

CONNECT

Winter 2016 • Volume 15, Number 1

Take **Two**

“This time I took the cotton out of my ears and put it in my mouth.”



That's the way Dennis explains his new way of thinking when he was allowed to return to KCRM's Christian Community of Recovery a second time. He struggled with the constraints of the program the first time until his behavior forced the Mission staff to ask him to leave.

“I was stubborn and wanted my own way,” Dennis admits, “but I finally came to a realization that I couldn't do it on my own. I needed the program ... I needed God.

“When they finally let me return, I took it very seriously. I needed to surrender. I was beat and I finally had to admit I was beat!”

Dennis stopped talking and started listening, and he heard God speaking to his heart. “I learned that God could — and would — change my life if I let Him,” he says. “And I finally let Him.

“They say ‘don't sweat the small stuff,’ but I've learned at KCRM to let God have it all, the big and the small stuff. It's all about surrender.”

Dennis surrendered a stubborn streak that had always led him back to the bottle and the street, and discovered himself in the process. He graduated the program and recently was hired on staff at KCRM. And soon he'll even move into his own apartment. “I haven't had my own place in more than 10 years!” he exclaims.

Today as he helps check in clients in the evening, he often gets a chance to encourage men who are where he once was.

What he hopes KCRM clients see as they watch his life is something he also wants *you* to know: “It works — KCRM works,” Dennis insists. “For some of us it takes a double dose, but it *works!*”

STEP BY STEP

by Joe Colaizzi



Maurice and Chris prepare to receive their diplomas at last month's commencement.



Sarah hugs her mom and dad after graduating the recovery program at the KCRM Women's Center.

Some of our favorite events at KCRM

are graduations. They're a big deal around here! In fact, we recently celebrated the exciting graduations of Maurice, Chris and Sarah, all residents of KCRM's recovery programs.

Last month, both Maurice and Chris received his high school diploma at a very special KCRM Academy commencement. Dr. Jerri Sapp, who founded the KCRM Learning Center in 2005 as a volunteer, created the KCRM Academy a few years ago to help residents of the Mission's recovery programs turn a life-long regret into a wonderful achievement.

Maurice came to KCRM having never completed the fifth grade, but he turned his determination to get clean and sober into a passion to become all he can be. That passion, fueled by his faith in God, has opened doors not only to a high school diploma, but to the restoration of his marriage and plans for college.

Chris came to KCRM after the death of his mother had sent him spiraling into addiction. Here he found the support and love to heal emotionally and to put down strong roots spiritually. Part of his healing was to complete his high school education, and I am sure his mom would be quite proud of him. But Chris isn't stopping there! He's already begun classes at a community college to study occupational therapy!

Sarah celebrated a different kind of graduation this past December. The homecoming queen at her high school, Sarah had thrived both academically and socially. But in college, what began as a party pastime turned into an ugly, life-altering addiction.

At her wit's end, Sarah's mom found the KCRM Women's Center in an online search and Sarah agreed to give the program her best. And she has! Sarah completed every step of this comprehensive recovery program and her graduation was a highlight for the Women's Center. Sarah's mom is thankful to have her back home: "For the first time in years she is truly sober and happy. I thank God every day for leading us to KCRM!"

The word *graduation* comes from a Latin word that means *to take a step*. At KCRM we recognize that these graduation moments aren't finish lines, but they are powerful landmarks ... they are giant steps into a bright and hopeful future. Not only that, but these celebrations are a spark of hope for other residents who are on similar journeys.

Step by step, men and women at KCRM are breaking free of the chains of past failure and embracing a faith-filled future. And you and I have the joy of cheering them on! **Thank you for standing with them and with KCRM.**

TAKENOTE

Annual contribution statements are mailed after January 25 and by request only. To receive a statement of your 2015 gifts to KCRM for income tax purposes, please contact Juliann Hansen at jhansen@kcrm.org or 816-421-7643, ext. 116.

Give Now to **KCRM's Future**

You can be an important part of KCRM's stability and growth when you join one or both of these important financial initiatives.

