

# THE RANCH VOICE

Magazine for friends and donors of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

Winter 2017-2018



Martha Anderson, Spiritual Life Specialist at the Ranch, helps children make beaded bracelets and necklaces for the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes they packed in November.



[www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)  
1.800.344.0957

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## Message from our President/CEO



**Joy Ryan**  
*President/CEO*

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DakotaRanch.org

Dearest Ranch Friends,

I was visiting our cottages during our annual Fall Festival. One of our older Ranch boys, who is now a Senior at Dakota Memorial School, was pretty dressed up for a school day. He had on a freshly pressed polo shirt and nice khaki slacks. He is a more reserved child, but he sidled up to me and just stood there expectantly. Amber, the Care Coordinator for the cottage, gently said, "I think he has something to tell you, Joy."

I turned fully to him to see a sparkle in his eye and a shy grin. "Joy, I had a job interview today! And I think it went really well!" I congratulated him, shook his hand and asked him when he would know for sure. "I have a second interview on Tuesday. I think I might get the job!" He was bubbling with excitement.

So much of our identity, in the United States, is tied up in what we "do." The second question we ask someone we've just met, after their name, is "What do you do?" I am very grateful for my role here at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch and am eager to answer the question. No matter how we answer, "I am raising my children." "I am a banker." "I am a pastor." "I am retired." "I work with at-risk kids," it is a big part of how we see ourselves. For this young man, his whole world is opening. He is going from "I am a foster child in care," to "I work at the large store on the corner of Broadway and Main, and I go to school full-time."

This same young man is applying for college. He is re-writing the story that is his life. He used to hear, "You are worthless," "You are a loser," "You are stupid," and "No one will ever love you." Now he hears, and believes, "You are valued and kind and, yes, go ahead and go to college! And, Jesus has always loved you."

This is what we do at the Ranch. With God as our hero, we help at-risk children find the life they were meant to live. No child is meant to live in pain, trauma, hurt, and shame. Every child should have the chance to be their own best selves... and that is what they find at the Ranch.

I fully expect to hear about this young man years from now. When asked "Who are you and what do you do?," he will say, "I am a child of God... and an astrophysicist," because that is the life he is determined to live.

Please keep our children, their families, and Ranch staff in your prayers. Thank you for your ongoing support.

In His love,  
Joy

## D.J.'s Story

*As Vice President of Communications for the Ranch, part of my job is to bring the stories of Ranch children to the donors who support our work. I don't work directly with the kids at the Ranch, but I see them every day. They look and sound like typical kids. As I see and hear them smile, talk, laugh, and listen to music on their iPods, it's easy to forget the reality of what these kids have been through.*

*But then, occasionally, I have the incredible honor of having one of these children trust me with their story. Like D.J.*

*I first met D.J. at a staff and board picnic last summer in Minot. She was so poised as she gave several staff and board members (strangers to her) a tour of her home at the Ranch, Challenge cottage. Her beauty, gentle spirit, and confidence shined through as she showed us every nook and cranny of the cottage, explained the house rules, and told us about the chores they had to do. She talked about what it was like to live with nine other teenage girls (a little chaotic!), about the friends she had made at the Ranch, and about her relationships with cottage staff.*

*I visited with D.J. again when she agreed to be interviewed for the Ranch Voice. She was open and brave as she shared her story. She wanted you to know about her and the Ranch. She was willing to share all the details, but out of respect for her and her privacy and her future, I have edited out some specifics. Just know that she has endured more than any 16-year-old should have to endure—in fact, more than most of us endure in a lifetime. This is D.J.'s story. I think you'll find her as inspiring as I do.*

*Warmly, Tammy Noteboom*



Cottage staff like Gladys and Kelsey, gave D.J. (top right) the courage and strength she needed to work through her painful circumstances.

D.J. was raised by her father, who didn't allow her to have any contact with her mother. She hasn't seen her mom in ten years.

Right after her 16th birthday, D.J. experienced a horrifically traumatic event. She felt she had no place to turn for help, and started to find her own ways to cope with the pain that was always with her. D.J. started smoking marijuana and isolating herself—tuning out and pushing everyone away helped her feel safe.

"I was mean to my friends and didn't want to be around anyone," D.J. said. "I stopped going to work, and didn't go out in public except to go to school."

She was depressed, anxious, and angry... and felt alone.

Then her dad went to jail and she



D.J. shows off her beautiful smile and gentle strength as she gives Ranch board member, Wendy Cooper, a tour of Challenge cottage.

also had nowhere to live.

After spending a few days at the Youth Assessment Center, D.J.'s county social worker brought her to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

As you can imagine, she was nervous. She was already depressed and anxious—and now she was moving into a new home, going to a new school, and being pulled away from everything she had ever known.

But, D.J.'s strong inner character came through and she quickly adjusted to the stable living environment at the Ranch. "It's a lot better here than what it used to be for me. You get three meals a day here, which is a plus. When I was living with my father, I was only eating once a day at school."

D.J. talks about school and therapy, and all she has learned at the Ranch. Sometimes, she doesn't give herself enough credit.

Underneath the brokenness D.J. brought with her to the Ranch lies a deep wisdom. Ranch youth care workers, therapists, and spiritual life specialists just had to show her how to tap into the wisdom and strength that were already there.

"One of the most important things I've learned is to trust in myself," D.J. said. "Before I came to the Ranch, someone told me that my life wasn't worth living, and that I wasn't worth being around because I had issues. Now I would say to that person, 'I've heard worse things from better people. It doesn't matter what you say about me. You can't dictate who I am.'"

She also learned to treasure the little things in life. "Even the little things

count," D.J. said. "Treasure those little moments in life because one day something will go wrong in your life, and you'll have those moments to hold onto and get you through it."

Learning to trust others has been more difficult. "I've seen how Ranch staff have genuinely been there for me. They listen and say, 'What can we do to make this better?' I can now see myself trusting others. I'm not quite there, but I have a glimmer of hope. And hope can get you through a lot."

While at the Ranch, D.J. also discovered how she can make a difference in other people's lives. She plays drums as part of the music ministry during Ranch chapel services. And, she's out in the community—a place she once shut out. "I volunteer at the nursing home. Ranch staff tell me I've touched a lot of lives at the nursing home, and a lot of lives there have touched me. [The residents of the nursing home] make me want to see the good in people."

In mid-October, D.J. was preparing to move in with a foster family. She was excited for the home visit she had coming up, and sees it as an opportunity to start over.

But she won't forget her time at this place of hope and healing. What does she want people to know about the Ranch? "The Ranch is someplace you can go when you don't have anyone else to rely on."

*We take great care to guard the privacy of our children. Pictures and identifying information are only used with the permission of the children themselves and the written permission of their guardians.*

# Understanding Our Kids

## Keeping Kids in the Classroom



**By Shayla Leinen, Principal, Dakota Memorial School, Fargo**

The purpose of DMS can be summed up in a quote by Donald O. Clifton, coauthor of “Now, Discover Your Strengths.” He said, “Our greatest contribution is to be sure there is a teacher in every classroom who cares that every student, every day, learns and grows and feels like a human being.”

For many of the students at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, school has been a difficult experience. This is especially true for students who haven’t developed coping skills to work through their intense emotions. In most school environments, classes are large and the easiest way to deal with disruptive behavior is to remove kids from the classroom.

Removing them from the classroom causes them to miss essential learning opportunities, which puts them at an increased risk for continued failure. So, at Dakota Memorial School (DMS), we strive to keep kids in the classroom as much as possible.

DMS educators and administrators have developed strategies and implemented research-based practices for working with students who struggle to maintain appropriate behavior.

### Relationships

Developing positive teacher-student

relationships is the most effective step we take every day to establish a positive climate and keep kids in the classroom.

All children need to have at least one significant adult in their lives who believes they can do well. DMS teachers have the unique opportunity and privilege to show students they believe in them. It is crucial for students to feel that despite any difficulties they are having, that they are safe, that we still care for them, and that we recognize their successes.

### Classroom Environment

Everyone can learn, but the way learning takes place is different for every student. We have taken those learning style differences into account in the design of our classrooms. The classrooms at DMS are conducive to open collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. If you look around our classrooms, you will see natural light; floor pillows; chairs that swivel, twist or rock; aromatherapy diffusers; small couches; standing desks, fidgets to keep hands busy; collaborative work tables; and pedal bikes under desks.

Flexible spaces within a balanced learning environment provide options for students, while giving them the responsibility of determining where their minds and bodies work best. In our newest classrooms, we have restrooms and drinking fountains in the room to decrease the instructional time they miss by leaving the room.

### Time to Regroup

As soon as we see a student struggling to maintain appropriate behavior, we give them respectful reminders or redirections. Redirecting student behavior is an opportunity for a teachable moment, and a chance to model healthy responses for the group. When a student is in distress or needs a break, we encourage them to move to another area within the classroom—an individual cubby station, rocking chair in the reading nook, bean bag, standing desk, yoga mat, etc. Sometimes kids just need a minute or two to get away from the group to pause their current thinking and response pattern. We always keep them within our line-of-sight, and encourage them to re-enter the discussion or lesson when they are ready—usually within a few minutes.

### Following Up

Following up with a student after a stressful situation is a vital step in the process, showing them we are on their side, and willing to help them find strategies that work for them.

Our first reaction when children don’t follow our rules or expectations is often anger, irritation, or frustration. When we find ways to rise above our own feelings, we can appreciate our students, look them in the eye, walk with them, and help them become their best selves.

At DMS, we all believe in our purpose, but most importantly, we believe in our kids.




# The Power of Mindfulness

## Teaching kids to be mindful helps them heal

Mindfulness is recognized by researchers as an effective tool for managing stress-related illness and enhancing well-being. But, what does mindfulness mean? Is it sitting cross-legged on a cushion, spending hours a day in meditation, or going to a silent retreat? Is it a magical way to always be calm, happy, and relaxed? Mindfulness is none of those things.

