

# REACH Ministries

Summer 2014

## REACH's Year-Round Cycle: Fostering a Safe Community for Those with HIV

*What is it really like to be rejected – continually – or live in constant fear of rejection?*

*Invite Executive Director, Dan Stoehr, to your home, work, church, or social club for a revealing look at the challenges of living with HIV.*

In 2014, rejection and fear of rejection are still the reality of living with HIV. HIV can be a harshly isolating disease, not only for those infected, but for their families as well. This is tragic, and the consequences are devastating, but through the devoted support of our donors and volunteers, we are difference makers. REACH holisti-

cally addresses the needs of the entire family (not just the infected members) by providing a continuous *“high touch” cycle of year-round programming:*

Labor Day Camp, Spring



*Volunteer counselors and REACH kids at our 2014 family Spring Retreat weekend.*

Retreat, individual mentoring, home visits, and quarterly family activities.

We are part of a comprehensive network of care. The medical community offers health care. Social workers offer services. REACH offers relationship, community, and hope.

*For many of our families and young adults, we are their ONLY safe community – the only place they can talk openly about their situation and be accepted, loved, and encouraged.*

Our vision is that over time all will come to know and fully live out God's unique purpose for their lives.

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**This year marks  
our 18th  
Labor Day  
weekend  
REACH Camp !**



David and Michelle of Tacoma faithfully and generously support REACH with their gifts *and* time – Michelle and her church group pray for us weekly, and David spends many hours advising us over cups of coffee.

Both had full careers as Army lawyers, and David had a second career as a development executive for sev-

## Donor Spotlight: David Little and Michelle Gray

eral large nonprofit organizations. Both are devoted servants: Michelle is a stalwart at University Place Presbyterian Church's food bank, and David is a volunteer chaplain at St. Joseph's Hospital.

*Q: Why do you support REACH?*

A: “Society is so polarized about HIV/AIDS, often treating those affected like modern day lepers ...

*Yet, here was REACH, non-judgmental and faith-based, allowing kids to just be kids for a while ... and parents go on the zip line and smile like kids again too! REACH can make them all feel like they actually can fit in.”*

To other supporters, they say: “REACH is the right mission + the right organization + the right staff. For us, that = ‘of course!’”

## Your Support Advances our Core Values

REACH embraces:

- **UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE** ... *We treasure who you are.*
- **COMMUNITY** ... *We journey through life together.*
- **JOY** ... *We play and laugh together.*
- **TRUST** ... *It's safe to be you.*

See how these values actually play out in the following articles ...

### Core Value: UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE

Observations by a REACH  
Advisor & Dad

Imagine a room full of people comfortably chatting, playing, and enjoying themselves. Pretty typical of a social gathering, right? ***Look a little bit closer. Here's something you might not see every day.*** These people are as diverse as

they come. Racially, yes. But more importantly, people from all walks of life act like brothers and sisters here. You see preppy girls laughing with tattooed and body-pierced girls, muscular young men taking time to visit with the elderly, men in black nail polish helping young kids play a board game, skaters giving children "sledding rides" on their skateboards.

Some are infected with HIV, but no one is concerned at all. Everywhere you look at a REACH get-together, you see unconditional acceptance. Each member of the REACH "family" is embraced just as they are. It is a judgment-free zone. And the safe community that results is something to behold.

### Core Value: COMMUNITY

REACH Parent Reflection: "One of the places where I feel the least fear is at camp. Twice a year I have a weekend in a truly judgment free zone. It is hard to describe how truly amazing this is. I keep trying to figure out why it works, probably so that I can bottle it up and sip from it the rest of the year.

"I should just bask in the glory of it, and be extremely thankful for the

moments of sheer joy. I think it is the sweet fellowship of the unashamedly broken. None of us is trying to be holier than thou.

***"We have all smacked hard on the bottom and are just glad to have some smiles around a circle of fellow failures. We all have hurts, and joys, and we are able to just lay them out together.***

"One man said that he was thankful for his biggest challenge in life because it brought him there and gave him that family. I tear up every time I think about him. If only I could remember that every time I am sitting with every other group God has put me in. Maybe the fear of fitting in keeps us from just admitting that we are a total mess and that is why we need each other."



"Lean on Me" at the 2014 family Spring Retreat.

## Core Value: JOY

At REACH, joy is a sound:

***“REACH really has become another family to us. When the kids walked into the gym the first night and a cheer went up, priceless. Actually my biological family rarely cheers when we roll up!”***

- REACH Parent

Joy is the celebration of each other that is unique within REACH.

It is the roar of the audience at the talent show for the goofiest display of hula-hoop spinning or acrobatics. Joy transforms the awkward start of the party – as people arrive who don’t know each

other well – into an outbreak of laughter and “all-in” fellowship by playing silly Minute-To-Win-It games.

Joy is the launch pad for building relationships.

Joy is the delight of being together.

