

VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 2 | FALL 2019

CONNECTIONS

THE DIFFERENCE **YOU** ARE MAKING FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

“I was at
my breaking
point.”

*How you helped
Arkasha and
her family*

Teenage mom alone at Christmas

How do you provide gifts for your child when you can't even put food on the table?

At the age of 16, Arkasha became a mother. She was finishing high school, working part-time, and learning how to raise a child. She left home to remove her daughter from an environment that was unsafe, without a clue of how she would make it.

When Christmas came around, what little money she had went to rent and the electric bill. After basic needs were met, there was nothing left over for food. She knew she couldn't give her 2-year old daughter, Artavia, the Christmas she deserved.

That's when Arkasha found Adopt A Family. Soon after, she learned she was expecting her second child. Through the kindness of people like **you**, she and her daughter not only received all the items they needed, but also she received gifts to prepare her for the arrival of her second daughter. Without the support of those like **you**, Arkasha's children would have gone without.

Years later, when she found herself not able to provide for another holiday, you stepped up again. **You made sure Artavia, Makalia, and Love did not go without.**

Fast forward to now, a mother and a grandmother and looking for a steady career to provide for her family. She began pursuing a nursing degree but soon realized financial aid wouldn't cut it. **"I would of dropped out of school. I was at my breaking point."**

Through the advice of a fellow classmate, Arkasha found our health professions training program. With the health professions program she has received assistance with tuition, books, transportation, and more.

Although she has had many setbacks in life, it hasn't stopped her from pushing forward. One day, when Arkasha's goals become a reality, she plans to give back to programs like Adopt A Family.

When Arkasha needed help the most, **you were there**. Your generosity over the years has shown your commitment to those in need.



Pictured above are Arkasha's three daughters, Artavia, Makalia, and Love, opening the gifts they received from donors like you on Christmas morning.

Because of you,
single mothers
like Arkasha
have faith in their
community.

“The family that adopted us years ago has no idea of the effect they had on my children or me, myself being a teen mom with no income.”

Arkasha knew that she could make it because she had people like you on her side. However, there are still so many families today that are wondering how they are going to provide for their children this holiday season. ***Can they count on you?***



Pictured left to right: Love (daughter), Kayden (grandson), Arkasha, Autumn (granddaughter), Artavia (daughter).

Did you know?

Adopt A Family relies on the compassionate generosity of people like you.

The need doesn't end here

Adopt A Family has a long wait-list of children and families, seniors, and homeless veterans in need of a Christmas miracle.

Donate or adopt today at www.adoptafamilymichigan.org. You can grant Christmas wishes for those who need it most. Visit page 5 to learn how you can give today.

“I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me.” -Matthew 26:40

Veteran loses eye in gunfire

How you helped Kenneth get his life back.

Kenneth is a hometown hero from Detroit. He served four years in the United States Marines as a sergeant and worked as a translator for intelligence. After finishing his service, he proudly came home to Detroit.

However, life wasn't what Kenneth expected it to be when he came back. The effects of his service on his marriage were too much and he and his wife divorced. Adjusting to civilian life and divorce simultaneously became a major struggle.

“I couldn't acclimate. When I got home I felt like I was in a strange place even though I grew up here. Everything was suddenly foreign to me.”

Kenneth was fortunate to have returned safe after his service, only to come home to be the victim of a senseless crime. Kenneth was shot in the head and lost his eye. **He went from fighting for our country to fighting for his life.**