Instead, mindfulness is “paying attention to the here and now with curiosity and kindness,” says Marcia Bartok, Superintendent of Dakota Memorial Schools. You can practice mindfulness wherever you are just by noticing



what is going on in your body, in your mind, and in the world around you.

Dr. Wayne Martinsen, Psychiatrist and Medical Director, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, believes that learning to notice the present moment with curiosity and kindness is especially beneficial for children at the Ranch.

“Our kids are unable to pay attention to the positive things in the world around them,” Martinsen says. “Instead they are mindful to the awful things—the tone of voice when someone is angry and is going to hurt them, the leer from someone before they sexually abuse them.”

The more they practice noticing and paying attention to the positive things they are experiencing in the moment, the more positive experiences they’ll have to reflect upon in the future.

Because mindfulness is proven to be so effective in helping children regulate their emotions, both school and treatment professionals at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch are looking at how mindfulness can help children at the Ranch—children who are often stuck in fight-or-flight mode due to prolonged trauma and abuse.

### **Mindfulness in Treatment**

Even though it hasn’t always been called that, mindfulness has been used in residential treatment at the Ranch for years, with groups or therapies that help kids notice what is going on in the moment. In addition to the traditional methods of teaching kids to notice things, Ranch staff add experiences to the equation.

“We can talk to our kids about being mindful, but they tend to be impatient,” Martinsen said. “We

have to create experiences where we exaggerate the mindfulness.”

The Ranch’s horse program is one way we exaggerate the mindfulness. “It’s a pretty powerful experience when you put a child with a 1,500-pound horse,” Martinsen said.

Mini-bikes and gardening also capture their attention.

National Youth Project Using Mini-bikes (NYPUM) instructors appear to just be teaching kids how to ride. In reality, they are also teaching them to notice the world around them by saying things like, “What’s really cool about these bikes is the sound of the engine. And, the feel of the air across your face and hands, and how that feeling changes when you slow down or speed up. Notice the vibration of the machine and how you feel it in your body as you ride across the field.”

Martinsen says the greenhouse/gardening program is also very effective in teaching mindfulness. Not all kids are interested in gardening, but those who are get their hands dirty, smell the dirt and the plants, and learn what plants need to live. Gardening can be a very relaxing and calming activity, and is something Ranch kids can use as a mindfulness practice for the rest of their lives.

### **Mindfulness at School**

Dakota Memorial School, the on-campus school of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, is in the early stages of incorporating mindfulness into its curriculum.

Bartok is in the midst of a year-long course titled, “Mindful Educator Essentials,” an intensive learning experience put on by Mindful Schools. Mindful Schools is one of the key players in the movement to integrate mindfulness into the

everyday learning environment of K-12 classrooms.

When she has completed the course in 2018, Bartok will work with treatment professionals at the Ranch to modify the mindfulness strategies so they work for children who have experienced trauma.

“Something seemingly very simple could be a trigger for our kids. We want to make sure we are integrating mindfulness into Dakota Memorial School in ways that help our kids learn, without compromising their treatment successes,” Bartok said.

Bartok cites powerful research that mindfulness provides significant benefits for both students and teachers.

She is very excited about the ability of mindfulness to enhance attention and emotional regulation; and promote flexibility for students. “Due to the plasticity of the brain, and the brain’s ability to create new neurons and neural connections at any age, mindfulness can change the brain structure in ways that promote brain health,” Bartok said.

“Even short moments of mindfulness practice repeated many times, becomes a part of class culture. This culture nurtures individual student needs, and over time, can provide tools and strategies for students to take with them on their life journeys.”

Emotional regulation is difficult for our students—and out-of-control emotions don’t leave room for learning. Mindfulness gives students tools they can use to become aware of the space that exists between a stimulus and a response. Once they notice the space, they can choose to respond in a more thoughtful or logical manner.

“Mindfulness also gives students

an important sense of power over their own lives,” Bartok said, “which improves self-esteem in the class setting and makes way for continued academic success.”

The increased well-being of teachers, who participate with the kids, leads to more supportive relationships with students, increased job retention, and a decrease in job burnout.

### The ease of mindfulness

Social Psychologist Ellen Langer has been studying mindfulness for over 35 years, and some have dubbed her “the mother of mindfulness.” Her take on mindfulness has never

involved contemplation or yoga, but is the simple act of actively noticing things.

Try it. Notice how your body feels against the chair, or your feet against the ground.

Stop to listen. Do you hear things you hadn’t noticed before, like the buzz of voices or the sound of your furnace?

What do you smell? Anything? Are they pleasant smells? Unpleasant smells?

Pay attention to your breath and notice how it feels going in and out of your body.

Notice your thoughts. What are you thinking right now? How about now? Try not to judge your thoughts—just notice them and watch them gently move on.

The simple act of noticing is easy—the difficult part is remembering to notice in the midst of your busy day. That’s what we teach our kids—how to notice what is going on in their bodies, in their minds, and in the world around them. Once they start noticing, they can choose how they are going to respond, rather than reacting out of fear, anger, shame, or any number of emotions that can affect how they relate to the world.

## Drumming Away Anxiety

Professionals at the Ranch are always looking for creative ways to help kids be attuned to their senses.

Dr. Meryl Willert, Psychologist, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, uses collaborative drumming with some of the kids he sees—both Ranch residents and kids who come to him for outpatient therapy. Drumming helps kids be present in the moment; and become more aware of their auditory, visual, and tactile senses.

“We choose who will set the main rhythm or foundation, and the other person gets to put in the accents or rhythms that add color around the main beat. While we play, it is typical for the child to watch me and listen to my rhythm,

while being aware of what the drum feels like on their hands and what it sounds like. It’s a nice blend of being attuned to your own senses, while

being mindful of what is going on in your immediate environment.”

Willert works with a 10-year-old boy who has severe performance anxiety in school. Drumming has helped him realize that his anxiety stems from thinking about the future instead of being present in the moment.

“When we are drumming together and doing well at creating a common rhythm, he has noticed that he feels calmer inside and has no worries,” Willert said. “I have been able to use this experience as evidence that he can conquer most of his anxiety by focusing his senses outward and being aware of what’s going on around him.”



Dr. Meryl Willert uses collaborative drumming to help children ease their anxiety.



## Community Organizations Support Dakota Memorial School

Because the needs of Ranch students are so complex, the Ranch spends \$1 million over and above tuition reimbursement to provide the additional services necessary for Ranch children to learn and advance at Dakota Memorial School, the on-campus school of the Ranch. The additional services—small classroom sizes, individualized attention, integration of trauma-informed practices, balanced learning environments, and advanced training for teachers—are only possible due to the generous support of committed organizational and individual donors throughout North Dakota and beyond.

### The Minot Community Endowment

**Fund** awarded the Ranch a \$5,000 grant to create balanced learning environments at DMS-Minot.

Balanced learning environments in classrooms let kids choose the environment best for their learning style. These include specialized work stations, special lighting, and specially trained staff. If students feel restless or unable to focus, they are encouraged to move around to

find the space that works best for them at that time.

The Minot Community Endowment Fund was established by a grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation in 1981 as a way for local residents to support nonprofit projects and programs in the Minot community.

The fund is managed locally by a volunteer Advisory Committee that meets annually to recommend grants from the fund.

**Sanford Health** donated \$5,000 to fund the Health and Wellness programs at DMS. Through the grant, Sanford Health will underwrite a portion of the Ranch's

costs to provide education during the school day in the areas of: physical and health education, independent living, consumer sciences, and life skills courses. Wellness and Health education is important to the healing of Ranch children. The wellness activities at DMS introduce students to healthy living habits, so they can take those habits with them when they complete treatment and leave our facilities.

Sanford Health is an integrated health system headquartered in the Dakotas. It is one of the largest health systems in the nation with 45 hospitals and nearly 300 clinics in nine states and four countries.



Each day, students walk into Dakota Memorial School to learn, and they are treated with kindness, love, and respect.

## A Teenager Finds His Way

### A Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Boy Thrives at Work

By: Peri Lapp, Communications Intern

Before he came to the Ranch, Matthew's anger often spiraled out of control, leading to outbursts and an unhealthy lifestyle. Matthew said, "I would get mad over different things before I came to the Ranch."

He spent several months at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch's Bismarck campus, learning to understand and control his anger. When he completed treatment, he headed east to the Fargo Youth Home.

After a month or two at the Fargo Youth Home, Matthew was ready for a new challenge. He decided to try to get a part-time job.

"I asked Lyndsey if I could work at the Thrift Store," Matthew said.

Lyndsey Tungseth, Case Manager, Fargo Youth Home, and Sandy Thiel, manager of the Ranch Thrift Store in South Fargo, have worked together to provide employment opportunities for Youth Home residents for about three years. But Ranch kids aren't guaranteed a job.

#### Getting the Job

Thiel requires each child to complete an application and go through an interview. This not only helps Thiel determine if they will be a good worker, but it allows the kids to experience the job search process.

"Lyndsey called Sandy at the thrift store," Matthew said. "I had an interview, filled out paperwork, and got the job."

When Matthew started at the store, he was quite shy and didn't interact

with a lot of people. He worked in the back, unloading and sorting through boxes of donations.

"At first, he didn't talk to customers or his co-workers," Thiel said. "He just worked."

But, then he began to come out of his shell. Matthew learned how to work the till, which allowed him to interact with customers. He evolved from a shy kid who did his job and left, into a personable young man, who strived to make

Tungseth said. "He takes pride in working, and seems to enjoy the extra responsibility."

Matthew has proven his strong work ethic to his co-workers and managers.

