

Victory Village Christian Academy

Fifty-five Years of Showing God's Unconditional, Healing Love to Teen Age Girls

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Unto Children's Children

The Apostle John wrote, *I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children are following the truth.*

- III John 4

Our hearts are always blessed when we hear from former students! Of course they are not really our own children, but we develop a special kinship when they are here, and we want to encourage them and their parents. Students are here temporarily in a very important time of life. We have the privilege of introducing them to Jesus, nurturing and helping them on to what God has for them next. It is especially encouraging when we have second generation students, letting us know parents trust VVCA when sending their own daughters here.

Alicia Halling-Smith, from the Northeast Kansas County of Doniphan, came to Victory Village as a student in 1982. She later married **Todd Smith** (pictured with her here). Their daughter **Kelsey** then came to VVCA in 2005.



Kelsey married **Levi Schultz**, and they have one son, **Otto**, age 11 and in the 6th grade at Wathena, also in Doniphan County. Levi has been in the military for 25

years, serving in the Army, Air Force, and is in the Air National Guard. Their Christian faith is a very important part of their lives. This picture was taken two years ago when **Otto** was confirmed in their family's historic Church,

St. Benedicts, located near Bendena in Doniphan County.



Kelsey works for the Department of Veteran Affairs. Levi and Kelsey just celebrated their 12th wedding anniversary. They also have a Doniphan County farm, where they raise cattle, goats and bees. We thank God for this family, and for the privilege that was ours for whatever help might have been given during both Alicia's and Kelsey's time at VVCA.



Our VVCA Saints Basketball team traveled to Abilene to compete in a two-day tournament, marking the end of the 2024 basketball season.. Participating in team sports helps teach our girls valuable lessons in sportsmanship, along with responsibility and leadership. It also keeps them physically active and healthy. We appreciate the girls' hard work and dedication throughout the season, and we want to continue supporting and encouraging our young athletes.

We have many Churches who support Victory Village Christian Academy, and during the year we are privileged to visit a few of these. The girls sing and give testimonies, while we share words of encouragement, challenge and gratitude for the Church's support.



Our last visit was to the **Hoffnungsaue Mennonite Church**, located in the country east of Buhler.

Pastor **Warren Stanton** and wife **Yvonne** have invited us to the **First Baptist Church of Anthony** to share in their Sunday morning service on April 6, at 11 am. Their Church has supported VVCA for many years.



We are happy to announce that the **First Baptist Church** of Ellinwood has decided to support VVCA with a monthly donation. This fine North American Baptist Church is pastored by **Rev. David Wesner**, whose father, the late **Rev. Edgar Wesner**, preached Bill's ordination sermon at the **Calvary Baptist Church** of Hoisington in 1966. David's son **Rev. Josh Wesner** is pastor of the **Emmanuel Baptist Church** of Marion, where we pastored for three years, and where **Heart Ministries** began. We welcome First Baptist Church of Ellinwood as a monthly supporter of our Heart Ministries family.

We would like more Churches to begin supporting Victory Village Christian Academy. Let us know if your Church is interested, and if possible we would like to visit and share the vision for this ministry and how your Church can become more involved. Each Church chooses the way they wish to support. Most send a gift monthly, but some give every three months, and others periodically. We appreciate every one of them so much.

A Special Thought from Carole

As Christians, children of God, we must learn to get our strength and courage from God's promises and provisions. ***There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. (1 John 4:18)*** Jesus taught us that there is no room for fear, worry, hate and selfishness, if our hearts are filled with love for God. Love is the first fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:12)

***His faithfulness fails not; it meets us each new day,
With guidance for every new step of the way.
New grace for new trials; new trust for old fears,
New patience for bearing the wrongs of the years.
New strength for new burdens; new courage for old,
New faith for whatever the day may unfold;
As fresh for each need as the dew on the sod;
Oh, new every morning, the mercies of God!***

-Annie Johnson Flint

It's Garden Time Again!

Our Victory Village Garden is a very important part of the ministry. The grocery bill is cut down considerably by the hard work put into raising a garden. We still have some corn and peas left in the freezer from last year, as well as potatoes that should last until this year's crop is harvested. It's been over 50 years since our late Board member and Dorm builder **Harold Froese** dropped his plow into the prairie sod and said, "Let's plant watermelons!" The sandy soil of our one acre garden spot has since been worked into a nice sandy loam, and the results of each year's garden is the cooperative work of many hands.



Ed Koehn from the Garden View Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, of rural Halstead, brings a large truck load of manure which enriches the soil with an ample supply of nitrogen. **Our Students** also have an important role in planting, picking and processing the produce, and the hard work in the Kansas' sun is a very good therapy for both body and soul. We like to depend on the rain for

moisture, but weather can be variable, so we have one well reserved just for irrigation when needed.



Our Maintenance Director, **Scott Hilburn**, supervises the planting, cultivating and harvesting, and makes good use of the new tractor that was given to the ministry last year. We really appreciate that wonderful and very useful gift.

