GETTING OFF THE STREETS

Tina Hatcher's Hope Impacts program is changing the lives of Katy's homeless one care package at a time

Writen by Kelly Boldt | Photography by Kristen Richards

"One day I met a woman living on the street and it turns out I went to high school with her 35 years ago," recalls Tina Hatcher. "It just goes to show, that you never know where life's going to take you. Anyone can encounter bad circumstances." Hatcher invited the woman into her home to live with them, and she was eventually able to get back on her feet.

A few times in life you meet someone who makes an impact. Not only do they have an impact on you, but nearly everyone they touch. Hatcher is one of those people. She has a huge heart for helping people from many walks of life and has used that heart to start a local non-profit organization to help the homeless and under-resourced population of Katy.

Making an Impact

Hatcher spent 13 years as a special education paraprofessional with Katy ISD and is currently a personal care attendant for a young man with disabilities. "Taking care of special needs adults requires a lot of love and patience, and few are up to the task. Our son Nick really loves Tina and he thoroughly enjoys their time together," says the young man's mom, Sandy.

Hope Impacts is a result of Hatcher's passion for helping people. "I originally thought my ministry would be serving special needs," she recalls."I have always had the desire to be a voice for those who don't have a voice, such as those with special needs, the elderly, or homeless individuals." Many times, Hatcher would take the time to talk with people who were living on the streets and give them meals, clothes, and hygiene supplies. "I want to offer people who are struggling hope, encouragement, and love," she adds.

Hope for the Homeless

While looking for ways to help her friends on the streets and also facing financial hardship herself, Hatcher decided to take action. As Hatcher was asking questions to find out who was taking the lead in serving the homeless, she discovered there wasn't one central point of contact. "There were great resources such as Christ Clinic, Breath of Life, Katy Christian Ministries, and several others, but we needed to coordinate our efforts and have a central point of contact for those who needed help." So in February 2014, Hope Impacts was born. "My life verse is Jeremiah 29:11, where God offers all of us hope," Hatcher recalls. "I want people to see Christ's love in and through us as we reach out to help."

Providing What They Need

Hope Impacts started with creating a calendar of what was already going on in Katy, then they went on to create a list of what they would like to see happen. "I have been overwhelmed by the partnerships that have fallen into place," Hatcher explains. "We now have a breakfast on the first Saturday of each month where all of us come together and provide food, clothes, and most of all, love, to those in need. Since our friends don't usually have transportation, we drive around in our vehicles to find them and give them a ride so they can join us." Many churches in the area have offered their parking lots, food, and volunteers to help staff the events. "One thing we do not give them is money," Hatcher points out. "We want to be sure that what they get from us will help them. Money sometimes allows them to continue their addictions. People often think they are helping by handing money out their windows at the corner but the best thing to do is to provide snacks, water bottles, or gift cards for a meal. If someone would like to donate money, please give it directly to one of our organizations that will help our street friends."

Everyone Has a Story

She has been blessed with lawyers, restaurant owners, clothing stores, and other vendors that are helping the organization. Hatcher humbly admits, "I am not qualified to be undertaking this huge job, but God always provides amazing partners to take care of the important details." Hatcher is making a difference by listening to those who often get overlooked and helping them move forward in their own life. "We don't know anybody's story until someone looks them in the eye and talks with them. I want to be that person." **KM**

KELLY BOLDT is a freelance writer and mom of teenagers who loves to learn about people who do amazing things.

If you would like to find out more about Hope Impacts or donate your time or resources, visit ***hopeimpacts.net.***

"I don't want to encourage people to remain homeless. I want to encourage people to go from where they are to where they need to be. I want them to get better."

- Tina Hatcher

With a desire to offer people who are struggling hope, encouragement, and love, Tina Hatcher started her own non-profit organization, Hope Impacts

Hope Impacts reaches out to provide breakfast on the first Saturday of each month

Hope Impacts provides meals, clothes, and hygiene supplies to the homeless

TURKEYFEST 2015

For those in need of a free, hot meal on Thanksgiving Day, contact Rhonda at 281-384 -0288 to sign up. If you would like to donate essential items to Hope Impacts, contact Mark Wiley at wileymark@sbcglobal.net.