

NEW DREAMS



Victoria Zambrana Caliz graduated from The Caring Place's Case Management program this past summer.

After the death of her grandfather, Victoria knew she needed a new path for her life, one that would give her life meaning after his passing. She packed up and moved to Texas with a job lead.

Initially, Victoria stayed with a friend who lined up employment for her, but the job fell through. When Victoria discovered her move was not going as she'd hoped, she proactively reached out to every organization she heard about to get help and plan her next step. Victoria learned there are a lot of organizations that can help, but it was important to know which one to go to for what purpose. The system in place to help is broad and often complicated. She admittedly said about her search for help, "I was all over the place." This is understandable when you are desperate to achieve something but you don't know where to start.

Thankfully, The Caring Place was on her list of places to call. She enrolled in the Case Management program which is designed to help clients meet self-identified goals to improve their quality of life. Shortly after starting the

program, Victoria learned it was critical for her to travel to Puerto Rico to visit family. The Caring Place's response? "We will be here when you get back." And we were.

The moment Victoria returned to Texas, she called Case Manager Dulce Ramirez at The Caring Place and said she was ready to get started. What was Victoria's initial goal? To get a job. For Victoria, a job search felt impossible. She didn't have the means to buy work clothes or even access to reliable transportation to attend an interview. The Caring Place could help with clothes, but due to a lack of reliable transportation from her friend's house in a rural area, job opportunities just weren't sustainable.

Concerns about her living situation with her friend pushed Victoria to broaden her goal. She needed to find a place to live independently that was closer to jobs and medical attention in case of an emergency. Her distance and lack of transportation made her feel disconnected and unable to take care of herself.

When Victoria shared her updated goals with The Caring Place, Dulce helped Victoria put those goals into action. She showed her which organizations she should call for specific services. "Each time Dulce suggested 'fill out this form and turn it in here,' I did it. Or call this number. I did everything she recommended immediately. She kept me focused." Working with The Caring Place kept Victoria from feeling lost in the process.

As all this was going on behind the scenes, Victoria got a call from family that her teen son in Puerto Rico would be moving in with her immediately. This news meant she needed to speed up the process to find a place of her own. Victoria had already secured a full-time job at McAlister's Deli the old-fashioned way, pounding the pavement in the Wolf Ranch Town Center. She was dropped off in Wolf Ranch by her friend, found a phone number to text for an interview and scheduled an interview the same day. She then walked to The Caring Place to get some clothes to wear for the interview and walked back to McAlister's Deli for her interview, where she was hired on the spot. Victoria's story includes a few good Samaritans beyond The Caring Place that truly will make your heart sing.



...DREAMS CONTINUED

Managers at McAlister’s Deli helped her buy work shoes, arranged travel for her son to live with her, gave her rides to and from work, and gave her son a job, too. This illustrates the type of person Victoria is, personable and hard-working. She makes friends wherever she goes. We also aren’t surprised people gave her a helping hand because we know that kind folks live and work in Georgetown.



Assistant Retail Manager Camille Campos shows examples of professional attire that are available in our thrift store.

Victoria credits her son for inspiring her motivation and purpose. She knew she needed a job and a place to live for him. Dulce called Victoria when she found a local apartment manager that would work with her. Victoria couldn’t believe it. With the help of The Caring Place and St. Vincent de Paul, the two non-profits helped Victoria with security deposits and the first month’s rent. The Caring Place also helped with utilities, food, clothes and toiletries to get her on her feet. The Caring Place introduced her to GoGeo bus transportation so she could travel around the local community on her own, too. She said, “I called Dulce and told her the bus stops right at my new apartment! It was such a relief.” Access to affordable transportation had become such an obstacle to Victoria reaching goals. A small thing like a convenient bus stop was a source of joy.

Case Management goes beyond a temporary financial fix. The Caring Place partners with neighbors to find long-term solutions. For Victoria the process began in that initial goal setting and planning stage with her Case Manager, Dulce. Next came action items like getting a job, finding a place to live, learning transportation options, talking about budget and living within that budget. Discussions included: What is the difference between a want and need? How much money do you need to cover critical expenses? What resources are in the community that can help cover basic needs like food so that you can stretch your budget? Victoria distinctly remembers a conversation about wanting to buy her son something at the store, and learning to say no to certain unnecessary items as she was getting settled. Now, she’s had some time to save and recently purchased her very first game console. Victoria was proud to be able to make a purchase like this. “It may not seem significant to other people, but to buy something myself was important.” Dulce interjected, “It was in her budget. She had done a lot of work to get to this point and was ready for a reward.” Victoria added, “Looking at Dulce’s computer screen, seeing checkmarks on goals we set just a few months ago, felt so good.”

