



# Good News!

Winter / Spring 2019

Helping Hands provides help for the homeless and others in crisis, mostly women and children. We provide a safe and clean place to live, a compassionate and friendly environment, life skills training, and counseling. We also assist with food, clothes, medical, dental, transportation, and jobs. Helping Hands is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) serving the people of Ocala/Marion County.

## Thank You For Helping Us Help Others



"I am thankful for second chances, a safe place to live, friends and sisters in Christ who support, love, and encourage me."

-Autumn



"I am thankful to Helping Hands offering our family a safe place to live after the hurricane. I am mostly thankful for Jesus' love and that He died for us."

-Wojciechowski Family



"I am thankful for my salvation, my baby girl, and also for the help that Helping Hands has been."

-Emily

## \$38,000.00 raised at Benefit Golf Scramble

Helping Hands, with support from Lockheed Martin, hosted a Benefit Golf event this summer at the Ocala Golf Club. Golfers, sponsors and volunteers raised over \$38,000. We are thankful for the 94 golfers and over 100 sponsors who participated.



1st Place Low Net



# Daily Life with our Residents



**Sue and her twin daughters**

## **Prayer, Worship & Bible Study**

During the week we offer various devotional times to help our residents experience the love of God, and grow in the knowledge of Him and His ways. These are times when our people find more purpose and direction in life... and more peace and joy.



**Ladies Monday Night Bible Study**

## **Balancing Life as a Single Mom**

Our single moms at Helping Hands face unique challenges every day. To provide adequately for their family, several of our moms have had to work multiple jobs. Many do not have a car and face the task of getting their children to day care, school, practices, etc. Without a vehicle, even simple things like grocery shopping and going to church becomes complicated. Despite all these challenges and more, our single moms show courage and determination in managing their lives and raising their children. We are so proud of them.

**Residents who are working hard!** Once a new resident moves in one of our first priorities is to assist them in finding a job. It can be very challenging to find a job when you are homeless or perhaps have a felony conviction in your past. We work with local agencies and businesses who are willing to give such people a second chance. Right now almost every resident is currently working. Having a job is an important step for them in feeling good about themselves and their future!



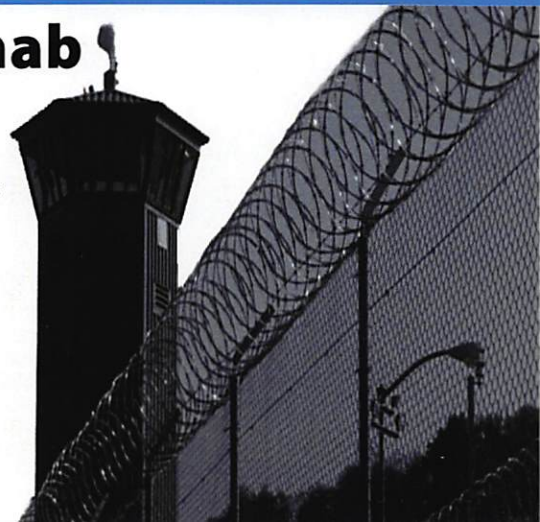
**Angel working as a baker at Earth Fare**



**Rondell working at Fidelity Manufacturing**

## **Adjusting to life after prison or rehab**

Some of our residents come to us straight from prison or rehab. Upon their release some have nowhere to go and no family to take them in. After being released, many experience the "re-entry" shock of an unfamiliar culture. At this point Helping Hands holds their hand through this process of building a new and successful life. Some keys in helping a new resident assimilate to the free world is patience, God's love and the joy of new freedom. Many times after being released they deal with a host of issues including depression, anger, the frustration of finding a job, housing, financial stability, even getting a driver's license. Helping them navigate through these challenges and helping them understand and experience the love of God is all part of the process of them adjusting to this renewed freedom and a better life.



# Testimonies and Success Stories

## Successful Graduate



Before coming to Helping Hands, I grew up in low income housing continually surrounded by illegal drugs and violence. I became a foster child. Later I was adopted by a great family. Unfortunately, when I turned 18 and moved out from

under my parents umbrella, I went backwards. I had two relationships that were very abusive ... mentally and physically. I moved to Florida to get away from that and thought a change in my surroundings would help, but the cycle continued.

My mechanic told me about Helping Hands and how I needed to get away from that situation so my life could change for the better. Having my children, I knew I could no longer let myself or my children suffer from these bad relationships. Helpings Hands provided me with the means to be able to provide a safe, healthy environment and also continue to keep God in our lives, through the devotionals, church and special events. I received a lot of support from them in every way they could help and meet my needs. Still struggling with my personal walk with the Lord, I gained lots of encouragement from Helping Hands letting me know I could give it all to the Lord and I didn't have to carry the burdens I had by myself.

