



## A Different Kid

**Annika Lee, a University of Wisconsin student majoring in education, never imagined herself going on a Summer Mission (formerly Summer in the City®).** Her interest was piqued at Cru® Winter Conference. “I heard a staff member with Inner City [sharing] about this need. Education majors were needed,” she remembers.

Following her sophomore year, she applied to serve on a Summer Mission and was asked to consider the inner city of Milwaukee. For six

weeks she would teach at an inner-city school. In preparation, she endured a poverty simulation to get a glimpse into life as someone experiencing extreme poverty.

Before that, she felt prideful, but acknowledges, “I needed to be broken down and allow the Lord to change my heart.” Bible study lessons on God’s heart for justice, and seeing every single person as being created in the image of God were especially eye-opening for her.

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## A Different Kid

One second grader named Jordan stands out in her memory. Many days he attended class with the odor of marijuana clinging to his clothing. His teeth were not brushed, and he wore the same shirt as the previous day. He was often tired and hungry. Though Jordan wasn't intentionally defiant, some of his behaviors were just plain difficult.

Annika's education courses had given her a set of tools for problem solving, but she found them to be inadequate in this setting. "I had to use a different set of lenses. What I learned in school wouldn't help me interact with someone who's grown up experiencing racism and poverty. I had to think outside the box."

One day, Jordan was so tired that he lay down on the floor and wouldn't budge. Annika didn't know what to do. But she relied on the Holy Spirit to lead her. The next thing she knew, she was lying next

to Jordan on the floor. She spoke gently. "Jordan, you're a part of my family. A part of my team. You're wanted here. You belong here. We can't do this without you."

From then on, after that loving interaction, Jordan was a different kid the rest of the summer.

*And so was Annika!*

Rather than being quick to judge or applying stereotypes, God has shifted her paradigm to ask, "How can I see the Lord at work in this person?" She now sees the inner city as a place where great redemption and restoration is happening and plans to return to Milwaukee for the long term.

Your support has had a profound impact on the lives of Jordan — and Annika! Thank you for helping to make God known!



# Easter Bags Resurrect Hope



**Kenny and Madalyn Alvarez had an idea last Easter: they would bring Easter Bags to their local**

**homeless shelter and minister to the women and children there.** They serve with Act to Act, a partner of Cru® serving the inner city of Orlando, Florida, and had an established relationship with the shelter.

On Easter Sunday, they played games with the kids and chatted with the mothers. They presented the gospel using Cru's Resurrection Eggs®, an interactive gift of a dozen plastic eggs that each contain a different symbol from the Easter story. Every child excitedly opened an egg as the story was told. Even the moms got involved!

Afterward, Kenny and Madalyn invited those wanting to place their faith in Jesus to pray with them. One little boy asked to read the prayer aloud, so they let him and had the others repeat. It felt like the entire room was praying!

Then they gave out Easter Bags and provided contact information for the mothers, so they could reconnect with them.

One single mother, Kristy, contacted Madalyn the very next day. They met at a diner and Kristy

shared her story of homelessness. Two days later, Madalyn was able to help Kristy secure a room rental in a nearby house. Kenny and Madalyn even helped her settle in so her new room would feel more like home.

Madalyn and Kristy began meeting weekly. Madalyn invited Kristy to church and offered to pick her up. "Yes!" Kristy exclaimed eagerly. She has faithfully attended church ever since.

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Kristy began growing spiritually, consuming all the discipleship materials she could get her hands on. She

is now committed to Christ. She shares often about praying, about her faith, and how she trusts God.

Kristy wasn't content just to receive assistance — she returned with Kenny and Madalyn to the shelter to help more women. Together, they renovated a room at the shelter by repainting and remodeling it. Now Kristy serves as a volunteer and encourages other single mothers. She has become an integral part of the shelter's work.

Thank you for praying over the Easter Bags that Cru partners use for outreach in their communities, and for your generous support that has made significant change possible for people like Kristy!





## They Kept Showing Love

**S.A.Y. Yes! Centers for Youth Development® seek to encourage, train, and build up children and youth to become productive leaders and positive role models in their community. Change does not usually come overnight, but it is such a thrill when that does happen.**

Richard behaved very well at the S.A.Y. Yes!® Center last year, but had a pattern of horrible behavior at school. In fact, fourth grade was his worst year yet. He was suspended numerous times. Not only was his behavior concerning, but so were his grades. At the end of fourth grade, Richard was reading at a second grade level. Marta, his S.A.Y. Yes! Director, shares how the mentors at the center would not stop showing love to Richard when he got into trouble. They prayed for him continually.

