

SHAPING DESTINY

Making Disciples | Serving the Poor | Empowering Locals

The Gift of Transformation

Hear the amazing story about how God used the generosity of Shaping Destiny sponsors to radically change the life of a three-year-old boy

Jump In!

Learn more about the many ways that you can support Shaping Destiny

In the Midst of the Storm

A call to prayer as the country of Cameroon is threatened by the terrorist group Boko Haram

The Step Made in Faith

An encouraging message from a Shaping Destiny volunteer

Start an Orphanage

Check out ways that you can become better equipped to serve the poor through Austin Bible Institute



Making a Difference!

Dear Shaping Destiny Supporters,

We want to thank you for your time, prayers, love, and dedication to helping care for the poor and the orphans. God is using you and your family to make a difference in the lives of so many. With your support, Shaping Destiny is able to provide material and spiritual support to so many people who have experienced a broken and beaten down spirit. Hundreds are now experiencing the hope that comes from the Lord and empowerment to make a difference in their community. Through your faithful support we are continuing to grow the number of individuals and families that we are able to reach out to and invest in. We encourage you and your family to continue to serve the poor and the fatherless by joining us in prayer as we ask for vision, and wisdom in this years endeavors.

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” Mark 11:24



The Orphan Care Movement

If you want to learn more about orphan care, poverty alleviation, and best practices when it comes to helping those in need, take a look at orphancaremovement.com.

This blog, created by Shaping Destiny Director Dr. Kenneth Acha, shares stories, experiences, and wisdom with people around the world.

It includes posts about everything from following your dreams to what prayer really means.

You can also access the free ebook about discerning God's call on your life. Check out the website to learn more.

Learn
to
Serve
with
Excellence

The Gift of Transformation

This is the story of Gift, the newest Shaping Destiny child brought into our orphanage, told by one of our incredible volunteers, Sunny. Sunny got to witness this malnourished and underweight child rescued from a life of hopelessness to a healthy life filled with joy and hope!

It's always a blessing when a new child is welcomed into the Shaping Destiny family. Whether they are toddlers or teenagers, being sponsored opens countless doors to education and resources that may have been inaccessible. I was fortunate enough to experience the joy of integrating children into the Shaping Destiny Center while I was in Cameroon from June to December of last year. I remember that day distinctly, not because of how hot it seemed to be or how many trips to the spring it took to fill our water drums, what caught my attention was the unfamiliar voice I heard that evening. As per usual, the children were doing homework in the room that I shared with Jackie, the orphanage director. The older kids were hard at work with long division and sentence construction and the younger ones were enjoying working out the simple arithmetic problems that we gave them. As I entered the room, I saw him: a young boy named Gift who had been chosen as a sponsor child. He didn't seem interested in playing, he was observant but shy. The first thing I noticed was how tiny he was, his mobility was limited to sitting up or standing with the aid of a chair or a hand. His hair was discolored and falling out and his skin had a sickly yellow tint to it. His stomach was swollen, a sign of malnourishment. I was taken aback by the state he was in; it seemed as though he came to the center just in time. I guessed that he couldn't be more than a year and a half old, he was so small. I began to talk to him, as you do with babies, and almost fell over when he began talking back.

"Ahhhhh! A talking baby!"



As it turns out, seventeen pound Gift was three years old. His condition didn't seem too promising. Gift has been receiving medical care, food, attention, and lots of love at the Shaping Destiny center for over four months and his condition has improved dramatically. His hair and skin is healthy, he is getting regular checkups at the hospital, he is running and dancing with his new friends, and there is seldom a time when you can't see his beautiful smile or hear his infectious laughter.

It is an incredible and moving experience seeing such an incredible transformation in such a short period of time. Our God is a God who loves transformation. One of the most prominent examples in creation is that of metamorphosis. A puny little worm thing wraps himself in some thread that is essentially glorified spit and emerges as one of the most beautiful and graceful creatures in nature. Granted, the in between phase might be less than comfortable for the caterpillar but it pays off in the end. Sometimes, transformation requires us to get a little uncomfortable. God might not ask you to hang upside down and wrap yourself in your own fibrous saliva, come to think of it, I don't think he ever asks people to do that, but he might ask you to make a sacrifice; to get uncomfortable for a little while. A caterpillar could walk around and be comfortable on the ground, hanging out with the worms and the millipedes, but he'll never find out what the glory of flying feels like until he gets a little sticky.

