

Work in Progress Update

March 1, 2005

Dear Friends:

**Jeremiah 29:11: For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”**

The Jeremiah Project, a new and exciting part of Neighborhood Ministries, is built on this promise that God gave to his people. We are applying it directly to the young adults that have grown up here in our ministry community.

Led by Allison Nagle (a former 2-yr intern) since we received a grant last October, this effort focuses on young adults between the ages of 16-21 who are primarily Latino and adjudicated (have a record in the juvenile justice system). So far, 39 young people (we will have 75 total) have been screened into the program and set up with vital services that they need to see the promise of Jeremiah 29 fulfilled in their lives. Manuela Sheehan, a member of our church who has a long history of working with adjudicated youth, is also staffing this program.

Here are some of the components:

- **GED Class:** Katie Wenzel is our part-time GED coordinator. Four days a week, 10 students are getting ready to take their GED, which will mean that they have completed high school. Some of the students have been out of school for 5-6 years. These young people are excited and working hard! Two girls are having an attendance contest to challenge other to come and they are in their 3<sup>rd</sup> week. Another student, after only 2 weeks, announced, “This is my school! I love it! I’m going to finish school here.” Each month, prizes and trips are awarded for attendance and completion of assignments.
  - ❖ Katie is looking for “GED Partners” – adult volunteers – to work with a student on homework each week. Give us a call!
- **Re-enrollment in high school:** Many of our teenagers have dropped out of high school. We are giving them the support they need to get back into school and work toward completing their diploma (8 so far!). They have a renewed sense of hope about the future!
- **Life-skills group counseling:** A group of teenage girls is meeting with a therapist to learn how to deal with conflict, how to deal with men/boyfriends, how to have healthy relationships with your children and family, and how to develop a sense



of self. After the first meeting ended, one of the girls said, "This is counseling?" What they are learning is having a deep effect on their lives already.

We are finalizing the details with a local partner organization to provide job skills training on our site to many of the teenagers in the Jeremiah Project. Students in the GED class will be able to attend a 40 hour class preparing them for a job. If they complete the class, they will receive \$200 and this organization will place them in a part-time job!

This is not just a program, but fits into our holistic, lifetime approach to relationships with these young adults. We are seeing the promise of Jeremiah 29:11 made real in these young lives. God has a hope and a plan for each one of them. Our long term goal, indigenous leadership development, is really happening!

Miracles are happening. Who knows what surprises God has in store for all of us through what He demonstrates in them? We appreciate your support and prayers.

#### Upcoming Events:

- NM Golf Classic, March 21 at FireRock CC (call to sign up!)
- Easter Festival: March 26 for the whole family!
- Spring Parents' Store: April 23
- Phoenix Urban Leaders: April 21

Please call for details: 602-252-5225

  
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