

OPEN DOOR MISSION

EST. 1954

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

~ Jeremiah 29:11

God has a plan FOR YOU!

God wants you to shine as bright as the Texas sun. Open Door Mission is here to help our men do the same because of donors like you. You will see how we help these men get closer to God's glory.

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Love Your Neighbors



Dear Friends:

Happy Summer! School is out, Galveston is a short drive, summer camps are starting. Kids need to be busy. Put them into every Vacation Bible School (VBS) you can find. It is my prayer that you have a wonderful and safe two months.

Galveston is mentioned intentionally. As our neighbor to the south, you need to know facts about the Mission's involvement with the island's drug problem. Not to say that Galveston is the only surrounding county that has these issues. We collaborate with them all by accepting those who need our help. The Mission provides life-saving residential treatment. Today, all these counties benefit from our services.

Stan Washington is our business development manager responsible for reaching out to these neighbors. He introduces the Mission as the place for treatment. Stan arranged for the Mission to host the "Behind the 8-Ball" symposium in March at Moody United Methodist Church with 100 local islanders in attendance. All were curious to know what ODM and other speakers had to say about fentanyl, fentanyl-laced pills, and other opioids that are taking lives on the Island and elsewhere. Everyone is seeking solutions.

Mothers who had lost a child to opiates spoke; we heard from UTMB drug experts; also, from a State Rep, a county commissioner, and the district attorney. Narcan received time at the mic as well.

TAKE NOTE-BE INVOLVED

Parents and grandparents, prepare and beware. Fentanyl is now found in counterfeit Adderall and Xanax pills, look-alike M&Ms and other candy. It can easily pass your eyes as the real thing. Fentanyl is unassuming and cheap enough for kids to buy with their allowance money.

At home we must know who our children hang out with. As important, we need to know who their parents are. When you read the cover story about Brandon, you see that his mother allowed him to use alcohol at age 11. Did she give to his friends? If we don't want to be a parent, we shouldn't have children. All children need watchful parents.

Families need to be in a church that provides after-school activities during the week, not only Sunday school. If kids don't have organized after-school activities, the church should be open and provide activities with supervision. Youth pastors have a huge responsibility. We need them.

THE SOLUTION BEGINS AT HOME AND CHURCH

The solution won't come from the government or schools. They know about drugs and alcohol, but it isn't up to them to drug-educate our children. Fixing the border is the government's job. It's where fentanyl crosses into the US.

Our next symposium is September 29 at the Galveston Water & Electric Light Community Center. Until then, we are working aggressively to treat and educate all summer. Follow our website to know more, <https://opendoorhouston.org>.

Thank you for your financial support and prayers in what we do for the least, last, and the lost. We ask for your continued support, or for the first time if you are new to the Mission.

Your brother in Christ,

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."

(Luke 12:48).



TSU VOLUNTEERS

TSU volunteers came to Open Door Mission with their sleeves rolled up ready to serve and fellowship. The clients highly appreciated them for being a part of our community and showing love to those who need it most.

CHEF WARNER

I grew up experimenting with drugs and alcohol at a very young age. Alcohol was a necessity in my family. There was never a shortage of alcohol in the house throughout my adolescence. Our household was full of chaos. My addiction was so severe that when I ran out, any alcohol was good alcohol. Eventually, I lost everything. Open Door Mission has helped me gain hope to pursue God's plan for my life. ODM helped me and can help you as well. Your mission awaits.

Read Brandon's full story on pg. 4



GO! ASTROS!

Thankful for those that donated Astros tickets for clients from Open Door Mission to experience a fun sober time. The experience was "Awesome," one client said. Moments like this are the ones that create a new pattern for old behaviors.





"I was so deep in the darkness I thought there was no way out."

CHEF WARNER

I had become exhausted.
It hurt just to exist.

I was born in Cleveland, Ohio. With 2 older brothers and both parents. My parents grew up in the rock and roll hippie era so there was a lot of partying at our house.

I grew up experimenting with drugs and alcohol at a very young age. I started at 10 years old smoking 'pot' and drinking every weekend. My mom would provide me and my friends with alcohol at around 11 years old. Soon every weekend turned into every day. By 16 I had smoked meth and crack while consuming any other drug in my path. My mother was an alcoholic herself so there was never a shortage of alcohol in the house throughout my adolescence. Our household was full of chaos.

