

Woman of Influence Award

Contract with NMCD!



I was recently honored with a special "Woman of Influence Award". But the best part of it was that I was also invited to recognize one of my mentors, Dr. David Poling.

My husband, a 747 airline Captain, had just been arrested. I was penniless, had a \$3.5 million IRS lien, and got turned down for food stamps because my "friend" in the state office said, "I don't think you need this!" I had four young sons with my baby on oxygen and I couldn't even pay for it. We had been a member of a church for 12 years and no one from the church called. Our neighbors suddenly shunned us and we became the lepers in the area. I was told I could no longer even be the Cub Scout leader. We were alone, ostracized from all we had known, and I needed help!

I had grown up in the church and I knew that God wouldn't kick us out, even though everyone else seemed to have done that. I asked a "friend" if they knew a pastor who might welcome us in. She told me about The Rev. Dr. David Poling. Even his title intimidated me, as I felt so worthless, but I called and made an appointment with him, because I didn't want to go to a church where the Sr. Pastor wouldn't want us.

I walked into David's office. He welcomed me, we talked, and at the end of our conversation he asked if he could pray with me and for me. He first took my hand in his hand, and then he placed his second hand around my hand, and he prayed for us.

David's touch felt like the hand of God reaching out to me! I felt so loved, comforted, and cared for. I felt so welcome. At that moment I was no longer the leper that no one would touch - I was now one of God's children, and David's hands made me feel wrapped in God's love.

Over time David had the courage to hire me, the wife of an inmate, as Youth Director. I learned about a model of ministry that became the foundation for Wings For LIFE International, a ministry I founded in 1995.

Now, 32 years later, I always share that special moment when David first took my hand and prayed for us and I talk about the importance of touch with the inmates and family members I meet in the 20+ states, Kenya, and India, where we have now done ministry. David is one of God's angels here on earth who brings God's love to us through his touch, his caring, and his compassion.

David is still there for me as my friend, pastor, and mentor. THANK YOU David! Everyone needs a David in their life! Ann Edenfield Sweet

Wings For LIFE International has received a contract with the NM Corrections Dept. to host Family Days in the NM prisons again this year. With the State of NM in a financial crisis, we are pleased that the NMCD found some funding to help us. Wings plans to host prison Family Days in all 11 NM prisons.



GCCF—Santa Rosa, NM—Wings Family Day 4-24-17

← Women's NE Pre-release Correctional Center—Cleveland, OH New Father's Day Outfits 4-15-17



My Life—Jessica Whitaker

I grew up in El Paso, Texas with a loving mom, a dad who worked a lot, and a typical mean older brother. We didn't have a ton of money but, we always had food to eat and a place to live. My childhood was good except I remember my parents fighting all the time. Their fighting eventually led to their divorce when I was eight years old. My dad moved to Louisiana and my brother and I would go to visit him often. We would spend our summers with our dad fishing, jet skiing, and getting spoiled by our relatives.

The year I turned 13 is the most vivid year of my life. We had just gotten done visiting our dad for summer break, when my grandma in Louisiana called and told my mom that my dad was killed by a drunk driver. I was absolutely devastated. I became withdrawn and sad my freshman year of high school. That was the year that I first tried smoking weed. It helped me deal with the death of my dad.

I smoked weed until I was 15 and that's when I was introduced to crystal meth. From that point on, my life was complete chaos. I was smoking meth on a daily basis and just living off of friends. I rarely talked to my mom and when I did, we would just argue. When I was 18 I had my first experience with getting arrested and was booked into the El Paso County Jail for drug possession. I got out on probation and after that, I would continue to go in and out jail while I was in Texas for the next 8 years. I just couldn't stay away from getting high on meth.

When I was 26 years old, I moved to Albuquerque to improve my life and get away from using meth. But very shortly after moving here, I found myself using again. I eventually went to jail for a possession charge and got out with probation again. I was still on probation and 28 years old when I had my first son James. I violated probation when he was 10 months old for having a dirty UA and he was placed into CYFD custody and I was sent to the New Mexico Women's Recovery Academy (NMWRA).

While I was at NMWRA I worked really hard on myself to change the person I was so I could stop the cycle of jail and get my son back from CYFD. I took and still take my recovery seriously. NMWRA had some different programs, but the one I liked the best was Wings for L.I.F.E. (WFL) I use to love getting ready and going to WFL because I knew that whatever speaker they had, would be a speaker that would interest me and would be beneficial to my life. The parenting classes were the ones I liked the best. WFL helped me with my self-esteem by showing me that I was not alone in my drug addiction. Through WFL and the guest speakers that I listened to, I realized that there are many people struggling with addiction and heartache of going in and out of jail. That was a hard time in my life and going to WFL I would feel welcomed and loved by Ann and her staff.

Now I have been clean for 7 years and I find myself back at WFL working on my social work practicum through CNM. I chose WFL for my practicum because instead of just going to WFL, I wanted to find out what goes on in the process of putting WFL together. I knew Ann and her staff worked hard, but I never realized how much effort goes into the planning of each event WFL has. I also want to learn better people skills by watching the interactions Ann has with her staff and the people who attend the events. I want to keep on learning about life skills and parenting skills that WFL has to offer. I know I am a good mom, but as my boys get older I am going to have to learn more things about parenting and I will take all the help I can get.

