

# THE ALLY

**IMPACT STORY - Nicole Claycamp - Shelter Director**

*NAMES OF CLIENTS AND COUNSELORS ARE WITHHELD FOR CONFIDENTIALITY PURPOSES.*



It can be hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel or hope while living in a shelter. It is an unknown environment with unknown people. The future can be as daunting as the past. The first days are tough, the trauma is raw, the burning need to get things back to “normal” for yourself and your children is almost unbearable. Trying to navigate the next steps towards a life free of violence is overwhelming. When faced with these obstacles, seeing the successes of day-to-day life can be challenging. It is important to remember that small steps will lead to bigger steps. Small victories will lead to big victories.

Bringing a family into shelter gives us a feeling deep within our souls that is hard to describe to anyone, unless they have done it. One can usually understand emotions experienced by a child by the look in their eyes. You can see within them the pain that they have felt. Watching them unwind and come more into themselves within the safety of the shelter is the most rewarding feeling ever. Watching a child relax reminds us that client successes are not always grandiose accomplishments. It is not always finding housing, or a job, or buying your first car. Sometimes, it is watching a mother rock her baby to sleep in a safe space, or seeing a kid get on the school bus in the morning knowing that when they get back, they are coming back to safety.



It is important to remember that the small steps matter. We recently watched a child take their first steps. Knowing that a child is growing and learning to explore the world in a safe place is an enormous success. Baby steps lead to bigger steps. Small successes lead to big victories. All it takes is tiny baby steps.



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## IMPACT DATA

Hope Alliance collects every piece of data we can. We believe in reporting on all our Direct Services in a straightforward, transparent way. By doing so, we attempt to let our donors know what we accomplish with their financial support. Hope Alliance provided the following services from **January to November 2023**:

**Total number of clients served = 2,635**

**Total number of service sessions provided = 26,576**

**Total Sheltered Nights of Safety provided = 6,930**

**Total number of sheltered clients served = 473**

**Total number of Hotline calls answered = 4,104**

**Total web-based Crisis Chats answered = 316**

**Total sexual assault accompaniments = 147**



We keep track of more data than shown above, but the point is that donors ought to know that Hope Alliance is dedicated to helping clients break the cycles of abuse in which they live. At the same time, Hope Alliance is equally dedicated to spending a donor's contribution as effectively and efficiently as possible.

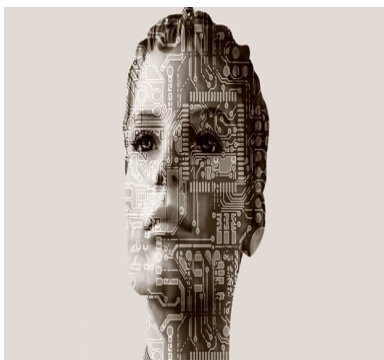
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**"I experienced sexual abuse throughout my childhood, which led to experiencing sexual assault in my early adult years. With the help of Hope Alliance, I am learning how to overcome my trauma and build foundations that will allow me to have a happier life and find and keep my self-worth. I can't thank Hope Alliance enough."**

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## MORE IMPACT DATA

In addition to keeping data on the number and types of services provided free of charge to our clients, it is important for us to know if the services provided are having the desired positive impact on the lives of our clients. To assess our impact on clients, we ask them to anonymously respond to a survey when they choose to exit our care.



**Clients exiting our care in November 2023 told us the following:**

- **72% FEEL SAFER,**
- **97% FEEL LESS ALONE,**
- **94% FEEL MORE HOPEFUL,**
- **91% LEARNED MORE ABOUT THE FAMILY VIOLENCE / SEXUAL ASSAULT DYNAMIC, AND**
- **98% WAS THE OVERALL SATISFACTION RATING.**

When our clients tell us we helped them save their lives, the survey results above support their claim.



## ALLY OF HOPE SPOTLIGHT

St. David's Foundation has a history of supporting various organizations and agencies since 1924. The foundation addresses community needs through strategic grantmaking, research to pandemic response and free clinical care. Annually, St. David's Foundation invests more than \$80 million in grants to support community health and well-being. The Foundation focuses on funding programs and initiatives surrounding: Resilient Children, Healthy Women and Girls, Older Adults Age in Place, Thriving Rural Communities, and Clinics as Community Hubs for Health.

