

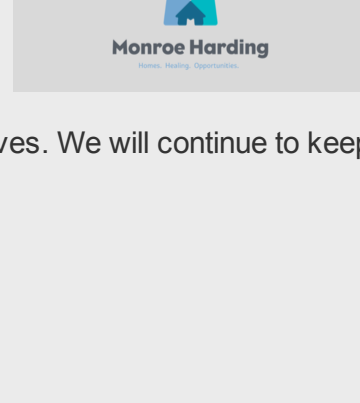
To Our Family of Supporters,

We are pleased to share in this Spring edition how the Monroe Harding Community is developing new and creative ways to engage, inspire, and support. Please enjoy these positive stories about our Foster Care families, young adults, volunteers, and staff.

We are especially proud of our Youth Connections Resource Center team who seamlessly transitioned to virtual learning last month. We've witnessed a dramatic increase in youth engagement since Nashville's Safer at Home order began. We have supported nearly 100 young adults over the past six weeks with basic needs assistance, health and education support, employment readiness, housing security, emotional and mental health support, and more.

I encourage you to follow us on Facebook and visit our website, www.monroeharding.org, to learn more about the impact of COVID-19 and Monroe Harding's response. Here you will also find ways to help, including participating in our Spring Appeal and virtual volunteer opportunities.

Next week we are participating in three days of giving to include the National Day of Giving and the Big Payback. Our goal is to raise \$20,000. We already have a \$10,000 match donation, so we are halfway there! Look forward to inspiring stories and posts on social media about our youth and programs. I hope that you can join us! Help us spread the word and together we can reach our funding goal.

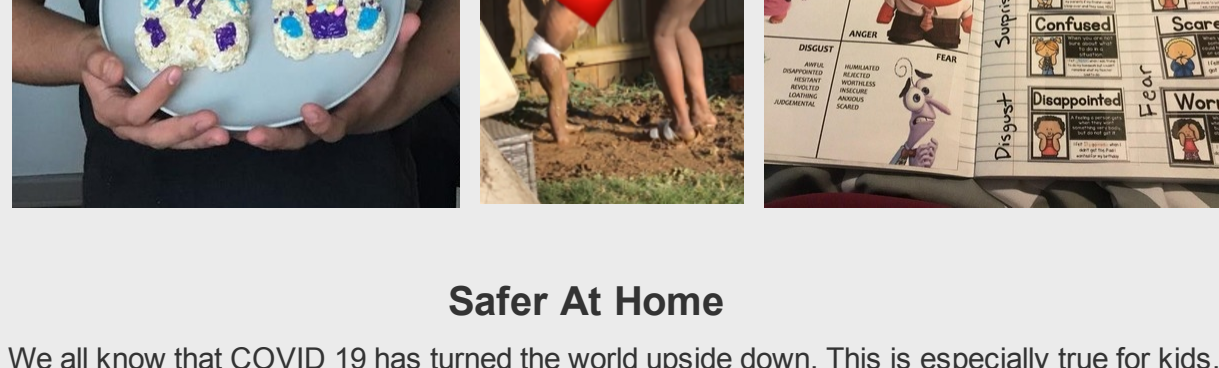


Thank you for the ongoing, generous support you provide and for your dedication to our mission of changing young peoples' lives. We will continue to keep you updated on all things Monroe Harding.

Very Truly Yours,

David M. Popen

David M. Popen
President & CEO



Safer At Home

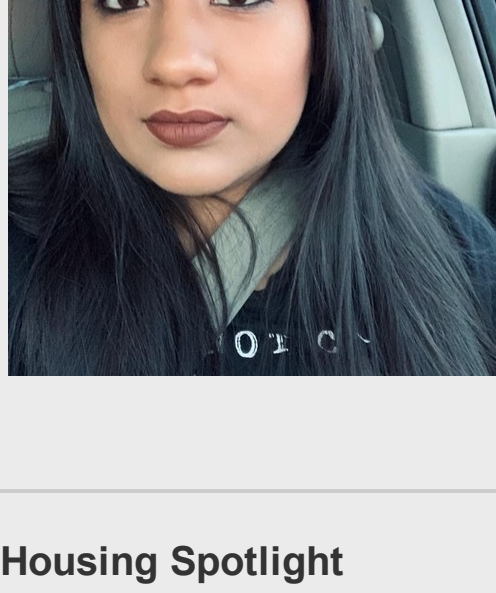
We all know that COVID 19 has turned the world upside down. This is especially true for kids. School, hanging out with friends, birthday parties, and even grocery shopping look different than they did just a few months ago. However, some of Monroe Harding's foster parents and youth have managed to turn this downtime into opportunities for learning and growing.

