

Fall 2015

Baker PROUD

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Feature Story

Homecoming

2015 Event Schedule



Giving
HOPE & HELP
Community Needs and Making a Difference
www.givinghopeandhelp.org

A humanitarian at heart

The story of Jessica McClellan, MSM '94, starts with generosity. She vividly remembers planting and picking produce in a garden with her family. After keeping what they needed for their own table, they would distribute the rest of the food to their neighbors.

"I've always been a humanitarian at heart," said McClellan, a Lee's Summit, Missouri, resident. "I come from a family of givers."

In the years since, McClellan hasn't strayed far from those roots. The most evident example of this is Giving Hope and Help, a nonprofit organization McClellan founded in the fall of 2013 with the goals of supporting domestic violence survivors and shelters, fundraising to support the educational and financial needs of pre-K through adult college students, and collecting hygiene products for global distribution to aid survivors of natural disasters.

The organization's inaugural Feminine Hygiene Product Drive in November 2013 had a modest goal of 100 donations, but an outpouring of support brought in more than 5,000 products that were donated to Hope House. McClellan's vision and plans received a boost when she learned about Mastercard's "Be Your Possible" contest the following spring. Although reluctant to enter at first, McClellan's essay about the betterment that could come from Giving Hope and Help earned her a \$10,000 prize, which she put toward gaining 501-3(c) nonprofit status, creating

a website, developing marketing materials and creating a board of directors.

The second annual Feminine Hygiene Product Drive garnered more than 11,300 donated products last December and supported two Hope House locations and a safe home in Overland Park, Kansas. Giving Hope and Help also partners with other organizations to provide motiva-

tional and leadership seminars as well as volunteerism activities for domestic abuse survivors at shelters. More recently, McClellan organized the LOVE Bags for Cancer campaign in which volunteers delivered bags of motivational items and toiletries to 55 cancer patients at University of Kansas Medical Center.

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"I was blown away at what a bag could do," McClellan said. "It just made some of these people's day."

This year also marked the beginning of the Education Is Your Passport program. Giving Hope and Help, through the initiative, expected to provide laptops and bedding to 50 low-income scholarship students as they prepared to enter college. Students who benefit from this will also receive mentoring during their college careers and volunteer with Giving Hope and Help for 10 hours each calendar year.

Inspired by a successful 2015, McClellan has her sights set on expansion. Giving Hope and Help will soon have a Texas branch and focus on similar philanthropic endeavors in the Dallas area. The Texas division will be the first of what McClellan envisions being a much larger growth.

"Our goal is to go global," McClellan said.

Being able to build Giving Hope and Help from the ground up while exceeding expectations and setting goals for positively influencing the world on a larger scale represents the drive and compassion McClellan had from a young age. She attributes much of the organization's success to the lessons she learned in Baker's master's program.

"Getting the Master of Science in Management from Baker helped provide transferrable skills into the workplace," McClellan said.

Her workplace is expanding every day. 



Check out Jessica's video
www.bakeru.edu/hopeandhelp