"He appreciates his paycheck," Thiel said. "He wants to learn how to do things and we like teaching him. When he is finished with a job he always asks, 'What else can I do?'"

By working at the Thrift Store,

Matthew has been able to build his independent living skills—learning about managing his time, scheduling, arranging for transportation to and from work, managing his money, and more.

Matthew said, "I sometimes buy books, but I save most of my paychecks. I have learned how to be more responsible with how I use my money."

Matthew has also gained a variety of work skills at the thrift store, and has been able



connections with customers and fellow employees. With this change in mood, Matthew began to really enjoy his work.

"Matt has a fantastic work ethic,"

to demonstrate and practice the anger management skills he learned in treatment. He is patient with shoppers and co-workers, and is personable to even the most difficult customers.

“I am able to listen more at work and at the Youth Home,” Matthew said. “The Ranch has taught me how to cope with certain situations that make me angry.”

Tungseth hopes more residents will be able to have similar successes.

“Just because a youth is in treatment, doesn’t mean that they shouldn’t experience having a job,” Tungseth said. “Having a job provides residents with responsibility, trust, and general life and independent

living skill building. A job gives our kids the opportunity to practice



their treatment skills out in the community.”

### Looking Forward

As the school year approaches,

Matthew will not be able to work as many hours at the thrift store. However, Thiel hopes he will continue to work on weekends.

“My favorite part about working at the thrift store are my colleagues,” Matthew said. “We all get along and it is a nice environment for working.”

Matthew’s goal is to graduate high school and tap into his savings to attend a trade school, where he would like to study carpentry, welding, and masonry.

Thanks to his own hard work, treatment at the Ranch, and work experience at the thrift store, he is on the right track to achieving his goals.

## Frequently Asked Questions About the Ranch

We talk to people every day who have questions about the Ranch and our kids. This is the first installment of a series, “FAQ about the Ranch.” If you wonder about anything and would like it answered here, please send your questions to [t.noteboom@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:t.noteboom@DakotaRanch.org). While we can’t promise we will use your question in the Ranch Voice right away, we promise to get back to you personally with an answer.

**Q:** How do kids get to the Ranch?

**A:** The children who come to the Ranch are trauma survivors. They have endured

abuse, neglect, domestic violence, and abandonment. For those reasons, many are in the care of the “state.” Most children who come to one of the Ranch’s Residential Treatment Facilities are referred to us by their county case manager or juvenile court. Most have had lower levels of counseling, out-of-home placements, and other interventions before they reach the Ranch. Unlike our kids at other points in the Ranch history, less than 20% of our children are involved in the juvenile justice system.

Parents—biological, adoptive, and kinship parents—also contact us, usually after they’ve tried everything and are desperate to find help for their child. If their child meets the

criteria for care at the Ranch, we welcome the child with open arms.

We work very closely with parents, guardians, and referral sources to determine the best place for the child—whether it’s at the Ranch or elsewhere—and then help them figure out funding options. Because of their custody reality, many of our kids qualify for Medicaid coverage for medically necessary services. Our donors support about 35% of the services provided to every child in care. Donors are what make the difference in the care of these amazing, complicated kids.

## Mystery Legos® for Cornelsen

An anonymous donor sent a huge box of Legos to our kids in Cornelsen cottage. These little boys LOVE Legos and someone out there really knows how to touch their little spirits.

Jessica White, Care Coordinator in Cornelsen cottage, says, “We’re so excited that someone thought about Cornelsen and our residents. We appreciate whomever took the time to do this for us. The boys just want to send the most heartfelt: THANK YOU!!!!”

Cornelsen cottage, on the Minot campus, provides psychiatric treatment and care to boys ages 10-14.



Jessica White, Care Coordinator, Cornelsen cottage, shows off the huge box of Legos donated by an anonymous donor.

## Foam fun unites Youth Care Workers

Our Ranch family in Bismarck sure knows how to have fun. The Youth Care Workers and Supervisors spent a few hours at Sky Zone getting to know each other a little better. They played dodgeball, jumped in the foam pit, and heard from the Sky Zone General Manager, Dave Bender, the importance of their work for the kids at the Ranch, and to the community. He said, “The Ranch is one of the best kept secrets in North Dakota!” Thank you, Dave, for providing a lot of clean fun for our kids and staff.



Youth Care Workers (YCW) provide 24-hour care for the kids at the Ranch. The Bismarck YCW’s—those who were off duty—took a break to have a little fun at Sky Zone.



## Ranch kids box honey for our donors

We could not do what we do without the kindness and generosity of our donors! Every year we send them a bottle of our Ranch honey as a “thank you”. This year we had some GREAT volunteers from Thatcher Cottage who helped box over 1,700 bottles of honey on their day off from school! Thank you, boys, for your kindness. If you gave to the Ranch in the past year, watch the mail in the next few months for your bottle of honey.

Residents from Thatcher cottage like to help out whenever they have the chance. In November, they boxed honey that will be sent Ranch donors.

## Making valuable connections at Dakota Memorial School

Using phone and on-site conferences, 100% of our kids had concerned adults participate in fall conferences. Here are a few sample comments from parents and guardians during or after conferences.

*“He actually likes going to school and feels comfortable there. Thank you for all that you’re doing.”*

*“For the first time in many years I had a positive school conference. I’m not gonna lie, I cried when I got home. So, thank you for supporting her the way you guys do.”*

*“It takes a village – I am glad I finally found mine! Thank you.”*

*“We have never heard these things about our daughter before. Are you sure you have the right kid (jokingly)?”*

*“I appreciate the communication. This hasn’t always been the case in the past with other facilities and it made both myself and the child feel welcomed. Thank you.”*

*“To say my daughter can be difficult is an understatement. Thank you for giving her a chance and not giving up on her.”*

*“I don’t know where I would be without the Ranch. The Ranch took me out of a really bad situation. Helped me mature, and gave me a safe place to be. What you do does matter. You empower young kids to make the right decisions.”*

-former Ranch resident



Ranch gardens give children the opportunity to see a plant grow from a seed to deliciousness on their plates, some for the first time!

## Great River Energy grant purchases gardening and greenhouse supplies

Great River Energy donated \$1,000 to the Ranch to support its Greenhouse/Gardening Program in Bismarck. Grant dollars will be used to purchase seeds, bulbs, potting soil, and other supplies for the greenhouse/gardening program.

Gardening and greenhouse activities are incorporated into the Ranch’s 8-week summer program, allowing children to spend 4-6 hours per week in the gardens and greenhouse. The Ranch also incorporates greenhouse activities into the curriculum at Dakota Memorial School, the Ranch’s on-campus school.

Working in the greenhouse is a relaxing and calming activity for kids at the Ranch—some children ask for time in the greenhouse when they are angry or feeling stressed. In addition to providing a therapeutic outlet, the Garden/Greenhouse program teaches kids skills they can take with them and use for life.

Great River Energy, based in Maple Grove, Minn., provides wholesale electric service to 28 distribution cooperatives, which distribute electricity to approximately 665,000 members across Minnesota.



Servant Teams share their gifts and learn valuable lessons at the Ranch. This Columbus, MO, group spent a week in Minot this summer.

## Missouri students volunteer on campus

A group of students from Trinity Lutheran Church in Columbus, MO, spent a week on the Ranch's Minot campus last summer. They cleaned tack in the horse barn, helped sort Christmas trees and decorations at the thrift store, and worked in the yard. They are a really great group of kids and pitched in to do whatever needed to be done.



Every summer, Servant Teams from congregations across the United States, come to the Ranch to give back, and to learn about discipleship, friendship, and service. For more information about how you can organize a Servant Team event in 2018, contact Chaplain Rick Jones, 1-800-593-3098.

## Ranch kids show compassion

In September, Dan Bezzant made a social media plea to the children in his Idaho community to stop bullying his son, Jackson, for the way he looks and speaks. Jackson has Treacher Collins, a medical condition that affects bone and tissue development in the face. He is also hard of hearing.



Ranch kids show their compassion by reaching out to boy who was bullied.

When Mr. Kuebler shared Jackson's story in social studies class, the students asked if they could show their support by making cards for Jackson.

It was evident by their words they understood Jackson's pain, and that many had experienced bullying themselves.

One boy wrote, "I too have experienced bullying. My parents always told me to pray for those who are mean to you because they don't know any better. Remember to always keep your head up and be proud of who you are. God bless."

Another child wrote, "You are perfect just the way you are. Don't let people tell you otherwise."

The kids at the Ranch have their own struggles, but they are compassionate, kind, and amazing!

## Generosity by Signal CRS donates \$4,000

Ranch friends and family stepped up in a big way when Generosity by Signal CRS, a group of Minot CRS realtors, held a social media contest last summer.

Generosity by Signal chose several local charities to participate in the contest. When they sold their 40th house, they gave a total of \$8,000 to the top three vote-getters. They created a video for each charity, posted the videos on Facebook, and let the voters decide. Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch won the first prize of \$4,000 for getting the most votes!



Generosity by Signal CRS presented a \$4,000 check to the Ranch, after the Ranch won their facebook voting contest. From left: Morgan Bosch, Andrea Savelkoul, Alecia Berg, & Kerri Zablotney.

## Magic Day of Giving benefits the Ranch

Thanks to the Minot Magic Day of Giving, several community volunteers lent their talents to the Ranch in September. Johnson Eyecare & Eyewear volunteers folded and stacked honey boxes; and Cognizant volunteers boxed honey, worked in the school, and helped at the thrift store.

Magic Day of Giving is the largest volunteer coordinated community service event in the history of Minot! Launched in 2014, the first Magic Day of



Volunteers from Cognizant (top) and Johnson Eyecare & Eyewear (bottom) volunteered at the Ranch on Minot's Magic Day of Giving.