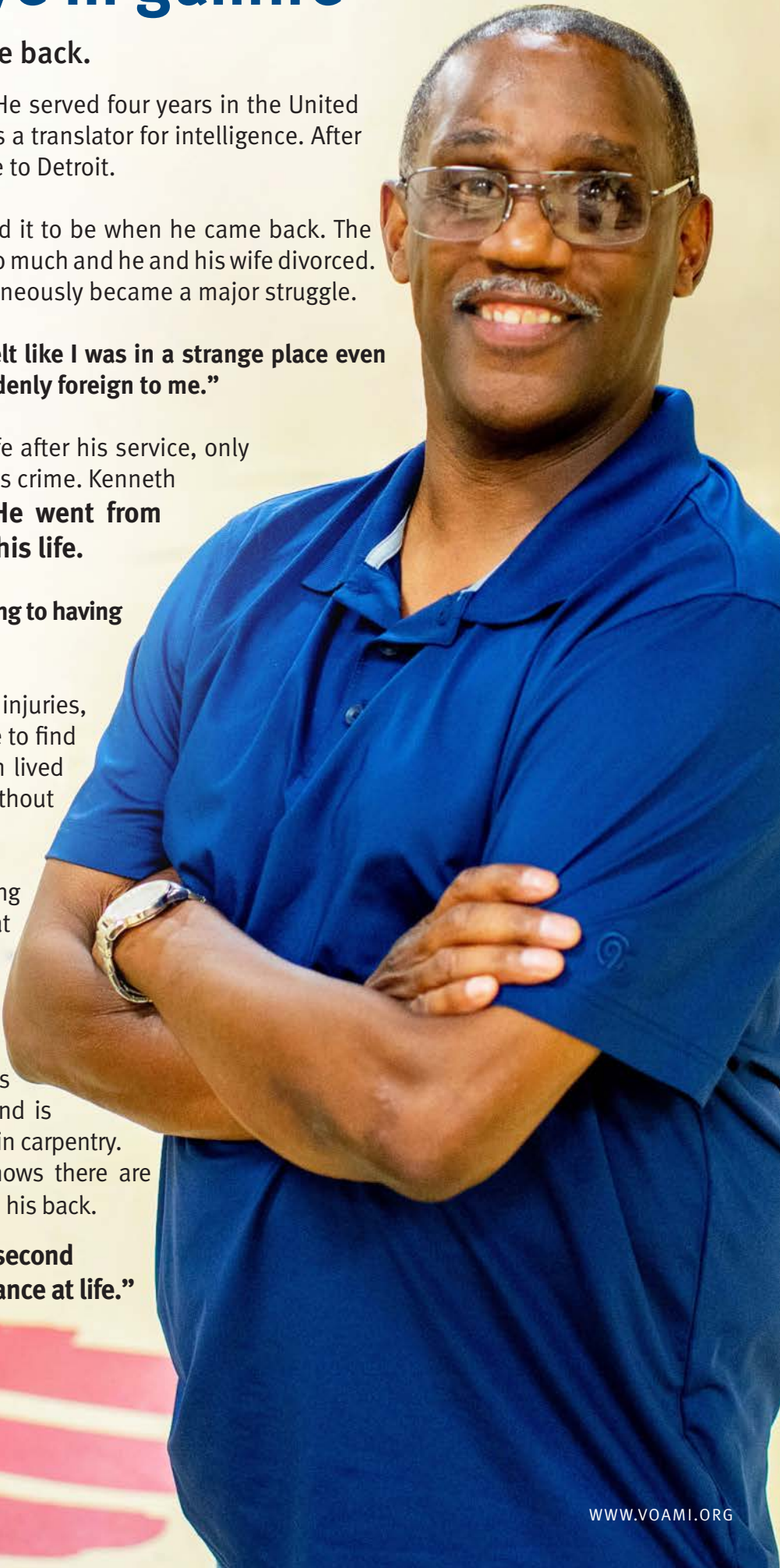
“After that, it was downhill. I went from thriving to having almost nothing.”

It took more than a year to recover from his injuries, and the loss of his livelihood left him unable to find safe, affordable housing. For years, Kenneth lived with different friends and family members without having a place to call his own.

When Kenneth realized his current living situation became unsafe, he found shelter at our Detroit Veterans Housing Program. There, Kenneth was able to get the stability and help he needed to start over.

