

KERR CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter for Donors, Volunteers & Friends of Albertina Kerr

CREATING STABILITY & HOPE WITH TREATMENT & LOVE

This summer, five children moved into stable, loving homes through Albertina Kerr's new Treatment Foster Care Program. While intensive mental health challenges previously limited them to residential care, they now have the opportunity to live, learn and play in their own communities.

After the first month in his new home, one young boy began acting out after a second child joined the family. With patience and love, his foster parents, Rose Braxton-Lyons and Doug Lyons, worked with him to identify what was triggering his behavior and help him find solutions.

"He said, 'I was jealous when the other kid came because I thought you guys were going to forget about me.' He didn't understand that we'd give them both a lot of attention," Rose said. "Now we're working on problem solving how they can get along and know that they both have us."

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Have lunch with Victoria Rowell, A Foster Care Success Story



Even if you don't know her name, you'll want to hear her story at our annual meeting on October 27. Actress and author of the best-selling

memoir *The Women Who Raised Me*, Victoria Rowell grew up in foster care.

Born as a ward of the state of Maine, she beat the odds thanks to some extraordinary women who stepped forward to love, nurture, guide, teach and challenge her. Rowell credits her foster families with instilling in her the confidence and drive to succeed.

Today, Rowell works to change the perceptions about foster care and draw attention to the plight of foster children. She offers a message of hope to children and adults, encouraging them to succeed no matter how difficult the journey is along the way.

Details & Tickets at AlbertinaKerr.org



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As one of the first three foster families in Albertina Kerr's Treatment Foster Care Program, Rose and Doug have plenty of love to go around. In the 15 years that they've been foster parents, they've cared for more than 30 children, staying in touch with many of them into adulthood. Their experience and success made them ideal candidates to be Treatment Foster Care parents.

All Albertina Kerr foster care programs specialize in caring for children with mental health challenges and developmental disabilities. But the new treatment program serves those with the greatest needs, providing children with a home- and community-based alternative to restrictive residential settings. Foster parents recruited for the program have extensive experience working with challenging children. In addition to the training and ongoing support all foster families receive, treatment foster families receive 24-hour emergency response and clinical oversight from a therapist, which equips them to provide active and structured treatment in their homes. Three families are caring for children now, and Albertina Kerr plans to recruit and train a total of 10 families.

"We got involved because it opened doors to give kids more help." Rose said.

"The extra training helped us understand things that we didn't know about before. It was like - bing - the light came on."

Rose credits the Albertina Kerr therapist they work with as a key part of their success with the two children now in their care. "She's not only good for the kids, but she's good for us: training us, preparing us and guiding us. It

has helped a lot. She's there for us, no matter what. It helps us be better parents to these kids."

Many of the children in Treatment Foster Care have never known permanence and stability. Providing it is the first step in helping them overcome challenges and succeed.

"We never give up on any of our kids, and that's what we're working to make clear now," Rose said. "These two kids have been in 15 or 16 homes, and one had a box that he never wanted to unpack because he was used to just blowing out and taking the box to the next place. So I told him, 'It's not happening here. Unpack. You're here. We're just going to work through it.'"

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

After 15 years as an Albertina Kerr foster parent, Rose Braxton-Lyon is clear about how she measures success.

"It's seeing a kid graduate when everyone said the odds are he's not going to do it. It's getting a letter from a kid who's in the military and getting ready to get married. It's seeing a kid get the job that he thought he could never get. It's knowing I was a part of it, because they didn't know if they were going to make it or not. My husband and I knew they could do it. They just needed family stability to do it."

Since then, the child has settled into his own room and compiled a Christmas wish list with his foster brother. To Rose, that list is a big breakthrough. "It was them saying, 'We plan to be here for Christmas. We want to be here.'"

NEWS & UPDATES

New Approach Improves Support for Young Children

Since 1993, the Kerr Early Intervention Program has helped young children with severe emotional issues and learning delays prepare to enter kindergarten ready to learn in their local schools. While services have been provided primarily through therapeutic classrooms at Edwards Elementary, in September we transitioned to a new community-based approach.

Albertina Kerr now provides young children and families with comprehensive mental health services that allow children to stay in their traditional preschool or Head Start settings. Working closely with teachers and mental health consultants, Albertina Kerr provides services to address each child's needs and reinforce family and community supports. Community partnerships and strategies to identify issues early build a foundation for children so they can be successful in their local preschools and well prepared for kindergarten.