I know on Monday night when I walk into the meeting with my little boys, that I am going to learn a life skill that will help guide me in my journey in life. My boys have already learned table manners and they get excited about going to WFL. Ann is a woman I look up to because is so strong and passionate about helping people. I hope one day that I am as strong as she is. I am glad to be back at WFL and I plan to keep coming back.



Jessica's sons helping to set the tables at WFL



Family Wins Bike at WFL

Upcoming Wings Family Days

- July 22 Central NM Correctional Facility—Los Lunas, NM Level 2
- July 29 Springer Women's Correctional Facility Springer, NM
- Aug. 12 Wings 22nd Annual Back-To-School Albuquerque Family Day
Sonrise Church
1704 Blake Road SW
Albuquerque, NM
2-4 Set-up, 4—7 Party

Volunteers Needed & Wanted!

Woody Plays a Vital Role at WFL!

John McWaters is an active Board Member of Wings For LIFE International, whose mission is transforming lives to break the generational cycle of incarceration.



Reading to Woody

One way Wings does this is by offering therapy comfort to children and families of incarcerated prisoners.



Woody is John's canine therapy partner who is a Rottweiler mix rescued from an Albuquerque shelter three years ago. **Woody** and John have been registered and active in therapy dog work for two years.

Both provide emotional therapy assistance for *Read to Dogs* at a local library and *Wings For L.I.F.E.s'* weekly educational program.

John previously retired from marketing at PNM, Public Service Company of New Mexico, and is a Vietnam Army Infantry Veteran who served as the NM Veterans Services Deputy Cabinet Secretary. He is now active with **Woody** in therapy dog work.



John's goal is to reduce crime in Albuquerque and New Mexico by supporting prisoners and their family members during and after their release with supportive family behavior through WFL training and behavior modification.

In order to address the escalating crime problem John believes it is important to help the children affected by incarceration of their family member as they are 72% more likely to become incarcerated than non-children of prisoners. Therapy dog emotional support is his effort to stop the cycle of crime and incarceration with this population, one child and one family at a time.

Cabi Clothing Giveaway

Cabi, the exclusive private in-home clothing line, chose the ladies from Wings and the Heart Gallery as recipients of their *Spring 2017 Heart of Cabi Foundation Week of Giving*. On Monday, May 15, at the Wings Mother's Day Potluck Celebration, **Cabi** fashion stylists and volunteers helped outfit 85 women in new donated **Cabi** designer clothing and/or accessories. THANK YOU Cabi ❤️ ❤️ ❤️



The Fantastic Stylists!

Some of the lovely new outfits. ↓



22nd Annual Banquet



Great night of fundraising, friends, recognition & FUN!



Wings For LIFE International
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 Albuquerque, NM 87112
 505-291-6412

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Transforming lives to break the generational cycle of incarceration.

2nd Quarter 2017

Facebook: at Wings-Ministry
Twitter: @WFLlabq
Instagram: WFLlabq
www.WingsForLIFEInternational.org
 AnnEdenfield@WingsForLIFEInternational.org

See more photos at
<http://wingsforlifeinternational.org/gallery.html>



- ✦ A child of a prisoner is faced with a daunting future.
- ✦ Children of prisoners have a **72% chance** of ending up in prison themselves!*
- ✦ **But this does not have to be!**
- ✦ **Your gift can make a difference in the life of a child!**



Wings For LIFE Int'l
 Reunites Families & Restores Hope

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift for:

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25

Other \$ _____

I would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities in my area.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

Wings is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization.

Wings accepts United Way & company matching fund contributions from anywhere in the U.S.



Thank You!



5th Celebration of Champions
Thursday Sept. 12
Hotel Albuquerque—Old Town Albuquerque, NM

5:30—11:00 pm

Dinner Tickets \$100 or \$1000 Reserved Table of 10

Elegant cuisine in Hotel Albuquerque
 Gourmet desserts & entertainment at Casa Esencia

Purchase tickets online at www.WingsForLIFEInternational.org

Call to pay/reserve your tickets.
505-291-6412 or 505-717-7523



Ways Wings For L.I.F.E. Measures Success

Wings For L.I.F.E. - Life-skills Imparted to Families through Education (WFL) (Serving Youth and Families of prisoners and Returning Citizens)

WFL is proud of its Client Outcome Performance Measures.