Thanks to you, Kenneth was able to get his life back. He now has his own apartment and is continuing his education to further his career in carpentry. Although life still has its challenges, he knows there are others out there like **you** who will always have his back.

“I feel like I have a second chance at life.”



“Give, and it will be given to you.” *Luke 6:38*

Your generosity gave Karri’s family the blessing they were hoping for.

Imagine being a child and waking up on Christmas morning and seeing nothing under the tree. That feeling of sadness and emptiness is heartbreaking. Sadly, this will be the reality for many children this Christmas.

Your generosity will allow a child to be excited to wake up on Christmas morning.
You have the chance to make a veteran feel appreciated.
You can ensure a senior isn’t neglected and forgotten about.
You are their only hope this holiday season.



Will you give the feeling of pure joy this Christmas?

Sadly, at just four years old, Ma’Kari had been through more than most adults. He was living in a domestic violence shelter after he witnessed the death of his baby sister. His mother, Karri was doing the best she could to get into a home where Ma’Kari and his baby brother would be safe. Despite her many efforts Karri was unable to find a job. It was starting to look very bleak for her and her children.



Karri didn’t think that they would be able to celebrate the holidays at all, and **she felt like she had failed as a mother.**

You can give hope to single mothers struggling to provide for their children.

Truth is, there are even more struggling families, neglected seniors, and homeless veterans right in your neighborhood. You can *provide hope*, and *give faith* to those that have fallen on hard times. Without your support, many will wake up on Christmas morning and feel completely alone.

Your gift of \$25, \$50, or \$100 can provide a holiday for those who need it most. *Can we count on you?*



YES! I want to give the gift of joy to a child like Ma’Kari!

To donate online visit us at www.voami.org

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$_____

I would like to make this a monthly gift annual gift one time gift

Check Enclosed Credit Card: Visa Mastercard Discover Amex

Name on card: _____

Card Number: _____

Exp: ____/____/____ CVV: _____ Billing Zip code: _____

Billing Address: _____

Signature: _____

Adopt A Family

Diagnosed with Dementia and nowhere to call home

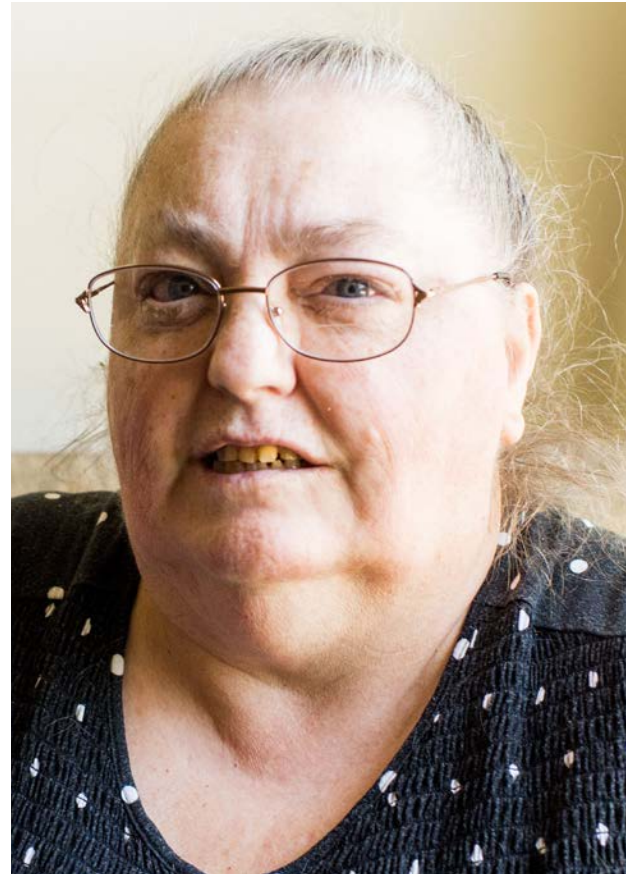
How your support gave Margaret a safe home in the community she dreamed of.