St. David's dedicates its efforts to enhancing the health and healthcare of the community, particularly for those who are underserved or have limited access to medical services. St. David's Foundation works towards creating a healthier Central Texas.

The latest grant initiative focuses on addressing homelessness and the housing affordability crisis. St. David's Foundation recently announced their \$7.8 million investment into Austin Community Foundation, Ending Community Homelessness Coalition, and Foundation Communities. These organizations were awarded funding to expand affordable housing programs and to continue addressing the homelessness and housing affordability crisis.

Beyond grant-making, St. David's Foundation operates a merit and needs-based scholarship program, exemplified by the St. David's Neal Kocurek Scholarship. This initiative assists graduating high school seniors in Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson counties who aspire to pursue healthcare careers in Texas colleges. These students can receive financial assistance of up to \$60,000 throughout their collegiate journey.

Currently, submission of grant applications to the St. David's Foundation is by invitation only. The St. David's Foundation consistently invites Hope Alliance to submit grant applications and since 2011 St. David's Foundation awarded Hope Alliance \$1,741,196.55 in grants and matching funds. These funds have been critical in providing counseling to family violence and sexual assault victims. St. David's Foundation has been an integral part in advancing Hope Alliance's mission, and we would not be the organization we are today without financial support from the St. David's Foundation.

Hope Alliance expresses its heart-felt gratitude to the St. David's Foundation for all your support and guidance throughout the years, and we look forward to a long, continuing relationship.





## HOPE ALLIANCE VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

“I started as a volunteer at Hope Alliance last year after finding myself with more time on my hands. Keeping busy keeps me on track and what better way to fill in the extra hours than giving time to an organization with a positive social impact on the community? After attending a few classroom hours of training, I can help with donations, the front desk, routing phone calls, and Sandra, our coordinator, makes it easy to sign up for shifts. I've even made new friends.

When I'm not at my part-time job or HA, I like to go to movies, ride my bike, read, spend time with my grandkids, and work out at the “Y.” My dream trip is to visit Norway.

Volunteering doesn't have to involve a long-term commitment or take a huge amount of time out of your busy schedule. Giving in even the smallest way can help others and improve your happiness at the same time.”

**Cyndee McHenry**



Do you have a little extra time on your hands? Hope Alliance can always use your help. If you are Interested in becoming a volunteer, then click [Here](#) to go to the volunteer page on our website. Check out how to get involved and what opportunities we have. Some examples are:

### **Join a Committee or the Board of Directors**

Joining a working committee or the Board of Directors allows you to help the agency at the 100,000-foot level. You will be working on the strategic goals of the organization as we work towards expansion. There is no need for you to be a nonprofit management expert, we need experts in other areas like marketing, accounting, and fundraising. We can always use legal expertise in the field of Family Law too!

## HOPE ALLIANCE FUNDRAISING EVENT NEWS

Hope Alliance had a prosperous year of fundraising events in 2023. We enjoyed our annual events beginning with Amplify Austin, Allies of Hope Dinner, Awards & Casino Night, the 17th Annual WoMen Fore Hope Golf Tournament, Survive Thrive Prevent 5K Walk/Run, and Giving Tuesday/End of Year Giving. Thank you to all our sponsors and donors for helping us raise over \$225,000!

Below are some of our amazing and loyal supporters.



**S.WATTS GROUP**  
COMMERCIAL GENERAL CONTRACTORS



**VOLVO CARS OF AUSTIN**  
**VOLVO CARS HILL COUNTRY**





## PREVENTION EDUCATION

As 2023 ended, we celebrated the splendid work our Williamson County community did to prevent gender-based violence. We are so excited for 2024, with plans of making new community partners and expanding our prevention programs! The prevention program here at Hope Alliance is based on community involvement. We aim to get every member of the community involved one way or another, no matter the age or profession.

Our “Close to Home” curriculum provides space for everyone to join our movement. Let’s end gender-based violence in our community! If you would like to see how you can be involved, please reach out to our team! A terrific way for our community partners to get involved is by posting our resources in their public areas. If you are interested in receiving some informational material from us regarding our resources and prevention guides, please reach out. The more people we can reach, the more people we can help. Let’s be the change we want to see in Williamson County this new year!

