Shining Stars

A message from Co-Founder, Steve Smith

“You’re a shining star
No matter who you are
Shining bright to see
What you could truly be”
- Shining Star by Earth, Wind and Fire

In this issue of the SRS newsletter you are going to be reading about women in our programs that are true Shining Stars. We recently had our annual SHINE event fundraiser for St. Raymond’s Society. It was a fun evening and raised a good amount of money. Sonny (Shine) and Cher (U. Money) even made an appearance lip syncing and telling incredibly bad jokes. The team that coordinated the event did an outstanding job and the whole night was amazing. The Shining Stars of the night, like every year, were the women who have made so much progress. We heard several stories of women who have transformed their lives from “what feels like death” to life. We heard about Tami who came to us broke and abused - and by broke I don’t just mean financially. We worked with her to put an abusing spouse in jail so as to not continually hurt her. She didn’t have a job and didn’t have an education. Now just over a year later this woman was accepted to an accelerated nursing program. She went to school 40 hours a week while working 40 hours on the weekend for a year. St. Raymond’s mothers are some of the hardest working people you will ever meet! She recently graduated from nursing school and has a job that pays a wage where she can sustain a life for her and her children. She’s a SHINING STAR! We heard of a woman who has lived with chronic pain. In her efforts to help others, while she was living with us, she became a licensed massage therapist. She is moving out, as well, with a full time job and the confidence to help her live a life she and her child deserve. Another SHINING STAR! The last story of the night was told of a woman who has been at one of our homes for just under a year. The part of her story that captured the hearts and minds of all who heard it was this part of her talk. “Moving into St. Raymond’s house was the turning point in my life. I was given this golden opportunity to become the person God created me to be, and I took full advantage of it. In less than a year’s time I went from a homeless, pregnant, part-time waitress to a breast-feeding mom, a college graduate employed in my field of study with a 401(k), a business owner, and most importantly, I became a baptized Christian”. You, young lady, are a SHINING STAR!!!

This is what your support provides and so much more. Thank you for your generosity! Blessings from St. Raymond’s Society and the women we partner with to make them see the SHINING STARS God intends them to be!

UPDATE: CONGRATS ON YOUR GRADUATION, TAMII!
Columbia Home Makeover: Restored and Renewed.

Columbia is excited to debut its restored residential facility in Columbia, Missouri. This spring the St. Raymond’s Society home “leaped” forward through a city-wide partnership with the For Columbia program, Hockman Interiors and Kliethermes Homes & Remodeling to provide interior and exterior renovations to the location. Over 65 volunteers pitched in to make the dream of a more modern, comfortable and efficient home possible for the mothers and children served on a daily basis over the last two months culminating in a mass service day held on Saturday April 28th, 2018 to add as many final touches as possible. Support from the community involved a number of groups who were inspired and care deeply to make the project successful. Over 7 different churches were assigned to help push through needed painting, furniture removal and replacement, lawn care and other maintenance items needed. Local businesses also came along side to help aid in the renovation. Additionally, a number of college students gave up their weekend to join the ranks of city volunteers who worked in teams to deliver services and volunteer support. We are excited for a renewed residence that will be home to many mothers and children as they press forward on the road to self-sufficiency, hope and love. We thank the City of Columbia for supporting St. Raymond’s Society!
Behind the Scenes: Staff Spotlight!

Rochara Knight is the Program Coordinator for St. Raymond’s Columbia. She received her Bachelor’s degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with an emphasis in Business Management, Organizational Communications, and Theatre Performance from the University of Missouri. She is currently working towards her Master’s degree in Public Affairs, with an emphasis in Nonprofit Management.

Rochara has 10 years of experience working in the Nonprofit sector, 7 of those years serving underprivileged families in the Columbia and Boone County area, with a primary focus on at risk youth and young mothers. A single mother herself, Rochara is dedicated to empowering and supporting each woman that she assists, helping them see the potential in themselves, and believing that each of them deserves the best life possible for themselves and their children. When not working, Rochara is actively involved in the Columbia Theatre community, serving as Vice President and Fundraising Chairman for the Board of Directors at Talking Horse Productions. She is also an active participant in the True/False Film Festival each year. Rochara has a strong sense of community and works hard to support the community she loves.

Rochara’s daughter, Chantal (16), also keeps her busy and active with multiple band competitions and performances, as well as college visits as Chantal prepares for high school graduation in 2019.

SHINE

This year’s annual fundraiser, SHINE, was a great success! Thank you to all who came to honor our Shining Stars!

It has become a tradition for our Co-founders, Steve Smith and Mike Hentges to provide an unforgettable finale. Meet Sonny “Shine” & Cher “U. Money,” pictured with Jefferson City Program Director, Mary Chen

Our two Shining Star moms from the Jefferson City Program, Alexa & Tami. We are so proud of these moms who now have a college education and are ready to be successful and self-sufficient!

A great turnout! We can’t thank you enough for your support.

Columbia Program Director, Whittley Jones, introduces one of our Shining Star moms, Brooklyn, and her precious son, Boston.
2017 IMPACT REPORT

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<td>46</td>
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TOTAL NUMBER OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN HELPED IN 2017: 396

St. Raymond’s Society
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