Victoria shared about Dulce, “I love her. She’s done a lot. This program helped me feel good about myself, built up my confidence, helped me learn to budget, taught me how to move around the community without a car, and taught me how to navigate services by teaching me who to ask, when to ask and what to ask. If I did this by myself, I wouldn’t be where I am.” Victoria recognized that so many of the small bumps along the way would have been large setbacks if it hadn’t been for The Caring Place giving her a safety net.

Dulce feels like a big part of her job is to empower neighbors. “I let them know they can do it, and I guide them along the way. Victoria had an eagerness to be proactive, so meeting goals was relatively smooth. I am so proud of her. Working with Victoria made it clear what my purpose was, to help others.” Victoria urges folks that need help to call The Caring Place. She says, “You are in the right place. They will help you, you just have to listen and follow through.” Victoria emphasizes the “follow through” part of that statement. She knew it was up to her to take the information and tools she received along the way to make positive change in her life and to stay the course. Victoria ended her interview with, “I feel very good about my future. I am on the right path, I know where I am going, and I know where to go if I need support. I plan on going back to school and making something out of me.”



Dulce Ramirez, Case Manager

FOOD PROGRAMS UPDATE

This summer, The Caring Place was awarded a \$140,132 grant by the Central Texas Food Bank to sustain and expand current food service levels. What plans does The Caring Place have for the funds?

- Replace its 16-year old truck with a new one that includes refrigeration for growth of healthy food distribution services, particularly in targeted rural populations;
- Convert old offices at its main location in order to double the size of the Food Pantry and Food Warehouse;
- Increase efficiency and safety throughout the Warehouse by sinking the food scale in the floor and making all areas forklift accessible;
- Improve accuracy and empower neighbors, staff and volunteers by purchasing tablets and replacing outdated computers for more efficient intake and data collection; and,
- Add a new Food Pantry intake position to increase ability to serve more people.



David Earl, Food Programs and Facilities Director with Food Pantry Team Members Lisa McGreevey and Dennis Hilgeman

The temporarily outdoor, drive through Food Pantry has made this an ideal time to make indoor improvements. Demolition of offices has already begun at the 2000 Railroad Food Pantry with no interruption of Food Programs. The process of purchasing updated technology, hiring a new staff member and purchasing an adequate truck for distribution and temporary cold storage is also under way. The Caring Place looks forward to revealing these updates in 2022.

Why are these updates important in a community like ours? The goal of our Food Programs is to not only to reduce food insecurity, but hopefully stretch a family's budget, so that they are able to pay their monthly household expenses. For example, a \$300 a month grocery savings for a family of 4 can help pay a medical, rent or utility bill. Utilizing the Food Pantry is the most cost effective and ongoing way The Caring Place can help a family struggling to make ends meet every month. This has remained true throughout the pandemic and amplifies the impact of this recent grant from the Central Texas Food Bank.

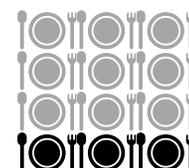
The Food Pantry at The Caring Place distributes food Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. in the 2000 Railroad drive through. The Caring Place Food Pantry is one of three food programs currently offered by the nonprofit including Healthy Options Program for the Elderly (HOPE) and Fresh Food For Families.

How can you help the Food Pantry? Keep reading this newsletter and learn about the [Little Blue Barrel](#) campaign!

THE CARING PLACE IMPACT IN NUMBERS...

FOOD PROGRAMS: JANUARY - SEPTEMBER

- Food Pantry: 14,560 Visits
- Fresh Food For Families: 6,432 Visits
- Healthy Options Program for the Elderly (HOPE): 401 Visits
- Food Distributed through all three Food Programs: 877,176 Pounds



PROGRAMS & SERVICES: JANUARY - SEPTEMBER

- COVID-19 Related Crisis: 107 families received an average of \$2,313 in assistance
- Severe Weather-Related Events: 46 families received an average of \$641 in assistance
- Enrolled in Case Management Services: 62 Neighbors

Thank you to our generous community and local funding partners for helping us provide additional assistance during this difficult time.



