



MAY 2020

Orangewood NEWS



BRINGING HER HOME

Orangewood International Student Turns to During Pandemic

In early March of this year, Orangewood Advanced Studies scholarship student Jacquelyn Leyva was in Bangkok, Thailand, doing a semester abroad for her Master of Global Studies graduate program. She was renting a small, one-room apartment with a mini-refrigerator and electric tea kettle. She relied on nearby inexpensive restaurants for her meals.

When the local restaurants switched to take-out only, then closed altogether a few days later, Jacquelyn began to wonder if they knew something she didn't. "It was very tumultuous and I was getting nervous," she says. The political climate in the country was intensifying and the government was putting limits on free speech, especially about COVID-19.

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GREETINGS FROM OUR CEO



Chris Simonsen
C.E.O

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your care and support of the 2,200 foster and community youth we serve each year. Because of you, Orangewood continues to help these teens and young adults 39 years after our founding, and even a global pandemic hasn't slowed down our dedicated staff!

As you might expect, Orangewood youth are being significantly impacted by the coronavirus. Many have been laid off or seen their hours significantly reduced. Some have no home in which to "shelter in place". Others are struggling with the mental and emotional burdens of their daily lives and uncertain futures. The domino effect of being unable to pay rent, bills or groceries is significant. But they know they can count on

Orangewood Foundation to be there for them to meet their needs.

I am so proud of the Orangewood team, and you should be too. Thanks to their efforts and the generosity of many of you in the community over the past two months, we have accessed numerous community resources and found creative ways to provide the social, emotional and financial support our youth so desperately need right now. **Our youth know that Orangewood Foundation cares about them deeply and will be there for them as long as this unprecedented situation exists.**

But we can't do it alone and our youth need your help now more than ever. Please consider making a COVID-19 relief fund gift of any amount, so our youth have the resources they need to get through this very difficult time.

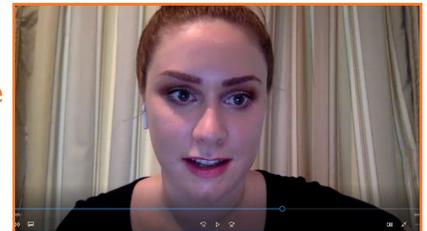
Thank you and stay safe and healthy!



BRINGING HER HOME (CONTINUED)

Based on past experience, Jacquelyn knew who to turn to for help – Orangewood Foundation and Scholarships & Grants Coordinator Carla Etzold. **"Orangewood really supports its youth," she says. "Carla has always gone above and beyond. If I needed anything, she was there to help – which is why I turned to her in this situation."**

Within 24 hours, Carla was able to secure a 10:00 P.M. flight, just in the nick of time. The following day the Bangkok airport was going to close. Over the course of 24 long hours, Jacquelyn flew from Bangkok to Japan to San Francisco. Carla kept her cell phone on 24/7 and was checking the airline website to track the progress of Jacquelyn's flights. In the crowded airports and on the planes, Jacquelyn saw many passengers in face masks and some even wearing head-to-toe hazmat suits. On March 26th, Jacquelyn's plane landed in San Francisco. Since then, she's been staying with her boyfriend and his parents in Northern California.



Jacquelyn and Carla Etzold (bottom) recounting the harrowing story.

Jacquelyn is healthy and continuing with school, submitting her final exams and papers. The summer internship she secured at the World Fair Trade Organization Asia is uncertain. She hopes to stay on track and graduate in April of 2021.

Despite her ordeal getting home during a global pandemic, Jacquelyn's spirit of adventure and her desire to travel haven't diminished. "Every experience makes me stronger," she says.

"Had Carla not been able to help, I probably would have stayed in Thailand," Jacquelyn says emphatically. **"I had no other alternatives. She was a lifesaver, literally. I'm really grateful to Orangewood Foundation."**

Read more about Jacquelyn's story by hovering your phone's camera over the smart code or by visiting www.orangewoodfoundation.org/meet-jacquelyn/



HOW OUR YOUTH ARE COPING



Many of our youth have been laid off or have reduced work hours. Young women at our Beverly's House transitional housing site who are normally at work or college are passing the time together and with Orangewood staff by barbecuing.



Youth Support Specialists like Elsa continue to connect regularly with youth like Antonio via video to offer support and reinforce that all of Orangewood programs and services continue to be available to them.



Survivors of sex trafficking can be triggered by stay-at-home orders that remind them of their time in the life with traffickers controlling their every move. The residents at The Lighthouse are using arts and crafts to destress.

Thank you

4:14

No thank you dude. I really appreciate how much of a difference your program makes in my life.

R

4:14 PM



The pandemic has been especially stressful for our Program staff who balance their own individual and family needs with those of our youth. Text messages like this one from a youth brighten their day.

Our onsite Orangewood Resource Center remains open offering groceries, hot meals, toiletries, coaching, PPEs, housing assistance and many more services in our parking lot. Despite reducing operating hours from 50 hours per week to 20, the Center continues to have almost as many visits.



Parenting youth, especially in our Rising Tide apartments, have many more hours to fill with their children due to the lack of childcare. They're getting tips and ideas from staff to help everyone stay calm and sane. Pictured is Jaden posing with his bike.

MAKE YOUR COVID-19 GIFT TODAY

During this time, our youth are disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Youth are losing jobs and struggling to pay for rent and food. We are seeing an increasing number of youth in need of additional financial and emotional help. Please take a moment now to donate to Orangewood foster and community youth by completing the enclosed donation envelope or by visiting our website.

Hover your phone's camera over the smart code or visit www.orangewoodfoundation.org/donate-general/ to donate.



LET'S COOK TOGETHER

We miss seeing our kitchen filled with volunteers cooking meals for our youth. In the meantime, we can cook together in our respective homes. Our longtime volunteer, Jean, shared a recipe for one of her favorite dishes she regularly cooks for our youth. It's a crowd favorite!

Jean's Corn Casserole

Ingredients:

1 can of corn, drained
(approx. 15 oz.)

1 can of creamed corn
(approx. 15 oz.)

1 box of corn bread mix
(8.5 oz)

1 stick of butter, melted (1/2 cup)

1/2 cup of sour cream



Preheat oven to 350°F

In a bowl, mix corn, creamed corn and cornbread mix together. Stir in melted butter and sour cream. Stir well until it is well incorporated. Pour mixture in a greased 9x9 glass baking pan (or a similar size) and smooth the surface. Bake for one hour or until the center is firm.



Jean was recently awarded the inaugural annual William (Bill) Steiner Heart of Service Award. The award is named after one of our founders and recognizes an outstanding Orangewood Foundation volunteer. Congratulations, Jean!

SOME WORDS FROM A YOUTH

“

I would like to say **thank you** a million times for your generosity. My life and studies would not be the same without your kindness and care. I am very **grateful**. I know that one day when I have finished my studies and have my dream job, I will be able to help others too. This is **because of generous people like you** who plant a seed that one day I will harvest. ”

-Anonymous Scholarship Recipient

Thank
You