

The Toledo Kids Who Care

Stephen's Mission

Summer 2008

Many Thanks

As always, we would like to thank all of you for your continuous support and help with all our projects. We are very excited to share with all of you what we have accomplished this summer and show you some of the projects we will be working on in the future. As we have said many times before nothing would be possible without your help. Thank You!!!

Our Story is heard at St. Helena's Church in Edison, N.J.

We recently had the great honor to share our story at St. Helena's Church in Edison, New Jersey. We do not have words to express our gratitude to Margie Ojeda for offering us this great opportunity and helping to make the event so successful. The evening was not only a lot of fun for all of us but we also had the opportunity to meet many interesting people that were truly interested in us and in what we do. Our mission has helped us meet many wonderful people, but we are truly blessed to have meet Margie Ojeda. She is making a difference in the life of so many people and she has touched us and made a huge difference in ours.



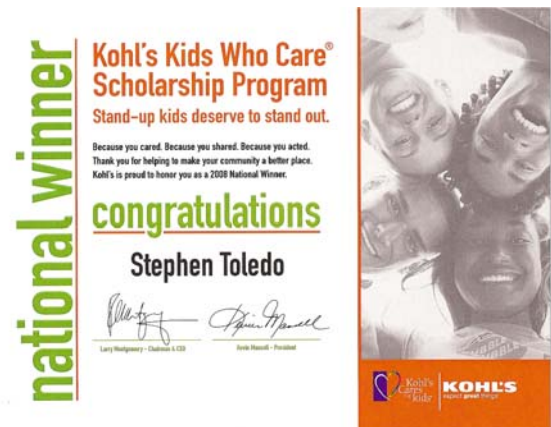
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P.O. Box 422, Mt. Freedom, New Jersey 07970

Kohl's Winner

We are very extremely excited to report that Stephen has been selected as a store-level, regional, and lastly National Winner of the Kohl's Kids Who Care Scholarship Program. www.kohlscorporation.com/CommunityRelations/scholarship/2008NationalWinners.asp As a National Winner, Stephen receives a \$5,000 scholarship towards his secondary education as well as \$1,000 towards a charity of his choosing. As always, we feel it is necessary to stress how fortunate we are to have your help and support. We know that we would not be qualified for this very prestigious award without the continuous support and help of all of you.

Thanks a million!



The Beacon

We would like to thank Ms. Cecile San Agustin, a reporter from *The Beacon* a Catholic Newspaper of the Diocese of Paterson, N.J. for helping us as we try to spread the word of our mission in our new Diocese. As a result of Ms San Agustin's very eloquent article Stephanie received an additional 40 pairs of used glasses and we were able to reach and meet many people that were truly interested in our story. For a copy of the article, please visit the "Press Articles" page on our web site.

Summer 2008

www.stephensmission.com

NJIT Real World MS/HS Connections

We are especially excited to announce that we have had the honor and pleasure to participate in a program sponsored by NJIT through the CCS capstone open university program founded by Osama Eljabiri, lecturer and director of CCS capstone courses at NJIT. With the dedicated support and guidance of volunteer from various industries, university and community, students work in small project teams to solve real world problems based on scenarios drawn from actual industry cases in broad array of fields, including health, communications, sports, and entertainment. Our involvement consisted of sharing our story and then working together with a team of students that will help strengthen and improve our mission in a capacity that would otherwise not be possible. We would like to thank Professor Eljabiri, Margie Ojeda, Chris Ojeda, Desire, Ken Hwang, and Eva Januszkiewicz for all their help, guidance, support, dedication and most of all for believing in our mission enough to give up so much of their free time to us. There will never be enough words to thank you. May God Bless you all.

Office of Temporary Assistance Award

We would like to thank the Morris County Department of Human Services Office of Temporary Assistance for awarding us a Certificate of Appreciation for our dedication in assisting the needy of our community.



Randolph Middle School Random Act of Kindness Certificate of Recognition

At the end of this school year, Stephen received perhaps the most significant award ever. This award was the Randolph Middle School Random Act of Kindness Certificate of Recognition. Although Stephen has received many awards and recognition in the past, and all have been very special, this



was perhaps the most memorable. Four years ago, Mr. Clemente, the 6th grade social studies teacher, started the Random Act of Kindness Club for the sixth graders of Randolph Middle School. At the end of each year, they have a recognition where they ask all sixth graders to nominate a person who has demonstrated kindness towards others. There were twenty special students nominated but Stephen received the most nomination in the history of this award. Although the award is only open for sixth graders, he received nominations from the sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. Perhaps the most memorable part will be to hear his name chanted by his peers as they all stood and cheered for him. I am sure you would all agree that to be accepted by your peers is the best feeling of all. Not too bad for being the new kid in town. We would like to thank Mr. Clemente and all the students for this unbelievable recognition.