Instead of being a spectator or bystander, 2024 is the year for you to take action and become an “Upstander” in our community. An Upstander is a person who speaks or acts in support of an individual or cause. If you see or suspect something, do something. We are calling upon everyone in our community to help us. Join us in our efforts to prevent gender-based violence!

We wish you a wonderful, healthy, and loving 2024!



CONVERSATION STARTERS	CONVERSATION STARTERS	CONVERSATION STARTERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do you like most about yourself?</li><li>• Why is it important to respect yourself?</li><li>• How can you give respect to yourself?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are you or your friends' dating relationships like?</li><li>• What qualities are important to someone you would date or go out with?</li><li>• What makes a relationship good? What makes it bad?</li><li>• What does respect look like in a relationship?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are some examples of someone saying or doing something that crosses your personal boundaries?</li><li>• What can you say and do to communicate your personal boundaries?</li></ul>

## HOPE SPEAKS - STAFF SPOTLIGHT

**Name:** Jessica Becker-Matthews

**Job Title:** Transportation Advocate

**Length of time Employed at Hope Alliance:**  
One year as a volunteer and one year as a Staff Member.

**Hometown:** Currently residing in Hutto, TX

**Fun Fact About Me:** I am the mom to three amazing young women. I also have two cats, two dogs, a bird, and frogs. I love to travel, and I only have four of the fifty states left to visit.

**During time away from work I enjoy:** Riding my Harley "Lucy" or hanging out with my friends and fam. I am currently looking forward to my trip to India to experience Holi.



The most rewarding thing about working at Hope Alliance: Is knowing that I am making a difference.

### Fast Favorites

**Food:** "I'm just a cheeseburger in paradise kind of girl."

**Activity:** "Laughing 'til my sides hurt, dancing until I collapse and wind therapy."

**Color:** Purple

**Movie/TV Show:** The Color Purple / Criminal Minds

**Supervisor Comments about Jessica:** Jessica is a vital part of our shelter crew. As the Transportation Advocate Jessica juggles several vital duties that help to keep the shelter running smoothly. She responds to the fast-paced, ever-changing needs of the shelter with a smile and her signature laugh. Jessica greets each resident like an old friend and has the uncanny ability to make everyone feel heard, seen, and safe. Not only is Jessica a phenomenal advocate for all the survivors she interacts with, but she is an immense help to all the shelter advocates. Jessica is always ready and willing to step up when someone needs an extra hand. Our shelter is a better and brighter place every day because of Jessica, and I am proud that she is a part of our team.

### Help Us Deliver Hope in the Future



Did you know Hope Alliance accepts distributions from estates? We do, and now you know. The most common distribution from an estate is in the form of a bequest, which is a transfer of personal property or assets that a person leaves to their family, friends, or charitable organizations like Hope Alliance through the terms of a Last Will and Testament after their death. A bequest can transfer any type of asset including cash, stocks, bonds, jewelry, or other personal items.

When a person uses a Last Will to transfer assets to their family, friends, or the charitable causes they support, the act is known as making a bequest. There are four distinct types of bequests:

- 1. Specific Bequest:** The transfer of a specifically identified asset, like jewelry, artwork, or vehicles, to a specific person or charitable cause.
- 2. General Bequest:** The transfer of money typically distributed from the person's pool of general assets, but not a specifically identified asset.
- 3. Demonstrative Bequest:** The transfer of an asset from a stated source like a bank account or retirement fund.
- 4. Residuary Bequest:** The transfer of assets remaining in the estate after the estate pays all debts and makes all other bequests.

It is important to note that a bequest is different from a gift. A bequest is the legal transfer of an asset from the decedent's estate to a beneficiary through a Last Will and Testament. People who transfer assets to others while they are alive are making gifts.

When planning your estate and creating a Last Will and Testament, using a professional with estate planning expertise is highly recommended. Using an estate planning professional will be comforting and help you avoid common mistakes in the distribution process. Using estate planning professionals in the planning phase before death will help you learn about and dispel the common myths associated with estate planning documents such as the Last Will and Testament.

