



in focus

SUMMER 2023

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Josiah
white's

God Sightings.



THANK YOU, RON!

After five faithful years of service, Josiah White's CEO and President Ron Evans has announced his transition into retirement. Ron has been a transformational leader for Josiah White's and has guided the organization through several initiatives. Achieving programmatic standards of excellence, Josiah White's is now accredited by the Teaching Family Association (TFA), Council for Accreditation of Residential Facilities (CARF), Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), and Cognia. A newly added garden center and café provide meaningful work for Josiah White's students, and for the

past two years, Josiah White's was certified as one of the Best Christian Workplaces in America by BCWI®.

"On behalf of the entire organization, I would like to thank Ron for his leadership and contributions to Josiah White's," said Brandt Downing, President of the Board. "His dedication to the families we serve, our staff, and the community will be greatly missed, and we wish him all the best as he moves to the warmer climate of Alabama."

As we look back on everything that happened at and through Josiah White's throughout the

past five years, we are so grateful to Ron and his wife, Jane, for their dedication to the mission and ministry of Josiah White's.

Evans commented that he and Jane have made friendships at Josiah White's that will last an eternity. "We have grown to love the ministry that happens at Josiah White's as we offer hope and transformation through Christ to children and families," said Evans. "I am confident that Josiah White's will continue to thrive under new leadership, and I look forward to seeing its success in the years to come."





Where Do You See God?

In our staff devotions, we often share “God sightings,” instances where we have seen God at work, to encourage others. I often struggle to share something as I don’t always have a clear vision as to what God is doing around me. I take so many things for granted and attribute them to my actions, situations, and experiences. This part of our devotions encourages me to change my focus and to look harder for what God is doing.

I think the trick is to realize that I’ve been looking at a mirror rather than a window. If we see what we look at, most of my time is looking towards myself and my own interests. Instead, if I would look through a window at what’s around me, I would begin to see what God is up to. C. S. Lewis has a wonderful quote from *Mere Christianity*, “True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.”

My prayer is that we are able to begin to turn from our mirrors and to start looking through the window at God. If our focus becomes time in the word, prayer, and communion with other believers, we will begin to see God everywhere we look. If I’m not having “God sightings,” it is because I’ve fallen back to looking at the mirror. I want to encourage us to take heed of what is revealed in Hebrew 12:1-2:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

ANDY STOUT
Director of Donor Relations

athletics return TO JOSIAH WHITE'S

Throughout the 2022–23 school year, Josiah White's began offering athletic opportunities to Residential program students once again after a hiatus of several years.

The opportunity to participate in these athletic programs is considered a privilege for the students, and the possibility of being on the rosters incentivizes students to stay committed to their treatment plans. Throughout the season, Josiah White's staff have witnessed students develop sportsmanship, teamwork, and leadership skills as a result of participation in athletics.

“Athletics programming provides a positive outlet for many of the stressors our students can experience during placement and provides them with motivation to model positive behavior and make progress in their treatment plans,” said Joshua Smith, Recreation Coordinator. “Most importantly, our student athletes are learning how to have fun in a way that’s constructive!”

Sports offered so far have included basketball, volleyball, and baseball. A total of 34 students participated in boys' basketball, and the team played a total of 12 games. After discovering a lack of volleyball leagues in the local community, Josiah White's staff members were invited to create co-ed volleyball teams to compete against the students. The staff was eager to join in, and a total of 45 staff members from across several departments participated in a staff vs. students volleyball tournament. A total of 22 students participated in the baseball team, which played in the Wabash Little League in the spring and joined the Wabash Metro League this summer.

Josiah White's Residential Services is so grateful to be able to offer these athletic opportunities to our students and looks forward to how the athletics program will continue to develop in the future!

Compass Rose Academy Implements New Menu



As part of our commitment to thoughtful ingenuity, Compass Rose Academy (CRA) decided to revitalize what the students were eating each day to better support their journey toward healing and growth. Because nutrition has a significant impact on our overall health, including our mental health, CRA put together a food committee made up of staff to thoughtfully redesign the menu to greatly limit or exclude refined carbohydrates, sugars, and processed foods and emphasize whole foods such as avocados and sweet potatoes.

Students enjoy breakfast in their homes, pack their lunch in a bento box, and join together in cooking dinners in the evenings. Meal planning is focused on offering healthy options. Recent meals have included shrimp tacos with rice and loaded sweet potatoes with shredded chicken, with a variety of fresh fruit and veggies as sides.

This new approach to food at Compass Rose also encourages students to reestablish a healthy relationship with food.