Ms. Nissel, one of our foster parents, has been using this time to work with Nate on emotional processing. She has introduced therapeutic activities including baking cakes, making Easter Rice Crispy Treats, building LEGO homes, playing Feelings Uno, and completing feelings worksheets. This is the kind of creativity the young hearts in our healing homes need. Another foster parent, Ms. Milleson, thought it would be fun to let Josh and Eli play in the mud while she was doing yard work. They were mud-splattered from head to toe, but they were all smiles. Their sensory experience continued with a fun (and necessary) bubble bath.

These are just a couple of examples of how our parents, children and youth are continuing to be strong families during an unprecedented time. We are so grateful for the way our foster parents love and support their children and teens and admire their hard work!

Celebrating a New Graduate

It's a popular time to play video games and binge-watch Netflix. While some folks are streaming movies, Cassandra has been using Safer-at-Home to her advantage, working diligently on school-work, completing twice as many lessons as she'd have time for normally. Cassandra completed her last assignment, a 1,250-word essay about her family, on March 30th—and was able to celebrate the completion of her high-school curriculum with her mother and son. We can't wait to celebrate this monumental achievement with Cassandra when we can be together again safely!



Supportive Housing Spotlight

Our staff and young adults in Supportive Housing are healthy and safe! Sharing meal-time together more than ever before, the Safer at Home order has created opportunities for togetherness, reigniting a sense of unity amongst residents. Connecting with youth on a daily basis, our staff's flexibility, commitment, and selflessness has been the glue that binds during this difficult time. Similarly, young people have embraced social distancing, staying home as much as possible.

Despite a challenging environment, celebrations this month include:

1. One of our Supportive Housing residents was offered a job at Home Depot and accepted!
2. By staying positive and focusing on schoolwork, another young lady overcame anxiety and achieved the Dean's list.
3. Volunteers worked with Supportive Housing to renovate one of our homes, and it looks fantastic!
4. Supportive Housing is at full capacity.
5. Eight of our young adults have been matched with virtual buddies. If you are interested, please email Amy at volunteer@monroeharding.org. We're looking for more buddies!

Our young people have come together in new ways—and while they can't wait to get back together—they are leaning on each other; even looking forward to virtual group meetings that they used to look at as obligations.

C.S. Lewis said it best, "Difficult times prepare ordinary people for extraordinary things."

The Bright Side

The King family planned for months to take a magical trip to Disney World in March. They reserved special lodging accommodations and ordered personalized Disney t-shirts, mini-airplanes, and decorative Micky Mouse headwear. When March they received news that their trip was put on hold due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Disney World had temporarily closed its doors. As you can imagine, The King family, and especially the foster children, were disappointed.



The Kings have come together to support the children during this difficult situation. Not to be deterred, they came up with creative ways to have fun together. During spring break, they created hearts and placed them on their front door. The hearts expressed gratitude to healthcare, food delivery, and grocery workers for their services. The family also found time to participate in group exercises and game nights. Their most recent endeavor was to paint the living room together, which created a beautiful home environment. Thanks to the Kings for being a wonderful example of finding the bright side in every situation.



Thank You, Volunteers

April is National Volunteer Appreciation Month and we are grateful for all of the volunteers that give their time and talents to our organization. From the church and corporate groups to our Childcare Volunteers, Board Members, and Mentors; we celebrate you! Thank you for all that you do to enrich Monroe Harding, we wouldn't be able to do what we do without your ongoing support!

Virtual Volunteer Opportunities



Volunteer Orientation this Week

Join us Thursday, April 30 at 10 am for our volunteer orientation with Amy. This month it will be brought to you online!

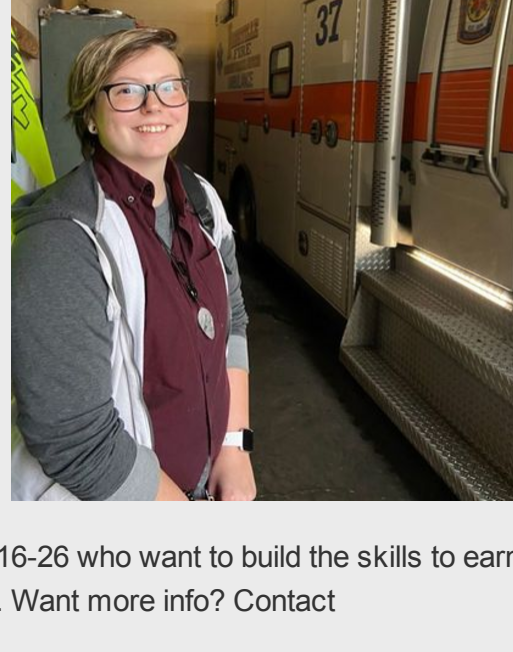
RSVP to volunteer@monroeharding.org, and we will send you the link to join our virtual meeting. Learn about our 127-year history, who we currently serve, and how can get started helping us.