**Myth 1:** Only wealthy people need Last Wills.

**WRONG:** If you have an asset that you care about, regardless of its financial worth, and you want said asset to be managed in a certain way after your death, then you need to write a set of instructions for your estate administrator which details who shall own the asset and how you wish it to be used after your death. In legal terms, the Executor is the estate administrator. The asset distribution instructions are called the Last Will and Testament. The smooth transfer of asset ownership is the most important reason for creating the Last Will







and Testament. Assets come in all sizes and shapes including real estate, cash, personal property, investments, retirement plan balances, life insurance benefits, etc. Ensure proper ownership transfer; create a Last Will and Testament.

**Myth 2:** Only people with dependents need to make a Last Will or other legal arrangements for the ownership transfer and distribution of their assets.

**WRONG:** Even people with no dependents need to make plans regarding the distribution of assets after death. Having a Last Will can sometimes reduce delays and probate costs, waive certain expenses, and save taxes. People with dependents must detail guardianship plans for their minor children in their Last Will and Testament. If you have minor children and do not have a Last Will and Testament, then why not?

**Myth 3:** When people die without Last Wills (Intestate), state laws usually distribute property the same way the decedent would have.

**WRONG:** There is no way for a government agency to know a person's wishes for the distribution of assets after death. Therefore, every state has specific property distribution laws, and every state's laws are different. Distributions from an estate without a Last Will and Testament for special friends are not possible and state laws will not distribute assets to your favorite charitable organization, such as the Williamson County Crisis Center d/b/a Hope Alliance. Do not let the transfer of your assets after your death become a court-appointed estate administrator's guessing game. Create a Last Will and Testament of your own, and please consider a transfer of assets to Hope Alliance in those plans!

**Myth 4:** There is no real need to go to the trouble and expense of making a Last Will or other legal arrangements if property is jointly owned by heirs with mutual rights of survivorship because such property is automatically transferred to the survivor at death.

**WRONG:** Joint ownership forces a probate process of the asset at the time of the heir's or survivor's death. The heir or survivor must do something with the asset while s/he is alive to avoid it from going through the probate process at their death. Probate is a legal proceeding designed to prove your ownership of assets at the time of your death and transferring ownership of said assets to someone else. Probate takes time and costs money. Probate can be avoided with the proper set of estate planning documents.





**Myth 5:** It is not a good idea to name your spouse as administrator or executor of your estate.

**WRONG:** You and your spouse should always remain in control of your assets for as long as you are willing and able. Remember, however, that it is always wise to name alternate Executors should you or your spouse be unable or unwilling to serve in that capacity. If you or your spouse is unable to serve, and you have not named an alternate Executor, then the Probate Court will step in to appoint an Executor of the court's choosing.

**Myth 6:** A good Last Will, professionally made, rarely needs revision.

**WRONG:** Life constantly changes. Periodic reviews of your plans are advisable. Every time there is a new life event such as a birth, a death, a marriage, a divorce, a change in the tax code, a change in the probate laws, there should be a review of your Last Will. Children grow up. Beneficiaries and Executors can predecease you; they can move away or become estranged. Estate values can increase or decrease. Your charitable wishes may alter over time. Review your Last Will annually. If changes are needed, then it is not always necessary to rewrite the entire Last Will. An amendment (codicil) can be added to cover the change, and codicils typically do not cost much.

**Myth 7:** Charitable bequests come from those people who have few close relatives or whose estates are so large that there are a lot of assets left over after other distributions.

**WRONG:** Anyone who owns anything has an estate regardless of its financial worth. People with modest estates discover they can arrange for generous provisions for dependents and loved ones, and still make meaningful charitable bequests that will enable Hope Alliance to continue its vital work to help victims break the cycles of violence in which they live.

**Myth 8:** Nonprofit organizations named in Last Wills as beneficiaries need only be identified by their popular, accepted names.

**WRONG:** Each organization or institution should be identified by its exact, legal, corporate name along with its address and taxpayer ID number, i.e., Williamson County Crisis Center d/b/a Hope Alliance, 1011 Gattis School Rd., Ste 110, Round Rock, TX 78664, with Tax ID: 74-2277114. Hope Alliance is always happy to share additional estate planning information with you or your advisers.

Please call us at 512-255-1212 to learn more about planning opportunities that can benefit not only you and those you care for, but also the many adults, children and families that count on Hope Alliance's help in their journey to break away from living in a constant cycle of abuse. You can call, or you can e-mail me: [Rick.Brown@hopealliancetx.org](mailto:Rick.Brown@hopealliancetx.org).

