

Life STORIES



Because of You

Well after 9 years, I can finally say that my monthly support is completely full! Between the monthly gifts and the float that has been built up through one-time giving, **we are blessed with a full pay check for the next two years!**

We sign up for this when we choose to work here, but it doesn't let the stress of inconsistent pay checks go away. Your sacrifice allows me to actually focus on the job at hand, rather than making sure I can get paid.

This is an investment you're making. Thank you for seeing the value in the next generation. Thank you for releasing us to guide and care for them. And thank you for trusting us. Wishing you a very Merry Christmas!

Evan & Rebecca

BOOT CAMP!

Everyone's favourite time of the year... BOOT CAMP!

We made a huge pivot in our programming schedule and moved our winter retreat a little earlier in the year. We wanted to capitalize a little bit on some warmer weather, as well as build solid relationships moving forward through the year. **This retreat helps our volunteers forge strong relationships with our students, but also, helps our older students build into the lives of the younger students.** Pivoting this retreat to an earlier time, allows those bonds to begin earlier, giving them something to build off of, rather than ending the year on a positive note. **We've already seen this paying off, we're just hoping it continues to build.**

This retreat is about feeding them well, letting them have fun and keeping them safe; things they miss out on compared to other students. The amount of food they eat is unbelievable. **For one weekend, they get healthy meals they can eat to their hearts content and they take advantage of it fully.** Essentially, this weekend is a hockey tournament or a weekend getaway all about having fun. Most affluent kids have this experience through dance, sports or even art. This is our opportunity to give them that same kind of experience. **A weekend full of fun where they can just be kids.** Their home lives can be drastically different from this weekend away, so **it's a great opportunity to see these hardened kids come out of their shell when safe. It's trust given that we don't take likely.**

In total, we had 55 students trust us and come out for the weekend and out of that number, 25 had never attended. We just hope we can build on that trust, earning the opportunity to speak life into them when the time comes. Also, notice the orange shirts. **They appreciated the opportunity to honour their elders by having an orange shirt.**

"Boot camp was amazing, thanks for taking me!"
(This girl never talks. Might have been the first thing I've heard her say.)

With a pandemic complicating the way we do fundraisers, we decided to move away from a traditional banquet and towards a movie/film. **We worked with a local film producer and created "Hope Rises" a documentary that looks into some of the more difficult moments during the last year.** There were consistent challenges that we had to overcome. Between the changing regulations and the fluctuating cases we had to be ready for anything, while wondering if our students were going to be ok or not. It took a toll on all us of mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually, but through the mess and the uncertainty we always had hope. **In the down times there was always something bringing us back to hope as we saw God working.**

Please feel free to watch the film if you have a spare hour. Inside this letter there should be a little business card with a QR code you can scan, this will take you right to our film. If that doesn't work for you, **just search up "Hope Rises YFC Saskatoon" on YouTube and it should bring you right to it!** Last years film "Hope Lives" shows what we do and what all of the programs look like as they are running. This year's film shows how things went, while we were trying to manage everything in the midst of the pandemic. We felt this was the best way to serve our partners donating and sacrificing to help us work. **This was what we felt led to do by Jesus; how we could serve with excellence to bring hope and offer belonging to our work. To follow Jesus and Serve with Excellence to Bring Hope and Offer belonging.**



One of my interviews during the film!



The poster for our documentary!



Our Staff team at the Premiere!

My People

Look at all of our fantastic students we get to see every week! These are the faces that we see every Wednesday at YFCHL! **Consistently we are bringing out around 60 students to our program.** These people could be anywhere and everywhere all over Saskatoon, but **every Wednesday they come and hang out with us where we bring hope, have fun and offer belonging in a safe community (YFCHL mission statement).**

We've had quite a bit of fun getting to know some of these new personalities that have been added to our community. **There is still a large percentage of indigenous youth as well as a few more group home kids than we have had in the past. Although this creates new challenges for us, it gives us a lot of hope as we become the safe space they look forward to every Wednesday!** Because a significant number of them are young, it gives us hope for life change.

When they come into our program under 12 we can show them a different way. It's not about indoctrinating them with something as much as just loving them. **When it comes to the various trauma issues that we are working with consistently, there is a lot of damage control that needs to be done. Dealing with intergenerational trauma is a long game.** We believe that the beginning of that is trust and love, once they feel

those two things we can move to guidance. **When you've grown up with authority figures that manipulate, abuse or use you, things like respect and trust do not come easy.** We earn every little ounce of those things. **Whether through good behaviour or bad, it's as though our students are constantly testing us. "Are you here for me? Or for you?"** This new group is reminding us about this constantly.

Late September, we were making teams and we had no clue what we're doing. We just didn't know any of these new students or their skill levels. **There was a moment where I prayed, thanking God for the many personalities that we didn't yet know, but would soon.** That in a few months we'd joke about when we didn't know these kids. Now after Boot Camp, we've made it a little ways down that road with more to come. **They're becoming our people and it's a beautiful thing.**