Our sponsors have chosen to make a sacrifice for the sake of transforming the lives of children halfway across the planet. Without their generosity, stories like Gift's wouldn't be possible. Maybe sponsoring a child through Shaping Destiny didn't seem possible at first; still, you answered the call to action and blessed children who desperately needed it. We want to thank all those who support Shaping Destiny in so many ways for all of the transformation that has been made possible through their support.

Jump In!

At Shaping Destiny, we know how important collaboration is. Our center in Cameroon couldn't function without the generosity of supporters and the hard work of our team stateside. Maybe it isn't possible for you to pack up and go to Africa, but here are some exciting opportunities for you to engage in with Shaping Destiny locally in the Austin-metro-area as well as online.

Humility is a virtue, but so are mad Ultimate Frisbee skills!

Come out to Elizabeth Milburn Park in Cedar Park on March 28th to show off your ultimate skills. Not only will you be contributing funds for our kids in Cameroon by participating in the event, but you will also help us raise community awareness about Shaping Destiny and the fatherless. Online registration costs just ten dollars per person with seven people per team. The cost of participating is minimal. The value of being with friends and engaging in the ultimate in athleticism? Priceless.



So dust off those sweatbands and enjoy a day of community, camaraderie, and competition while supporting Shaping Destiny. You can register your team or as an individual at:

<http://www.shapingdestiny.org/ultimate-frisbee-tournament/>.

If you are unable to attend the event but want to make a donation you can do so at: <http://www.shapingdestiny.org/donate-to-orphans/>.

Other ways for you to get involved and help care for orphans

1. Financial support 💰

Whether it's through sponsorship or a one-time donation, giving to Shaping Destiny is a great way to help change lives around the world. For more information on the many ways you can give, go to shapingdestiny.org and go to Get Involved.

2. Social Media 📷 📺 📧

If your friends list is pushing four digits and emojis are your language of choice, you will be glad to hear that you can support Shaping Destiny through a simple "like" or "share". Supporting Shaping Destiny's social media page's can raise awareness about the organization and increase their website traffic. Hitting the "like" or "follow" button only takes a second and it helps bring attention to the work that God is doing through Shaping Destiny.

3. Host a fundraiser on behalf of Shaping Destiny 💰

4. Share about Austin Bible Institute 🏰

You can share the Austin Bible Institute promo video or e- brochures with friends, family, and church members who might be interested

5. Take classes with Austin Bible Institute

Whether you're looking to learn more about caring for orphans or just want to grow in your spiritual life, ABI has classes for you! To learn more about the courses offered go to www.austinbibleinstitute.com

6. Work or volunteer with us!

If you desire to use your skills, talents, and abilities to help Shaping Destiny, prayerfully consider making the work that God is doing through us your own. Job openings can be found online at the Shaping Destiny website.

In the Midst of the Storm

As you may already know, the nation of Cameroon is in the midst of some unsteady times. The terrorist group Boko Haram, based in Nigeria, has been making advances into the far north region of Cameroon. The group aims to fight against "Western education". They have kidnapped and killed students and vocally communicated their intent to target foreigners from the West. The nations threatened by Boko Haram, including Chad, Cameroon, and Nigeria, are fighting back; however, the group is still active and fiercely opposed to the education being given in schools in Africa. While these things are out of our own control, we serve the One who is in control of everything. We ask you to join us in praying for Cameroon and the nations being threatened by Boko Haram. Pray for those that have been taken hostage and their families, pray for the families of those who have died, pray for wisdom for political leaders and for the Boko Haram members. Let us ask these things in faith!



“Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven “ - Psalm 107:28-30

A Step Made in Faith

Meet Sunny, a young girl from Oregon who came to volunteer last year with Shaping Destiny in Cameroon. It was such a joy to see her grow in her faith, in her perspective, and in her worldview on orphan care. Although she is young, she is wise beyond her years and has quickly become a close friend to our ministry and a wonderful success story to our volunteer program. Her time spent overseas was a blessing, not only to her, but to our ministry as well. This is her story...

Eight months ago, I got on a plane to Cameroon. Not just one plane, a series of planes. That’s usually how international flights work. I had a couple layovers in Europe; not long enough to see anything cool but long enough to say that “I’ve kind of been to France”. I returned to the US two months ago, right before Christmas. Culture shock is bad enough when you come back in the summer, try being exposed to the most commercialized holiday ever right after six months of dirt roads and dried fish. Since I’ve come back, people have asked me a myriad of questions. Some of them are really difficult to answer; most of them are impossible to answer. Still, I stumble my way through a response. By far the most common question I have been asked is “how was Africa?” I’m going to let you guys in on a secret: I have no idea how to answer that. I could say it was good but that’s a very general statement. Honestly, it wasn’t always good. I didn’t go to Africa to have a good time; I went so that God could use me to do something outside of myself. I went to learn and to work and to grow. I did those things. I learned more than I could have ever imagined I would. I worked harder than I thought I could. I grew in knowledge of who I



was and who God is. In the midst of being there, as close as I could be to children in need, I realized that God had something for me to accomplish back home; so I got on another plane and I went again. Through all of the changes and the difficulties, I am still reaching out for something infinitely more important than my comfort, my wants, or myself. I am pursuing the will and the purpose of my creator. I am stepping back and following His lead. Our society often recoils at words such as “submission” or “surrender” but they are such beautiful concepts if we understand them. Surrendering to God’s will is a choice, oftentimes it’s an uncomfortable one. The first time I went to Africa I was in the midst of an intense battle with fear. Anxiety ruled my life, but I knew that God was asking me to do something that I knew I wasn’t capable of in and of myself. My fear didn’t go away until I got on the airplane. I was acting contrary to what my circumstance was telling me. We all have circumstances in life that seem insurmountable. Maybe it’s finances, broken relationships, or an illness. Still, we are told to walk by faith and not by sight. How freeing it is when we yield to the truth of who God is in the

midst of the chaos around us. He doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called. I encourage you to follow God's plan for your life even if your

circumstances say no. You can walk a million miles, but the step that you make in faith will bring you farther than you've ever gone before.

Learn How to Start an Orphanage

Austin Bible Institute is offering a course on *How to Start an Orphanage*. This introductory course is designed to be a first step in equipping students who feel called to serve orphans, start an orphan care organization or orphanage. They are taught how to discover and write their purpose, mission and vision statements, establish core values, develop strategies, set initial goals, write a business plan, select initial board members, choose a name for the organization and incorporate or register with their state government. The course will cover everything that a student needs to go from their dream to launching their new organization. In addition to that, it will introduce students to other

recommended courses at Austin Bible Institute that they can take to further prepare themselves to achieve their goal of running an orphan care organization effectively. With exegesis of biblical passages students are challenged to personally examine motives and confirm their call to serve orphans. The focus of this course will be on starting an orphan care ministry, not running it. Students will be directed to other courses at Austin Bible Institute that will prepare them to effectively run the organization that this course teaches them how to start. To find out more about this online course visit: <http://www.austinbiblecollege.com/startanorphanage/>

Financial Accountability

We are truly grateful to God and to you as fellow laborers in God's house for your sacrificial giving to God, and for choosing to partner with us in loving our neighbors around the world. You, our partners and supporters are Shaping Destiny, and as a family we are able to serve those God has called us to because of all our prayers and hard work. As a result we strive to be prudent with the resources we have been given because we know we are accountable to God and to one another, and because all these resources are valuable for poverty alleviation and making disciples. To view our financial highlights/report for 2013 and previous years, please go to our website at the following link: www.shapingdestiny.org/form990. 2014 will be available for viewing as soon as we have completely prepared and filed our taxes with the IRS.

.....

Shaping Destiny
P.O. Box 200700
Austin, Texas 78720-0700