

WESTERN MICHIGAN TEEN CHALLENGE

January 2017

440 Pontaluna Road | Muskegon, MI 49444 | 231-798-7927

Dear Friends,

It has been a privilege to serve God at Western Michigan Teen Challenge in 2016. There have been so many victories and successes during the whole year. Proverbs 16:3 is a great encouragement to me. "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts (or plans) shall be established." We are laborers together with Christ and His plans have flourished.

- First I want to mention the many souls that have been delivered and set free from sins of addictions to alcohol, drugs, crime, violence, immorality, lying, cheating, stealing, and many others.
- Many have graduated and taken their place in society and churches as stable Christians and productive citizens.
- Many parents are thankful to have their sons and daughters back as sound, trustworthy, and constructive people.
- Not only have students' lives been changed, but in many cases whole families have come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- Much remodeling, repairs and improvements have been and are being made on all our facilities. Our dorms are being totally remodeled with new heating, lights, beds, dressers and insulation.
- There is much going on at the center, and you are being a big part of it through your prayers, caring and financial support. Thank you so much.

We travel to churches every week holding Teen Challenge rallies which include singing, testimonies and ministry from the word of God. We come for a free-will offering. If you would like us to come to your church, call us at 231.798.7927 and ask for Doris or Brenna.

November and December 2016 Graduates

TESTIMONIES CONTINUED ON BACK



Brad Aldred Frank Colantuono, Jr. Nicole Rentzel Karie Stewart Casey Russell Josh Irons Leon Anderson Dave Gibson Vincent Kloes Zach Noel

Nicole Rentzel - I was raised in a very loving home, both of my parents being very successful. I had hearing aids and ADHD as a child, so the enemy told me I was different. However, I excelled in sports and waterskiing at a young age. I found my identity wrapped in sports, achievement, and perfectionism. I became consumed by the fear, doubt, and denial of perfectionism. I thought body image would be the answer to what I longed for, so at the age of 18, I was a full blown bulimic. From there I turned to alcohol, which escalated to IV drug use, both Meth and Heroin, crack cocaine and anything else to escape the realities of everyday life. I was so focused on what I wasn't. After substituting one thing for another, I ended up in 9 rehabs, mental institutions, had several jail sentences, suicide attempts and overdoses. By God's grace, I am now graduating from Teen Challenge. I thank God for my 14 year battle with bulimia and self-destructive behaviors, because He has turned them into opportunities for me to develop a greater dependence on Him. In one short year, God has delivered me from all bondages, restored my health and my family, and transformed me from the inside out. God has truly taken what the enemy meant to destroy me and turned it into something beautiful to serve others. Jesus is the stronghold of my life today. There is no substitute for Jesus. He is the love I was so desperately seeking, and in Him I am made complete. I stand on Romans 8:28, "...in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."



Leon Anderson - At the age of 16, I started living the party life. I thought it was amazing until I realized I couldn't do without being drunk or high. I made a few attempts to quit, which always lasted a few days. Then I was worse than ever before, and this soon led to IV heroin, meth and anything else I could put in a needle. I overdosed a year ago, and by the grace of God, I'm still alive. I'm so thankful for what God has brought me out of. God has given me hope and joy since I have been here. The verse I stand on is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

With anticipation, we look forward to 2017 and all that God is going to be doing this year. Your continued prayers and financial support is greatly appreciated. Thank you for helping us reach the desperate with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As there are many, many overdosing on drugs these days, you are helping us help the helpless. Thank you for your love for God and people. "Only one life will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last." Thank you! We love you.

Yours serving Christ,
Phil & Michelle McClain

Phil & Michelle McClain



November and December 2016 Graduate Testimonies



David Gibson - I grew up being homeschooled in a conservative Christian family, so I was very sheltered from the world. My dad committed suicide when I was 13, so my mom, who was my teacher, had to support the family, which meant I had to go to a public high school. I started hanging out with the "wrong crowd". Marijuana & alcohol became socially acceptable. As I became an adult harder drugs didn't seem so bad, but after a while my life went downhill. I had to be high, constantly on something, just to cope with life. The family I was living with suggested Teen Challenge, so I agreed and soon found myself walking through those doors. I've been able to develop an intimate relationship with Jesus here, and He's transformed my life. I know now that God sees the beauty in the process, and it's a lifelong journey. He's used Teen Challenge to get me back on track and to rekindle the fire inside of me.

