



“We really fill a hole in the community by serving the underserved population of the poor and uninsured.”

- Denise Owen

Katy Angels at Work

Written by Stacy Giddings
Photos by Lisa Mangos



Denise Owen is the executive director of The Breath of Life Clinic



Sandy Faucett is the founder and CEO of Kay Christian Ministries

Giving Back is a Way of Life for these Charitable Women

Two women, united by a similar passion for life and a compassion for others, are at the heart of two of Katy's most cherished organizations. Denise Owen is the founder and the executive director of the Breath of Life clinic, and Sandy Faucett is the chief executive officer of Katy Christian Ministries. To ask them about their job is like asking them what's in their hearts. To them, this casual conversation starter is more of a question about who they are and what they stand for than the expected laundry list of daily office duties.

Following the Call

That's not to say that Faucett and Owen don't have a lot of the same job frustrations as many others including long hours, managing a budget, overseeing a group of employees, and being held accountable to an executive board. However, the stresses of the work place are easily forgotten when gratitude for a job well done is awarded with plentiful smiles and hugs, and a return on investment is not measured by data on bar charts or line graphs but by the power of a heartfelt thank you. For Owen and Faucett, their job of serving the community of Katy is more than finding the right vocation to fit their professional talents and abilities, it's about following the call of God.

The Breath of Life Children's Center

In Owen's case, God's call came when she had her heart broken by a sick 6-year-old girl. "I was working in a medical office and saw a six year old girl arrive with an ear ache. Her family had no money and no insurance so she had to sit in the waiting room for eight hours." While waiting for care, the young girl witnessed offensive traumas and angry family disputes. "The emergency room is not a place for a child and it absolutely broke my heart." Owen combined her will to serve God and her clinical experience of 32 years as a Licensed Vocational Nurse and founded a clinic for families without insurance, called Breath of Life.

Today, Breath of Life is comprised of two clinics, a non profit clinic for children (infant to age 17) and a for-profit adult clinic. In 2007, Breath of Life clinic administered 7,340 shots and had 6,445 patient visits. "We really fill a hole in the community by serving the underserved population of the poor and uninsured."

Since founding the clinic, Owen has helped so many people, but she can still remember the story of a single mom who entered the clinic in tears with her

Volunteer Marisa Leach signs in clients for Marjorie Motley, Case Manager for Social Services at KCM



Dr. Gonzalez, a volunteer at the clinic, and Irene Pabon, a shot nurse, treat uninsured patients

four children. “She made \$50 too much to qualify for Medicaid and she had nowhere to go to get her kids treated for respiratory infections.” Owen and her staff were able to treat the children for a fraction of the cost that a hospital would charge. “For me, keeping a child with asthma out of the hospital by treating him in our clinic is the biggest reward because that is what makes a difference in a child’s life.”

Katy Christian Ministries

Faucett shares Owen’s passion to help others, but her career of compassion started at a different place. Faucett’s involvement with Katy Christian Ministries (KCM) began in her role as coordinator of the domestic abuse center. While working at this arm of the ministry, Faucett became clear on her calling from God. “I have a past of domestic abuse, and I know how much healing it takes to get past that. I wanted to be a part of that healing for other people.” To Faucett, her role at the abuse center was a natural fit as she was able to help others in her own way. “Sometimes all people need is a hug, or a chance to talk, or to know that someone cares. Helping someone isn’t always about giving them money, food, or clothing; it’s about building a relationship with them and providing them with a safe place.” Faucett’s role at KCM has evolved, and now that she is at the helm, KCM includes a social services agency, a food pantry, a crisis center, a domestic abuse center, a sexual abuse center, and other special programs.

Serving the Unexpected

Katy Christian Ministries, a coalition of thirty-three area churches, will celebrate twenty-five years of service in the Katy community next year. In the past twenty-five years many things have changed, including what Faucett calls “the face of the people they help.” “People make the assumption that we only help the poor, but due to the high gas prices and the higher costs of groceries, rent, and mortgage, we are seeing more of the working poor where both adults work but can no longer make ends meet. We are seeing a different face on people than we saw twenty-five years ago.”