Giving took place on Friday, September 19, with 840 volunteers who collectively gave back 2,000 hours of service to the community!

The event has grown each year, and in 2017, more than 3,000 volunteers participated in this community day of giving.



Ranch kids learn the value of giving through community volunteer opportunities they participate in throughout the year.

## Kindness in action

Ranch kids and staff worked and sang as they put together boxes of food items to feed the hungry. By packing Orphan Grain Train Mercy Meals, our kids had an opportunity to show someone else the compassion and care they receive here at the Ranch.

## Enbridge volunteers work in the horse barn

Fifteen Enbridge employees spent the day painting and repairing the Glen Ista Arena on the Ranch's Minot campus. The arena, home to the Ranch's Horse Program, needs constant upkeep to stay clean and beautiful for the kids and horses.



The Ranch is blessed by volunteers at all three campuses who take time out of their busy schedules to help our facilities crews keep things looking great.

# SummerFest 2017

The Second Annual SummerFest Event on the Ranch's Bismarck campus was a resounding success!

Kids and staff invited their families to join us for this great summer event. We invited folks from the neighborhood and we all celebrated summer together.

The set-up was absolutely perfect, with lots of food, tents, and activities. The highlight for kids was getting to dunk their favorite Ranch staff in the Dunk Tank!



Cain, a former student, along with his family, stay connected with their Ranch family. They came to Summerfest, and Cain manned one of the prize booths.



Residential Supervisor, Taylor Anderson, was dunked 25 times!



One of our youngest volunteers, Jessie Vetter, helped her mom at the face painting station.



For the second time in a year, Vice President Jim Vetter was the favorite Dunk Tank target.



Nikki Lambert, Nurse, and Joy Ryan, President/CEO, checked people in at the registration tent to make sure everyone received their game and food tickets.



Kids and their families shared lots of laughs as they picked out their "costumes" for the Photo Booth. Ranch Foundation staff, pictured here, showed them how it's done!



## Charissa Makes Honor Roll for the First Time

Charissa is a bright kid, but because she missed so much school, she was failing nearly all of her classes.

She missed nearly three months of school the year before she came to DMS. Because she was bullied and suffered from social anxiety, she pretended to be sick and stayed home whenever she could get away with it.

Now at DMS, Charissa is excelling in her classes and is on the Honor Roll. "I never thought I would be on the Honor Roll, and I had a 4.0 GPA last year!" she said.

Charissa is super proud of herself. She hangs her Honor Roll certificates on the wall in her room, and when giving a recent tour of her cottage, they were the first things she pointed out to the visitors.

Charissa attributes her success to the things she has learned at the Ranch, and to her teachers.

"At the Ranch, I have learned social skills that have helped me develop a more open mind towards others, instead of automatically assuming everyone is out to hurt me," Charissa said. "And, I love all of my teachers. They are there to help me learn, and to help me accept myself."

Charissa's success at DMS has broadened her vision for the future.

"I didn't think I was smart enough to go to college," she said. "Now I know I can."

*We take great care to guard the privacy of our children. Pictures and identifying information are only used with the permission of the children themselves and the written permission of their guardians.*



At the Ranch, Charissa has learned she is capable of much more than she ever thought possible. She is shown here with DMS Minot Principal, Tina Degree.



DMS English teacher, Mr. Miller, brings books to life by adding related activities to the curriculum. After reading "To Build a Fire," by Jack London, and "Snowbound," by John Greenleaf Whittier, Miller guided the kids in creating their own Wickiup shelter, a shelter made using forest debris.

## Transforming Spaces for our Kids

### Home Builders Association of Fargo-Moorhead Remodels Fargo Youth Home Basement

By: Peri Lapp, Communication Intern

Picture a basement. Dark, outdated, and mostly gray. That is how the Fargo Youth Home basement felt to the kids who lived there. Tom Kopp, Fargo Youth Home Treatment Manager, said the basement was always clean and safe, but not very homey.

#### Where to start?

The Home Builders Association of Fargo-Moorhead adopted the Fargo Youth Home after meeting with Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch President/CEO, Joy Ryan, and touring the facility with Kopp. Their team of member volunteers and designers came up with a plan to create an environment where kids would want to spend time. It has been a collaborative effort between the HBA of F-M, its Remodelers Council and its charity, Home Builders Care of F-M Foundation. The HBA of F-M is a non-profit trade association of over 900 members that has been in existence since 1956.

#### The Transformation

HBA of F-M volunteers, assisted by association staff, rounded up members to donate time and materials, and then the builders and remodelers arrived.

“They replaced the florescent lighting with recessed lighting,” said Kopp. “They also put in all new trim, foot boards, wood paneling, and carpet.”

The lighting made a huge difference in the hominess of the space—but local builders and remodelers didn’t stop there. They also added a variety of bright and colorful paintings to add personality and character to an outdated space.

The paintings were created by Sydney Ulrich, an art student from Minnesota State University Moorhead. Ulrich painted six pieces with different patterns and colors. Each color represents the work we do at the Ranch.

- Yellow – Christ Centered

We create a Christ-Centered environment where we give meaning, hope, and purpose to

at-risk children and their families.

- Blue – Dignity

We treat all people with dignity.

- Red – Respect

We respect all voices, cultures, and perspectives.

- Purple – Holistic

We provide comprehensive therapeutic and educational services.

- Orange – Stewardship

We practice good stewardship to provide a financial return sufficient for present and future needs.

- Green – Continuous Improvement

We reach beyond the status quo through our inherent commitment to quality and continued improvement.

#### Ranch Kids Leave their Mark

Kopp wanted the kids to leave a little piece of themselves at the Ranch when they moved on. So, Ulrich created two giant murals made up of puzzle pieces to create



Giant murals give Ranch kids opportunity to leave their mark on the Fargo Youth Home when they move on.

the words, Hope and Believe—central themes of the children’s treatment. The puzzle pieces are blank now, but each child at the Youth Home will paint a puzzle piece—leaving their mark on the Youth Home. Maybe someday they will come back with their own families—to show them the place that helped them succeed, and point out their puzzle piece.

### The Kid’s Reaction

The kids were the whole reason for the remodel. Kopp strives to make the Fargo Youth Home into a comfortable place the kids can call home, even if they are only there for a short while. He made sure everyone working on the project stayed focused on the kids. “The kids are the whole reason for the remodel,” Kopp said.

But, change is sometimes difficult, so he did worry about how the kids would react. He needn’t have worried.

“A lot of the kids were happy with how it looked,” Kopp said. “I don’t hear kids say, ‘I don’t want to go down there,’ anymore.”

The once dreary room is now a bright space with personality. One resident, D., said, “The colors have a



The first step in the Youth Home remodel was to transform the game room into a comfy place for kids to relax and commune.



homey feeling. Before, kids only wanted to go down there because there was another TV, but now it is a place where we can get alone time and enjoy the space.”

“This is a space for the kids,” Kopp said, as he pointed out the murals, his favorite part of the basement remodel. Over time, the murals will be decorated by the kids which will make it not only FOR the kids, but BY the kids.

### What’s Next?

The HBA of F-M’s adoption of the Fargo Youth Home continues, with a kitchen remodel in the planning stages. They have also contributed in other ways. Last Christmas, they held a toiletry drive and members

collected more than 2,500 toiletry items for Ranch residents. In addition to the toiletry drive, they had a giving tree, and purchased gifts for all residents of the Fargo Youth Home and the Fargo Residential Treatment Center.

The staff at the Fargo Youth Home have always created a homey environment for the kids—through the love, limits, listening, and support they give the kids every day. Now, the space is being transformed to match the healthy environment we provide. And, room-by-room, the HBA of F-M is turning the Fargo Youth Home from a house into a home.



Rev. William and Gail Simmons, St. Louis, MO, are long-time Ranch donors

## Connecting Children to Faith

“The fact that the Ranch weds spiritual life and healing is what gets me to North Dakota in December when it’s 18 below,” says Rev. William Simmons (Pastor Bill).

Pastor Bill, a member of the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation board of directors, comes to Ranch board meetings from St. Louis, MO—where he enjoys a much warmer climate, serves as the administrative pastor at Christ Memorial Lutheran Church, and enjoys family time with his wife, Gail, their four children, and four grandchildren.

As a board member, Pastor Bill is committed to ensuring that the expertise of our therapists, psychiatrist, psychologists, youth care workers, nurses, and occupational therapists, remains linked to a strong foundation in the Christian faith.

### Rev. William & Gail Simmons

“What compels me to serve,” he says, “is an appreciation for how the Ranch is there for kids who come from broken and difficult family situations. We can teach skills, but it is the change of heart that ultimately leads to the healing our kids need. The Ranch connects children to faith, and to a relationship with Jesus that provides the change of heart that moves and motivates all the other skills—so they are able to heal and be made whole again.”

In addition to Pastor Bill’s contribution as a board member, he and Gail have long supported the Ranch financially. They learned of the ministry through the Ranch’s connection to the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod as a Recognized Service Organization.

Gail, a nurse by vocation, volunteers at church in various capacities and works part-time for a health care delivery company. “Her real delight and calling,” Pastor Bill said, “is being available for our children when they need her to take care of our grandchildren. That is where her heart is.”

Gail’s heart for family, combined with Pastor Bill’s passion for the ministry’s work and business, is what has motivated them to support the Ranch financially for many years.

Pastor Bill also shares the Ranch mission and stories with the mission committee at Christ Memorial, and the church contributed thousands of

dollars to the Ranch's Hope in the Heartland Campaign—a campaign to support the building of the Fargo campus. He played a key board role in the successful completion of the Hope in the Heartland campaign in 2016.

Through the campaign, and his work at Christ Memorial, Pastor Bill has learned to appreciate the significance of every gift.