“At home, I had a very strained relationship with food. I definitely had body issues. I couldn’t look at myself in the mirror. I was constantly breaking out because of the food I was eating,” said a current CRA student. “Since I came here, my skin has cleared up so

much. I definitely feel more energized, and I just feel better. With that, I’ve also been participating more in recreation. I’m eating healthy, and I’m so proud of myself.”

In the future, the hope is to adjust the menu rotation based on the season and the students’ evaluations. Future goals also include having our own farm on campus that will directly contribute to the meals the students are eating on a daily basis.

“Partly the goal is to really emphasize that our relationship with food starts with more awareness of where food comes from, how we grow, nurture, and develop it and its impact on our bodies. Eventually we want to do everything from raising animals to growing more of our own fruits and vegetables,” said Mike Haarer. “We also have pasture land and own livestock adjacent to our student homes.”

Overall, we want our students to learn to enjoy food, understand where it comes from, and learn to make healthy choices that have a lasting, positive impact on their lives. By teaching them experientially in our therapeutic environment, we not only help them to eat healthy food while they are here, but we equip them with knowledge and create patterns to help them when they leave as well.



FAMILY PRESERVATION PROGRAM EXPANDS

In early fall of 2020, Josiah White's launched Family Preservation Services, which seeks to reconnect and reestablish family bonds and keep children in their home whenever possible. Since then, God has provided Josiah White's the opportunity to expand the program, which now serves a total of 11 counties out of our Wabash, Fort Wayne, and South Bend offices. At its full capacity, Josiah White's Family Preservation program can serve up to 48 families at a time.

In most cases, the families served through Family Preservation Services are grappling with substance use, domestic violence, or mental health concerns. Josiah White's staff offer these families healthy second chances by working with them to establish safety in the home, develop parenting skills, and put resources into place for long-term success. As followers of Christ, the Family Preservation team strives to reflect Christ's love by serving as a faithful presence while entering into the difficulties these families are facing and equipping them to overcome any obstacles in their way of a healthy and whole family.

"Josiah White's exists to offer hope and transformation through Christ to children and families. Family Preservation adds on to the end of this statement, 'right in their very home,'" said Brent Kirby, Program Director for Family Preservation. "We do not require or wait for the family to come to us within our four walls. We go to where the family is. We enter their world, meeting them right where they are, in the middle of all of their stuff, showing them persevering hope and new possibilities for their future. It is our calling to bring them life and life to the full."

Josiah White's looks forward to seeing how God continues to work through the ministry of Family Preservation as it continues to serve families in need!

creating connections THROUGH CAREPORTAL

Since 2020, Josiah White's has been serving as the bridge between local congregations in Wabash County and families in need through our partnership with CarePortal. CarePortal is an organized platform that allows case workers to communicate the needs of families in crisis to local churches and community members that want to help. Josiah White's is now working toward expanding this partnership to involve churches from other counties beyond Wabash.

"By placing this platform into the church's laps, we are serving out our mission as a Christ-centered organization while also strengthening our relationship with our churches," said Megan Lehner, Josiah White's CarePortal Manager. "There might be those within a church body who feel called to foster or even adopt, but they're just not sure how to get there. Fulfilling a tangible need on behalf of families within our own community is a much easier on-ramp."

When a request is submitted, the caseworker includes the overall purpose of the request, such as keeping a child from entering the foster care system, supporting a potential adoption, or providing essentials for a teen aging out of foster care.

"I remember the very first time I was able to actually connect and take a need to a family. A foster family who's kiddos they had fostered for a couple years, were reuniting with their mom and needed a few items to go home with. It was such a blessing to talk to this foster mom and see how, even though there would be heartbreak over the kids leaving, she was also extremely proud and supportive of the mom who had worked hard to get her kids back. Even though we never actually connected with the mom, just to talk to this foster mom and encourage her in a difficult moment, was wonderful," said Amy Holmes, a congregant at New Life Baptist Church in Wabash County.

During this process of meeting tangible needs requests, CarePortal seeks to create opportunities for lasting relationships to grow, providing a new support system to struggling families. These relationships will open doors that allow volunteers to share the love of Christ with the families they are serving.

If you are interested in getting your church involved with CarePortal through Josiah White's, please scan the QR code or contact Megan Lehner at megan.lehner@whitesrfs.org.



How CarePortal Works



Step 1: Uncovering Needs

A child or family in need requires help from a caseworker.



Step 2: Submitting Needs

A CarePortal-approved caseworker vets the need and enters it into CarePortal.



Step 3: Sharing Needs

CarePortal alerts nearby churches and community members to needs.



Step 4: Meeting Needs

Churches and community members partner to ensure that the child and family's need is met.



Josiah white's

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IMPACT
WITH US!**



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