



the james project

...homes and support for fostering families...



November 2017  
Volume 6, Issue 2

# The JP Journal

*Rewriting the stories of children in foster care*

## 5

### Years of

### The James Project Means...

- ♥ **22 siblings were kept together in foster care**
- ♥ **78 children lived in a JP Home**
- ♥ **8 children were adopted**
- ♥ **570 children served by The Closet**
- ♥ **42 families served by Call 1:27**
- ♥ **169 beds given to foster children**

### HELP US HELP FOSTER CHILDREN

The James Project has made a marked difference in the lives of foster children in Sangamon county since our founding in 2012. In the upcoming year, we hope to purchase our fifth home. While we are not all called to be foster parents, we are all called to help the orphans in our midst. (James 1:27) As you prepare for year-end giving, wish to remember a loved one, or simply want to honor someone special, we humbly ask that you consider a donation to The James Project. Every dollar is put to work locally to ensure, "That none be lost." Donating is easy—visit our Web site at [www.thejamesproject127.com](http://www.thejamesproject127.com) to make a secure donation through Paypal or send a donation to our office: 907 Clocktower Drive, Springfield, IL 62704. All donations are tax deductible as we are a 501(c)(3) organization.

Thank you for supporting The James Project!

### Our Mission

The James Project recruits and supports dedicated foster parents through the provision of homes and services.

### Our Vision

The James Project is dedicated to living out Christ's vision to care for displaced children in our community by assisting foster parents to create secure and loving homes for all children in need.



"We live in a world where we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say, 'It's not my child, not my community, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes."

-Fred Rogers



## Thank You Supporters

The Leadership Committee at Athens High School provided support to the JP during this past year, completing projects at different homes. This club diligently works to make a positive difference within their community and we sincerely thank these teens for showing love to our JP families!



Left to right: Grace Armstrong, Marybeth Holliday, and Advisor John Tobias

Tara Long, an award winning photographer in Springfield, donated a portion of every photography session throughout the summer months to the JP. Board member Karen Gianonne accepted the incredible \$2600 donation. Thank you, Tara, for your generosity!



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: MARK BREWER



Mark Brewer checks on a leaky faucet with foster mom Angela Trowbridge at the Teen Home.

One of our top priorities for The James Project (JP) is for our families to have large, comfortable homes to care for foster children. Keeping these homes in tip-top shape requires a person of many talents and we have found an incredible Property Manager named Mark Brewer. A retired colonel in the Illinois National Guard, Mark has found his niche within the JP as he has a heart for people and especially displaced children. His skills as a handyman make Mark a wonderful person to have as a part of the JP team and we are grateful for his service. He and his wife Janet attend West Side Christian Church with their children Dillon and Analise.

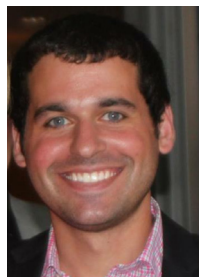
*“You have made the Lord your defender, the Most High Your protector and so no disaster will strike you, no violence will come near your home. God will put His angels in charge of you to protect you wherever you go.” Psalm 91:9-11*

## JP PARENTS ATTEND REFRESH CONFERENCE

Getting away as a parent is very important, and getting away as foster parents is vital for refreshing your calling. This October, David and Tommie Lee along with the JP Co-Director Sarah Homeier attended the ReFresh Chicago conference. ReFresh is a Christian conference designed for foster and adoptive parents, kinship providers, grandparents, and others who care for God’s orphaned and vulnerable children. Tommie recounted, “David and I were truly blessed by this conference. We were refreshed, encouraged, and empowered with tools to do Gods calling for our lives and serve the kiddos entrusted to us with excellence. Thank you James Project!”



## NEW BOARD MEMBER: RYAN JOHNSON



Ryan Johnson was born and raised in Springfield. He is a 2006 graduate of Sacred Heart Griffin, and received a degree from Creighton University in financial analysis. He now works for Bank of Springfield as a commercial banker and completed an MBA from University of Illinois-Springfield. Ryan has been a part of many civic activities, including Leadership Springfield, as his family instilled in him a strong sense of community. We know he will be a valuable asset to the JP Board.

## KIDS HELPING KIDS

**Hollis Snider**, a talented young artist, hosted an art show at her house this summer to benefit the JP. This is Hollis' second "showing" of her work and all of the proceeds from her show went directly into the JP mattress fund. We think it's incredible how she uses her talent to help others!



The tweens and teens in the **Cherry Hills Junior High Youth Group** along with their supervisor **Catherine Broadbooks** hosted a Backyard Clean-up day at the Teen Home. Such work is invaluable! The youth group also had a Casseroles and Cookie Dough Creation Day to make meals for our JP families. Thank you, **Kara Roth**, for guiding this group in the kitchen!