Remember Kerr in Your United Way Gift

Fall marks the start of charitable giving campaign season, and many employers allow employees to donate through automatic payroll deductions. If your employer participates in the United Way or Combined Federal Campaign, please consider choosing Albertina Kerr Centers' Foundation through the Donor Choice Option.

Annual Spotlight on Kerr Gala Moves to February

Though memories of the spring Venetian Masquerade Ball still burn bright, it's time to mark your calendar for the 2011 gala - the date is February 18. You have only six months to wait. *Watch for details at AlbertinaKerr.org.*

GET INVOLVED

Holiday Wish-Granters Needed

Make some magic this holiday season. Host a giving tree in your business, church, school or home, and help grant the wishes of people served by Albertina Kerr. Our annual Holiday Giving Campaign provides essential support for children and adults with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges.

It's easy to be a community partner in the campaign. We provide pre-made tags for you to display, each one listing the special wish of someone we serve. Then you encourage others to fulfill a wish. For some, the gift they receive may be the only one of the season. But for all, it will be a sign that someone truly cares. *For more information or additional ways to give, contact Stephanie Bolson at 503.262.0187 or StephanieBo@AlbertinaKerr.org.*



Jaimie and Jeff Parson PARSON LANDING CHRISTMAS TREE FARM

Located near the end of the Oregon Trail, Parson Landing Christmas Tree Farm has been a pioneer in helping community groups raise funds with Christmas tree sales. Last year, owners Jaimie and Jeff Parson wanted to do more and help children in need. Albertina Kerr was the lucky recipient of their generosity.

On December 5, Jaimie and Jeff hosted the December Tree Toy Drive. They invited family and friends out to the farm, asking them to bring toys for children in foster care in exchange for a freshly cut tree. The result: 135 toys found happy homes for the holidays. Jaimie and Jeff also donated \$135 in proceeds from the day's U-Cut tree sales.

Consider hosting your own fundraising event. Call Lee Carson at 503.262.0174 for details or email LeeC@albertinakerr.org.

Be a Champion

Join the Champions for Kerr Gift Society, created to recognize Albertina Kerr supporters who give \$1,000 or more each year. If you're already a member, consider recruiting others to join you.

For details, call Jodi Lippert at 503.262.0185 or email JodiL@albertinakerr.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Snapshot Series

Learn more about our vital work in the community at [The Kerr Games](#) and the [Community Inclusion Art Show](#).

RSVP for either event: 503.262.0175 or rsvp@albertinakerr.org

The Kerr Games at Hillsboro Stadium

September 29, 2010, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Don't miss this lively event, a highlight for youth group home residents. Enjoy a light lunch, then unleash your inner cheerleader as the kids play their favorite sports.

Community Inclusion Art Show at Albertina's Restaurant

October 6, 2010, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Enrich your day with a stroll through the exhibit of art by adults in the Community Inclusion Program. Enjoy light refreshments on Albertina's patio.

Annual Meeting

October 27, 2010, Governor Hotel

Luncheon keynote speaker Victoria Rowell will share her experiences growing up in foster care and tell the stories of the role models who help her succeed as a foster care advocate, actress and author of *The Women Who Raised Me*.

Details at AlbertinaKerr.org

Spotlight on Kerr

February 18, 2011, Pure Space

This annual gala moves to February to help chase away the winter blues. Watch our website for exciting details about this vintage carnival soireé. AlbertinaKerr.org

13th Annual Race for the Roses

April 3, 2011, Oregon Convention Center

Register now for Portland's favorite 5K, 10K and half-marathon. Race4theRoses.org

Albertina's Restaurant & Shops

Reservations: 503-231-0216

Open Monday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Seatings at 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Stop in to do your holiday shopping and celebrate the season. Call to make your lunch reservations now. Holiday decorations will be up November 8.

Kerr Bikes

Information: KerrBikes.org

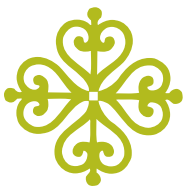
Last chance to pedal this season!

Visit us through October on the Portland Waterfront at Salmon Street Springs.

Open seven days a week in September.

Open Saturday and Sunday in October.

We envision a community where all children and adults with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges will thrive in nurturing homes and inclusive communities.



ALBERTINA
KERR

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