“The small and regular gifts given are equally as significant as the larger gift. It is not the size of the gift, but the heart and compassion behind the gift that commends it to be worthy in God's sight. Thankfully, God provides both types of gifts—the small and the large—and the combination of these are more than sufficient.”

The Simmons lived in the “north country” for a time in the late 70s—when Bill did his vicarage at a church in Fergus Falls, MN. While they chose to move back to St. Louis, in part to avoid the cold winters, they have a special tie to the area and feel blessed to be supporting the work of the Ranch.

“It is an honor to serve on the Foundation board,” Pastor Bill said, “and I look forward to new and increasing ways to steward the gifts so generously donated [to the Ranch] by our many donors.”

## Many Ways to Give

Thanks to gifts from our generous donors, the Ranch is able to help the most troubled, complicated, and amazing kids by providing best-in-class psychiatric therapy and trauma-informed care.

If you would like to provide hope and healing for a child at the Ranch, you can choose from a number of ways to give.

### Memorials and Honorariums

When you make a donation in memory or in honor of a loved one, they will live on through programs that provide much-needed care for the hurting children who come to the Ranch. You can make your donation in one of the following ways:

Online at [DakotaRanch.org](http://DakotaRanch.org): Select Memorial/Honorarium when completing the donation form.

Phone: Call 1-800-344-0957.

### Gift in Your Will

Your stewardship impacts your ability to serve God's kingdom; it also affects the legacy you leave. Our Legacy Giving website will help you become a better steward so you can provide for your loved ones and the ministries you believe in—ministries like Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. To maximize your philanthropic goals, visit our legacy giving website at [DakotaRanch.org/legacy](http://DakotaRanch.org/legacy).

### Tree of Life

You can honor or remember a loved one with a gift to:

Tree of Life in Minot (supports Dakota Memorial School, Minot)

Tree of Life in Fargo (supports the Fargo Residential Center)

Tree of Life in Bismarck (supports services provided at the Bismarck campus)

For a Tree of Life order form, go to [DakotaRanch.org](http://DakotaRanch.org) and choose “Many Ways to Give” from the dropdown menu. Or call 1-800-344-0957—we can send you an order form or take your information over the phone.

### Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

If you are a Thrivent Financial member, you may have Thrivent Choice Dollars® available to direct to your favorite enrolled charity. Directing Choice Dollars® to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch helps us teach Christian values to the amazing children at the Ranch—values that aid in their healing, provide a foundation of hope, and help them be successful in their treatment. At the Ranch, we use all Thrivent Choice® funding to support our Spiritual Life Program.

Go to the Thrivent Choice website, login, and choose Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. To direct Choice Dollars® over the phone, call 1-800-847-4836 and say “Thrivent Choice” after the prompt.

# Friends of the Ranch

## Double Blessings:

Stock Transfer Blesses Ranch Kids as well as Donors



Ron and Shirley Hankel's faith inspires them to financially support the Ranch—where they are helping to share Christ's love and forgiveness with kids at the Ranch.

### Ron & Shirley Hankel

motivation for giving is always the kids, Ron said in addition to receiving a tax deduction for the donation, transferring shares allows them to avoid paying capital gains taxes on the appreciated stock.

Ron and Shirley agree that they give because they have been blessed.

"I realize what God has given to us," Ron said. "You can share it, or you can hoard it. We share it because everything we have has come from God. I believe we are all to share our blessings with others."

Ron and Shirley were both married before, with families of their own. In 1998, Ron's spouse passed away, and in 1999, Shirley lost her husband. They both lived in LaMoure, ND, and knew of each other, but neither of them were interested in dating for several years after their spouses' deaths.

Eventually, they started spending time together, and in 2004, they were married.

At that time, Shirley joined Ron's church, Trinity Lutheran Church, an LCMS congregation in LaMoure, ND. It was there, and through Ron, that Shirley learned about the Ranch. Church has always been an important part

Ron Hankel learned about Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch when he was in high school in the early 1950's. The youth director at his church was a former youth care worker at the Ranch. He talked about the kids being served through this brand-new ministry of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS), which was then called Dakota Boys Ranch. They also prayed for boys at the Ranch during their Bible studies and youth group activities.

As a member of an LCMS congregation, Ron learned more about the Ranch throughout the years, and in 1987, he made his first cash gift to the Fargo Youth Home. Since then, Ron has supported the kids at the Ranch in a variety of ways.

Ron and his wife, Shirley's, most recent gift was a transfer of appreciated stocks to the Ranch. While their

of Ron and Shirley's lives.

Shirley feels very blessed to have grown up in a loving, church-going family. "I don't know what people do without faith, without believing in God," she said. "He is the one who helps us and sees us through. He strengthens us daily. When you think about people and children not believing in God, and trusting Him with their lives, it's very sad to me."

Through their gifts to the Ranch Spiritual Life Program, Ron and Shirley help introduce children—who don't have the benefit of that same Christian background—to Christ's love and forgiveness.

"Kids here get a taste of what's right," Ron said. "Faith is a big part of healing for a lot of the kids at the Ranch."

Because faith is such an important part of their lives, much of their recent gift went to support the

Ranch's Spiritual Life Program.

Another portion of their gift helped plant a row of privacy trees on the Fargo campus, as well as purchase a 3-D printer to enhance S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) curriculum for Dakota Memorial School, the Ranch's on-campus school. The remainder will be used to provide mirrors for the Wellness Room, which will help "enlarge" the space for children who are claustrophobic due to past trauma.

Ron and Shirley live a very full and busy life. They have a large yard to take care of, and both really enjoy taking care of their flowers. They attend a weekly Bible Study in addition to going to church on Sunday, and they have lots of family to visit (Ron has four children and Shirley has three. They each have eight grandchildren, and Ron will

soon have three great grandchildren).

They also love to travel and have seen the world through many trips, cruises, and tours. One of their trip highlights was seeing the church in Germany where Luther nailed the 95 theses on the door.

At the end of each trip, Ron and Shirley come back to North Dakota feeling very blessed by their families, their home, their community, and their God. They encourage others to share their blessings, and they also encourage others to learn more about the Ranch.

"If people are curious about the Ranch, they should visit," Ron said. "When we came last year for the Open House in Fargo, we were amazed at how everything is set up. We were able to see how the Ranch helps children who are struggling, how the Ranch gives children an opportunity to have a better life.

## Giving appreciated stock you've held for more than a year is an alternative to giving cash.

Gifts of appreciated stock can benefit the giver in many ways:

1. You will avoid capital gains taxes on the increase in value over time.
2. If you have owned the stock for a year or more, and you itemize deductions, you can take a charitable deduction for the full fair-market value of the stock at the time of the gift.
3. You will have the satisfaction of knowing your money is invested in a cause important to you.

For more information about how you can transfer appreciated stock to the Ranch, contact us at 1-800-344-0957.

## Immeasurably More ....



**By Linda Medhus, Senior Development Officer**

**Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch**

*Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us. (Ephesians 3:20)*

During this season of gratitude and blessings, and throughout the entire year, we are ever thankful of the faithful support received from you, our friends. Thank you for your faithful stewardship, which comes as an immeasurable blessing to the

mission of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

It's remarkable to us that most of you will never visit one of our campuses, you will not personally meet our boys and girls, yet you extend such love and concern for our Ranch kids. You believe in them, you care about them, you walk with them in spirit; and most importantly, you have faith in what God can do in their lives.

Throughout the years, your support combined with the healing ministry of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, has enabled countless children to experience healing and hope, as they work to reach their full potential and

understand who they are in Christ. Thank you for helping us accomplish this important work in their lives.

We count your friendship as a great privilege, as we are very aware that we simply could not do what we do to help children in need without the prayers and generosity of friends like you. Thank you for joining together for the cause of children—boys and girls who, in many ways, are powerless to help themselves.

And thank you for blessing us “immeasurably more” as we carry out the mission of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch!

Linda Medhus is just one of the caring professionals who works one-by-one with Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch donors—figuring out how they can make an impact on the world in a way that best suits their values and wishes. If you have any questions about the Ranch, feel free to contact any one of the people listed below at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:info@DakotaRanch.org).



**Lisa Cole**  
Development Officer



**Laurie Dannewitz**  
Development Officer



**Ron Lundeen**  
Senior Development Officer



**Amanda Mosser**  
Corporate & Foundation  
Development Officer



**Alex Ohman**  
Development Officer



**Kris Ryan**  
Mission Advancement Officer



**Jim Vetter**  
Vice President/Development Officer



**Janet Zinke**  
Senior Development Officer





## Children find HOPE through Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch's focus on FAITH

### Spiritual nurturing is a key part of the Ranch's work to help kids overcome their troubles.

God is the hero at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch!

We allow Him to work through us to surround our children in Christ's unconditional love. Our Spiritual Life Program addresses the ministry needs of children, youth and staff. All children are encouraged to participate in Chapel, Christian education, and Spiritual Life groups, as well as to meet individually with an on-campus Chaplain or Spiritual Life Specialist.

While the Ranch's Spiritual Life program is rooted in Lutheranism, we promote principles of respect, acceptance, and character building that are common to all faiths. The Ranch collaborates closely with hundreds of churches across the nation in various ways, including service projects and congregational awareness and engagement activities. Each year, Servant Teams from across the U.S. volunteer their time and skills to help us advance our mission.

Our Spiritual Life Program has always been at the heart of our services to children. The Christian values children learn at the Ranch aid in their healing, provide a foundation of hope, and help them to be successful in their treatment. Those lessons often stay with them through their entire lives, helping to positively shape and influence their future.

