

Mercy for teen parents

While **Acts of Love** takes care of the children, young parents stay in school

By **Katie Evans**
 Director, Acts of Love

ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) in Leander is a 2018-20 LWML Texas District mission grant recipient. ACTS of Love provides free childcare for children (ages 0-2) of teen-parents, helping the parents continue their education and build a positive foundation for their new family.

The members of ACTS Church Leander saw a need in their community. Teen parents in Leander and Liberty Hill had no access to free childcare, as is often provided by school districts. As a result, many teen-parents were forced to make the decision to drop out of high school and care for their baby or struggle to find affordable, quality care. Those choosing to drop out face the difficult task of finding employment that will keep them above the poverty level.

With help from ACTS of Love, these same students are now able to graduate high school and have more opportunities for higher education. ACTS of Love is currently in its fourth school year, having served more than 30 teen-parent families, helped 19 teen-parents graduate and witnessed six of those graduates pursue higher education.

Following is a testimony from a family that we have the privilege to work with:

“ACTS of Love has given me the opportunity to reach toward my dreams that seemed impossible

when I first became a teen parent. With their help, I have been able to finish high school knowing Amberlynn is in a safe place with great people meeting her needs. ... [The staff] supports my natural way of raising Amberlynn, like with breastfeeding and baby-led weaning. Not only are they there for my daughter, but for Aaron and I as well. They have given us so much support and knowledge.

“Katie guides us with parenting and higher education information that we need to better support our family. She has helped me gather college information and build rapport with the admissions team at the university that I am very interested in attending. She has also built my confidence in continuing my education, with a little one, after high school. ACTS of Love has made sure there are no needs left uncovered.”

While daily childcare is a much-needed blessing to our families, ACTS of Love is able to provide so much more. At ACTS of Love, we have created a place just for teen-parents. Our center is free of judgment and full of love. We are here to support teen-parent families in many ways as they work



ACTS of Love ECEC staff enjoy sharing Jesus with the little ones in their care.

to build a positive future for their new family.

We provide access to food, clothing and other needed baby items, access to exclusive scholarships at Concordia University Texas, and loving support that families need to succeed.

ACTS of Love ECEC has a partnership with the local Early Head Start and Head Start programs. Once a family ages out of ACTS of Love, they are able to transition to these Head Start programs to continue care until the child enters kindergarten. The partnership between ACTS of Love and Head Start provides additional funding for teacher salaries and classroom supplies. Acts of Love is grateful for the support of LWML Texas District as we provide opportunities to learn about and experience God’s love daily with the families we serve.



If you would like more information about ACTS of Love ECEC, you can check out their websites:

- ▶ actsofloveecec.com
- ▶ facebook.com/ACTSofLoveECEC

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mission education

Last month I began sharing six goals of LWML based on the primary targets. One of the joys I have experienced as an LWML officer is learning about the numerous missions in the LCMS. It has opened my eyes to see mission opportunities in my own community. This month I am highlighting a goal that addresses mission education:

Bring the joy and energy of missions and missionaries to LCMS women:

1. Research and utilize local mission opportunities.
2. Engage LCMS women beyond local missions.
3. Engage missionaries in the field through social media.

4. Bring missionaries to the home congregations to present personal testimonies.

One way to engage LCMS Women in Mission is to show the mission grant videos to your congregation. Both LWML and LWML Texas District have these videos on their websites.

It is my prayer that the local LWML groups are encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries and supporting global missions. If I can help, please contact me at president@lwmltxdist.org.



Serving with JOY
Debbie Curry

2018-20 MISSION GRANTS

Recipient	Total	Paid	Balance
Scholarships for Seminarians — Texas District	\$50,000	\$12,500	\$37,500
DCE Scholarships — Concordia University Texas	\$24,000	\$6,000	\$18,000
Multi-Ethnic Ministry of North Texas	\$25,000	\$6,250	\$16,750
ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center — Leander	\$20,000	—	\$20,000
Reaching Visually Impaired Inmates with God's Love — Lutheran Braille workers	\$18,500	—	\$18,500
Forward in Faith — Faith Lutheran High School	\$10,000	—	\$10,000
Navigating Life an Faith — LINC Austin	\$10,000	—	\$10,000
Let it Shine for Children with Autism — Lutheran Special Education Ministries	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Spanish and American Sign Language Bible Stories — Lutheran Friends of the Deaf	\$5,000	—	\$5,000
Alamo Hill's Children's Ministry (Shepherd of the Hills Church Plant) — San Antonio	\$4,285	—	\$4,285
Expanding the Mission at Lutheran Student Center — Arlington	\$3,215	—	\$3,215
Total 2018-20 mission grants	\$180,000	\$29,750	\$150,250

ALERT:

Banner designs DUE FEB. 6

Banner designs to represent the LWML Texas District at the LWML Convention June 20-23, in Mobile, Ala., are due Wednesday, Feb. 6. The banner procession is a special highlight of the convention.

Information on designs can be found in the 2018 fall edition of *Linked by Love*. Find it at lwmltxdist.org/linked-love.

The convention theme is "In Praise to the Lord!," based on 1 Chron. 16:23-24a.

For more information on the convention, go to lwml.org/2019-convention.



2018-20 Mite Goal:
\$350,900

Mites received through July:
\$58,823

Mission grants paid through July: \$29,750

Send mites to:

LWML TEXAS DISTRICT
ATTN: FRANCES MOLITOR
FINANCIAL SECRETARY
P.O. Box 820
ANDERSON, TX 77830