With all the changes that KCM has seen over its near twenty-five years, one thing remains consistent - their relentless spirit of giving. KCM has a strong network of contributors, but out of all of the donations they receive, the ones that touch Faucett the

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most are the donations from former clients. She recalls a family who sought help from KCM's social services agency and food pantry for six months before regaining employment. Six years later, Faucett received a letter of thanks along with their pledge to make monthly contributions so that the organization can continue to help families, like theirs, who are in need of help.

Keeping Faith

Although Faucett and Owen face different situations and a different set of problems, they both go to the same place for answers. Even on the bad days, trusting in God's plan helps Faucett stay centered and motivated. "I know that this is not my ministry, it's God's ministry, and his hand is all over it. I'm not in this by myself; God is in control, and I can take everything to Him in prayer." Owen also finds clarity in her faith, stating "When I need an answer, I know God has promised to provide me an answer. The answer is to do what He calls me to do. If God had not asked me to do this I would not, but I love my Lord a lot."

Compassion in the Community

While they're both proud of their past accomplishments, Faucett and Owen keep their eyes firmly focused on the future. Both of them have plans for growth and expansion. Owen's future plans for Breath of Life include owning a building with 10,000 square feet of space, allowing for sixteen exam rooms. The current clinic only has six exam rooms. Faucett dreams of expanding services at KCM to include an adult day care. More importantly, they share the common dream of making their mark of compassion in the community. Owen hopes to leave behind a legacy that will inspire others to follow in her ministry. "I hope that after I'm gone, other people in Katy will share God's love and give hope to people in the community." Faucett also has a message to pass on to the next generation of humanitarians. She offers simple words to abide by. "Love the Lord first, then love other people and help when you can." KM

STACY GIDDINGS is a native of Wisconsin and a proud cheesehead. She lives in Katy with her husband Aaron and dog, JD.

Here's How You Can Help

Each of these organizations is always seeking more volunteers and donations, whether it be time, money, or supplies.

Katy Christian Ministries

5011 E. Fifth St. • ktcm.org

According to Faucett, 83 cents of every dollar donated to KCM goes to help clients. Those interested in volunteering should call 281-391-5261 and ask for Christene.

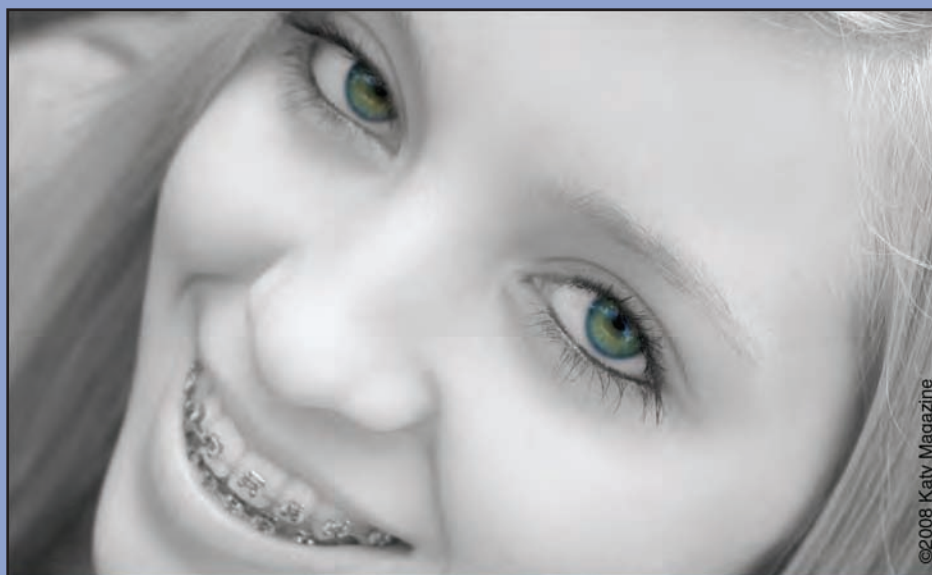
Breath of Life

21715 Kingsland Blvd. boflife.com

In addition to financial donations, Breath of Life is also in need of hand sanitizer, soap, office supplies, and over-the-counter children's medication. Those interested in volunteering should visit the website or stop by the office to complete a volunteer packet.



Development Coordinator Janni Granero and Office Assistant Karla Rogers at The Breath of Life clinic



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