### Cost to provide Spiritual Life Program: \$260,500/year

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch's Spiritual Life Program is funded completely through the generous support of individuals, churches, and foundations. The annual cost includes:

- A Spiritual assessment upon each child's arrival at the Ranch.
- A Bible and other Christian resources to introduce children to Jesus and help them grow in their faith.
- Regular chapel services for children and employees, with worship and teaching from God's Word.
- Weekly Spiritual Life groups.
- A Christian environment—with therapists, counselors, teachers, and youth care workers able to bring faith into the discussion.
- Vacation Bible School within summer programming.
- Ongoing Spiritual mentoring by our Chaplain and Spiritual Life Specialists.
- A daily devotion for Ranch employees, written by our Chaplain.
- Spiritual mentoring and guidance for employees interested in exploring their faith.

The Spiritual Life Program at the Ranch is voluntary, meaning children are not required to attend, but nearly 100 percent choose to participate in our ministry of hope and healing.

"I was inspired by you guys to go to college for a pastoral degree, [and someday return to the Ranch]. God called me to be a pastor so I can help kids and adults in need. I want to help them learn who God is, so their faith can grow stronger."

-Former resident

"At the Ranch, I learned patience, respect, integrity, perseverance, religion, love and kindness. I can tell you that my life would not be the same if I had never set foot at the Ranch. I am not, and will never again be, a victim!"

-Former resident



Pastor Rick Jones shows Christ's love to the children at the Ranch through his compassion, gentleness, and listening.



The Ranch goes all out to celebrate Christ's birthday. This is the hallway that connects to the cottages on our Bismarck campus.

*"I was a boy at the Ranch from 1964 to 1969. I learned a lot there! I drove through the Minot Ranch last week, and the trees I planted along the road are now about 50 feet high. I will always have fond memories of the Ranch."*

—former Ranch resident

*"You shaped me in ways I can't yet begin to even imagine."*

—former Ranch resident

*"I was very impressed with the Ranch and so was my commander. Later that day, I was in a meeting with every higher-up in my unit and the commander went on for about five minutes with how great of an organization the Ranch is."*

—Sergeant Hawkins,  
Minot Air Force Base

*"We are very pleased with the kindness and care and consistency of the staff at [Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch]. We can't believe how well [our son] is adjusting. We know that there will be tough moments ahead but he is off to a great start."*

—mother of resident

*"Thank you for everything you've done for me and will do for kids in the future. I truly respect you. All of you. I may not know what my future holds, but thanks to y'all, I know I'm going places."*

—former Ranch resident



# Share the Love

## with the kids at

# Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

## Giving Hearts Day • Thursday, February 8, 2018

### GivingHeartsDay.org

Your gifts to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch on Giving Hearts Day will support trauma-informed care for children at the Ranch. Your online gift of \$10 or more, made at [givingheartsday.org](http://givingheartsday.org) on Feb. 9, will give hope and healing to a child. Thanks to Dakota Medical Foundation and other generous donors, matching funds will maximize the impact of your gift.

Giving Hearts Day is so important for our kids in care. Great advances in brain development and trauma-informed treatment research are happening daily. The support given through Giving Hearts Day allows us to keep the care we deliver to kids at the forefront of healing.

At the Ranch, we help the most troubled, complicated, and amazing kids by providing best-in-class psychiatric therapy and trauma-informed care where we look children in the eye, walk with them, and help them become their best selves in the world and in Christ. In short, we help these kids find and become who they truly are.

Your gifts will help troubled youth regain a sense of hope, possibility, and wholeness.

--Joy Ryan, President/CEO  
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch



6301 19th Ave. N.W., P.O. Box 5007 Minot, ND 58702

[www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org) 701-839-7888

The mission of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.

# Students Create Colorful Self-portraits



Students in Ms. Wilhelm’s art class, Dakota Memorial School-Fargo, analyzed the components of self-image concerning their abilities, goals, personalities, beliefs, and interests—and created colorful self-portraits on brown paper bags.

Before creating their portraits, the students studied how lines and color can show emotion.

**Red** = Passion, love, anger, and intensity

**Orange** = Encouragement and success

**Yellow** = Happy and warm

**Green** = Nature, environment, envy, and jealousy

**Blue** = Trustworthy and calm

**Purple** = Royal and faith

**Straight lines** = Aggressive and calm

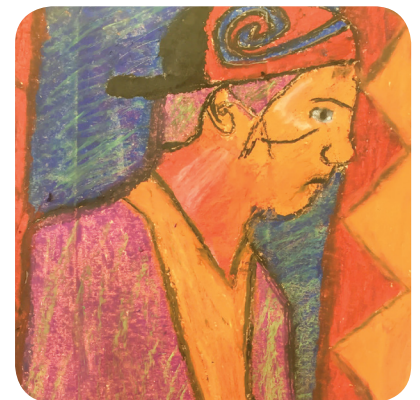
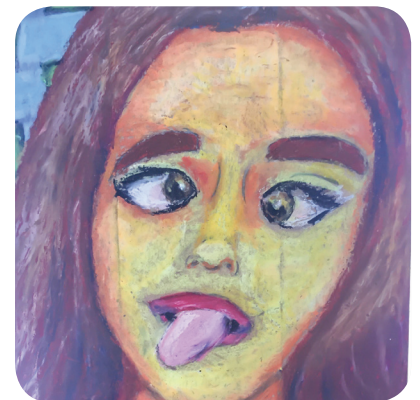
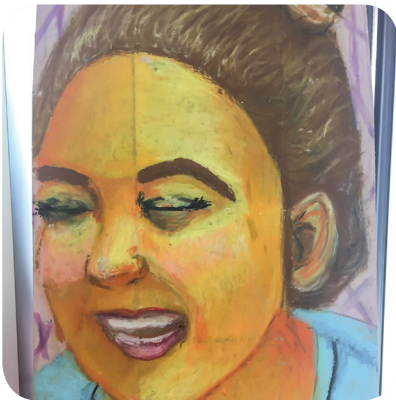
**Wavy lines** = Happy and silly

**Darker lines** = Aggressive, strong, and masculine

**Thin light lines** = Feminine and shy

Students selected lines in their backgrounds to describe their emotions. Skin tone/color was chosen for how it represented their emotions.

The paper bag symbolized their internal selves—the students placed 10 positive affirmations about themselves inside their bags.



Art helps Ranch children explore their emotions.

There's no better way  
to give and receive  
than to make a gift  
that helps others at  
this time of year.



As we unwrap gifts and wrap up another year, this is the time when we think most of others. The familiar saying reminds us it is “better to give than to receive.” As the year winds to a close, take time to make sure you have given to yourself by giving to others.

The remaining weeks of the year give you a final opportunity to balance your income and giving for the tax year. When you give a gift to a qualified nonprofit organization, you receive an income tax deduction. Even if your income is less this year than it was last year, you may still want to offset it with a tax deductible contribution.

Your gift can go a long way toward helping others. This holiday season, take a moment and consider the gifts you would like to make, then make them happen. Call us if we can be of help to you in your giving.



1-800-344-0957  
[www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)

## Foundation and Corporate Grants

**Rupert Dunklau Foundation**  
\$25,750, Spiritual Life Program

**Great River Energy**  
\$1,000, Greenhouse/Gardening Program, Bismarck

**McCook Community Foundation Fund (Kathryn A. Wall Endowment)**  
\$2,251, General Operating

**Minot Community Endowment Fund**  
\$5,000, Balanced learning equipment for Dakota Memorial School, Minot

**Northwest Association of Horticulture (NOAH)**  
\$500, Minot Greenhouse Program

**Trinity Lutheran Church Foundation**  
\$5,000, Spiritual Life Program, Fargo

**Verendrye Electric Operation Round Up**  
\$2,500; Wildlife Club, Minot

*“Your work changes lives and don’t doubt it for a minute. I also found faith at the Ranch and learned that the Lord is always with me.”*

-former Ranch resident

## Boards of Directors

**Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch**  
Joy K. Ryan,  
President/CEO  
Gene D. Kaseman,  
CEO Emeritus, retired  
Larry D. Knutson,  
President Emeritus, retired

### **Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Program Board of Directors**

Robert Drees, Chair  
Grand Forks, ND  
Maxine Beckwith, Vice Chair  
Hazen, ND  
Dr. Brent A. Askvig, PhD,  
Secretary  
Minot, ND  
Wayne Ulven, Treasurer  
Walcott, ND  
Michelle Anderson  
Beulah, ND  
Robert W. Briggs  
Minot, ND  
Wendy Cooper  
Bismarck, ND  
Rev. Derek Harkins  
Minot, ND  
Rev. Paul Krueger  
Minot, ND  
Gerald Leeseberg, Honorary  
Member  
Flower Mound, TX  
Dr. George O’Neill, PhD  
Fargo, ND  
Dr. Wayne Sanstead, PhD  
Bismarck, ND  
Dick Shorma  
Wahpeton, ND  
Amanda Thomas, Ex-officio  
West Fargo, ND

### **Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation Board of Directors**

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Brent Mattson, Vice Chair  
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Fargo, ND  
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Minot, ND  
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Jerry Hauff  
Bismarck, ND  
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Member  
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Daniel Olson  
Fargo, ND  
Rev. William T. Simmons  
St. Louis, MO

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Fargo, ND  
Dr. Donald Burke, Secretary/  
Treasurer  
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Larry Bellew  
Minot, ND  
Robert Drees, Ex-officio  
Grand Forks, ND  
Amanda Thomas, Ex-officio  
West Fargo, ND  
Dr. Rebecca Ulven, PhD  
Walcott, ND

# Memorials/Honorariums

Unless otherwise designated, donations you give in memory or in honor of your loved ones will be used to help build, maintain, and upkeep chapel facilities on all Ranch campuses. Your gift to the Ranch will live on through the children at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, by helping us teach them about Jesus' unending love. For more information about making memorial and honorarium gifts to the Ranch, contact Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch at 1-800-344-0957 or info@DakotaRanch.org.

