

Issue 7, December 8, 2016

OUR HOUSE

IN FOCUS



CAFSI

Meet Marian Oliver and
Her Family

Independence
through Literacy

Introducing our Social
Work Interns



HUMANS OF OUR HOUSE

Marian Oliver

Marian Oliver entered the CAFSI program nearly a year ago. She was facing eviction, forcing her and the six children in her care to move into the home of a relative. None of the children are her kin, she has taken in from their biological mother who is unable to care for them. The children range from ages 4 to 14, and Marian has raised each since infancy and is currently the legal guardian of the oldest two.

When Marian entered the program, she wanted to work on saving money and improving her literacy. "I've benefited greatly from the CAFSI Program. I've gotten back to school, working on saving, learning how to be my child's best advocate, and dealing with different situations as they arise. I've really enjoyed the parenting classes because you never really know what you're going through until you know what other people are going through...I've really learned from other parents." Despite facing numerous barriers, Marian continues to provide stability and support to her children.

OUR TEAM

Meagan Bowen
MSW Intern

Team Member Since: 2016
Hometown: Little Rock, AR



Marian takes advantage of the services provided at the Career Center, including Conflict Management led by Meagan Bowen, our University of Arkansas at Little Rock Masters Social Work Intern.

Meagan's Conflict Management program has been instrumental for Marian to create strategies for managing conflicts. *"I'm learning how to reflect on situations as they arise, learning how we can talk to each other and not hold stuff in."* When she entered the CAFSI program, conflicts at school were creating unrest for her children, and through the strategies she's learned, her family has been able to better deal with any conflicts.

Meagan graduated from the University of Central Arkansas with a Bachelor's in Psychology and is currently working toward her Master's of Social Work at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She hopes to play a part in changing lives for the better during her internship at Our House. Outside of work she enjoys playing tennis and spending time with her husband and three dogs.

"It has been such an amazing experience watching Marian, and all the Our House clients I work with, grow and become better versions of themselves. I'm lucky to work in a place that empowers clients to be the best they can be."

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Literacy Action

Marian is working with Jenifer Hamel from Literacy Action of Central Arkansas every week to increase her ability to read and write. Jenifer works with Marian every Wednesday morning, and has been seeing an exciting amount of improvement in Marian's literacy skills. Marian says that tutoring is still hard, "I'm working on vowels and phonics, but reading has been getting better, but I still need work on spelling and math." The main motivation for improving her literacy and reading is to be able to help her children with their homework, "*They'll say, 'Momma, you can't help,' but I want to be able to help.*"





HUMANS OF OUR HOUSE

Marian Oliver

Marian and the kids are currently staying with a family member as they wait for a house to become available that could fit everyone and accept a housing voucher. Marian's CAFSI Case manager, Chris Ramsey, helped her fill out the application, but Marian hopes to soon be able to fill out any additional applications independently. Marian is determined to continue to save money, budget better, find suitable housing for her family, and maintain stability after exiting the CAFSI program. Along with her case manager, the classes, groups, and volunteer support offered through the Career Center have been crucial in Marian's progress and her future.





OUR HOUSE CAREER CENTER

PARTNER APPRECIATION



[Click here to learn more about
Literacy Action of Central Arkansas](#)

Jenifer Hamel

Jenifer Hamel from Literacy Action of Central Arkansas volunteers in the Career Center and works with Marian weekly to improve her literacy. For Jenifer, volunteering is very personal—she has a Masters in teaching ESL, and imagined she'd be teaching English around the world, but returned to Little Rock to take care of her mother. She sees teaching adults to read as the most valuable work she could be doing, other than caring for her mother. "I personally love reading. I also know that higher levels of literacy for adults lead to increased income and higher quality of life. I want to help adults unlock things that inspire them." Jenifer and Marian have been working together for weeks, and Jenifer tries to be as flexible as possible in meeting Marian's literary needs- sometimes they'll go over the kid's homework, other times they'll go over Bible passages. "We're working through different words, especially poetic language and getting to the core of what the words really mean."