

MISSION ROAD

MINISTRIES

The Road to Independence, Productivity and Inclusion

A CLIENT STORY

Cheers!

Nick Envisions a Friendly World For the Disabled

He cheers for the Spurs, has a not-so-secret crush on Hannah Montana, refers to himself as a college dropout, and hopes to be a Hollywood screenwriter. With his intelligence, winning smile, sense of humor, charm and gift for gab, you have to believe he can accomplish anything.

In spite of the cerebral palsy that has crippled him since birth.

Nick lives life in a wheelchair, and though he is physically impaired, he is smart, creative and a delightful conversationalist. And this handsome 23-year-old can count many blessings in his life — he is beloved by a supportive family, embraced by friends, and is a valued member of the Mission Road Ministries Day Program.

Nick joined the MRM program a year ago. A high school graduate, he attended San Antonio College, but decided to defer further college plans for a while. In the meantime, he discovered Mission Road, and here he has

found a sense of belonging, safety and acceptance that eluded him in the outside world.

“I got ridiculed in high school because of my disabilities,” he says. Yet he forgives those kids. He says with wisdom that belies his own youthfulness, “They didn’t know any better.”

Because he is wheelchair-bound, he does know better, and he would like to share what he knows to sensitize others to the plight of the disabled. “I’m working on a play about a guy who lives in the future and has a disability — but here’s the kicker: he is the only person on the planet who has a disability,” Nick says.

He says that the creative process has caused him to revisit the ghosts of his past and cites a quote that touches him: “That which doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.” He says he does not resent his disabilities, but rather, “All my experiences

have shaped who I am — and I like who I am.”

Unlike the majority of MRM’s clients, who have some degree of mental retardation, Nick is blessed with a quick mind and he is highly articulate. MRM staff has tailored a program to fit Nick — urging him to strengthen (continued on page 4)



Norma Garcia, Direct Care Trainer, helps Nick with exercises to strengthen his hands.

Oppenheimer Center:

Play, Dance, Sing, Learn & Worship!

Mission Road met the \$2.9 million challenge from Jesse H. and Susan Oppenheimer in 2007. This fall, the multi-purpose Oppenheimer Center on the MRM campus will begin construction!

Picture the Joy!

Happy kids and adults shooting baskets from wheelchairs and walkers ... or dancing, singing and keeping the beat with rhythm instruments. Neighborhood kids playing volleyball in a summer program while their parents enjoy a rest from the intensity of caring for a child with mental retardation.

Generous gifts from charitable foundations, corporations and individuals are making this dream a reality. MRM thanks all donors — including these foundations and corporations that awarded major gifts to the campaign: Golf San Antonio, Greehey Family Foundation, Kronkosky Charitable Foundation, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation, Myra Stafford Pryor Charitable Trust and USAA Federal Savings Bank.

Now, Another Opportunity!

And now we're moving toward an expanded goal: To raise another \$600,000, for a total of \$3.5 million, which will enable MRM to improve safety and security on the campus for the 150 children, adults and staff living and working there daily.

Please Consider a Gift

We invite your gifts to this amazing and wonderful project that will serve thousands over time as we reach out into the community and invite children with mental retardation to join us for after-school and summer activities in the new Oppenheimer Center that your gifts will build!

Please go to www.missionroadministries.org and click on the tab with the red ribbon, Make a Donation. You may also send a check to Mission Road Developmental Center, 8706 Mission Road, San Antonio, TX 78214, Attention Suzanne Letch.

Shindig '07

\$515,000!

Mission Road extends a heartfelt "Thank You" to the 28th Annual Grand Western Shindig Chairs Maggie & Gordon Hartman and the volunteers who made Shindig 2007 the most successful in our history. Gordon Hartman said, "Maggie and I are very happy to have been asked to do this and more importantly, very happy to have exceeded our goal of 500K!"

Special thanks also to the Express-News for supporting Shindig with ads to promote Shindig and celebrate our success.

Published As A Community Service

THE 28th ANNUAL
Grand Western Shindig
benefiting Mission Road Ministries

SWELLEN' AT
60
1947 - 2007

\$515,000^{NET}
RAISED ON DEC. 6TH, 2007
SUCCESS THANKS TO YOU!

MISSION ROAD
Celebrating 60 years of caring in San Antonio
A place where persons with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities are recognized for their potential, not their limitations.

For more information visit
www.MissionRoadMinistries.org

San Antonio Express-News
www.MySA.com | Keyword: What's Happening

\$30,000 H-E-B GIFT

Honors Fallen Soldier

Javier "Niño" Paredes died too young, at age 24, an Army private serving his country in Iraq. To honor Niño's life, work and heroic sacrifice, H-E-B generously donated \$30,000 to Mission Road Ministries in Niño's name.