I drank and took all my classmate's Adderall throughout school somehow maintaining A's and B's. I idolized the rap lifestyle. Performing robberies, and selling guns, and drugs with no regard for my life or others. I've experienced many near-death experiences; rolling a car 3 times, falling out of a car going 50 mph, and jumping from a 3-story balcony are just some. One day my friends and I were drinking after school on a Thursday. I noticed my best friend Adam was too intoxicated to drive so I took his keys from him. He begged for his keys back for about an hour. Ultimately, I gave in and handed him his keys. He took off and instantly hit a tree and died. I blamed myself for his death for many years.

A few years later I witnessed my mom fall and hit her head on the concrete. After a few days on life support, I watched her be unplugged. I began to self-harm just so I could feel something. Went from putting cigarettes out on my hand to tattooing myself, and eventually 15 staples in my arm to keep me from bleeding out.

I had gone completely insane. I would stay awake for weeks at a time, running away from reality; searching for false gods, and experimenting with dark arts. I was so deep in the darkness I thought there was no way out. Nor did I care to get out. I truly believed I was possessed by demons. I ended up in the psychiatric hospital half a dozen times because I was a danger to myself.

My addiction was so severe; when I ran out of alcohol, I would resort to drinking vanilla extract, mouthwash, hand sanitizer, and even bottles of rubbing alcohol. I would consume the largest amounts of hallucinogens I could find. Sometimes 10 different drugs at a time. I used to think I wasn't harming anyone but myself.

Eventually, I lost everything; jobs, vehicles, homes, loved ones, and my sanity. I had become exhausted. It hurt just to exist. After an involuntary hospital visit, I was sober long enough to realize if I continued to use, I will die. I desperately prayed to God for help. I knew just any treatment center could not help me. Especially any that I could afford.

I was led to the Open Door Mission. It's my last chance to survive. I was welcomed with open arms. Not with just a sense of community, but family. The program seems long, but much healing was needed from a constant 20-year addiction to sin and chaos.

The Open Door Mission provided me with everything I needed in the physical and spiritual. I am now equipped with the armor of God. I have the Word of God in my heart, and I am guided by the Holy Spirit. By staying in the Word and praying I've been able to change how I think and behave. I have found a sense of belonging at the Open Door Mission and I am now the Head Chef. I have found a fulfilling joy in serving others. I am a new creation in Christ, the old things have passed away. ODM gave me hope enabling me to pursue God's plans for my life.

The Santos and Jose Show



ODM's Outreach Team

With the increased use of fentanyl and other synthetic drugs, the Mission's Outreach Team of Santos Ramirez and Jose Sanchez take two ODM clients into schools and churches in the surrounding Houston area to raise awareness to prevent drug use in kids.

The students and many of their parents who attend are intrigued by the talking points involving behavior changes such as lying, stealing, hiding, and isolation.

Behavior changes are easy to spot if parents are paying attention. The "user" is quickly irritated when he/she cannot get to the drug of choice, or when things don't go their way. They will isolate for fear of being seen or found out by a loved one or close friend.

The ODM Outreach Team creates a first-hand experience by audience participation. One activity is to bind the hands of an audience volunteer and watch them try their hardest to break free. The purpose is to understand how restricting drug addiction can be physically, mentally, and emotionally. The will to quit might be there, but their hands are tied.

Our clients share personal stories of being an addict and how God changed their lives. As our director says, "Healing comes with revealing" and opening up and becoming vulnerable can be very difficult. The clients in recovery and the Outreach Team reveal their stories to heal themselves as well as others in the community.

Spring Highlights



*US Department of
Education, Mayor's
Office for Adult Literacy
(MOAL), Wesley
Community Centre*

The Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy honored the Mission by bringing the US Assistant Secretary of Education of Career, Technology and Adult Education, Dr. Amy Loyd, for a site visit on April 27. The Secretary asked to talk to some of our "learners" about their experience at ODM. She also asked how a private non-profit can successfully operate without government funding. We had great fun answering the questions. It is through collaborations and partnerships. We strive to keep the government out of it.