## Memorials

July 1, 2017 - October 31, 2017

AASAND, FRANCES

Frank & Linda McCann

ALBRECHT, FLORENCE

Mary Kenna

Bill & Irene Webster

ANDERSON, DONALD

Bruce & Pam Smith

ANDERSON, GROVENE

Vivian Waltman

ANDERSON, LESTER

Jennene A. Kammerzell

ANDERSON, RENAE

Don & Arlene Schumacher

ANDERSON, ROBERT

Anita Petersen

ASKIM, IRENE

Ernest & Carol Olson

AVENSON, MERLE

Robert Becker

BARTSCH, MELODY

Adeline Rorvig

BAULING, MARGARET

Gerald & Shirley Peterson

BECK, WALLY

Martin & Shirley Hannemann

BETHELL, GEORGE

LaMae Pettit

BETTY BLOOM

Linda Hill

BLUEGE, CATHARINE

Shawn Miller

BOKN, DUANE

Jerome Bokn

BORNEMANN, BURTON

Merle Henke

Marian Kitzmann

Wes & Marlys Kunz

Delores Maier

Evelyn Schwagler

Gene & Marlene Toepke

BOSS, MEGAN

LaMae Pettit

BRANDENBURG, MARLENE

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

Mrs. Marvin Siedschlag

BRISTOW, SHIRLEY

Patricia Brenden

BROWN, ELAINE

George & Elernor Krueger

BRUELLEMAN, ROGER

Lloyd & Karen Koestler

BUCHHOLZ, ZANE

Chris & Jean Hansen

BUCKMAN, CAROLINE

Austin Buckman

BUELIGEN, DUANE

Patrick Doll

Rose Marie Henke

Gene & Marlene Toepke

BUELIGEN, ROGER

Martha Becker

Patrick Doll

Rose Marie Henke

Keith & Roberta Hoesel

Wilbert & Delores Kunz

Delores Maier

BULTMAN, MILDRED "MILLIE"

Marlene Eilts

Don & Ratchani Trageser

BURTMAN, DAVID

Merle & Patricia Nylander

CARSTENS, ALLEN

Ethel Mae Kopischke

CLAEGER, TINA

Helen M. Foss-Bohm

CLAUSEN, MARY HELEN

Antone & Opaldine Clausen

CLIKEMAN, DICK

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Flechsig

CONITZ, EVELYN

Martha Becker

Joel & Donna Johnson

Rowan Rosendahl

Gene & Marlene Toepke

DANNEWITZ, VIVIAN

Betty Born

DENDINGER, DONALD

Fred & Judith Otten

DETHLEFSEN, JOE

Bruce & Pam Smith

DINGER, ELLYN

Patricia Bahr

DIVINE, CAROL

Marga Breckenfelder

DOUGLAS, MARJORIE

Linda Hansen

DUNCAN, STEVE

Fred & Judith Otten

DURAY, LEONARD

Ethel Mae Kopischke

ERICKSON, SHIRLEY

Tracy & Carolyn Steen

FATLAND, JAN

Dean Fatland

FATLAND, SYLVIA

Dean Fatland

FEENEY, SHIRLEY

Doris M. Oeder

FIECHTNER, ARLAN

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

Rose Marie Henke

FISCHER, FRANK W.

Douglas & Julia Fischer

FLEMMER, WILBERT

Lorina Zuern

FREY JR, CARL H.

Bruce & Pam Smith

FRIEDERICHSEN, ROBERT

LaMae Pettit

FRANZEN, JOHNNIE

LaMae Pettit

FUGERE, CHASE

Roger & Lisa Cole

FUHLBRIGGE, REV KARL

George & Eleanor Krueger

GATHMAN, CATHERINE

Marilyn J. Baumann

# Memorials/Honorariums

GILBERT, RICHARD

Ethel Mae Kopischke

GLYNN, ROSE EMMA

Jane & Richard McCabe

GOERKE SR., REINHART

Don & Arlene Schumacher

GORDER, WILLIAM

Frank & Linda McCann

HAGEN, ROGER

Henry & Joyce Trangsrud

HALL, RUTH

Jerroll Erickson

Argy & Rochelle Nelson

HALONE, KENNETH

Diane Burger

John & Joan Hefter

HAM, JAMES

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

HANSON, RENIL

Mary Becker

HAYER, HAROLD

Delsie Foreman

HEAGLE, GREGORY

Delores Maier

HENKE, ERVIN

Patrick Doll

Wes & Marlys Kunz

Marvin & Laverne Schulz

HEUER, GORDON

Curtis & Elaine Bening

HIEBER, CHARLES RAMONE

Marilyn Hieber

HILL, CARL

Mary Marquardt

HOEVEN, JACK

Dale & Laurie Dannewitz

HOFFEINS, ARTHUR M.

Julie Hoffeins

HOGANSON, HOWARD

Sherman E. Hoganson

HUETHER, WILLIAM "BILLY"

Bob & Karen Huether

Janice Riebe

HULNE, BETTY

Robert Rostad

ISAAK, DARLENE

Sarah Richau

JACOBS, JULIA

Mr. & Mrs. Fred Vogele

JAEGER, TINA

Helen Bohm

JAHSMANN, REV. ALLAN

Lois Grewe Snyder

JENSON, DYLAN MICHAEL

Patrick Doll

Hilda Jensen

Nancy Stevenson

JOHNSON, WAYNE

Roger & Lisa Cole

JOHNSTUN, NANCY (HOOK)

Juanita Baumgartner

JORDET, MELBORNE "BUD"

Doris M. Oeder

JOST, PATRICIA

Jim and Karen Bonnet

JUNG, MEREDITH

Darleen F. Klemp

KASSULKER, KEN

Rev. Don & Carol Urbach

KASTEN, LORRAINE

Don & Kay Stoterau

KERN, ANNABELLE E.

Anita Petersen

KLEIN, EUGENE

Edith Klein

KLEMM, LEROY

Al & Sue Manson

KLUVERS, EVY

Roy Erickson

KORTH, MYRON

Fred & Judith Otten

KRAFT, ANNA MARIE

Elaine Kunz

Delores Maier

KRAM, JEAN

Lyle & Becky Hangsleben

KREKLAU, VERNA

Merle Henke

KURIO, BEN

Gary Kurio

KVAM, ALICE

Thomas Link

KYLLO, HOWARD

Dick & Myrna Thorsell

LAHREN, ALLAN "BUD"

Barbara Rude

LARSON, FRANK

Dick & Myrna Thorsell

LARSON, IRENE

Marilynn Johnson

LARSON, OWEN

Dr. Wayne & Mary Jane Sanstead

LAUFER, PATRICIA D.

Rev. & Mrs. John L. Schmidt

LECLERC, GERALD "JERRY"

Merle Henke

Doris Jensen

Michael & Delores Kvislen

Ronald LeClerc

Ray & Marlys Long

James & Ruth Mattson

Clarice Mosolf

Dottie Nelson

Jean Peppard

Russell Schumacher

LEHMKUHL, MARY

Muriel M. Juers

LEMP, PAUL

Lorina Zuern

LINDGREN, SCOTT

Natalie Lindgren & Everly

LISA OLSON'S GRANDMA

Joy Ryan

LODAHL, SELMER "SAMMY"

Duane Kurtz

LONGLET, LORNA

Dallas & Carol Grieger

LORENZ, ROBERT

Beverly Berg

LUOMA, IRENE

Gary Bodie

Mary Ann Dallas

MAIER, BEATRICE

Wally & Lucille Fowler

MARINER, MARVY

Rob & Vicki Reiner

MARTENS, MELVIN H.

Gordon & Martha Bivens

Mike & Edith Finck

Shirley H. Freese

Randall & Barbara Gould

Dorothy Greif

Kathleen Hawks

Evan Jackson

Pearl A. Martens

William Martens

Ann Masri

Steve & Karla Roush



John E. Sinn  
Diane & Ron Turner  
Rickey & Patty Vroegh  
Gregory & Charlotte Weaklend  
MATTERN, REUBEN  
Jerroll Erickson  
MCCONNELL, YVONNE  
Dallas & Carol Greiger  
MELQUIST, HELEN  
LaMae Pettit  
MOLL, STANLEY R.  
Fulton County Garden Club  
William & Cathy Glanz  
Ruth Moll  
Jerry & Pamela Nagel  
MOUM, DOROTHY  
Barb Hart  
Greg & Leslie Knudson  
Edward & Patricia Morrow  
Jim & Jenny Richardson  
Lois Sinner  
MUNSTERMAN, RONALD  
Joy Ryan  
NELSON, REV. DUANE  
Don & Evonne Andersen  
NELSON, LOIS  
Robert & Joyce Moore  
NESET, LANCE  
Dale & Laurie Dannewitz  
NERVA, HELEN  
Delores Glessing  
LaMae Pettit  
ODEGARD, YVONNE  
Bruce & Pam Smith  
ODEGARD, RAYMOND  
Linda Hill  
OEN, ALBERT  
Margie Zietlow  
OLSON, BERNICE  
Judith Baumann  
OLSON, MARLIN R.  
Muriel Juers  
OLSON, PAUL WILLIAM  
Roberta Ramberg  
OSTER, MARLENE  
Richard & Lucille Gust  
OSTER, TERESA  
Ella J. Oster  
PANTSARI, HAROLD  
Phyllis Pantsari