The **Sr. High Youth Group at Cherry Hills** had a "Demo Day" at the Roanoake house and tore down a shed. We appreciate their hard work!



Kids are always blessing us with gifts from their birthday parties. **Micaiah Blakely** collected items for The Closet during her 7th birthday, including PJs, diapers, and toiletries. **Inara Lair** collected \$150 from her birthday party to help The Closet. These girls have big hearts!



## THE NUTS & BOLTS OF CLOSET 1:27

The James Project's Closet 1:27 has efficiently served foster families in Sangamon County for five years, bringing necessary items to newly placed foster children. How are we able to deliver things to families so quickly? Read on!

When a child is placed into foster care, or transferred from one home to another, they usually have nothing with them but what they are wearing. Our goal is to get them settled with their own things ASAP. To get the ball rolling, their caseworker requests a delivery of items through our Web site. This request is answered by Mary Cumming, our Closet Coordinator, and she sends out a message to our volunteer deliverers to see who is able to fulfill the request and deliver items that particular day. The volunteer contacts the foster parent directly to find out about the new child. They ask questions such as age, sizes, if a school uniform is needed, favorite color, diaper size, or if a bed, bedding or pillow is needed.

The volunteer then "shops" in Closet 1:27 filling laundry baskets with the needed items, delivering them to the foster family, usually within 24 hours. Providing such a service enables the foster parents to focus on the newly placed foster child, rather than scrambling to find essential items to get through the first few days. Closet 1:27 is a lifeline to foster families and we appreciate the dedication of our volunteers to help make foster family transitions a little easier. ♥

### CLOSET 1:27 WISH LIST

Currently, Closet 1:27 is well stocked, except for a few specific items:

- Twin bed sheet sets
- Waterproof, zippered mattress covers
- Packages of new underwear & socks – all ages

We ask that any item donated be **new or like-new** as we want all foster children to have a truly fresh start with their foster family, which includes the items they receive from The Closet.

We appreciate your consideration!

## PEACE BY PIECE QUILTERS

Who doesn't love a quilt? There's just something comforting about slipping beneath the warm fabric and running your hand across every stitch. Ladies of the Peace by Piece Quilters love to sew and fellowship with each other, all the while using their skills to help heal the hearts of foster children. They created a variety of quilts for foster children and gave them to the JP. Each quilt gives a child something they can keep forever, no matter where they go. We thank these ladies for this gift of LOVE!



Welcome to The JP Board, Sarah!

## SERVING FOSTER FAMILIES

**BY: RYAN MILLER, FOSTER DAD & YOUTH MINISTER**

My wife Kasey and I have been foster parents for 18 months and part of a loving and supportive church for 12 years. As foster parents, we have learned there are some "do's and don'ts" when supporting foster families in your life/church.

**DO:** Buy our foster kids clothes, toys, and other gifts if you feel the need to welcome them or for special occasions like birthdays. Ask us sizes and needs, just as you would for a grandchild or your best friend's child.

**DON'T:** Give us a bag of Goodwill clothes that you are excited about because you got 5 outfits for \$10.

**DO:** Have us over for supper, or offer to bring us our favorite meal and take time to visit with our new family.

**DON'T:** Give us leftover coupons or gift cards to restaurants that we don't go to either. Our family dynamic changes with each placement, but we still like to be social and included in things.

**DO:** Get to KNOW and INVEST your TIME/LOVE into our foster children. Every child is dearly loved by our Heavenly Father. I know it can be hard to pour your love into someone that might not be around tomorrow, but PLEASE DO!

**DON'T:** Think or say... "I guess they got another foster child." "I hope this one is more well behaved than the last." "I wonder what their parents did to lose them."

If you are reading this, I know that you have a desire to help foster families. I encourage you to take every opportunity to make your support as loving and personal as you can. Thank You!

## SUMMERTIME FOR JP FAMILIES

The summer months can be a bit daunting for parents when all of the children are out of school, but for our JP families, they experienced some fun things thanks to Mattress Firm and the Helen Engelhardt Adventure Fund. Each family received passes to a local pool, 2 boys attended Boy Scout camp, 1 child attended Lincoln Land College for Kids, and swimming lessons were made available for kids as well as a mom and a baby. Meals continued to be brought to each family once a week, which is a huge blessing to every family! We are also pleased to report that each home has an extra freezer to keep plenty of meals on hand for our large fostering families. If you have an idea as to how to bless our foster families, we invite you to contact us at: 217.546.3352 or [info@thejamesproject.com](mailto:info@thejamesproject.com)

## NEW BOARD MEMBER: SARAH HARKNESS

Sarah Harkness has lived all over the country, being a "pastor's kid." She studied Early Childhood and Elementary Education at Greenville College and is currently teaching Pre-K in Auburn, IL. She attends Cherry Hills Church and serves as a small group leader with the Youth Group. Sarah has successfully led the JP Box Lunch fundraisers for the last few years, so we know she is a great addition to our Board!