Federico Salas-Isnardi and Jackie Aguilera of the Mayor's Office have long been impressed by the progress our clients make in academic education and computer literacy.

Fort Bend County Court Officials

As we work with counties surrounding our own Harris County, we find that the court systems have not been aware of the Mission. Thanks to Stan Washington, ODM Business Development Manager, he has established relationships with Galveston, Brazoria, Montgomery, and most recently, Ft. Bend County.

On April 28, a group from the Mental Health Public Defenders Department of Fort Bend County visited for an introduction to Open Door. As a result of the visit, we will be seeing appropriate clients referred for treatment rather than incarceration. The group is led by Attorney Overzenia Ojuri.





Our Annual Gala

September 21, 2023

Iconic multi-platinum singer and songwriter Michael W. Smith will provide an evening to remember as he appears at our Gala this year. This Contemporary Christian Music artist last performed for us in 2016. He is returning to light up our evening once again.

Michael W. Smith is an acclaimed singer, songwriter, and musician who has sold more than 18 million albums and has received 45 Dove Awards. Hear him perform some of these audience favorites.

Show your support of the Mission by joining us on:

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Cocktails at 6 PM, Dinner at 7 PM

River Oaks Country Club

Table purchases on our website:

www.opendoorhouston.org.



Volunteers Making Donations

Xi Eta Alphas

The North Houston Alphas delivered a donation of shoes of all kinds and sizes that are always on our needs list. Many of our clients have been wearing the same shoes since they arrived. We thank you, Xi Eta Alphas for your generosity.



How to make clothing donations

The Mission gladly accepts men's clothing donations. Please bring clean and gently used clothes and shoes. Underwear and socks must be in new packaging.

In Honor



Jacques Craig
Christian Brothers Automotive

Imogene T. Mauney
David Mauney

Robert S. Ochoa
Margie Bowden
"Love You!! Mom."

Stacey A. Bevill
Linda Bedford

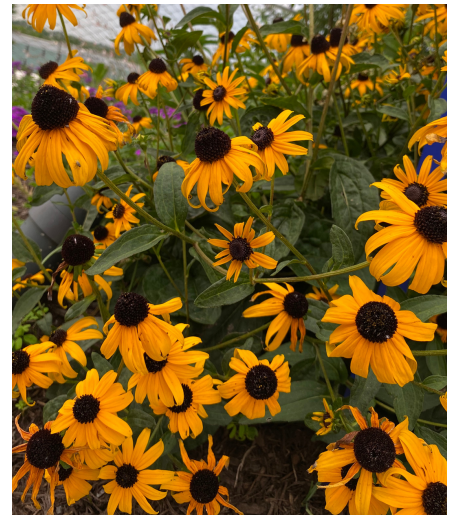
Jesus Christ
Micalen King

Scott Jones
Jack Horn Jr.
"Because He lives, we can
face tomorrow!!!"

In Memorium

Freddie J. Ellis
Carolyn A. Ellis
"My husband was involved with
Open Door many years ago"

Cole Milne
Susan Myers



Summer

2023 NEWSLETTER

Yes! I want to give men a place of rest and help them find their purpose in life this spring.

Enclosed is my gift of: \$50 \$100 \$125 \$200 \$300 \$_____

Send me the latest news & stories via email: _____



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(713) 921-7520

THANK YOU!
YOUR GIFT IS TAX-DEDUCTIBLE AS ALLOWED BY LAW

Please make checks payable to Open Door Mission.
You can also give online at opendoorhouston.org/donate
To ensure your privacy, we do not sell our donor information.

LUNCH *Mission* WITH A

Would you like to see what we do?

We hold a monthly luncheon open house with a tour to answer all the questions you may have.

Simply RSVP with Stan at swashington@opendoorhouston.org so we can save your seat!



**Skip the paper and
Scan to Donate**

Need Help?



Whether it's looking for a place for a loved one or for yourself. **Please call us.**

We'll work with you to make sure Open Door Mission is a good fit or help point you in the right direction.

An appointment can be made through our intake office. Email Ricardo at:
rhernandez@opendoorhouston.org
or call 832-962-4256

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