PAULSON, EVERETT  
Dick & Myrna Thorsell  
PETERMAN, EVA  
Raymond Thieme  
PUPPE, BONNIE  
Clarice Mosolf  
RADEMACHER, GENE  
Elaine Kunz  
RANDALL, ROGER  
Ethel Mae Kopischke  
RETTMAN, EDWARD  
Don & Arlene Schumacher  
REUTHER, KAREN  
Keith & Roberta Hoesel  
RIEGER, JACK  
Bruce & Pam Smith  
RISTAD, FLORENCE  
David & Sharon Miller  
ROEHM, LORNE  
LaMae Pettit  
RONGLIEN, MAXINE  
Ethel Mae Kopischke  
ROSSOW, REV. E.J.  
Irene Berkley  
RUSTAD, EUNICE  
Allan & Bergliot Turmo  
SCHEVECK, JOHN  
LaMae Pettit  
SCHMIDT, DENNIS  
Elaine Engel  
SCHMITZ, BERNITA  
Muriel M Juers  
SCHOUSEK, NATHANIEL  
Howard & Carole Schmidt  
SCHOUSEK, ZACHARY  
Howard & Carole Schmidt  
SCHRECK, DAN  
Eileen Newkirk  
SCHULZ, GUY  
Adeline I. Rorvig  
SCHULTZ, STEVE  
Rev. Ronald & Deanne Kirsch  
SHUBECK, CAROL SANSTEAD  
Wayne & Mary Jane Sanstead  
SIEDSCHLAG, MARVIN  
Ron & Shirley Hankel  
SIMONITSCH, MARY  
Margaret Crummy  
SITZER, ALLAN DEXTER  
Frank & Linda McCann

SLAVICK, JACKIE  
Marian Kitzmann  
SROZINSKI, GERALD "JERRY"  
Ralph & Clara Fiechtner  
Rose Marie Henke  
STETZ, DAVID  
Linda Thomas  
STRAND, HELEN  
Hank & Jan Albers  
SWANSON, JANE  
Patsy Moerke  
SZEWCZAK, CASEY  
Patricia Szewczak  
TELLMANN, FERN  
Martha Becker  
Millie Bueligen  
Joyce Henke  
Keith & Roberta Hoesel  
Elaine Kunz  
Wilbert & Delores Kunz  
Delores Maier  
Gene & Marlene Toepke  
THIELKE, HELEN  
Anita Petersen  
THURSTON, WAYNE  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Flechsig  
TRAGESER, RUTH "SIS"  
Jean Bertram  
Brown Family Foundation  
Dianne Clary  
Steven & Barbara Collins  
Marlene Eilts  
Ruth Holtkamp  
Peoples Bank & Agency  
James & Jackie Pickner  
Susan K. Zamzow  
TRENDE, BETTY  
Betty Born  
TROWBRIDGE, ROLAND &  
HELEN  
Jim Goodman  
TRUCHAN, WILLIAM  
Jim & Karen Bonnet  
VOGALSANG, GERALD  
Delores Glessing  
WALKER, ED  
Adeline I. Rorvig  
WANGLER, RITA  
Chris & Jean Hansen

# Memorials/Honorariums

WAYNE THURSTON

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Flechsig

WELL, WILLIAM "BILL"

Bruce & Pam Smith

WENDLAND, REV. LELAND

Harold A. & Gladys M. Blume

WESTERGARD, CARL

Don & Ratchani Trageser

WETZLER, WARREN

Wayne & Dolores Boekelheidel

WICKMAN, GERALD

Merle & Ethel Peterson

WITTHOFT, RUTH

Rev. Theo & Caroline Letzring

WOELBING, NORMA

Erika Stonitsch

WUSSOW, NEVA

Bud & Sheila Gerry

ZECHMANN, JANE

Fred & Judith Otten

ZIEBARTH, KENNETH

Patricia Brenden

ZIMMERMAN, DUDLEY

Donna Depute

## Honorariums

July 1, 2017 – Oct. 31, 2017

DELORES GOEBEL'S 90<sup>TH</sup>  
BIRTHDAY

Don & Arlene Schumacher

GOULD, LUCILLE HOLMLY

Susan Vivatson

JONES, RICK

Joyce Milliren

LOESEL, REV. ANDREW &

CAROL'S 50<sup>TH</sup> WEDDING

ANNIVERSARY

George & Eleanor Krueger

NOTEBOOM, TAMMY

Joy Ryan

OTTEN, FRED

Elkhorn Valley Bank and Trust

Employees

RYAN, JOY

Quin Seiler

SCHNELL, MARILYN

Bernice Bernthal

DON SCHUMACHER'S 90<sup>TH</sup>

BIRTHDAY

Sharon Haberkamp

JENNIFER TEIGEN'S BIRTHDAY

Linda Fjellanger

ULVEN, BECKY

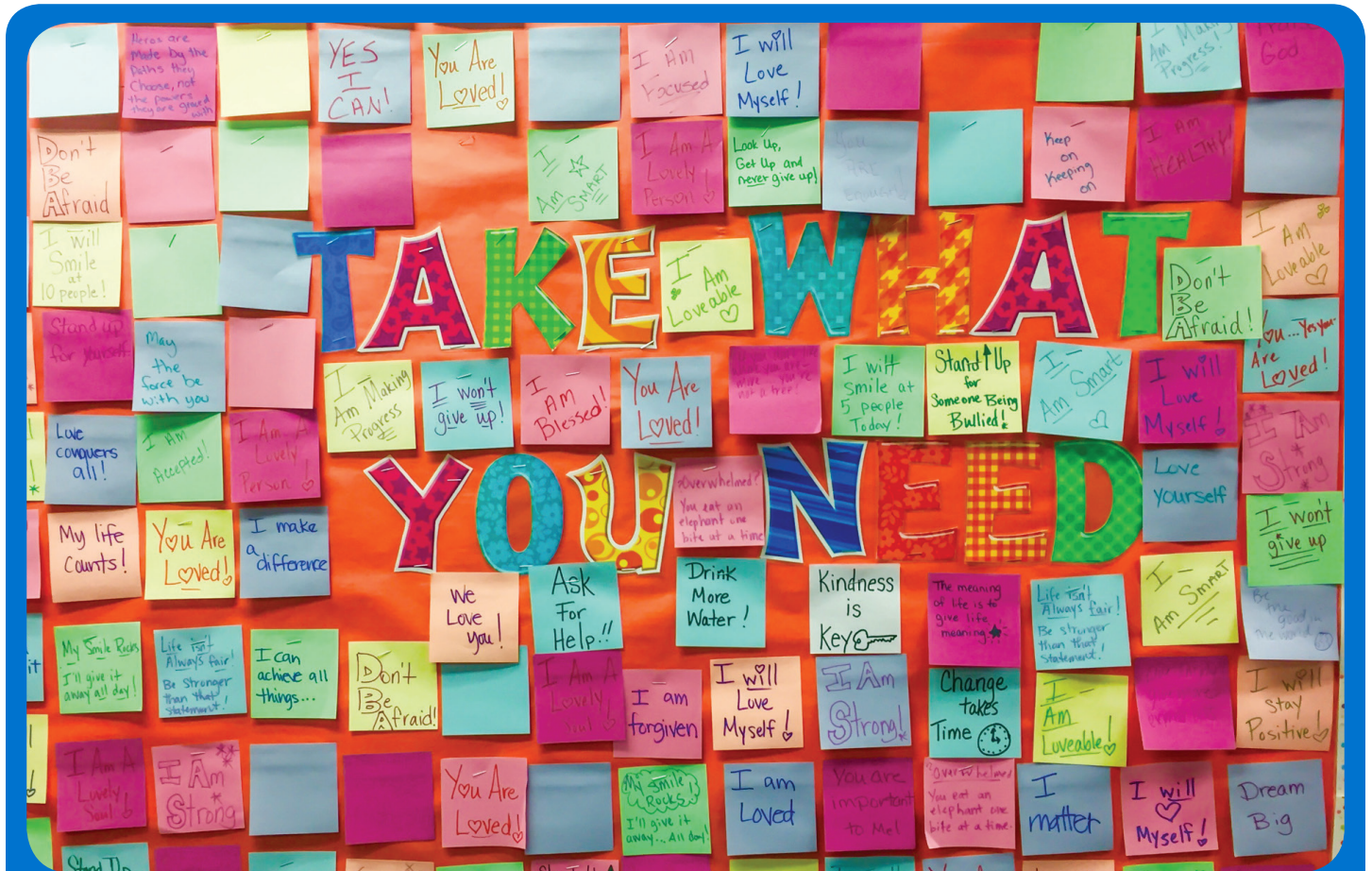
Dorlan Lybeck

ULVEN, WAYNE

Dorlan Lybeck

ZINKE, JANET

Tammy Noteboom



Dakota Memorial School teachers, staff, and students wrote affirmations on sticky notes for an Affirmation bulletin board. If a student needs a little extra support for the day, they are encouraged to take what they need!

## Keeping you in our Prayers



Your prayers are handled with care and compassion by Chaplain Rick Jones and Lara Casey, Donor Relations Specialist—shown here with the prayer book that holds all the prayers sent to us.

When you send us a prayer request, we take it very seriously.

We receive prayer requests every week via email and mail. And, just in case you've ever wondered what we do with those, we thought we'd tell you!

We send every prayer request to our worship leaders, so we can pray for the individual at Chapel Services on all three campuses. In Minot, it goes to Chaplain Rick Jones and Vicar Matt; in Bismarck, Rev. Thomas Marcis; and in Fargo, Spiritual Life Specialist, Jay Schaefer.

We also write your prayer in a special Prayer Book that we keep in the Ranch's Foundation Office in Minot. If you are ever in the area and want to stop by the Foundation office, we'd love to help you find your prayer in our Prayer Book.

If you have a special intention or prayer request, please complete this form and return to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, P.O. Box 5007, Minot, ND 58702-5007. Or contact us at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:info@DakotaRanch.org).

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please pray for

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Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch  
P.O. Box 5007  
Minot, ND 58702-5007

Change Service Requested



“Sunrise of Hope,” painted by a Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch resident.

The mission of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.

[www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)

Main Switchboard: 1-800-593-3098

Foundation: 1-800-344-0957

