



September/October 2023 Newsletter

It's hard to believe we are in the last quarter of the year! We look forward to Thanksgiving and Christmas. Many women coming out of prison have never had a nice Thanksgiving dinner or a special Christmas. We are thrilled to make these occasions special. The community we live in and our generous partners have been very gracious to supply all that we need. Thank you to all who support this nonprofit.

Project Safe Start occasionally helps women while still in prison.

Prior to starting Project Safe Start, I was inside Perryville Prison bringing Church and Bible study to the inmates. I have stayed in contact with several of these ladies since 2020 when Covid prevented me going inside the prison.

Recently, one of these ladies, Rachel, contacted me. She was trying to get a scholarship for the last seven credits to obtain her Associate's Degree. Rachel had been working on her education for a few years. She wants to be in a good position for success when she is released from prison.

I was able to connect Rachel with Matthew 25, one of our partners. Matthew 25 is a prison ministry that helps with education, pen pals, and

re-entry for women in Perryville Prison. Project Safe Start is one of their re-entry programs.

Matthew 25 is now helping Rachel with a scholarship for her education!

We love our partners. Check out their website here:

<http://www.matthew25az.com/index.html>

Julia McKernan

CEO Julia McKernan Ministries/Project Safe Start



We are thankful for Matthew 25!!

It is always wonderful when a woman we have helped circles back around.....

Working with women who are very broken is not easy. Often, we don't know what happens down the road with the ladies we have helped. When someone takes the time to contact us and let us know we made a difference, it is such a joy!

The housing we work with takes about 95% of their ladies from prison. There are a small amount of wome that are either homeless or coming out of drug rehab.

Almost a year ago, I had two bags of clothing and backpacks full of toiletries to deliver to two women. It was a small apartment I was going to. After being invited in, I sat on the couch with three women. I assumed the third woman in the room had received her items from us the week prior.

She said, NO I didn't get anything and I don't qualify for hardly any help and it makes me very mad. She was not trying to be a troublemaker, I could see she was genuinely hurt. She told me that she had been homeless for quite a while but was trying to make her life better. I told her that after I finished speaking to the two ladies, I would love to spend some time with her. She patiently waited. I knew our program didn't fit her needs but I remembered a twin comforter that I had in the back of my car. It was an "extra" item someone had given us. When it was time, I asked this woman to come to the car with me and I had a gift for her. I found out her name is Dawn. We stood at the side of my car for quite a while. I listened to her story. She explained that all of her family had nice homes but nobody cared to help her even though she was homeless. I explained to her that she was looking at the wrong source for her help. I was brutally honest with her. I told her that without Christ she would not only become homeless again but could possibly die on the street! That is pretty blunt for a stranger to say but it was the truth and I saw it written all over her story. She had a lot of hurt and anger.

In the Bible, God says that He is our provider Jehovah-jireh. I began to tell her that Jesus cares very much about her but she has to turn to him for help. I remember the look on her face. Her expression told me that this was new information to her. She was willing to listen to all that I had to tell her about Christ.

When I gave her the comforter it meant everything to her. She told me that it was her favorite color, purple!

Then, she remembered that she had something for me. She went into her apartment and brought out a bag of toys for small children. She asked if I could find children that would enjoy these toys. I could see that she wanted to be a giver. I took the toys and made sure I donated to a nonprofit that helps children and families, Compassion Harvest.

I stayed in contact with Dawn for weeks and she was doing well until.....I heard nothing back.

Last week I received a text message from Dawn. She told me life continued to get harder for her after we met. She apologized for not keeping in touch but that she only had bad news until.....

Recently, she cried out to God. Here are her words:

“I was at the end and God Almighty helped me. I asked what I could do for Him. He said 1: Forgive 2: Love like you have never been hurt 3: Be thankful and 4: Pray. Right then and there I forgave all of those that I felt did me wrong/hurt me. My life changed the very next day!! I can see God’s hand in every step of the way!! My brother became a vital part of God’s plan and he helped me every time I needed him. I am now living in a beautiful Scottsdale apartment.”

Dawn was selected shortly after turning to God for government-approved housing through a drawing.

I asked her, do you have a Bible? She said I have three but I cannot read any of them. I have had several operations on my eye and the print is too small to read. Project Safe Start is sending her a LARGER than large print Bible.

Even though Dawn didn’t qualify for our program she matters. I am thankful Jesus grabbed my heart that day. I am thankful for the hard words that needed to be said and I am thankful that although it took a while, Dawn now understands who her provider is. I am meeting with her via Zoom soon so that I can continue to help her understand this GREAT God we serve.

Did she come out of prison, NO but somehow God intersected our day. The gospel is for everyone.

Julia McKernan

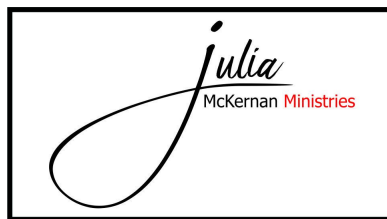
CEO Julia McKernan Ministries/Project Safe Start

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Soon we will be purchasing many Turkey dinners for Thanksgiving! Would you like to give to help make this happen? We will also be getting ready for our Christmas celebration before you know it!!

We will purchase gifts for the women. **Currently we are collecting Bath and Body Works Spray and matching Lotions, Small new throw blankets, New Wallets, and Unused Beauty items.** Email: juliamckernanministries.com for drop off location.

We do our very best for the women we serve. It is so nice to give to these ladies what many of us take for granted.



Did you know Arizona law allows taxpayers to redirect some of their state taxes they owe to help the poorest in our state? You are eligible to receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for \$421 (filing single) or \$841 (filing jointly).

Julia McKernan Ministries, Inc. is registered with the state of Arizona as a qualifying charity and fully funds and operates Project Safe Start.

The state of Arizona issues each qualified charity partner a Qualifying Charitable Organization Code. Project Safe Start's code is: 22199. You will use this code on your tax return.

Would you kindly consider using your tax credit to support the mission of Project Safe Start? www.projectsafestart.org to donate.

Checks can be mailed to: Project Safe Start 24654 N. Lake Pleasant Pkwy #103-441, Peoria, AZ 85383