***“My daughter’s social delays often make it hard for her to have fun with peers, but this group is so kind and accepting of her that she truly has fun.”***

- Parent

## Core Value: TRUST

During home or coffee shop visits, we have asked families and young adults about the biggest impact REACH is having in their lives. Many say, “This, right now, that

you care enough about me to visit, and I can talk safely about my situation. I can’t do that with anyone else.”

***“I just want to say I feel very, very blessed to be a***

***part of REACH. There is no other place we go as a family, including our own church, where the love of God is so evident!”*** - REACH Parent



Fun at the 2014 Retreat.



### Volunteer Spotlight: Jenni Jamieson Leme

For years, Jenni was a volunteer counselor at REACH Camp. Then in 2003 she committed to mentoring Angela and Marti, two pre-teens – one with HIV – who had recently moved here from Africa. Their uncle was happy for the support.

***Within weeks, Jenni got an unusual call.***

Immigration authorities had detained their uncle, and the girls were home alone. Could Jenni go and stay with them until he got home?

Jenni hurried over – they played games, and she kept them calm. Hours later, when the uncle hadn’t returned, church friends took the girls to their home for the night. Reflecting on this intense day, Jenni said, “There are some points in your life where you say, ‘That was the hand of God.’ I was placed there for this purpose.”

This transition became permanent when the uncle was deported. Angela is now 22 and finishing her degree at UW; Marti graduates high school this month.

***For over 11 years, Jenni has shared “the big***

***moments”*** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade and high school graduations, helping Angela select a college, and most recently prom dress shopping with Marti. She also cherishes the girls’ desire to simply have real conversations over a meal (think middle school drama, struggling grades, shyness, and no biological family in the country).

Jenni and her girls represent the vision for REACH mentoring – ***steadfastly journeying through life together,*** and discovering joy and committed friendships that go the distance.

***“Maintaining parent relationships at REACH are wonderful, especially for those of us so absorbed by high-needs kids that we never spend time with other adults/parents.”*** – Parent



A REACH young adult who grew up with us, and Judy Fisher, devoted long-time volunteer and donor.

**REACH by the Numbers:**

- 385 children, family members, and young adults affected by HIV
- 78 infected with HIV
- 150 volunteers
- 20 mentors
- 4 part-time staff
- \$200,000 annual budget



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Fostering safe community for children, families, and young adults affected by HIV, strengthening them to grow in hope and purpose through tangible expressions of God's love.

www.REACHministries.org

## Join Us in This Special Campaign to Provide "Camperships" and Year-Round Services

**\$400** sends one child to Labor Day Camp.

Your gift of **\$1,200** (\$100 per month) allows:  
1 family to attend Labor Day Camp,  
OR 3 kids and young adults to get one-on-one monthly mentoring.

Your gift of **\$5,000** (\$417 per month) provides:  
ALL of our year-round services for 1 family with 4-6 children, which includes Labor Day Camp, Spring Retreat, one-on-one monthly mentoring, home visits, and quarterly activities, such as holiday parties.

Your gift of **\$10,000** (\$834 per month) provides:  
Airfare and activities costs for 2 long-distance families to attend Labor Day Camp and the Spring Retreat.

**Surprise us!** We appreciate all gifts.



See our complete  
Wish List online

### Have you considered making a legacy gift to REACH?

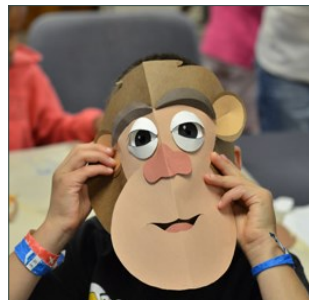
There are many creative ways to make a gift, such as a **cash gift in your will, gifts of appreciated stock, or naming REACH as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, IRA or retirement plan.**

Call us to discuss ideas.

### You Can Be the Volunteer Who Changes a Child's Life

- Be a **VOLUNTEER** for Camp. Join us as a counselor of 2-3 children, or as a "rover" (someone who helps out with all the behind-the-scenes activity). Trainings are held twice this summer. We would love to have you join us this year!
- Become a **MENTOR** – like Jenni – and journey through life with a child, teen, or young adult.

## REACH Kids Grow Up to "Give Back"



Funny mask for art therapy at Camp.

REACH young adult:

*"I am happy to say that this year I felt the most useful and inspired out of my many years at Camp. I felt like I had a real purpose, there was hope.*

"It was nice to finally take the 'P' out of the camp experience. For me, there really has been nothing for me at camp for a few years. I mean there are my friends and family but when the focus of your camp experience is 'what am I gonna do for me today?' it's shal-

low, and I felt I was wasting a weekend that could be filled with something else. This year I found what I needed – to focus on others, serve and be around, and *to care about others in a greater capacity than I had ever imagined possible.*

"To steal a line from Beauty and the Beast: 'Life is so unnerving for a servant who's not serving' – that's how I felt. This opportunity has meant the world to me. Thank you."