

## Second Quarter Report 2014



### **Meet Laura Gardner**

*"I have been with TCH since close to the beginning. I was getting ready to graduate from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in autumn of 2010 and had begun the job hunt. I knew I would be moving to Saint Louis after graduation and so had been searching for jobs here. I was involved in women's rights and advocacy throughout college and was searching for jobs in the field- particularly related to sexual abuse and exploitation. I happened upon The Covering House one day- really, by accident- and started reading about Dedee and her project. I was very intrigued in what she was doing so contacted her to see if I could learn more. She told me that although they weren't hiring, she would meet with me for coffee to chat once I moved. After meeting with her, I decided that this was a movement in which I wanted to take part. Since then, I have worked with Dedee from her kitchen table, from my kitchen table, a small room in a convent, Mokabe's coffeehouse, and finally an office as we created piece by piece her vision for a long-term therapeutic home for young girls. Now, three-plus years later, we are getting ready to open this home, which for me started at a small table in a St. Louis Bread Company in a new city where I knew nobody, waiting to meet a woman whom I had never met, to learn about an idea that would become a reality and there the journey began."*

We at The Covering House are so thankful to have Laura on our team. She has been a part of The Covering House since the beginning; volunteering hundreds of hours before becoming our Supervisor of Experiential Learning in October of 2012. Laura is hard-working, diligent, caring and a huge component of why The Covering House is here today! She is consistently loved by all of the girls and their parents, not to mention the staff!

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## **Client Services**

### **Out Client Program**

After a year and a half of offering out client services, we are evaluating our out-client program to gain a better understanding of what is working well and what improvements need to be made to increase effectiveness.

### **Long Term Therapeutic Home**

- Both the staff and home are ready for clients. This process has taken longer than anticipated but the good news is that we will be open very soon.
- Christine McDonald, a survivor and author of Cry Purple shared her story with staff. She agreed to be an advocate/mentor for our clients.
- Judy Davis (neuropsychologist) and Joanne Taser (artist) joined us from Wisconsin to provide a brain-based art therapy training for our staff.

### **Projects in Development**

***Developing a Therapeutic Foster Care Training and Program:*** After offering services for over a year, TCH has identified the need to begin developing a Foster Care Program. This program would allow TCH to provide the least restrictive environment for girls coming out of sex trafficking in two ways:

1. Our foster care homes would provide a positive transition for our girls leaving the residential facility.
2. Foster homes would give us the opportunity to place girls who may not need the restrictions of a residential.

A Manager of Therapeutic Foster Care & Family Services would be responsible for recruiting and training foster parents on a therapeutic level, offering weekly services to clients and families, developing life skills classes for parents and oversees our Supportive Adults Program.

### **Case Management**

- Established a new physician partnership in Jefferson County for required physicals.
- Presented Trafficking 101 to the Jefferson County Health Department Staff
- Found referral services and follow-up for eight individuals seeking services who did not meet TCH criteria for services.
- Attendance of Homeless Youth Initiative; Jefferson County meetings in April and May
- Attendance of the Rescue and Restore Annual Conference for Human Trafficking
- Attendance of Rescue and Restore meetings for Southern Illinois and St. Louis

### **Experiential Learning**

- Raised garden beds were built, filled, and planted
- Held "Meet and Greets" at house for Social Service Providers
- Created staff wellness plans
- Developed summer meal plans that were approved by Maiya Ingram, licensed dietitian

### **Projects in Development**

Developing Experiential Learning Training Manual

### **Academic Education**

- Staff participated in a mock classroom day that included math, vocabulary, reading and writing.

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- Created lesson plans to use in "Connections"; our school program that interfaces with our experiential and recreational programming.
- Met with our Reading Plus representative to discuss the best use of Reading Plus with our students.
- Purchased Townsend Press's Vocabulary Curriculum, along with reading, writing, and library resources, through donor funding.
- Organized and individualized our vocabulary program to fit our specific needs.
- Established our in-house library.
- Became members St. Louis Homeschooling Activities Resources and Encouragement, an organization that provides curriculum and classroom resources at nominal cost.
- Researched and planned educational field trips.
- Worked on and submitted an education grant.
- Created an on-line Khan Academy classroom for Math and Science curriculums.
- Began planning and developing our Creative Writing program.

### **Community Awareness**

#### **Media and Social Media**

- Reached over 5,261 LIKES on Facebook which is an increase of 600 from first quarter.
- Advancing our twitter following.
  - Current following: 896
  - Increased 56 since first quarter
- Interviewed on STL TV Live Show

#### **Presentations:** (April – June, not including third-party)

Total presentations: 10

Audience reached: 130

**Freedom Registry** added 31 new participants for a total of 271 participants

#### **Projects in Development**

- ***The Covering House on Campus:*** Launching The Covering House on Campus in the fall of 2014 in order to increase awareness about The Covering House and sex trafficking.
- ***Speakers Bureau:*** creating a committee to assist with speaking engagements. The training will start in the fall of 2014.
- ***Race for Refuge Event:*** Planning for the Race is in full swing. Currently we have people coming to run in the race from California, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Ohio as well from the St. Louis area.

#### **New Partnerships**

- Operation Food Search: Operation Food Search will provide us with both perishable and nonperishable food every week. This partnership will help cut our food budget immensely.
- Congresswoman Ann Wagner
- Daughters of Charity
- Roblee Foundation

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- St. Louis Police Academy: Co-trained the St. Louis City Police Academy with a St. Louis Detective in June. Since that training, we have been asked back to provide 30 more trainings to the academy and department between August of 2014 and December of 2014.
- Cardinals Wives: The Covering House was chosen to be honored at a Cardinal game.

As always, we at The Covering House thank you for your continuous support, encouragement, and prayers.

Oh behalf of these young girls, we are sincerely grateful.

*Dedee Lhamon, Executive Director and Founder*