GO LITTLE BLUE!



The Caring Place's Little Blue Barrel campaign encourages monetary donations for our Food Pantry.

Borrow and pass around our "Little Blue Barrel" to fill it with monetary donations from your congregation, office, civic organization or neighborhood.

More Details at:
caringplacetx.org/bluebarrel

Little Blue Barrel



WHY IS THE CARING PLACE GOING "LITTLE?"

Due to safety precautions, program changes, limited staffing, storage availability and necessary facility improvements, The Caring Place temporarily stopped taking food donations in March of 2020. The introduction of the 'Little Blue Barrel' will allow our community to continue to feed neighbors in need through the entire year. Last year, The Caring Place was able to purchase 14 pounds of food per dollar donated. Not only is that a responsible use of funds, but monetary gifts help solve space issues. We purchase this discounted food from Central Texas Food Bank as we need to instead of storing it.

The Little Blue Barrel, which is a 32 ounce travel mug, can be borrowed for a week at a time to facilitate community Food Drive initiatives. Community Engagement Manager Rita Turner shares, "We know families look to The Caring Place when they are going through hard times. This last year and a half has brought a lot of challenges for families, but The Caring Place has stayed committed to carrying out its mission to provide for basic needs in our community. The Little Blue Barrel is an opportunity for friends in our community to be partners in that mission."



Rita Turner, Community Engagement Manager

Visit caringplacetx.org/bluebarrel for program guidelines or caringplacetx.org/donate to directly support all of the programs and services helping neighbors in need at The Caring Place.

2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



We are delighted to introduce you to The Caring Place's 2021-2022 Board of Directors.

From top to bottom, left to right: Isaac Lopez (Secretary), Stephen Benold (Treasurer), Hugh Brown (President), Van P. Swift, Lindsay Harris, Patricia Khoury, Sheron Scurlock, Rhonda Wilson (Vice President), Dayne M. Carlson, Harriett Jones, Paul Jordan (At-Large), Kenneth W. Poteete, Kyra Quenan, Stephen Schlobohm, Holly Steger Stevens

Thank you to outgoing board member Susan Richmond for her work and leadership on behalf of The Caring Place during her tenure.



SHOW YOUR SUPPORT BY SHOPPING

The Holiday Season is upon us...Let's make it mean even more!

- 1** Shop our two thrift stores (We have Gift Cards!)
- 2** Shop our ebay store
- 3** Shop AmazonSmile benefiting The Caring Place



Designate us on your Randalls Remarkable Card

Give a tribute instead of a present by donating



5 WAYS TO BEGIN "SHOPPING FOR GOOD!"
at The Caring Place

Learn more here:

CARINGPLACETX.ORG/HOLIDAYS



"SHOPPING FOR GOOD" 'TIS THE SEASON

Fill the Stores!

Your generous item donations keep our thrift stores filled!

You can donate gently used or new items every Monday from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in our 2000 Railroad Avenue drive through.

By filling our stores, you directly support programs and services which help your neighbors in need.

Learn more at caringplacetx.org/donatemystuff

We have two thrift stores in Georgetown that offer a wonderful shopping experience. We can help you make this a holiday to remember with festive décor and unique gifts. Find fashion for all seasons at our Railroad location.

When you shop at The Caring Place, your purchases support our mission. We call that "Shopping for Good."

The Shops at The Caring Place
2000 Railroad Avenue | 512-943-0700



Second Helping
3700 Williams Drive | 512-987-2998
Learn more at caringplacetx.org/shop

The mission of The Caring Place is to provide for the basic human needs of all people in our community in a welcoming, respectful and caring way.



"How wonderful it is that no one has to wait, but can start right now to gradually change the world." - Anne Frank

Programs & Services
2001 Railroad Avenue, Georgetown
Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Assistance by Phone Only
The Shops at The Caring Place
Thrift Store
2000 Railroad Avenue, Georgetown
Donations
caringplacetx.org/donatemystuff
Second Helping
Thrift Store
3700 Williams Drive, Georgetown
512-987-2998
512-943-0700
caringplacetx.org



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