Josh Irons - I was raised in a good home with great parents, but as I became an adult, I started making bad choices. IV use of Methamphetamine took over my life. It finally hit me just how out of control my life had gotten, when I found myself facing four felonies and 3-6 years in prison. I knew I needed to do something. My mom had been pushing for me to come to Western Michigan Teen Challenge for years, so I decided to give it a chance. I can honestly say it has been the best decision I have ever made. I give the Lord all the credit for my life being completely transformed since coming here.



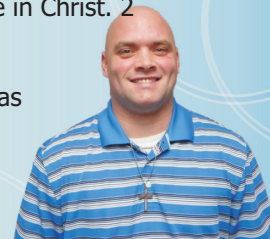
Casey Russell - The end of my freshman year I moved from Texas to Sparta, TN. That's when things started on a downward spiral for me. I started hustling and living the street lifestyle. Nothing else mattered! This brought a lot of legal trouble and a 10 year prison sentence. "What I always feared has happened to me. What I dreaded has come true." Job 3:25. But God had a plan for my life! He used what the devil meant to harm me for His glory. This year at TC has been the most amazing, yet hardest thing I've ever done. God is restoring my family and my daughter back to me. I give God all the glory, honor and praise, because without Him, I'm nothing! I stand on 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.'" Today, I'm proud to be the daughter of the Most High!

Karie Stewart - Growing up fatherless filled me with rejection, no self-worth and a ton of self-pity. It created a desire to escape problems and seek love and acceptance. I looked, and what I found was meth and heroin. At 26, I abandoned my son and my family, and I chased after all the wrong things. For the last 10 years of my life, I've sold my body, my dignity and my soul to stay high. Cooking meth to support my habit consumed me. Last October, my boyfriend blew himself up and burned our house down. With nowhere to go and no one to turn to, I came to Teen Challenge. I was desperate for an answer, desperate for help! Once I accepted Jesus and surrendered everything to Him, I changed. For the first time in my life, I feel genuine acceptance and unconditional love. I feel a release from the guilt and shame of my past. "...if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature..." 2 Corinthians 5:17. He changed me from the inside out, giving me a new heart and new desires! Thanks to Jesus Christ I have hope and a future. He gives me victory over sin! I want to live the rest of my life making the best of it for the Lord. Wow! It has been an amazing experience getting to know the Lord Jesus Christ. Finding my identity in Him has renewed my life. Wow, what a life.



Zach Noel - I started with alcohol and smoking. At 21, I was introduced to opiates and then I ended up in jail. I cried out to the Lord, and found my way to Teen Challenge. Here the Lord has set me free and is filling my life with love, joy and peace. I know I have a bright future in Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:7 says, "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

Brad Aldred - Life difficulties and hardship brought me to a place where I was diagnosed with several stress related health problems. Only after multiple suicide attempts did I know something had to change, and I came to Teen Challenge. The Lord has delivered me completely from all of my health issues and my life is moving forward with the Lord today. "A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." ~Proverbs 16:9



Vincent Kloes - I grew up in the A/G Church and eventually got engaged to a woman who ended up breaking my heart. I rapidly started using drugs such as ecstasy, marijuana and alcohol. I drank excessively for 11 years and ended up living on the streets for 3 years, robbing people to feed my habit. My family let me come home on the condition that I stayed sober. I eventually fell again and wanted to end it all. I took a 12 gauge shotgun, held it to my head and pulled the trigger. The bullet got jammed. I was stubborn to realize it, but God was with me then and every moment before. Thanks to Teen Challenge, God is my Savior, and I am now a child of God who is His servant forever. Amen!!

Frank Colantuono, Jr. - In my 40's, I lost everything I'd worked for. Consumed by an opiate addiction, I found myself in a jail cell facing drug charges which carried up to 20 yrs. in prison. Everyone had abandoned me, and in my loneliest and darkest hour, I cried out to God. He heard my cries and led me to Teen Challenge. Being here has totally changed my life and set me on a new course for life in Christ Jesus.



Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth...