

In my work at Central Outreach and Advocacy Center, I have come to cherish the opportunity that I have daily to share in the lives of others. Unfortunately, all too often this means listening to the frustrations of those who are not able to get the services that they need or watching others struggle to better their situation while only taking baby steps in the right direction. With many people we are able to find a way to get them what they need either through our agency or another social service site. The hardest part of my job is saying “no” when there simply are not enough resources available. Yet, on the other hand, I have a hard time describing the incredible joy that I feel when someone shares their successes with me and I am able to see the great improvement in their situation. One of the greatest examples of this is a gentleman whom I have mentioned briefly in previous newsletters. During one of my first weeks at Central he came up to my desk, even though I was not meeting with him for services and had never met him before, and shared the wonderful news that he had been clean from drugs for four months. A few weeks later he relayed a message to me through another volunteer that he had joined his church choir and was still doing really well. After not seeing him for a couple of months, I had the opportunity to meet with him again today. He once again openly shared his story. He has now been off of drugs for eight months and is still active in the church choir, which kept him very busy over the holidays. He was lucky enough to get into an affordable apartment since I last saw him. He and his wife are even working on restoring their relationship. Most incredible of all was hearing him talk about how it was Christ that transformed his life and how proud he is to be able to share his faith with his nine-year-old son. It is an amazing experience to see God at work as I did nothing to instigate this relationship, which has been so powerful for me. I consider it a privilege to simply provide the listening ear for such a testimony to the transforming power of God’s love. It is the experiences like this one that give hope to situations that are often bleak.

Outside of work I have found some new ways to get involved in the community. One of my housemates and I have joined a women’s winter Ultimate Frisbee league and play games every Saturday morning. Over the Martin Luther King holiday we chaperoned a group of boys from our neighborhood at the Hawks game against the Celtics. The boys had lunch provided by Chik-fil-a, met with the Hawks announcers and were visited by the mascots during the game.

In the next month I am looking forward to spending community days visiting a Christian community Jubilee Partners, and going on a civil rights tour of Birmingham. In February we will also start meeting with someone who will work with us on vocational discernment.

Thank you for all of your support and encouragement. As always, I can be reached at aliciabwilson@gmail.com or 683 Grant St. SE, Atlanta, GA 30315.

Blessings,
Alicia