Niño, who formerly worked at H-E-B's Central Market in San Antonio, suffered abuse as a child, was taken into protective custody, and lived in foster care. That experience was the impetus for H-E-B's gift in his honor.

"Mission Road Ministries is one of the most respected organizations that provides foster care services to children," said H-E-B spokesperson Dya Campos. "This seemed a fitting way to pay tribute to one of our partners, honor his past and recognize the sacrifice he made to his country." Niño died September 5, 2007, after sustaining injuries in an explosion in Iraq.

KB Home Builds

Playhouse for MRM Children

At the 1876 Votaw-James Homestead — architectural centerpiece on the MRM campus — busy staff members run the daily operations that sustain a growing ministry to adults and children with mental retardation.

At the 2007 Votaw-James Homestead replica — playground centerpiece for MRM children — busy little bodies gleefully play make-believe, hang out on the porch and wave to friends from the railing.

KB Home and trade partners custom-designed, donated materials and built the latest addition to the MRM campus, and they scored a big, happy hit with their gift. Accessible, safe and kid-friendly to MRM's 60 resident children, the playhouse was built with fine materials, construction expertise and lots of love.

KB Home modeled the playhouse after the historic Votaw-James Homestead, making it both a delightful attraction for the children and an attractive feature on the campus. The playhouse



KB Homes & Friends are heroes to MRM children. What a fabulous playhouse!

will be named after Rudy and Debbie Cran in thanks for the generous bid that earned the Crans naming rights at the 28th Annual Grand Western Shindig in December.

Mission Road children send hugs and gratitude to the generous team that spent Saturdays in October constructing the one-of-a-kind playhouse.



fiestaespecial.com

River City Christian School has chosen MRM as the beneficiary of 10% of their net proceeds from Fiesta Especial 2008. MRM invites you to join us at this official Fiesta event at River City Christian School, 5810 Blanco Road, Friday & Saturday, April 18-19, from 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.

GRACIAS! LET'S FIESTA!

Los Padrinos Godparents to our Family

When you become a Padrino — an advocate, angel, benefactor, patron — you are promising more than a pledge or donation. You are making a significant and sustaining difference in the life of an MRM child or adult.

Los Padrinos is the annual drive conducted by the MRM Board of Directors to raise \$100,000 for operating funds and ensure quality service for our special clients.

Ed Moore, Maxine Farrimond and John Dunlap, Chairs of the 2008 Los Padrinos drive, are leading the charge to help us meet our goal. In 2007, a challenge by Jack & Laura Richmond with The Richmond Foundation, a supporting organization of the San Antonio Area Foundation, inspired many to give. And we hope you'll continue that generosity in 2008.

With your gift, we can purchase school clothes, send children to camp, compen-

sate caregivers and support the expenses that all parents face when rearing a large family. Please help our family of more than 500 children and adults with a nurturing home, wholesome meals, an education, a faithful worship life and lots of love.

To become a Padrino, call 210.334.2455 or visit www.missionroadministries.org.

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A CLIENT STORY!

(continued from cover)

his frail hands and improve his dexterity, letting him study and practice his writing skills on campus computers, and bringing in a volunteer, Drew Pyle, to work one-on-one with him. Nick's dad, Steve Welch, says, "Susanne, his MRM caseworker, and the staff have been just incredible. Everything they said they could do, they have done. They have offered suggestions and options and implemented them. We can't praise Susanne and the rest of the organization enough. And Nick is very happy there."

One of his favorite writing projects is an episode of Hannah Montana's TV show that he has scripted but not yet submitted. He's still honing his writing skills and envisions a day when he will live in Hollywood and be an advocate for the disabled. In the meantime, he is exploring his potential at Mission Road. He says, "People with disabilities can come to this safe environment and not feel like outcasts or alone — there's always someone to talk to, someone to listen."

Nick is one of 600 adults and children served by Mission Road Ministries who are able to fulfill their potential, thanks to generous friends who offer their support. To find out how you can be a part of this very special MRM family, contact Suzanne Letch at 210-334-2453 or e-mail sletch@mrmsat.org.

LITTLE BIRDIES \$16,335 to MRM!

A birdie is a wonderful thing! Thanks to our supporters at the 2007 Valero Texas Open Birdies for Charity event, MRM got \$16,335 to help buy clothing, backpacks, food, household goods and other necessities of life for our residents. And hats off to our Pro-Am team of Sam Mitts, Dietrich Knoer, Robert Heitmann and Doug Ziegler, who teed off with Pro Kent Jones to raise funds for Mission Road Ministries.