## OUR NEIGHBORS

While you may not live near one of The James Project homes, you can become a Neighbor just the same, with a \$1000 donation or more. We humbly thank the following supporters for being a part of our Neighborhood:

A-1 Lock	Mark W. Groesch Family Foundation	Robin & Sue Pickett
ABC Club	Jason and Jacquelyn Ground	Carol Shipp
Be One Inc.	Larry and Rose Haas	Pickett & Sproat Insurance
Blake Anderson	Tom and June Harmon	Rotary South of Springfield
Cherry Hills Baptist Church	Harvest Moon Landscaping	Jimmy Rousey—UTG
Marianne Bartholomew	Forrest and Mary Lou Holsapple	Ticket to Dream
Gary and Paula Borah	Kyle Killibrew	Curtis & Karun Tillett
The Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln	Taylor and Scott Kincade	The Tracy Family Foundation
Cornerstone Community Church - Auburn	Jason and Kara Kincaid	Curt & Deb Trampe
Matt and Jennifer DeBackere	Lakeside Christian Church	Neville and Cheryl White
Bruce and Bethanie Drake	Tara Long Photography	Russ and Jan Williams
First United Methodist Church	Mattress Firm	Eric and Terri Woolbright
Len and Karen Giannone	Patrick and Diane McCormick	
Good News Adult Sunday School	Jim and Annette McDermott	
	Eleanor Novotnak	

Make a donation via Paypal at:  
[www.thejamesproject127.com/support](http://www.thejamesproject127.com/support)

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## VOLUNTEERS AND FRIENDS OF THE MINISTRY

We are grateful for the following churches, individuals, businesses, and groups who supported The James Project in a variety of ways in recent months:

Tracy Armstrong	Mary Cumming	Illinois Bankers Assoc.	Mark Peters
Sherri Barry	Maryanne Dehart	Melissa Hostetter & Family	Debbie Rigg
Bemco Mattress	Carol Diedrichsen	Emily Jewel	Erica Rovey
Missy Best	Dillon Pizza	Michelle & Kingsley Keys	Jennifer Sheehan
Kristal & Travis Bland	Kate Dunne	Lakeside Christian Church Community Group	Donna Smith
Bless This Stitch	Lori Frederking	Living Faith Baptist Church	Ken & Diane Smith
Blessings on State	Amy Gelber	Denise Longanecker	Sharon Smith
Cheryl Blook	Goodman Fence	Lowe's	Springfield Clinic Accounting Department
Dayton Burnett	Grace Lutheran Church-Women's Group	Janet & Maddie McKeown	Tailored Printing
Café Moxo	Lu Ann Groesch	Elizabeth Mitchell	Karun Tillet
Joann Carter	Jackie Ground	Esperanza Morales	Brandi Tolley
Central Baptist Church	Rose Haas	Tina Newingham	United Ways Days of Action
Susan Cowles	Krista Halm	Peace Lutheran Church	John Voigts
Crystal Lynn Photography	Julie Hart	Peace by Piece Quilters	Missy Whitely
First Christian Springfield Church	Heartland Credit Union	Mario Perrino	
	Hope Presbyterian Church		



## A NEW PLAY STRUCTURE

There's nothing like an awesome play structure to get kids excited, and the backyard at Roanoke now has one. Our friends at First United Methodist Church (FUMC) led by **Kendra Overbey**, organized a group to take on the task of assembling the play structure. As you can see by the photo, the area in which the play structure sits is beautifully framed out and filled in with mulch. This work was completed by volunteers from the **Bunn Corporation—Angie Comstock, Jacob Perry, and Karissa Turner**. Two thumbs-up to all of you for a job well done!

## THE JP BENEFITS FROM DENIM DAYS

In June, our friends at the **HSHS Administrative Office** put together a creative fundraiser called Denim Days. When an employee donated just a few dollars, they could wear blue jeans to work—and who doesn't love wearing a comfy pair of jeans? The month-long fundraiser collected \$2665! HSHS representatives **Marsha**



**LaRocca and Ashley Miller** presented the check to JP Co-Director Jan Williams. We extend a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to everyone at HSHS as this is the second time they have blessed the JP in this way.

## EMPOWERED TO CONNECT CONFERENCE

Mark your calendars for an upcoming simulcast at First United Methodist Church April 13 & 14, 2018 entitled Empowered to Connect. It is very pertinent to foster and adoptive parents dealing with children affected by trauma. Stay tuned to The James Project Facebook page as details are finalized.

### The James Project

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