God was always with me and had never forsaken me. When I finally decided to fully give my life to the Lord He then he led me back to my parents home in Ohio. Since then I have been able to have my children together, in a safe, God-fearing home. I am now a faithful member of my parents church. I participate in my church choir every Sunday and my children are participating in the A.W.A.N.A. program. I want to continue to provide my children with a life I didn't have growing up, a consistency in having a good environment, and a healthy relationship with them.

## Current Resident

As a small child, Jessica remembers her parents turning to drugs as a means of coping with the stresses of life. For 10 years she says there was not only intense drug use, there was also verbal and physical abuse, fights and all kinds of neglect. By age fifteen things really began to spiral out of control for her parents and Jessica remembers being sent with her brother to live with another family member while her parents lost everything. As a result of all that was taking place in her life, bitterness and anger began to settle in Jessica's heart and found herself turning to the wrong crowd, using drugs and alcohol to try and fill the void and emptiness she was feeling.



By age 18 Jessica found herself in California, married and divorced within a year and quickly found herself in another bad relationship and now was pregnant with her first child. This relationship became abusive, fueled by drugs and alcohol. After the birth of her second child things became so bad she had to leave and had only one place to go ... to a cousin in Florida to try and start her life over again. But this would actually be the start of what Jessica describes as 20 years of failures, tribulations, heartache, mistakes, poor choices, toxic relationships, another failed marriage and two more children.

Jessica was now living in another state with the father of her youngest. After intense fighting and turmoil, in fear of her safety, she knew she had to leave quickly ...so in the middle of the night Jessica gathered quickly what she could, took her children and fled for Florida.

Jessica had no idea where to go, but knew she had to go back to Florida. She was able to stay on a friends couch for a few days, but it was somewhere that wasn't safe for them to be. Not sure where to go next, she reached out to a friend in Ocala who told her about Helping Hands. After being interviewed, Jessica and her children were invited to be a part of Helping Hands.

New goals and direction. Jessica tells us... "During my time with Helping Hands I intend to continue my spiritual growth. To lay a solid foundation in Christ. To grow in Him, to learn how to love others despite their setbacks. My goal is to once again become self-sufficient and learn to choose accordingly to God's purpose for me and my children."

## Donate your vehicle to Helping Hands and help our single moms!

A vehicle would provide a way to get to work, take children to school and day care, and the ability to meet other basic needs. Your donation would be tax-deductible. For more details call Nigel Wagg at 352-732-4464.



Kirstin, standing beside a car donated to Helping Hands

# Community Support



## Local Business Donation

Pictured is Brad Dinkins (left) receiving a check for \$3,500 from Mr. and Mrs. Fairbanks representing Fairbanks Construction.

**Churches that are involved!** Churches like **Ocala First Assembly of God** have taken a personal interest in our residents. They not only have reached out to them individually but have also come and picked them up and brought them to church! Our men participate in a Men's Bible Study each Wednesday and several of our residents are serving in various ministries there.



Joe, of **Christ's Church of Marion County** each month delivers food and fresh meats for our residents. Over the last few months alone they have supplied our single moms and families with chicken, hamburger, and meal boxes. This allows them to stretch their food budget and in some cases provides meals when they were out of money for the month.

## Helping Hands Thrift Store

### THRIFT & CONSIGNMENTS



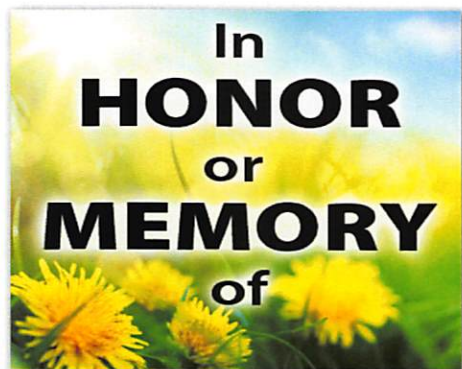
Our **Helping Hands Thrift Store** is a great place to find bargains and also a place you can donate your used furniture. All sales go to help fund the daily operational cost of Helping Hands. Along with a store full of great items, they offer new mattresses and have pick up and delivery services. You can call the store at 352-237-1761 for free pick up of large items.

**Come visit us Monday - Friday 9:00 - 4:30 or Saturday 9:00 - 3:00**  
**Thrift Store located at 8820 SW Hwy 200**

**For any questions or to schedule a tour of our facilities,**  
**call us at 352-732-4464**

**Offices are located at 101 NE 16th Ave. Ocala**

**To donate anytime visit our website at:**  
**[www.HelpingHandsOcala.org](http://www.HelpingHandsOcala.org)**



**Karen Crenshaw** by Larry Crenshaw

**Frances Colbert** by Rusty Colbert

**John "Jack" Lathrop Jr.** by Carolyn Lathrop

**James Haselden** by Gail Haselden

**Trudy Just** by Robert Just