Margaret found herself in a place she never imagined. In her 50's, she was diagnosed with dementia, was evicted from her apartment, and had no support system.

That's when her doctor suggested she begin living in a nursing home. While she was there, Margaret was able to gain control of her dementia and wanted to have her independence back.

For Margaret, it was important to find a place where she fit in. She found Delta River Senior Village and decided to apply. After moving into her very own apartment, she quickly realized her neighbors were more than neighbors, they had become family.

"I love everything about Delta River. When my friends know I have a problem, they pray for me. I wanted to get out on my own, and this is the perfect place for it."



Did you know?

You can continue your impact by leaving a gift in your will for Volunteers of America Michigan.

- Please send me information on how to continue my impact by leaving a gift in my will.
- Please call me to discuss leaving a gift in my will for Volunteers of America Michigan.
My phone number is: _____
The best time to call is: _____

- My employer offers matching gift funds. Enclosed is the appropriate form from my Human Resources Department.



MICHIGAN

Thank you for keeping hope alive in your community!
Your gift is tax deductible as a charitable contribution. All gifts received are used where most needed to help care for people in need throughout the year.

Giving back in the city

Volunteering has allowed Stephanie to be a part of her community in a bigger way.

Why do you volunteer? I volunteer to help out in the community. Especially in the city of Detroit. It helps grow the city and that means so much to me to be able to give back in my own area. Working for Proof Management, I get so many opportunities to get involved.

I genuinely want to help people. **Volunteering shows that there are still people out there.** I truly enjoy it and I have fun!

What has been your biggest takeaway? Really just spreading excitement and positivity. It's all about your perspective and your attitude towards volunteering. **I have a lot of fun just being able to give back.**

What experience has made the biggest impact? Honestly, I would say Operation Backpack. It's good to see that so many kids are getting supplies. I've been doing it for three years now and it feels good to see the impact.

Stephanie Belaen

Volunteers of America Michigan Volunteer



To sign up to volunteer, please visit us at www.voami.org/volunteer

Creating a lasting legacy

How Eddie's impact will continue on...

