



# Letting Their Light Shine

The Erie City Mission Youth Ministry team believes that servant leadership is more than just a title; it is a demonstration of how to lead well. This July, the Urban University program put leadership into action as four students and six mentors embarked on their first stateside mission trip to Bean Station, TN.

Urban University (UU), in partnership with Taco Bell and Charter Foods LLC, spent a week in Bean Station, serving the youth and staff at Kingswood Home for Children, a private residential home for children (5-18) who have experienced abandonment, abuse, neglect, or displacement.

The theme for this mission trip and the program's summer semester is, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine." And shine, they did!

Over the course of seven days, UU students and mentors engaged in service projects, led leadership lessons, played activities and games with the children, enjoyed worship and prayer services as a group, and built community.

"This trip was life-changing, not just for our students, but for our adult mentors, as well," shares RoseMarie Croce, director of youth ministries. "It provided the opportunity to gain perspective, exercise empathy, impart leadership, and practice silence and solitude to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit."

Service learning is a key component of the Urban University program. Throughout the year, students participate in a number of service projects that help them understand and develop themselves as leaders of character. Going on this mission trip allowed students to take their leadership on the road where they would be a witness to others and become catalysts for change outside of their community.

"I am thankful to God for compelling and equipping this team to serve with us. We pray that it is only the beginning of a long relationship," shared Will Martin, pastor and executive



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**"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." - Matthew 5:14-16 NIV**



## A Message from the CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



Benjamin D. Wilson, Ed.D.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Staff at the Erie City Mission, we want to thank you, our donors, community partners, and prayer warriors, for your continued generosity and for the outpouring of blessings.

We are so grateful to be a part of the Erie community--a community that continually supports the programs and services we offer.

Because of your generosity and through the power of Jesus Christ, our Mission continues to be a safe and welcoming environment for men, women, and children who are struggling with hunger, homelessness, and desperation.

The Board of Directors and Staff would also like to thank Darrell A. Smith, former Chief Executive Officer (CEO), for his 18.5 years of service to the Erie City Mission and wish him the best of luck as he enters semi-retirement. Although Darrell has retired, he will be working with the Mission as a consultant as we prayerfully seek the 15th CEO to lead the Erie City Mission. We wish Darrell and his family all the best.

I hope you'll take some time to read this edition of *The Beacon* and learn about the transformational stories that are taking place. You'll read about the amazing opportunity our Urban University students had this summer, celebrate alongside our newest graduates, and learn what's happening at the Mission this Fall. There are so many ways to get involved--and we hope and pray you will consider taking advantage of these opportunities.

Thank you again for your prayers and support.  
This is Our City, Our Mission!

## A Celebration of New Life!

Save the Date - Thursday, October 26

Join us on Thursday, October 26, for an evening of mingling and heavy hors d'oeuvres, as we celebrate this year's stories of hope and new life.

Our annual celebration will look a little different this year. Be sure to mark your calendars for this one-night-only event. Invitation with details to follow soon.

Interested in sponsoring this event? Contact Erin Layden in Development to learn how you can support the event through sponsorship and advertisement opportunities. Call 814-452-4421 x234 or email [erin.layden@eriemission.org](mailto:erin.layden@eriemission.org)



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## Upcoming Events

**October 19** – New Life Program, Men's Graduation  
**October 26** – Erie City Mission, Annual Celebration of New Life 2023  
**November 20** – Erie City Mission, Thanksgiving Turkey Bag Distribution  
**November 22** – Erie City Mission, Public Thanksgiving Lunch  
**November 25** – Small Business Saturday at the Thrifty Shopper  
**December 4** – Koinonia Men's Christmas Party  
**December 23** – Erie City Mission, Public Christmas Lunch  
**January 4, 2024** – New Life Program, Men's Graduation  
**February 13, 2024** – Knockout Homelessness 15, Bayfront Convention Center

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director of Kingswood Home for Children. "Our Kingswood kids and my family were blessed by their generosity, their servants' hearts, their kindness, their prayers, their engaging personalities, and their commitment to excellence."

The Urban University staff, mentors, and students would like to thank the many individuals and organizations who generously supported their efforts on this mission trip through financial giving and fervent prayer. They could not have shined without you!

### Are you ready to become a leader?

Urban University's fall semester kicks off on Monday, September 11. If you are in 7th-12th grade and consider yourself an influencer or want to learn how to become one, you need to check out Urban University. Get hands-on experience in the arts, math, sciences, and visual media creation--all while developing your skills as an influencer.

**Enroll in Urban University today at [www.eriemission.org/urban-university](http://www.eriemission.org/urban-university).**

## Lace up the Gloves!

The Erie City Mission's signature fundraiser, Knockout Homelessness (KOH) is scheduled for Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie.

Join us for our 15th year, as local celebrity boxers go up against the legendary Bizarro family all in an effort to raise funds and awareness for our Samaritan Care Emergency Shelter.