We will end by talking about our virtual volunteering opportunities. You don't want to miss it!

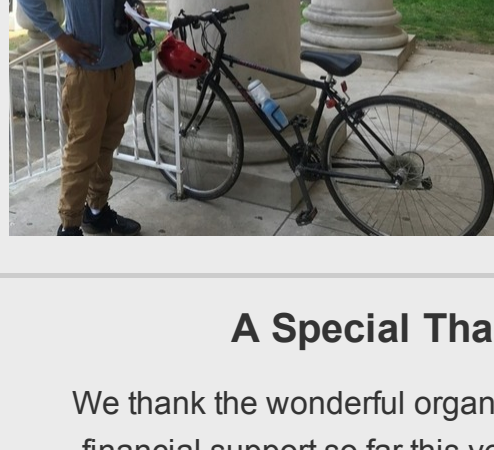
Career Steps in the Making

The first step toward a bright future! This is Works Wonders participant Cheyenne on-site at a Fire Station for an Informational Interview. Cheyenne loves helping people and is also calm under pressure!

She wanted to know more about a career as an EMT and what the job really looks like day-to-day. With this in mind, our Works Wonders staff set her up with an interview to find out what it takes to be an EMT and what the path is to get that job!



Our Works Wonders career development and employment engagement program is open to youth 16-26 who want to build the skills to earn a living wage and find a career they're excited about. Want more info? Contact us: sarahbrock@monroeharding.org

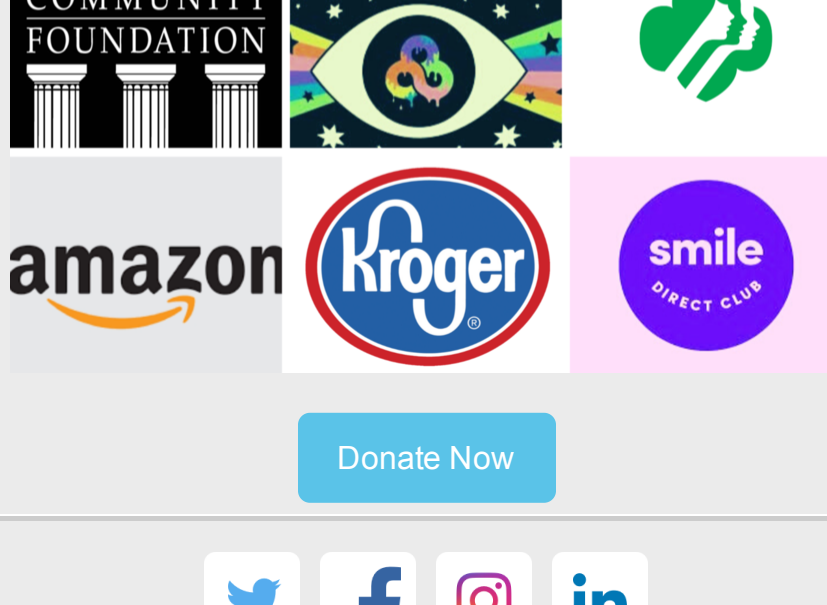


Getting Around Town

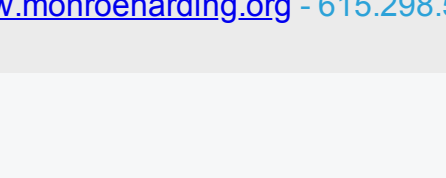
In March, Carlos lost his job at a downtown hotel when COVID-19 closed all non-essential businesses and restaurants. Wasting no time, he immediately started looking for a new position. After some searching and a couple of virtual interviews, Carlos was offered a job at Kroger. He reached out to the YC staff to see if they could help him find a bike to assist with transportation. Thanks to a generous donation, Carlos picked up his new bike complete with helmet, lock, water bottle, and a light—the very next week.

A Special Thank You to our Supporters

We thank the wonderful organizations below that provided Monroe Harding financial support so far this year. Their contributions make a huge positive impact on the lives of our young people and families. Thanks to their generosity we deliver our mission of changing young peoples' lives.

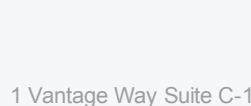


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