

Building Hope

The Newsletter of Family Promise of Hawai'i

Building community, strengthening lives

From Our Family to Yours... Michael and Katreena

Where do I begin?! This has all been such a blessing! Before our family joined Family Promise we were "house surfing" from one relative's house to another until we hit our last house with nowhere else to go. The new school year had just started and we couldn't register our daughters in school due to no address.

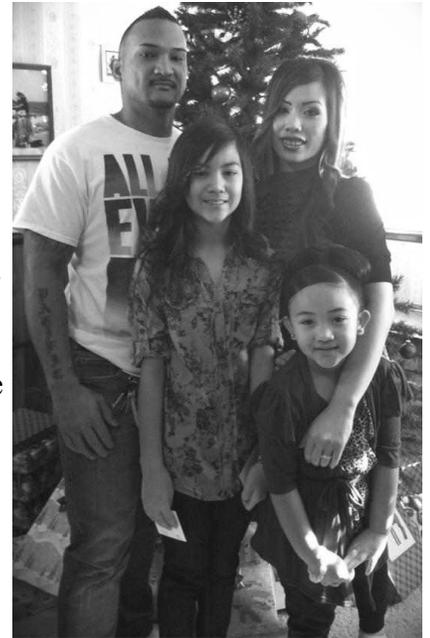
We then got a hold of a program called Affordable Housing and Homeless Alliance (AHHA) to help us out with our situation in hopes for housing. Our case worker worked closely with us and was determined to find us a roof over our heads. She then informed us about Family Promise and explained the program to us. Michael was really hesitant about it and was really concerned for the safety of our daughters. We talked it over and I prayed that Michael would agree to join the program.

Monday came and Michael called me from work to tell me he checked out the Kailua Day Center and were moving in. I was relieved! Staying at Family Promise really helped our family get back on our feet, especially with saving money! Our daughters were finally registered and attending school even though school was back in session for a month already. The first week was different for us because we had to get our routine down and get to know the other families in the program.

We really benefited from Family Promise. They gave us resources for other programs available

to us that we didn't know existed. The staff are excellent and always there for motivation and support. The volunteers at the congregations go above and beyond. We're just really grateful for a program like Family Promise and we wouldn't have done it any other way.

When we succeeded out of the program, I had mixed emotions about leaving. I really LOVED the program and was a bit sad. The staff has been another family for us and the bond between the other families in the program grew. I didn't think I'd feel that way when leaving, and I didn't think we'd succeed out as quickly as we did. I now see the light at the end of our tunnel and happy to start this new chapter in our lives. I'm forever thankful for this program, the staff and volunteers. Their passion has inspired me so much that I'd like to give back and volunteer. I'm also considering going back to school to be a social worker to help others in need.



Mahalo to HomeWorld for donating a brand new sofa sleeper to Jocelyn and her three boys! They are enjoying it everyday in their brand new apartment.



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CONGREGATIONS**

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First Baptist Church of Honolulu
Church of the Crossroads
Community Church of Honolulu
Nu`uanu Congregational Church
Temple Emanu-el
Christ United Methodist Church
Central Union Church
United Church of Christ Judd Street
First Christian Church of Honolulu
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St. John's by the Sea
St. Stephen's Catholic Church
Kailua Christian Church
Kailua Seventh Day Adventist Church
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Kailua United Methodist Church
Christ Church Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians
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St. Mark's Episcopal Church
First Presbyterian Church of Honolulu
Kailua Hongwanji Mission



At several volunteer trainings this year I was asked about current statistics regarding family homelessness. I thought it would be useful to include that information in this month's article. While the news may seem somewhat disheartening, it also inspires organizations like Family Promise to work harder at housing families so that every child has a chance at a better life.

According to *The State of Homelessness in America 2013* (National Alliance to End Homelessness, April 2013):

- There was a decrease in homeless subpopulations with the exception of families
- Median household incomes decreased between 2010 and 2011 by 1.3%
- More than 48 million people were living in poverty in 2011. More than half of these households were families with a single adult present.
- Average fair market rentals increased by 1.5%
- More than 6.5 million households spend more than 50% of their income for housing expenses.
- In 2012, 37.8% of the homeless population were families. In Hawaii, family homelessness increased by 2.2%.
- Estimated number of children experiencing homelessness is 162,246. This represents a 2% increase between 2011 and 2012

A family's ability to pay for housing is crucial in getting more of Hawaii's families housed. We work very hard to teach our parents financial literacy and budgeting that will take them far beyond their time here with us at Family Promise. Our goal is for our families to make the necessary lifelong changes required to remain successfully housed. Since we opened in 2006, to our knowledge, less than a handful of our families fell back into homelessness. I attribute our successes to the intense support services provided by our Program Manager, numerous case workers and the dedicated congregational volunteers providing much needed moral support - of course, the daily meals they provide are great too! I know that the best way to combat family homelessness is for all of us in the community to continue working together.

With Warmest Aloha,

Mary Saunders

LOOKING FOR WAYS TO HELP SUPPORT FAMILY PROMISE?

Invite friends to our center to hear about our program

Celebrate a special occasion by making a donation

Make a pledge in honor of every family who is successfully housed this year

Remember us in your will

Save taxes and contribute charitably by gifting appreciated securities or other assets such as those from your IRA in 2013.

*For more information contact Mary Saunders at 548-7478
or director@familypromisehawaii.org*

MAHALO FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF OUR FAMILIES!

The Family Promise Community

Now that Family Promise has been in existence for 7 years, we have welcomed over 250 families including over 1,000 guests into our program. We have also increased our energetic and compassionate volunteers every year. These days, when I'm out and about around town, it never fails that I will run into someone who has some kind of connection to Family Promise. Do any of you have this same experience?

One day, I'm at a grocery store and a former guest is right behind me in the check-out line. Then I was at another store and see another family who used to be in our program and they give me a big 'ol bear hug! One night, I was talking to these bubbly and warm-hearted people I met recently and, through our conversation, discover that they are volunteers at one of our Buddhist temples! I recently drove some friends to the airport and they asked me what I do. While describing the beauties of our organization, I happened to spot another former guest walking home from work!

I've been sensing being surrounded by an 'ohana connected to Family Promise lately. Whenever I see a former guest or volunteer, all I can feel is utter joy and appreciation for the experiences they have provided me with. The evening news is filled with so many painful things to watch. I have to always keep in mind the people that "balance" everything out!

Seeing families move into their new homes is something to behold. Greeting volunteers as they drop-off much needed donations at our Family Centers warms my heart. Hearing about the wonderful time the families had with our volunteers at the congregation the other night is music to my ears. Thank you all for enriching my life every day.



Christy MacPherson
Program Manager

Family Promise of Hawai'i

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Email: Director@FamilyPromiseHawaii.org

The mission of Family Promise of Hawai'i is to mobilize existing community resources to aid families with children experiencing homelessness and help them transition to sustainable independence.

FPH is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Tax-deductible donations can be sent to the addresses above.

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**Family Promise
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Aloha United Way

WWW.AUW.ORG

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Family Promise of Hawaii Inaugural Family Fun Run

Saturday, August 17, 2013 at 7:00 am

All families are welcome to our 5k run/walk.
The race starts at the Kailua Recreation Center and
travels down Kainalu Drive and back.

You can register at active.com or request a registration
form at either family center.

For more information please email
volunteer@familypromisehawaii.org or call 548-7478