Reaching Across the Country

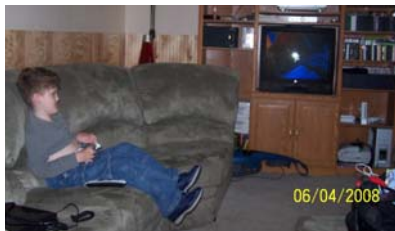
Several months ago, we received an email from our very good friend Trainer Joe, Team Athletic Trainer for the NJ Devils Youth Hockey Club. The email asked if we could help get a Playstation for a very deserving child suffering



from Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA). Aschdon, who lives in Wyoming, needs a series of surgeries, and uses his playstation during long periods of recovery. His

existing playstation had recently broken and the family could not afford to get him a new one with all the medical expenses endured due to his illness. Our hearts went out to Aschdon and his family and we decided to send out an email in hopes of getting a used system from someone who no longer had the use of one. In less than 24 hours we not only had offers for two used systems, but we received an email from someone whom we had never met before offering to get Aschdon a new system. This very special person is Mary Ellen Pavlovsky from the island of Bermuda. Our dear cousin Maria Vazquez-Melendez had forwarded our email to Mary Ellen who in turn notified us of her intentions.

Mary Ellen not only donated a new playstation to Aschdon, but also made it possible for him to receive it in time for his birthday.



Our initial email generated a lot of concern for Aschdon and the requests to help poured in. Trainer Joe asked Aschdon and his mother to put together a wish list. Surprisingly most of the items were things that many of us take for

granted. He needed a long-handle toothbrush and long-handle hairbrush to help him be more independent and something called a “wobble seat”. We really did not know the first thing about these items nor how to go about purchasing them for Aschdon. Some might say it is a coincidence or divine intervention, but at that time Ms. Cindy Coviello, Occupational Therapist, was treating our grandmother Mimi. It was her expertise and very generous donation that made it possible for Aschdon to receive these items.

In addition, we also found out that due to multiple surgeries Aschdon’s vocal cords have been affected and the use of a voice amplifier would be very useful. As many times before, we wanted to help, but we simply did not have the money. That weekend our Aunt Randy and Uncle Terry were visiting us from Virginia they brought with them a jar of coins that Terry uses to collect his spare change. Much to our surprise, it was exactly enough to purchase the voice amplifier for Aschdon....coincidence or divine intervention?

As many of you know, Trainer Joe has a huge heart. We would never have had the opportunity to know Aschdon or the pleasure of this experience. We thank him deeply for this. We would also like to note that Trainer Joe also purchased a sidewalk chalk apparatus that can be attached to Aschdon’s wheelchair so he can show his artistic side to his friends and neighbors.



We would like to thank all of you how responded to our call and helped us reach out to Aschdon and his family.

As you can see, we have many angels working with us. This story continues to show us how anything is possible when we work together.

Stephanie is Recognized by Pearle Vision

We are very proud to report that Stephanie's collection of glasses continues to be a huge success. Her grand total to date is **580** used prescription eyeglasses. She has set her goal to 1,000 and we know that with every one's help she will surely reach that goal. In addition, she was recently recognized by *Pearle Vision Center and Give the Gift of Sight* for her outstanding contribution and in appreciation for helping the world see.



Stephanie has worked very hard on this project, so she would like to thank some very important people that helped her get this far. A special thanks to our Aunt Carmen Torres, who is collecting used glasses for us in Pennsylvania. Our Uncle Carlos Torres, who is collecting used glasses for us in New York. Father Dave of St. Matthew the Apostle Church in Randolph, N.J., our grandparents Anthony and Julia Toledo who are collecting glasses for us in Florida and a **very, very** special thanks to Mr. Cristobal Sotolongo and Carnival Cruise Line.

Upcoming and Continuing Projects

We will continue to collect used prescription eyeglasses for Pearl Vision. If anyone has used prescription glasses that are no longer being used, please forward them to us.

We would like to continue to help the Randolph Animal pound. If anyone is interested in helping us with this project please contact us. They are in great need of cat food.

We will also continue to knit for the needy children in our area. If anyone is interested in knitting a baby item, please contact us.

We would very much like to help the *Morris County Office of Temporary Assistance* collect back-to-school supplies for children in need. Please contact us if you are able to donate any new backpacks or school supplies or visit our website for more details.

The Hope House has asked us to help with a very special project of making Duduza (comfort) Dolls for the children in Uganda. If anyone is interested in making these very special dolls, please contact us for the pattern or visit our website.



We will also be participating in The Hope House 3rd Annual "Share the Hope, Walk for your Cause" on October 4th. A 4-mile fundraising walkathon to raise money for Hope House clients. If anyone is interested in being a walker, sponsor, or financial supporter please contact us as soon as possible.

Thanks again to everyone for your continued interest and support. Together we can make a difference.