

Leading by Surrender

Sarah grinned ear to ear, pushed her graduation hat tassel out of her face and looked around the room full of guests who'd come to attend her graduation from the Women's Center at Shelter KC.

"My father taught me faith through his walk. My parents loved me, and Psalm 23 stayed open on the table," Sarah said. Yet despite a faith-filled upbringing, Sarah turned toward clubs, drugs and bad choices to get her way.

After a life-threatening situation where she miraculously wasn't

losing her life made her consider recovery again. She called from the county jail and once Wendy Cahill, case manager at the Women's Center, met with her, she knew it was time. "From the moment she reached out to us, I knew she was ready," said Wendy.

Sarah rejoined the recovery program and began to take small steps. As her thinking changed, her heart did too. A newfound humility emerged, as well as renewed tenacity. Sarah's perseverance and commitment to recovery and healing made her the first woman to graduate from the updated Women's Center program.

"You're no longer diagnosable with what you came in here with," said Beth Russell, Women's Center Director and licensed clinical therapist. And then Beth added, "Everywhere you go, you become the leader. There's a leadership mantle on you."

"You have all touched my heart and helped me change. Being the street person I am, I'm now a walking street ministry. You've got to know what I know if you're going to reach somebody out there." — Sarah, speaking at her graduation

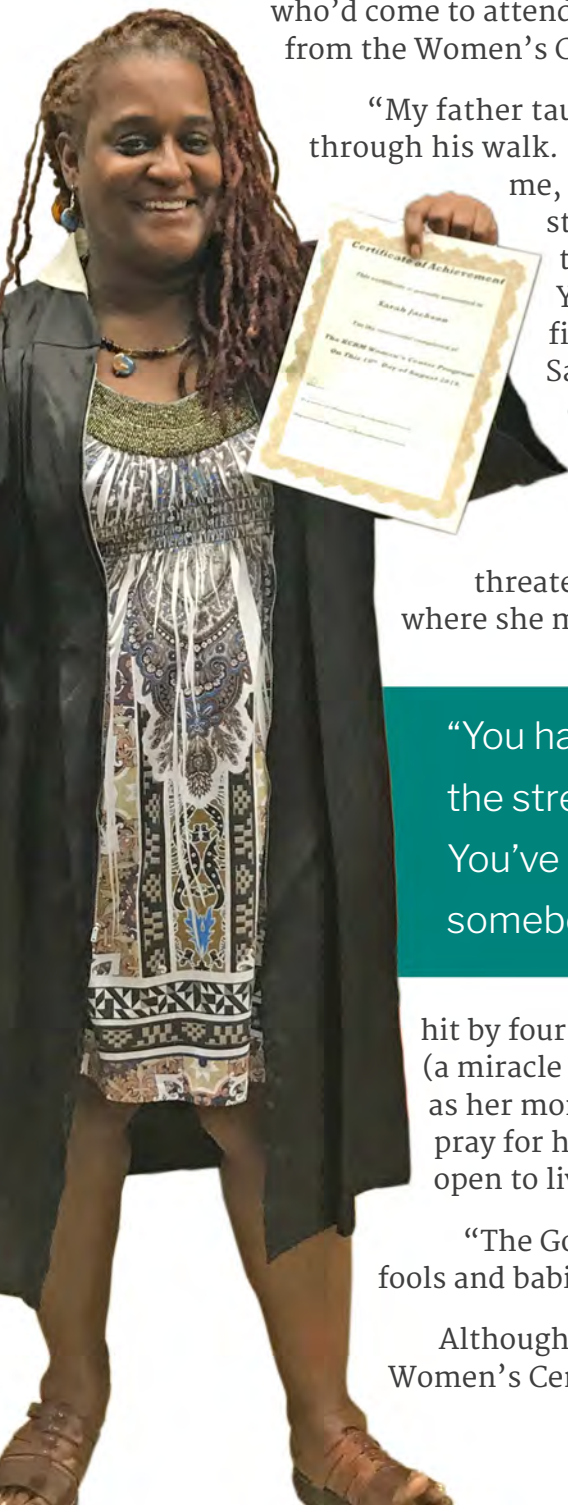
hit by four bullets shot at her (a miracle she believes came as her mom was awakened to pray for her), Sarah became open to living God's way.

