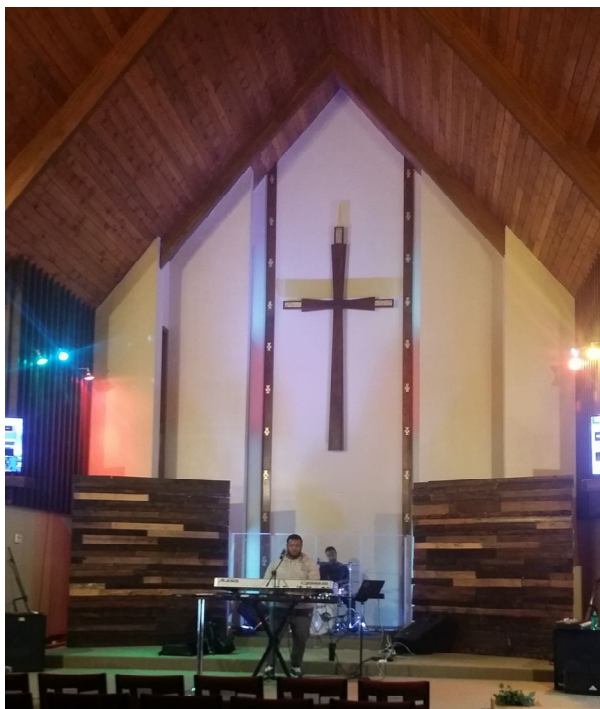
families, neighborhoods and communities. They can either return as "Champions" for their community and be an asset to their neighborhood or a "Chump" and be a liability. The manner in which they return is dependent upon the community from which they came and not the department of corrections. The CIA staff is making preparations to attend and we are seeking \$3,000.00 to cover our expenses for the trip.

The NUSA Conference was held in Omaha last year and it is our hope to have a strong representation of Omaha in Birmingham. Please contact Precious, (402-706-4398) president of North Omaha Neighborhood Associations (NONA) to contribute toward Omaha Neighborhoods NUSA Fund allowing members of NONA to attend the conference. For more information about NONA or Omaha's participation at the NUSA Conference in Alabama, call Precious or NONA 402-999-6629. Omaha was the center of attraction last year and all cities and countries who attended the NUSA Conference were impressed. We want to continue that mode in Alabama and REPRESENT! Your support is greatly needed and appreciated. Thanks!

Historical Grant Matching Funds

The Historical Grant offered by the City of Omaha each year provides opportunity to secure historical sites in the city as well as support organizations working with youth to reduce violence. Compassion In Action occupied the property of the former Wesley House in 2013, including the church on the property, which is now Mission Church. Most people in Omaha for the past 3 generations have a memory from the former Wesley House, as it was the home of the first social service office in the city. It was also where the idea of alternative education was birthed through community advocate, Tommie Wilson, to save those youth falling through the cracks of public schools. In addition, there were sports, after school programs, child care, summer projects, free lunch programs etc., that many still remember. In other words, the site is totally historic and CIA is honoring that legacy as we continue to serve the community in a wellspring of areas, including those families who are normally left behind. CIA was awarded \$25,000 from the Historical Grant and will receive it when \$50,000 matching funds are raised toward the purchase of the property. CIA, the RAW DAWGS Youth Corps., LeMick Production Studio and Tastefully Done Catering Service are family owned business located within the CIA bldg. In addition, Bridge 2 Health is leasing office space from CIA to provide free health screening on the weekends and Mission Church is also leasing their building from CIA. This location is truly historic and is providing services, to families in the community and surrounding areas to honor the legacy and history of the former Wesley House. You can make us property owners by sending your donations for the matching Historical Grant Funds to Compassion In Action Inc. GOD BLESS YOU!

Mission Church & Compassion In Action



Imagine living in the shadows of life, not being able to experience the dawning of a new day with hope. Each day looks the same because your surroundings and the people in your world never change. How does a person maintain a sense of purpose and hope in such an environment? I don't know, but.....you might want to step out of your zone of 0 and step into the zone of HOPE.

Mission Church is full of such people, who felt they had nothing to look forward to and lost all hope of becoming anything beyond the identification of their pain or problem. You've heard them in the 'rooms,' "Hi my name is John and I'm a drug addict or I'm an alcoholic." LIE, LIE, LIE! God never created any drug addicts or alcoholics, He only makes babies! You may have a problem with a chemical because of other underlying issues and that is for real, but neither your habit or your criminal behavior defines who you are. You are a God breathed, created and valuable individual with problems. Who isn't?

The pastor of Mission Church is Myron Pierce, who has experienced, first hand, that feeling of hopelessness. From his prison cell, he had the opportunity to make a choice and stay stuck on what he knew from his past or dare to trust Jesus Christ as his new homie. Pastor Myron chose to end his career as a dope dealer and become a "HOPE" dealer. He is committed to make as many "HOPE" dealers as the Lord will allow, which means there are no limits to the possibilities. Pastor Myron planted Mission Church in March 2017, the people came and in just eight months, we needed two services. So check out Mission Church, Sundays 9:00 am or 11:15 am and see hope for yourself. You too can become a "HOPE" Dealer. See you there!

HOPE Dealers

CIA Community Action

The City of Omaha recognizes Compassion In Action, including Mission Church as an historical site in Village 1 and we have several community events planned to validate that. A major project will be a community mural painted on the entire west side of Mission Church that represents the history and neighborhood projects provided by the former Wesley House, during all the years they have served Omaha. We have professionals who will plan and direct us. However, people in the community, who want to participate will be invited to help create this work of 'historical' art. CIA has 6 windows located on the top of the north side of our building which will also be sites for art work connected to the Community Mural. It will become a site to behold and will tell the story of 3+ generations served from this location over 60 years. If you have a memory, we are selling memory bricks at \$100 each for your name and the year of your Wesley House memory. A three sided brick wall will be constructed around the flag pole which was donated by the Woodman Tower and was the first flag pole to go up in North Omaha after 911.



Attainable Goals for 2018



Compassion In Action Inc.

*"Embracing the Person,
Rebuilding the Family and Breaking
the Cycle"*

- ♦ *Matching funds to purchase CIA Property* **\$50,000**
- *RAW DAWGS Staff and Program* **\$50,000**
- *RAW DAWGS Vans (2)* **\$20,000**
- *Program Operations* **\$50,000**
- *Ongoing Staffing for CIA Programing* **\$75,000**
- *CIA/Mission Church Playground Equipment* **\$25,000**
- *Parking Lot Resurfacing* **\$25,000**

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Soon to be Released!

"What IF?" Author, Teela A. Mickles
That's right, my first book coming soon,
guaranteed THOUGHT PROVOKING....

WATCH FOR IT!

*2018 is the year of harvest for 30+ years of
sowing and tilling God's harvest field of pre-
cious people. Pray, Support and Celebrate the
Harvest with us! Thank you and God bless!!!*

Need a Speaker?

Compassion In Action offers
Community Awareness to:

- Invest in Human Beings
- Reunite Families
- Community UNITY
- Break Criminal Cycles
- Serve the Unserved
- Remember the
Forgotten

Call for a seasoned speaker,
workshop, training seminars
and information luncheons.

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