Consider lacing up your gloves and joining in the fight against homelessness as we prepare for Round 15 of KOH! Sponsorships and advertisements are available now, and we are in need of items for our basket raffle.

Contact Erin Layden by calling 814-452-4421 ext 234 or by email at [erin.layden@eriecitymission.org](mailto:erin.layden@eriecitymission.org).



## The Power of a Meal

Serving a warm meal—with a smile that conveys value and dignity—is one of the best ways for us to show the love of Jesus. It can ignite hope and become the first step to a new start.

This holiday season, the Mission will serve over 24,000 meals to men, women, and children. But it's not just about meals; it's about the hope that these meals bring to our guests. Your generosity will help us to continue this important mission. For men and women who are suffering from homelessness and battling addictions, a meal can represent the first step toward a better life—a transformed life.

Join us this holiday season in bringing hope to those who are hurting.

### Thanksgiving Turkey Bag Distribution

Help us fill 1,200 bags for our annual Thanksgiving outreach by picking up a bag(s) starting September 1. Not able to fill a bag? Consider donating money toward the purchase of turkeys.

### Prep and Serve a Holiday Meal

Join our volunteer team during the holiday months. Prep and serve a breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

### Bake a Holiday Dessert

Donate your favorite holiday pie or dessert for our guests to enjoy during the holiday months. Food donations can be dropped off at the kitchen doors on 11th Street.

### Christmas Caroling

Spread Christmas cheer to our public lunch guests through caroling. Schedule your singing or musical group in the month of December.

Contact our main office at 814-452-4421 for more information on how to bring hope this holiday season.



## Celebrating Our Recent Graduates

August 25 marked the latest graduation ceremony for the Erie City Mission's New Life Program for men, a long-term recovery program for those battling alcoholism and substance abuse. The program, which typically lasts nine months, offers regular counseling, Bible study, addiction classes, and the recovery tools needed to claim the new life in Christ that they have been given.

We are so proud of our recent New Life Program graduates! Join us in congratulating: Chris P. and Zach T. who graduated on May 25; and Patrick M., Cody B., Charles K., Lord M., and Anthony G. on August 10. These seven men put in the hard work to change their lives and now they have all moved on to the next stage of victorious living. Congratulations!



# WE ARE *hiring*

CHECK OUT THE JOB POSTINGS ON OUR WEBSITE  
AND APPLY ONLINE

## Join Our Team!

We are looking for dedicated, creative, and Christ-oriented people to join us in making the Erie City Mission even better!

When you join the Erie City Mission team, you'll join a diverse and faith-based environment where you are welcomed, engaged, and challenged. If this sounds like a good fit for you or someone you know, then we encourage you to view our current listings for employment and apply.

### Open Positions

#### Administration

Chief Executive Officer (FT)

#### Men's Ministry

Men's Desk Supervisor (FT, 2nd shift)

Men's Desk Supervisor (PT, 2nd shift weekends)

#### Food Service

Food Service Cook/Driver (FT)

#### Development

Development Associate (FT, 32.5hrs/wk)

#### Women's Ministry

House Advocate (PT, weekends)

To view a full job description and apply, visit us online at  
[www.eriecitymission.org/contact-us/employment-opportunities](http://www.eriecitymission.org/contact-us/employment-opportunities).

# THANK YOU

FOR SUPPORTING OUR  
GIVING DAY ♥



## Erie Gives 2023 Highlights

Tuesday, August 8, marked the 13th annual Erie Gives Day, the biggest day of giving in the Erie community--and just like every year before it, those who support the Erie City Mission showed up in a big way!

We are so grateful for the outpouring of support. When we ask, you always answer the call. We appreciate you so much.

Check out the highlights below from this year's event.



Erie Gives 2023 raised a total of \$8,265,478. Of the \$8.2 million, you gifted the Mission \$208,635.



This year, Erie Gives received donations from 32,471 donors. 1,055 of those donors gave to the Mission, putting us at the top of the board for number of donors in 2023.



The number of donors who gave to the Mission during Erie Gives blew us away, with 699 of you making a digital donation via credit card, and 356 of you making a donation by check.



Starting at 8 a.m. on August 8, the race was on. You kept the Mission in the top five for most of the day, allowing us to finish at #4 in overall donations.

*Numbers are considered preliminary numbers until the official Erie Gives press conference on September 8. Amount raised does not include prorated match.*

## Because you gave...

**39,820**

Breakfast and lunch meals were prepared and distributed to the public and our residents.

**58**

Men received rehabilitation, recovery, and shelter.

**4**

Women received rehabilitation, recovery, and shelter at Grace House.

**21**

Crisis requests were fulfilled through our thrift stores.

**2,938**

Volunteer hours were contributed.

**4,412**

Safe overnights were provided in our Samaritan Care Shelter for men.

### Giving Statistics for April - June 2023