Living Dangerously In the Hands of God

By Dr. Ahneka Valdois, VVCA Principal

I have a picture in my office that Tish painted, and it has the words on it, "Living Dangerously in the hands of God," an apropos sentiment for this season of my life. Every day is an adventure. When I first decided to apply to work at Victory Village. It was the results of weeks of prayer. My online teaching position was being eliminated, and I knew I was going to need, not only another source of income, but also some way to serve others. God gave me the community at Victory Village, and I have learned so much from them.



When in that initial interview, I was asked what position I was interested in, I said, "I can teach, I can cook, I can work as dorm staff, I can fill any position." Little did I know how much that versatility would be called upon. In these last few months, I have worked almost every position, covering shortfalls in staffing. I am so grateful to God that He brought me here in this season so that I can contribute to His work in this way. Slowly, God is sending us the staff we need to fill those positions, and my focus has narrowed in on my conventional role as principal at the school. We've been very fortunate to have experienced teachers on staff who not only know what they are doing, but can also clue me in when I miss something. They deserve the credit for keeping the girls' education consistent and rigorous during this time of transition.

At the beginning of the semester, **Tish, Ashley** and I embarked on a journey. We didn't know what challenges we might face on the way, and I, for one, was not entirely sure I could surmount them, but I knew that God was in control, and I was confident that He would accomplish His will if we made ourselves available to be used. As that future has taken shape, I have seen His faithfulness and provision. Though the path may feel dangerous, we are never truly at risk when we are in the hands of God. We can depend on Him to fulfill His will, and even though we can't always know what His will is, we can know that it is always good. ***I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord....plans to give you a future and a hope.*** (Jeremiah 29:11)

Activity Day

Thursday afternoons offer a little change from the regular academic schedule, but some academics are still included.



Becky Valdois and husband **Eric** spent several years in China, working and doing mission work as they were able. Here is Becky teaching a class in Chinese.



Brenda Shenk of the Dorm Staff, comes from a tradition strong in acappella singing. She has organized a small choir, and they are making some beautiful music.

We appreciate all the gifts in kind we receive. Non-perishable foods, paper products and cleaning supplies are always needed. Thanks for these and for the financial gifts we need to pay our staff, utilities and other operational expenses. God miraculously provided for the replacement of the Chapel furnace, and we are grateful to those who made this possible.

Victory Village Christian Academy

MARCH, 2025



Our 56th Year of Changing Lives for Jesus Christ and His Kingdom; Jesus said, I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)

Our Mission is to serve as the hands and feet of Jesus. Inspired by His Gospel, we seek to make God's amazing love and compassion real to teenage girls, serving them without charge to their families by providing a clean and safe home, a good Christian and State approved education, nutritious meals, training in life skills, outdoor and indoor activities and sports, opportunities to be involved in the ministry of helping others, and an introduction to Jesus, who will love them forever. We affirm the worth of all, without prejudice, partiality or intimidation. **Victory Village Christian Academy** is located at 201 S Victory Road, Burrton, KS 67020, and is licensed by the State of Kansas, with qualified teachers and curriculum. Credits are transferable, high school diplomas are earned and recognized for entrance to colleges.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Bob Friesen, Chairman; Rev. Bill & Carole Cowell, Becky Goering, Gordon Goering, Dr. Jessica Kerzner, Rev. John Williams, Larry Chapman; **FOUNDERS & ADMINISTRATORS:** Bill & Carole Cowell; **DIRECTOR:** Tish Horton; **SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:** Ahneka Valdois; **DORMITORY SUPERVISOR:** Ashley Penner; **SECRETARY:** Barb Hedges; **MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR:** Scott Hilburn; **THERAPIST:** Dr. Jessica Kersner; **CASE MANAGER:** Kristi Colvin; **FUND RAISER:** Cayleena Pilgreen; **TEACHERS:** Marla Johnson, Jerry Nininger, Katy Nininger; **FULL TIME DORM STAFF:** Brenda Shenk, Briana Neel; **PART TIME & VOLUNTEERS:** Karey Weaver, Charis Valdois, Becky Valdois, Sarah Newberry, Emily Moore, Felicity Reed, Melissa King, Emma Foster, Shannon Fitzgerald, Leigha Ensz, Karen Chatterton, Brynn Foster, Sarah McKinnon, Grace Skiles; **ACCOUNTANT:** Wilma Engle.

VVCA IS SUPPORTED BY DONATIONS

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Our Organist, Karen Chatterton, is showing **Phica** some features of the pipe organ. We would like some of the girls to learn how to play this fine instrument.

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Emma Foster teaches Art, along with working in the Dorm. With the beginning of warmer weather, Emma sometimes takes her class outside.



Karen Chatterton teaches a class about different folk dances of the world, including Native American dances.



Robin Traffas is our Woodworking teacher, and the girls make some neat things under her direction. Robin formerly taught Woodworking at Hutchinson High School.

Thanks to all who pray for VVCA, to those who support the ministry financially, and to those who support with gifts in kind. May God bless you all.