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The amazing journey of T. Mychael Rambo

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Without a home to call his own—or a shelter to sleep in—Rambo would spend his nights in garages, doorways, in city buses and the emergency room at St. Joseph’s Hospital. Later he found refuge at Mary Hall, sleeping in a single room on the second floor.

He was once one of the thousands of faces who came to Catholic Charities in their hour of need. He’s now an actor, vocalist and educator—an accomplished man by any definition of the word.

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“Catholic Charities has helped me find my true north. It helped provide me with a sense of direction. It gave me hope. It gave me a sense of vision. They gave me a reason I was worth caring for and loving myself,” he said.

READ MORE: cctwincities.org/TMychael

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“T. Mychael Rambo is living proof. His is a true north. It helped provide me with a sense of direction. It gave me hope. It gave me a sense of vision. They gave me a reason I was worth caring for and loving myself.”

For more information visit MNhomelesscoalition.org/advocate
**“What we are doing works, the children are prepared to start school.”**

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— Higher Ground Volunteer Caitlin

**Provide strong and healthy starts to kids on the north side**

Catholic Charities’ Northside Child Development Center provides early education, preschool, school readiness and school reinforcement experiences, all designed to combat the negative impact poverty can have on children. Since 1985 Northside Child Development Center has been a part of the Catholic Charities mission, providing strong, healthy starts to children in North Minneapolis. Because of the quality education we are able to provide at Northside, you are giving children the first steps on their pathways out of poverty.

The staff are the heart of the center and the work that happens there. Parents feel comfortable bringing their children to Northside because they’re bringing them to a good place. “Northside Child Development Center is embedded in the community and people want their children to be here. What we are doing works, the children are prepared to start school,” said Program Director Kim Osborn. In addition to top-notch early childhood education, the staff at Northside also work with the parents and families, providing services and educational opportunities to build strong and stable environments where kids can thrive and succeed. Our staff strives for the highest quality possible, and thanks to your support, Northside Child Development Center once again received a four-star rating—the highest rating possible—from Minnesota Department of Human Services Parent Aware.

**“I wanted to be part of something bigger.”**

Gopher punter gives kids at St. Joe’s a few kicks

University of Minnesota Golden Gopher football punter Peter Mortell’s generosity will impact the lives of many kids at St. Joseph’s Home for Children for years to come. Mortell—as part of his participation with the Golden Gophers in the 2015 Citrus Bowl—received a gift card from Best Buy. “I received this gift card and I thought: I could buy something for myself, but I knew that wouldn’t last. I wanted to make a difference for kids—to buy something so a lot of kids could benefit. I wanted to be part of something bigger,” Mortell said.

He used his Best Buy gift card to purchase DVDs, game equipment, headphones, and other items that will be enjoyed by all the kids at St. Joe’s. “We greatly appreciate Peter’s donation. This donation not only brought smiles for children throughout the year,” said Keith Kozerski, Senior Director of Children and Family Services at Catholic Charities. St. Joseph’s serves children in North Minneapolis throughout the year and donations like Peter’s help us make sure we’re ready to serve these youth all year long.

**Provoking strong and healthy starts to kids on the north side**

The kids, the community, that’s a great organization to work for,” said Jones. He came to Northside as a 15-year-old working a summer program. He did so well that they asked him to stay on and work with the after school program. Damont continued his education but never lost contact with Northside. His role has changed over the years and now he works as program manager. Jones appreciates the quality team he works with and how much they care about the children. “What do I like about Northside? It’s about the kids first, but I love the team I work with. Every one of our workers really care and want to be here. Thanks to the support we receive from our donors we can focus on what is important, the future of the children.”

**Northside’s Damont Jones: Committed to improving the lives of children**

Every day, Damont Jones comes to Catholic Charities’ Northside Child Development Center and works to improve the lives of North Minneapolis children. It’s something he’s done for more than 25 years and something he plans to do for as long as possible.

**Providing strong and healthy starts to kids on the north side**

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Volunteers Caitlin and Adam are Tuesday night fixtures at Catholic Charities’ Higher Ground, a shelter for those experiencing homelessness. They work the front desk in the shelter, greeting clients as they come in to stay the night, not merely checking them in, but welcoming them.

“I wanted to stay in my neighborhood but I wanted to get outside of my comfort zone,” Adam said. “I come here every Tuesday. It’s become a part of my normal weekly routine. After coming week after week, you feel a part of something.”

Jessica Grease, shelter program manager at Higher Ground, said Adam and Caitlin have been an appreciated addition to Higher Ground.

“They make a huge difference. It’s only a few hours but those few mean a lot,” Grease said.

Giving back is just part of their way of life. “I just think that’s part of being an active member of the community,” Caitlin said. “This is fun. I look forward to it every week,” Adam said.

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“I received this gift card and I thought: I could buy something for myself, but I knew that wouldn’t last. I wanted to make a difference for kids—to buy something as a lot of kids could benefit. I wanted to be part of something bigger,” Mortell said. He used his first $100 gift card to purchase DVDs, game equipment, headphones, and other items that will be enjoyed by all the kids at St. Joe’s.

“We greatly appreciate Pete’s donation. This donation not only brought smiles over the holidays but will be useful in providing a welcoming environment for children throughout the year,” said Keith Kozierski, Senior Director of Children and Family Services at Catholic Charities. St. Joseph’s serves children who are dealing with mental health issues or healing from abuse throughout the year and donations like Pete’s help us make sure we’re ready to serve these youth all year long.

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An update on the new vision for the Dorothy Day Center

In January, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners voted to provide partial funding in the amount of $1.7 million towards construction of the Dorothy Day Connection Center in downtown St. Paul.

The Connection Center will provide on-site housing, employment and health-related services to those experiencing homelessness and housing instability. This commitment by Ramsey County is the first local funding for the Connection Center and will provide a critical foundation upon which additional funding is anticipated to be provided by state and local private and philanthropic sources.

“The Connection Center is an integral element of the new vision for the Dorothy Day Center. This investment by Ramsey County represents a significant step toward making this new vision a reality,” said Tim Marx, President and CEO of Catholic Charities. “We are grateful for the county’s partnership and leadership in addressing our community’s toughest challenges.”

FOR MORE UPDATES on the Dorothy Day Center visit dorothydayrevision.org

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READ MORE: cctwincities.org/Tmychael

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