"The God I serve protects fools and babies," she said.

Although she'd been to the Women's Center once, nearly

With tears in her eyes, Sarah stood before the room and shared her upcoming plans: staying the course of recovery ... working for Shelter KC at the Women's Center reception desk ... and living into the faith-filled legacy of her family.

"I'm not running the streets anymore and I don't want to be that person," Sarah confidently declared. "I've truly surrendered."



What Matters Most

A Note from Joe Colaizzi, Executive Director

Merry Christmas! This is the time of year we like to talk about the simple things of life, those things that make life meaningful — like faith and family.

One of my favorite encouragements to the men and women we serve at Shelter KC is, “Keep the main thing, the main thing!” Christmas is the perfect time to do exactly that.

Micah 6:8 says it this way, “*He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*”

Justice is more than a decision declared in a courtroom. It’s making wrong things right. At Shelter KC we see addiction broken. We see minds and hearts opened by hope. We see lives and families restored. We see people who once couldn’t hold a job becoming leaders in the workplace. Justice happens every day at Shelter KC!

I don’t think I’ve ever seen a kinder place than Shelter KC. That kindness is reflected in people like Jessica Thomas, who recently provided 1,700 brand new pairs of warm athletic socks to Shelter KC’s clothing room. It’s reflected in people like John and Donna Craiglow, who have been faithfully volunteering at the Shelter KC Men’s Center for more than a decade.

And that kindness is found in the people who give their time and financial gifts to provide life-giving hope and help to the precious people Shelter KC serves each day of the year.

Justice, kindness ... and humility. I am daily humbled to witness God’s restoration power, and the generous kindness of people like you, changing the lives of our guests and residents.

This is what matters most. This is love, lived out.

Would you take a moment and consider how you can help make this Christmas at Shelter KC a success? Perhaps you can give from one of the lists provided here or better yet, a greatly-needed financial gift. Again, you are changing lives at Shelter KC through your kindness and generosity. **Thank you, and merry Christmas!**



JUST LIKE YOUR FAMILY, Shelter KC cherishes its own Christmas traditions that bring us closer together and instill new memories in our hearts. This season of giving is especially beautiful because the gifts we share with the homeless come straight from the loving hands of our donors and volunteers ... **FROM YOU!**

This year, each man and woman staying at Shelter KC over Christmas will receive a gift

package filled with new clothing and other items, both practical and fun. Please consider helping ensure that every homeless person at Shelter KC receives a gift package. **Ship or bring your gifts to Shelter KC, 1520 Cherry Street, KCMO 64108.**

Prefer to shop online? You can find our wishlist at dollardays.com/shelterkc/wishlist.html. Thank you for helping make the men and women we serve feel loved and remembered this Christmas.

WOMEN’S CENTER

GIFT PACKAGES FOR RESIDENTS

(New only, please; 20 needed)

- Bathrobe
- Slipper socks
- Jesus Calling devotional
- \$25 Walmart gift card
- Fun tote bag
- Lotion
- Adult coloring book
- Colored pencils
- Lotions, body wash, and hair care products for women of color

MEN’S CENTER

GIFT PACKAGES FOR RESIDENTS

(New only, please; 40 needed)

- \$25 Walmart gift card
- Life Recovery devotional
- Sweat shirt and pants set
- Wrist watch
- Mini games/cards
- Nice writing pen
- Wallet

GIFT PACKAGES FOR OVERNIGHT GUESTS

(New only, please; 110 needed)

- Rain poncho
- Activity book (sudoku/crossword/word search) and pen
- Hoodie sweatshirt
- New Testament (NIV or MSG)
- Ski gloves (water resistant) and hat
- Thermal underwear set
- Pocket planner
- Pocket flashlight
- 30-count bag of cough drops
- Travel size lotion



Shelter KC has been helping the poor and homeless celebrate Christmas for many years! Here’s Joe leading a Christmas chapel in the late 1980s.

