



www.ourfamilyservices.org

(520) 323-1708

Winter 2016

"It comes back to you!"



The Sterrett Family

It was a position Sterrett had never been in before; he is usually the one lending a helping hand. In fact, when he received the car in November, Sterrett and his wife had two young people living with them, one of whom would have otherwise been homeless, in addition to their grandson, whom they adopted at age two and have raised as their own.

Our Family case worker, Sharlene Gatison, was able to help the family catch up on their unpaid rent and obtain food, toiletries, and a uniform and job training for Sterrett. Gatison says Sterrett "went above and beyond" the program requirements. By last fall, he had been hired by the Tucson Unified School District as a full-time bus driver.

Sterrett says his family is thankful for everything — but also happy to go back to helping others "whenever, wherever" they can. "It comes back to you," he says. "You be a good person, and the world will treat you ok." So true! — Written by Kristen Green

Veteran Bill Sterrett will tell you this if you spend a few minutes with him, and he knows from very recent experience. Sterrett, a 2015 Our Family Services client, was honored to receive a newly refurbished car in November as part of The Progressive Group of Insurance Companies' Keys to Progress program.

Tucson Service Center Manager, David Sowers, says Keys to Progress is Progressive's effort to "give back to those who've given a lot for this country." Sterrett and another former Our Family client were the first Tucson veterans to receive cars after Progressive opened its local service center last year.

Sowers, who is also a veteran, says Keys to Progress takes the work of many parties, such as mechanics, parts suppliers, the National Auto Body Council, and others who enjoy helping veterans in need.

Sterrett says the car he received, a 2010 Chevy Malibu, is "definitely a blessing to us. It's still amazing to me every time I get in the car. I'm still shaking. I've never owned anything this nice before." Previously, Sterrett drove an unreliable 1969 Volkswagon Bug with "paper-thin" brakes.

Sterrett and his family are a perfect example of how the Family Stability Project (which Our Family operates in partnership with United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona and the Siemer Institute for Family Stability) helps families in financial crisis get back on their feet. When the Sterretts came to Our Family last February, they faced eviction because they were behind on their rent. They had moved to Tucson only a few months earlier, and Sterrett had not yet found full-time employment. Working only three shifts a week at a fast-food restaurant, Sterrett's paychecks barely covered rent, let alone other necessities.



Mr. and Mrs. Sterrett

Moving Forward



Happy New Year! As we consider our accomplishments in 2015 and set goals for 2016, I want to pause to express our deep appreciation for your dedication to helping people in need. Many of you were very generous throughout 2015 with your gifts of both time and financial contributions. On behalf of the people we serve, our staff members, and our Board of Directors, thank you!

We accomplished a great deal together in 2015. Please check out our annual report and audited financials, posted on our website at <http://www.ourfamilyservices.org/reports.html>. And do be sure to give me a call if you have any questions, either about recent accomplishments or about what's coming up. We are partners in this work to make our community a better place to live, to grow up and to grow older.

This month we launch a new program tracking and outcomes software that will help make us more efficient in our work and better able to see which programs and services are most effective. While software may not seem very mission focused, we are excited because at least six other organizations in our community will be using the same software by the end of 2016. That means over time we will be able to look at community-wide impacts on key social issues that matter to all of us. Good news!

This month also launches the 2016 session of the state legislature. Please help us support a couple of key initiatives that would make a tremendous difference in the lives of families in our community.

- Restoring KidsCare (health insurance for Arizona's children) would cost taxpayers absolutely nothing if implemented today - which is important to know, because more than 150,000 children in Arizona are currently without health coverage. We support the Children's Action Alliance which is taking the lead on educating our elected officials about the importance of basic health care for children in need.
- Expanding low income childcare has an \$8 million budget price tag. However, we know lack of quality childcare is at the root of much of our economic distress such as under-employment, homelessness, and children who are unprepared for school.

Please watch for opportunities to share your support for these initiatives directly with elected officials, as we work "upstream" from many of the effects of poverty.

In partnership and service,

Patti Caldwell, MSW
Chief Executive Officer

National Philanthropy Day: Honoring our Donors

Please join us in celebrating Our Family supporters who were honored with November's National Philanthropy Day "Spirit of Philanthropy" awards.

The ceremony honored the Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation with an Outstanding Foundation Philanthropist award for their contributions to Our Family and other charities in Tucson. The Foundation has invested heavily in Our Family and its predecessor, New Beginnings for Women and Children, over the past 12 years. When Our Family began a capital campaign to build Reunion House, a crisis shelter for runaway and homeless youth, the Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation kicked off the campaign with a sizable lead gift. This investment made it possible to build the momentum required to bring the campaign to fruition.



Nikki Halle and Bruce Halle Jr.

Larry "Buzz" Petersen and Robbie Willingham were also instrumental in assuring that the new Reunion House was able to open its doors. The couple received an Outstanding Philanthropist award for their service. Buzz and Robbie are longtime consistent donors to Our Family Services and other worthy causes in our community. Buzz and Robbie created a matching campaign to bring in the last dollars needed to complete construction of the shelter.