Community for Hope

Just as you anticipate a paycheck regularly, KCRM depends on a regular stream of income to pay for meals, utilities, housekeeping supports and other items that make a house a home. That's why our **Community for Hope** members are so important! Many of these partners make a commitment to give a specific sum of money to KCRM annually, quarterly or monthly, helping the Mission build a strong and predictable financial foundation. Learn more at kcrm.org.

KCRM Endowment

Generous and forward-thinking KCRM donors have established the KCRM Endowment to help ensure the Mission's stability far into the future. Your gift to the endowment extends your partnership with the Mission beyond your lifetime, ensuring the homeless will find "freedom from the past and hope for the future" for decades to come.

Contact Julie Larocco, chief development officer, at (816) 421-7643 or jlarocco@kcrm.org to find out more.

Calendar of Events

March – June 2016

Change for Change, April-May

A Collection for the KCRM Learning Center

Donate change to help fill our **10-gallon jug** and support KCRM's Learning Center. When you drop off your change, take a guess at the amount we'll raise when the jug is full and, if your guess comes closest, you'll win a **KCRM hoodie**! Every penny counts! Contact Paul Masao at pmasao@kcrm.org or (816) 421-7643, ext. 136 to get started.

Madeline's Garden Open House, Sunday, June 5

Join us as we dedicate **Madeline's Garden**, Sunday, June 5, 2-3:30 p.m., at the KCRM Women's Center, 11th and Prospect. There is no charge, but RSVP to Julie Larocco at jlarocco@kcrm.org or (816) 421-7643, ext. 141 by June 2. Learn more at kcrm.org.

KCRM Night at Pizza Ranch, Monday, June 13

KCRM volunteers will bus tables and handle other wait-staff duties, 4:30-9 p.m., during **KCRM Night at Pizza Ranch**, 4801 N. Oak Trafficway in the Northland. Tips and 10 percent of the night's sales will go to **benefit KCRM**, so the more diners the better! To volunteer, please email kray@kcrm.org or alomangino@kcrm.org.



Above:
Executive Director
Joe Colaizzi sports a
KCRM hoodie and
shows off a sad, empty
Change for Change jug.

KCRM Needs Volunteers!

In 2015, KCRM benefited from the compassionate services of more than 2,000 volunteers who provided everything from housekeeping to fitness classes to delicious meals. Altogether, volunteers provided more than 6,000 hours of service valued at \$60,000! Here are KCRM's top volunteer needs for 2016. Email kray@kcrm.org or alomangino@kcrm.org to get involved.

Women's Center Meals: Drop off a 25-serving meal we can freeze and use later, or sign up to provide, serve and enjoy a meal with our residents monthly or quarterly.

Group Serve Day: Bring your group of up to 15 for a morning or afternoon service project. We'll start with a short video and Q/A before working on projects throughout KCRM.

Immediate Needs: Collect food and other KCRM needs in your church, school or neighborhood. We provide literature, fliers and collection boxes or barrels for your drive.

G2:10 Immersion: Immerse your youth or adult group in KCRM's community! Your cost-per-person includes food, shelter, projects, a field trip with our residents, testimonies and Bible study. Participants say this experience is life changing!

Professional Services: Assist KCRM's development team with photography, videography, graphic design, data entry and other professional skills.



Volunteer coordinators Kristen Ray and Alex Lomangino invite you to visit kcrm.org and click "Join with Us" to learn about volunteer opportunities at KCRM.



Volunteer Superstars!

Westside Family Church volunteers joined KCRM residents (back row) and Church Relations Manager Paul Masao (far right) to pack boxes for **Operation Family Feast**.

The **CONNECT** newsletter is a publication of **KCRM**

1520 Cherry • Kansas City, MO 64108-1530
(816) 421-7643 • kcrm.org • info@kcrm.org



Christmas Cheer!

KC Wolf made our Christmas celebrations extra special this year with a surprise visit to both the Men's Center and Women's Center residents. Thanks, Mr. Wolf!