Meet Abby

Abby Spitler is the Women’s Center Chaplain and Manager of Residential Services



“Whatever I can do to serve.”

For Abby, it’s a pretty simple philosophy of ministry: see a need and meet it. “I’ve always seen ministry as doing the things that need to be done, so that it creates an environment in which these women can see God,” she says. “I want to help the staff function well as a team so they can provide our residents that environment.”

Abby believes so much in this kind of servant-leadership that she is pursuing a master’s degree in transformational leadership at Nazarene Theological Seminary. “The Women’s Center team is so good at relational ministry to our women, so I’ve found the best way I can serve them is to provide a strong organizational foundation,” Abby explains. “I love helping them do what they do best!”

Abby loves to teach, but her favorite way to impact the women at Shelter KC is what she calls “under the radar.”

“I want to provide a calm presence and teach or lead by example,” she says. “I like seeing God work and I like the steadfast hope and faith that fuels the people that work here. The best way I can lead is to demonstrate that.”



An Evening of Honor and Hope

Almost 200 friends of Shelter KC gathered in Kansas City's Power and Light District on November 9, to celebrate and reflect on Joe and Marilyn Colaizzi's 35 years of devotion to serving men and women who are homeless. The night was filled with good food, music and fellowship sweetened by stories of God's redemptive power and driven by Executive Director-Elect Eric Burger's vision for the future.



Left to right: Rev. Joe Colaizzi receives the Rescuer Award for a lifetime of service from Citygate Network's president-emeritus, Rev. Steve Burger (father of Shelter KC's executive director-elect, Eric Burger); Joe presents Marilyn with flowers in gratitude for her many years of service and support; Eric honors Joe with a gift and surprise announcement. The Men's Center chapel will be updated and become Colaizzi Chapel in 2020.

It's Not Too Late to Show Your Support!

As the air turns colder and we enjoy the holiday season, I wanted to remind you of a year-end to-do I prescribed earlier this year: a tax projection for 2019. Doesn't that sound fun?

Have you enjoyed the blessings of higher income from your employment this year? How about nice gains in the stock market? Has it been a banner year for your business? If so, it's time to see how that is affecting your taxes and determine if your giving reflects your gratitude for God's blessings.

Here are some powerful ways to support Shelter KC by 12/31/2019:

- 1. Older than 70 1/2 and have an IRA?** You can donate directly to Shelter KC from that account as a tax-free transfer...and it counts toward your RMD!
- 2. Own appreciated stocks or mutual funds outside of your Retirement Plans?** Consider transferring some of those shares to Shelter KC and avoid the capital gains taxes, while getting a charitable deduction ... if you itemize.
- 3. Interested in "bunching deductions" to enjoy itemizing again?** That means combining a few years' worth of giving into 2019 to exceed the standard deduction (\$12,200 Single/\$24,400 MFJ).



4. Does your estate plan include Shelter KC as a beneficiary? It's very simple to add them to your Retirement Plan, Trust and/or Donor Advised Fund with a little help from professional advisors.

5. Already have KCRM in your estate plans? Remember they changed their name this year! Talk to your advisors about updating those plans to read "Shelter KC: A Kansas City Rescue Mission".

Planned Giving will make a big difference, both now and for years to come!

Ready to talk more? Reach out to our Director of Development, Connie Chambers, at cchambers@shelterkc.org, or (816) 421-7643, ext. 141 for more information about these charitable giving strategies. Blessings to you and yours as you make 2019 another grateful year!

by **Matt Syverson, CFP®**,
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