- **WFL is unique** as it aims at intervention, prevention, and positive child and adult development through successful implementation of Search Institute's[®] 40 Developmental Assets[®] – scientifically-sound principles which focus on prevention and resiliency to promote positive, healthy development in people of all ages. The more Assets a person has, the less at-risk behaviors they exhibit. At WFL, Assets are introduced to influence choices people make which help them become more caring, responsible individuals. Because Assets are taught to adults/caregivers and the children, the family unit learns together and change occurs. WFL is changing these at-risk behaviors for all ages and teaching skills for healthy living to all family members.
- **Attendance:** In 2016 WFL met 43 times. There were 2986 people who attended 43 meetings including 541 children/teens and 2445 adults for an average 70 people/meeting.
- **County lived:** 94% of attendees were from Bernalillo County, 3% Sandoval, 2% Valencia, other unknown.
- **Ethnicity:** 56% Hispanic; 24% Caucasian; 10% Native American; 7% African America; 2% Asian; 1% other
- **Repeat Attendance:** WFL is proud of repeat attendance. 32% came 2-43 times. Attendance is difficult for our participants. Many do not have a car and walk or ride the bus. 94% of participants in 2016 in a voluntary income survey had a household income less than \$12,000/year. WFL serves a very poor clientele.
- **Life-Skills:** All participants, including children, were taught how to properly set a table. Everyone helped set the tables and prepared the food family-style for serving. The children were seen as *equal helpers*, which allowed them to naturally build good social skills while learning practical life skills.
- **Pre-dinner Mixers:** Everyone participated in the mixers that were offered prior to the official start of WFL at 6:00. Everyone learned how to shake a hand, proper placement of a nametag, and built confidence and self-esteem by talking with others.
- **Dinner table discussion** taught all participants how to share their life stories, failures and successes around a dinner table and modeled healthy family communication.
- **Dinner:** 2986 people were fed a nutritious, healthy meal (Entrée, Salad/fruit/veggies, bread, dessert, beverage)
- **Manners:** All participants were taught a minimum of 3 manners each week and then practiced them at each meeting.
- **Speakers:** 43 speakers donated their time and expertise to provide best-practice education, inspiration, and training in 4 areas: Jobs, Finance, Parenting, and Issues unique to incarceration.
- **Pre-K and K-12 After-dinner programming:**
 - All 531 children were taught appropriate social behaviors, manners, communication skills, and relationship development skills.
 - WFL tracked and provided each child with educational, mental, emotional, and social support in areas of specific need to that child. (WFL tracks all children, but children who come ten or more times will have the greatest positive outcomes.)

- WFL tracks each child in the following areas of functioning: grade progression, literacy, school subjects requiring one-on-one tutoring, socialization skills, family relations, 40 Developmental Assets[®], and life skills appropriate for his/her age.
- All children received a free book each week and were given school supplies.
- **One-on-one tutoring** is offered for all children and teens who attend WFL. Volunteer tutors come from UNM, CMN, NMHU, Intel, the Sandia Labs scientific community, banking, business, legal, and teaching fields. The volunteer tutors are under the supervision of the WFL Tutoring/Pre-K Director. Tutors offer assistance with the child's homework (reading, writing, math, spelling, and with any other classroom need). There is an intentional focus to teach and model the 40 Developmental Assets[®] with the children. (i.e. family support, positive family communication, other caring adults, safety, planning and decision-making, school engagement, peaceful conflict resolution, achievement motivation, reading for pleasure, responsibility, high expectations, family boundaries, and resistance skills.)
- **Intake surveys** were given to all new attendees.
- **Follow-up surveys** were given to adults and youth after attending 10+, 20+, 30+ and 40+ times/year. Clients filled out weekly comment forms stating requests, comments and suggestions for WFL to assist them in achieving specific goals and positive life changes. Surveys also analyzed increased skills in building 40 Developmental Assets[®], family relationships, positive communication, increased confidence, manners, positive view of the future, asking for help, improved relationships with friends, making better choices, and feeling valued and appreciated by others. A few of the comments include:
 - *Wings has been a second family to me.*
 - *WFL improves one's life as well as those around them. I've learned public speaking, proper table manners, and respect for others.*
 - *I feel important at WFL as they welcome any and every one.*
 - *I love coming to Wings! It's the highlight of my week!*
 - *Wings is great and I invite others to join me.*
 - Comments and survey results from the WFL participants proved program satisfaction and an increase in "best-practice" learning. The results can be found online at <http://wingsforlifeinternational.org/docs/comments/Comments.pdf>.
- **Results:**
 - 100% of Exit surveys reported stronger family relationships and communication, higher achievement motivation, stronger sense of purpose, increased resistance skills, better planning and decision-making, and a more positive view of future.
 - 100% of attendees had an increased knowledge of Developmental Assets[®]. Each meeting unique placemats (which become lesson plans) identify at least 2 of the 40 Assets. Each week the Assets, and ways to build and strengthen them, are discussed, guaranteeing an awareness of the Assets and how to use them in families and relationships. (30+ Assets are needed before at-risk behaviors lessen and many clients have >10 Assets.)
 - 100% of attendees reported increased knowledge and use of dinner manners and life skills specific to dining, jobs, sports, telephone, social graces and life's encounters.
 - 100% of children/youth who attended 10+ meetings progressed to the next grade
 - WFL hosted special meetings: Dr. Seuss – Read Across America, Back-To-School Fashion Show, Make a Difference Day ABQ, Mother's Day Potluck, Keep ABQ Beautiful, and Christmas Go Shopping.