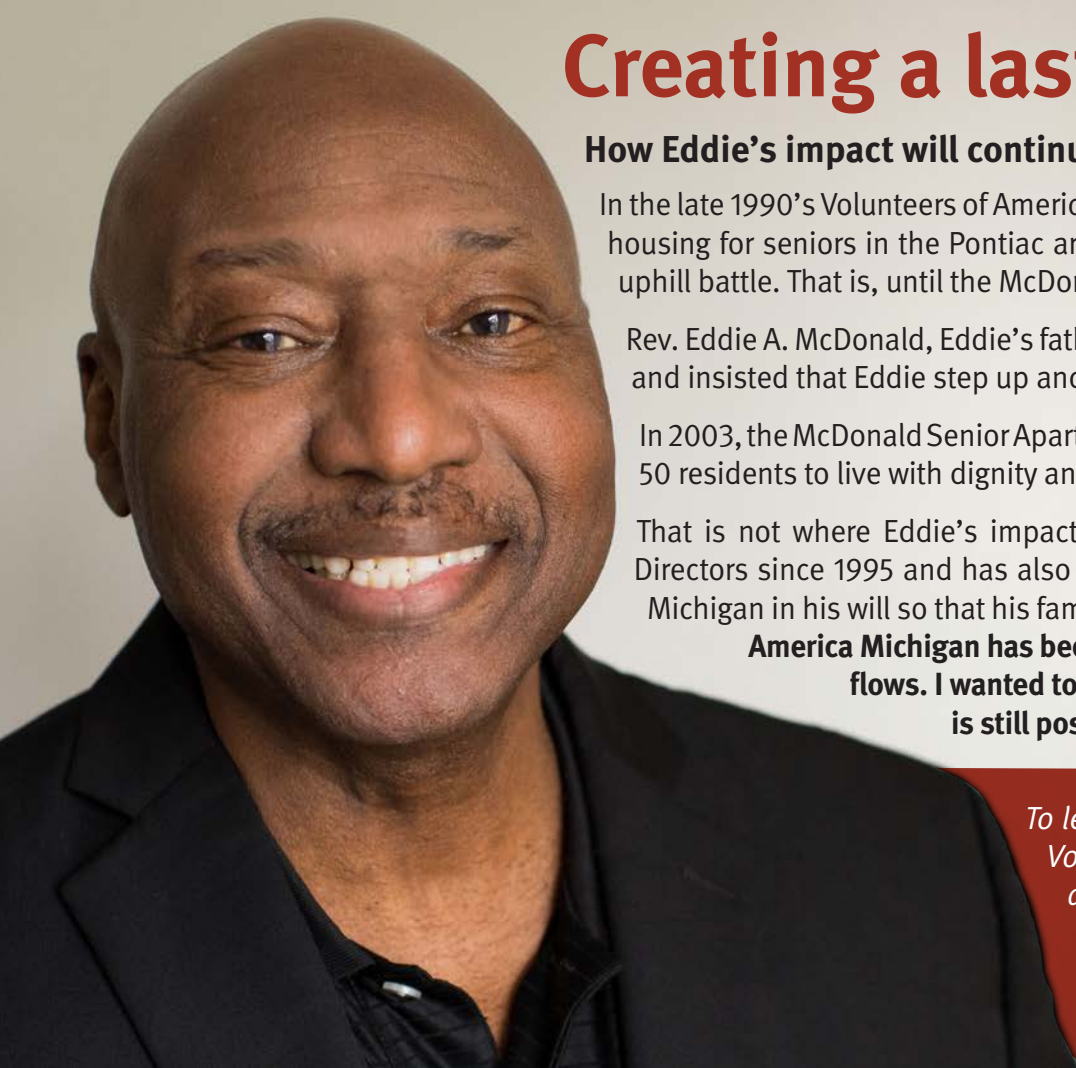
In the late 1990's Volunteers of America Michigan was trying to build affordable housing for seniors in the Pontiac area. Which seemed to be a never-ending uphill battle. That is, until the McDonald family stepped in.

Rev. Eddie A. McDonald, Eddie's father, was an influential resident in Pontiac and insisted that Eddie step up and make change happen.

In 2003, the McDonald Senior Apartments opened their doors and welcomed 50 residents to live with dignity and well deserved independence.

That is not where Eddie's impact ends. He has served on our Board of Directors since 1995 and has also included a gift to Volunteers of America Michigan in his will so that his family's legacy can continue. **"Volunteers of America Michigan has been a vital pipeline through which change flows. I wanted to know that when I am gone, that change is still possible."**

To learn more about how you can remember Volunteers of America Michigan in your will, and allow your giving to make a difference for years to come, contact Laura LeBlanc at 248-204-6034.



*You are invited to
make a difference!*

HOLIDAYS OF
Hope
a moment in time

Every single day there are homeless veterans wondering how they will find their next meal, lonely seniors that are unable to pay their rent, and families that just need a helping hand to get them back on their feet. All of them are waiting for *the moment in time* when they can hope for change.

At the Holidays of Hope Gala, you have the chance to create that moment for Michigan's most vulnerable.

We hope you will join us.

Saturday, December 7, 2019
Reception beginning at 6:00 pm

The Henry Ford Museum
20900 Oakwood Boulevard, Dearborn, MI 48124

RSVP by November 29 at www.voami.org/HolidaysofHope



21415 Civic Center Drive
Suite 306
Southfield, MI 48076

www.voami.org

Follow us on social media



CONTACT US

Volunteer with us

volunteers@voami.org
248-204-6042

Schedule a tour

lleblanc@voami.org
248-204-6034

Donate

lleblanc@voami.org
248-204-6034

Vehicle donations

carshelpingpeople.org
877-721-4862

Thrift pick-up

866-333-8281