Larry "Buzz" Petersen and Robbie Willingham

Since opening in July 2013, Reunion House has given safe haven to nearly 500 young people with nowhere to call home.

We at Our Family are indebted to Buzz and Robbie, the Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation, and to all of you, our donors and supporters. Your steadfast commitment sustains this work and encourages us, as we serve those most at risk here in Tucson and Southern Arizona.

Thank you!

Our Family's Senior Leadership

Patti Caldwell, Chief Executive Officer
Emily Brott, Development Director
Kim Egita, Finance & Assets Director
Laurie Mazerbo, Director of Housing and Homeless Services
Lisa Reams, Senior Director

Board of Directors

Rachel Chanes, Larry Cochran, Vanessa Cota,
Peter DeLuca, Geneva Escobedo, Sarah Hazen,
Hazel Heinzer, John Jackson, Scott Koenig, Melodie Lopez,
Kay Nelson, Stella Rivera-Varela, JC Rivers, Lenny Robles,
Ann Ventola, Patti Caldwell (ex officio)

Mediation Training

Our 42-hour basic-skills mediation course prepares participants to mediate a variety of workplace and personal conflicts.

The course includes theory, communication skills, mediation process and techniques, and ethical standards, along with extensive practice.



This course is open to anyone who would like to increase their skills in dealing with conflict. The course is also a requirement for those interested in volunteering with our Community Mediation Program.

In this training, participants will:

- Identify their personal strategies in dealing with conflict
- Learn about the complex nature of conflict and how it affects our neurobiology
- Gain an in-depth understanding of transformative mediation
- Practice their active listening skills in a group setting
- Participate in mediation simulations with highly-trained volunteer mediators

Dates: March 9, 10, 11 and 16, 17, 18, 2016

Time: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm each day

Location: Our Family Services, North Conference Room 3830 E Bellevue St., Tucson, Arizona

Cost: \$550

We are actively recruiting people to become mediators who are bilingual Spanish/English, Tribal members, veterans, those with disabilities, and members of immigrant communities. Limited scholarships are available.

To register, visit: <http://www.ourfamilyservices.org/training.html> and scroll down the page to 42-Hour Basic Mediation Training. Questions? Contact Leslie Bosch at (520)323-1708 x 122 or lbosch@ourfamilyservices.org.

*Note: You must attend all six days to receive your certificate.
The training is limited to 20 participants.*

Stay Connected Year-Round

Text

OURFAMILY

to **22828** to get started.

Message and data rates may apply.

In addition to our regular print mailings, Our Family also has electronic newsletters. Sign up for our e-newsletters and you'll receive monthly updates on what's happening in our programs and information about how you can help. Rest assured, Our Family will not share your information and you can unsubscribe any time you like. To sign up for our e-newsletters, simply text OUR FAMILY to 22828 (message and data rates apply) or email Sam at sbossert@ourfamilyservices.org.

Annual Street Count Brings Funds to Those in Need



EVERYONE COUNTS

Every year, volunteers and employees of human service agencies hit the streets to count the number of unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness in Pima County. This event is known as the Street Count, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires the count to be done every other year. However in Pima County, the Street Count takes place annually to ensure the quality and consistency of the data collected, as well as to track progress. The data collected from the count determines the amount of federal funds that are distributed from HUD to communities across the nation, including Pima County, to provide housing and supportive services for people experiencing homelessness.

The Street Count is a collaborative effort that is spearheaded by the Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness (TPCH). TPCH is a coalition of community and faith-based organizations, government entities, businesses, and individuals committed to the mission of ending homelessness and addressing the issues related to homelessness in our community. Our Family is part of TPCH and provides 10 to 15 volunteers every year to assist with the Street Count. Furthermore, Our Family Services currently receives funding from three HUD grants and is a partner on two additional HUD grants. For more information, please contact Laurie Mazerbo at (520) 323-1708 x243 or lmazerbo@ourfamilyservices.



Need information about local resources and social services? Call the Community Information and Referral Services helpline at 2-1-1 or search the resource database at www.211arizona.org.

Get referrals to agencies that help with health care, food boxes, legal assistance, GED classes, domestic violence shelters, substance abuse, assistive technology, computer classes, support groups, counseling, parenting classes, donation pick-ups, volunteer opportunities, animal services, and much more!

For additional information contact Lora King at (520) 323-1708 x260 or lking@ourfamilyservices.org.

Need Help? Dial 2-1-1!



Nonprofit Org
US Postage Paid
Tucson AZ
Permit #992

2590 N. Alvernon Way, Tucson, AZ 85712

Change service requested

ARIZONA
GIVES ★ DAY
— APRIL 5, 2016 —

Our Family publishes this newsletter three times a year. If you no longer wish to receive it, please let us know.

2016 Spring Luncheon - Save the Date!

Our Family Services' Spring Luncheon
Thursday, April 28, 2016
Tucson Convention Center
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Thank you to our Sponsors:



Growing Community, Strengthening Families

Stay tuned for more information or visit www.ourfamilyservices.org/springluncheon.html.