Toward the end of the school year, Richard started asking Marta permission to let him attend children's camp. She was nervous about how he might behave, but knew it would be so good for

him to participate. A month later Richard started showing real improvement. Not only did he receive a "B" in reading, he also earned an "A" for conduct!

Richard went to church camp, where the Lord got a hold of his heart. When an invitation was given to pray to express faith in Christ, Richard stood up in a group of 300 campers.

The camp counselor, Stephen, also attends the church where the S.A.Y. Yes! Center operates. He spent time talking to Richard and sensed a sincere desire for a relationship with Jesus.

Stephen then led Richard in a prayer. "Richard was beaming afterward," Stephen says.

Were it not for S.A.Y. Yes!, Richard would not have been attending the camp where he placed his faith in Jesus as his Savior. Richard is an example of children at S.A.Y. Yes! who are developing spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Thank you for being on the journey with Cru Inner City, and for your part in helping children like Richard know Jesus.

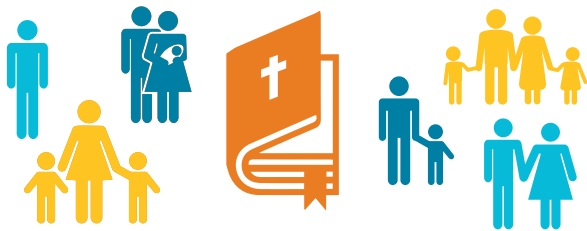
Were it not for S.A.Y. Yes!, Richard would not have been attending the camp where he placed his faith in Jesus as his Savior

# Your Investment Multiplied

Through your generous giving, the inner-city ministry of Cru is able to offer planning, structure, support, programs, and Compassionate Products™, such as Boxes of Love®, to our inner-city church partners. In 2018, we...



Worked with more than **2,000** churches in **26** cities.



Had **45,000** Gospel conversations.



Reached over **200,000** people through Programming and Compassionate Products.

# A Personal Word



Milton Massie  
Executive Steward

Transitions often bring up many emotions and tend to be accompanied by deep reflection. As I adjust to my new assignment as the Executive Steward of the inner-city ministry of Cru®, I am anchored by my hope and trust in God. It is He who has called us to this ministry and

keeps His guiding hand upon it. What a sure foundation that is!

God is calling me to focus on two things in this season: first, to shepherd our staff well. American culture focuses so much on leadership, but the Bible speaks more about servanthood. In Matthew 20:26, Jesus says, “Whoever would be great among you must be your servant.” I do not think of myself as a “servant leader” but rather as a “servant shepherd” of Cru Inner City.

Second, God is calling me to steward the vision. I Corinthians 4:2 tells us, “Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.” God has given this ministry a set of values to guide the vision: we are Christ-Centered, Church-Based, and Compassion-Driven. Our strategy for ministry is the Circle of Hope — which focuses on Connecting, Empowering, and Developing — to create life-changing options for people living in situations of poverty. Being a steward reminds me that this is not a “new position,” since “position” implies the idea of permanence. My role as Executive Steward is an assignment from the Lord. That it is an assignment reminds me that I am a steward.

My prayer is that God will find all of us faithful with the assignments He has entrusted to us in ministering to the poor!

Grateful for your partnership,

*Milton Lee Massie*

Milton Massie  
Executive Steward

# You're Shining His LIGHT

## Eight-year-old Travara lived in Avalon Gardens, a dangerous housing project in tough South Central L.A.

It's not a tourist destination ... so when a team of college students showed up — and set up a Bible club — it got everyone's attention! A throng of children gathered. A student named Erica boldly shared the gospel.

... she prayed continually that her young friend would survive ...

Travara gave her heart to Christ that day. She and Erica became dear friends that week.

When Erica headed back to college, she prayed continually that her young friend would survive, physically and spiritually, in her difficult world.

It was two full years before Erica was able to return to Avalon Gardens. But there, she found Travara. Erica was thrilled to learn that Travara was in a Bible-believing church, her faith deepening, **her story rewritten**.

This summer, hundreds of equally dedicated college students like Erica will hit the parks, streets, and shelters of America's inner cities and lead the lost to Jesus Christ. It's part of our proven-powerful evangelism outreach — Inner City Summer Missions (formerly Summer in the City®).

Please pray for this amazing effort and give as generously as possible to shine God's Light into the inner city this summer.



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Occasionally the names of people featured in this report are changed to protect their privacy.

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