

LEAVING A LEGACY

This month, we took the time to sit down with two mentors from Legacy Church on the beautiful Eastside of O‘ahu to understand firsthand, their experiences in being a mentor for a lonely child. We left the interview galvanized, hearing the difference they are making in the lives of their child. We know if you’re reading this, you’re out there making a difference too. We thank you.



Auntie Norma (left) and Uncle David (right) for Legacy Church

Auntie Norma Slavish

Occupation: Retired

Years mentored for: 4 years

Number of children mentored: 1

How many years have you mentored for?

Well, I had one little girl for three years that was in the program. It was awesome to have somebody that long and consistent. It’s really good if we could continue each year with the same child.

One thing you wish you knew before you started mentoring?

We have the trainings and meetings with the counselor at the school—that’s good to know the counselor. And I don’t know, maybe we should give the kids some kind of progress report or some assessment.

I like to have one-on-one so if there’s anything that she needs to share with me—something that’s going on at home, whatever,

then it’s private to her. Then they can speak to us about it but actually with my girl, I haven’t had anything except that she didn’t have a mom. Sometimes I would say, “Maybe we should check with your mom.” And she goes, “My mom’s dead.” The first time she told me that I just dropped my jaw and I said, “Ok.” They didn’t tell me that the mom had passed away. So when she told me cold that her mom was dead—I didn’t really know what to say.

What made you want to continue mentoring?

I’ve had my girl for three years. I saw her growth throughout the years and I was able to be a part of her family. They invited me to her first communion and we got to share dinner and meet the rest of her family. That was kind of cool and I think it made a little bit of a difference in her life. I was able to write a reference letter for her for Kamehameha. I feel good being able to share what we’ve gone through together.

David Kua‘aona

Occupation: Honolulu Police Department, Pastor

Years mentored: 1 semester (6 months)

Number of children mentored: 1

What made you want to continue mentoring?

To be able to watch that person’s life bloom. And tell that you’ve had some part in it and just be proud of the person they become. So, I hope to have that with my boy. He’s already told me that he wants to be a cop. So we kind of have that connection. He just thinks that it’s the coolest thing in the world. And I believe that nothing happens by chance. We met for a reason. We have similar goals, similar lives from the little I know about him. It seems like we’ve had a similar childhood. It seems more common now days than before, to come from broken homes. And I’m a product of a broken home.

Did he want to become a cop before he met you, or after?

When we were first getting to know each other I asked a real basic question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” And he didn’t even know I was a cop yet, he says, “I want to be a policeman.” I said, “Oh really? That’s funny.”

-Leighna Lariosa for Common Grace

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Kindness 4 Kids

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BIG NEWS
SEPTEMBER 2015

Aloha,

Howzit C.G. gangy, dis ees da beeg kahuna (Pipeline Jay), writin’ to you folks ‘bout how us guys tryin’ for surf da humongous waves da Boss, Jesus, stay sendin’ us ova hea.

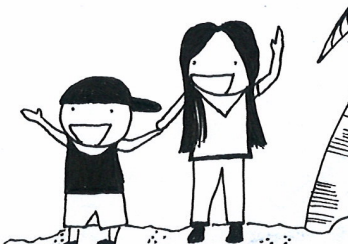
(back to the normal boring me—) This issue of Beeg News, oops sorry, Big News is all about new news of Common Grace. Aries Jackson, our new Associate Director — you met her in the last general letter we sent out — is a genius at welcoming and including new people on our staff team. The inside article is written by Leighna, our paid intern who speaks for herself as well as for our volunteer summer intern, Roselyn. These two gifted women have brought energy and youthful vision to our ministry. Also, Leighna interviewed Auntie Norma & Uncle David — two mentors on O‘ahu’s windward side. See how a retiree and a policeman relate to their C.G. kids. They are both so kindhearted! And lighthearted. And truly representative of over 150 adults and students who are mentoring lonely children throughout this school year.

Please focus on the articles, not the photo of me from 1985. I’ve changed. Lost a little weight since then. My hair is a few shades darker and I have learned deep humility over the years.

So, shaka braddahs n’ seestahs! May da Boss geev you plenny grace bot’ now n’ bumbye.

~J





I’m Leighna—Common Grace’s current intern! Their previous intern was Rosie, who helped Common Grace for four weeks before she went back to school this fall to pursue a degree in business at Berkeley. This summer I graduated from the School of Language, Linguistics, and Literature at UH Mānoa, which is really just a fancy way to say I have a Bachelor’s in English, but that’s how they said it on my diploma (which was \$\$\$\$\$) so, hey. Sometimes I daydream about being married to a famous surfer or being an artist but for now, I’d like to pursue my Master’s to teach creative writing at the collegiate level and write on the side. This newsletter is a start!

I started surfing as a junior in high school—reluctantly. My father forced me; I was more into soccer and track at the time. I had to wake up at 5:30 in the morning (ew), I was scared of getting yelled at by the uncles in the lineup (ahh), and had to wear stifling rash guards and boardshorts (ew). In many ways, starting to work for Common Grace was the same: I had to wake up early for work (is this what real adults have to do?!), I was initially scared of getting yelled at by Uncle Jay (my boss and the founder of Common Grace), and I had to wear semi-professional clothes. Despite these things, I knew I had to follow the unwavering but simple mission of Common Grace—to be kind to a child in need.

A summer swell rolled in for the organization—Common Grace was blessed with their first intern in 16 years! Rosie Chan was referred to Common Grace through a scholarship foundation and helped out until going back to school (you can read about her experiences on our website commongrace.org). Shortly after, Aries Jackson approached me asking if I wanted to help Common Grace while Jackie, their Communication Director, left to China for a mission trip—knowing that I loved creativity and writing. If I joined, I would somehow be helping children that perhaps have had to grow up much too fast or just badly need loving attention. I couldn’t say no. I would be their second intern; following in Rosie’s wake.

A small as these feats seem; as slight as the title “intern” may sound—they’re overhead-sized waves for Common Grace. Although we’re a small organization with a core team of three people, we are fashioning the building blocks of our nation. Children are our future and as new as I am, I can see Common Grace making big waves.

Also, I solemnly swear not to skip work to surf.



Leighna Lariosa
Common Grace
Communications Coordinator Intern

BIGGEST MAHALOS TO:

