

# Shine.

THE 2014 BUCKNER ANNUAL REPORT



BUCKNER.

Hope shines here.®



## Values that shine

**S**amrawit Fesha, 19, doesn't have many visitors in her one-room home in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Her father died when she was 7. Four years later, her mother followed him in death. In her words, their departure left her feeling utterly, completely "alone" in the home she once shared with her parents.



"Every time I breathe, I miss my parents, especially my mom," she says. "It's very hard to live on your own. In order to survive, you have to do everything. I miss my parents a lot, especially after school ... I come home each day and the door is shut. No one is here."

Through its foster care and Family Hope Center programs, Buckner has stepped in so Samrawit won't be alone anymore. By providing Alemtsehay Kido as her home care provider, Buckner is ensuring she'll survive, succeed...and be alone no more.

"My home care provider takes care of me. That's why I survive. She and Buckner are doing a tremendous work in my life. I consider Alemtsehay my mother and Buckner my father."

In addition to singling out Buckner as a source of hope, she also gives thanks to God. "I go to church to praise God," she says. "He is the one who prepared all of this. I go to praise him and thank him."

At Buckner, we also praise God for his work in Samrawit's life. As we read in James 1:27, we are reminded that no orphan child, widow or any other person in need should feel alone and without help or hope.

It is that reminder and our faith that drives us, compels us and gives us the passion to shine and serve in the lives of the vulnerable. It also determines our values.

In 2014, we clearly defined our core organizational values. This is critical to the life of any organization because it helps give us clarity and direction. As a result of the process, we acknowledged we hold the following values:

### Christ-like

- Mission-driven
- Give the glory to someone else
- Self-sacrificing
- Forgiving

### Servant spirit

- Humble
- Treat others with respect
- Put others first
- Team player

### Passion-driven

- Dedicated to the mission and purpose of Buckner
- Persevere
- Reliable
- Work hard

These values are not only reflected in the organization but individually by a passionate staff and a dedicated, zealous team of volunteers and supporters.

Even though it's great to define our personality and values, the ultimate benefit is for those people we are fortunate to serve through Buckner in the name of Christ. By understanding our values and living by them every day, we will move closer to accomplishing our mission of transforming lives like Samrawit Fesha's "through Christ-centered values" and let them shine hope to others today and for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Albert Reyes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

President and CEO  
Buckner International

Visit Dr. Reyes' blog at [bucknerprez.com](http://bucknerprez.com)



Shine.



# Shine.

We shine to some of the most vulnerable children and families in the world.

We shine through programs that meet deep needs and lead to self-sufficiency.

We shine the light of Christ, often in the darkest places and in the darkest moments.

We shine through education, support, care and empowerment.

We shine with others to respond to need.

We shine because we are driven by compassion and a call to see justice.

We shine so that others may know Christ and his message of good news.

We shine in the hope that one day those we serve will in turn shine in others' lives.

We shine because we are compelled by our faith to serve others.

We shine wherever we are.

At Buckner, hope **shines** here.

**Our Mission.** Buckner International transforms the lives of vulnerable children, enriches the lives of senior adults and builds strong families through Christ-centered values.

**Our Vision.** Buckner International will become a global ministry maximizing resources and leadership to serve vulnerable children, seniors and families.

**Our Values.** Buckner follows Christ-centered values ministered with professional excellence.

# Shining Examples

**OPEN**



HERE

At Buckner, we see  
ways hope shines  
in the lives of those  
we serve and those  
who serve.



BUCKNER®

Hope shines here.®



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**"I'm free. I matter. I'm a mom...I'm a great mom. And my son, he has everything he could ever want and anything he could ever need. I'm in a great place. I'm in a godly home. I'm in a home, not a house."** *-Foster Child Arianna Roque*





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**"This school means way more to me than prime rib. And there's nothing like a prime rib. There's no earthly thing better to me than this school. This schooling has been one of the most joyful, blessed things in my life."** *-Buckner Family Hope Center Literacy Participant Jerutha*





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**"I was able to sprout and come out of the dirt and grow up to the point where I can blossom. Buckner allows you to grow out of the dirt. And that's an awesome place to be when all of your life you've been in the dirt."** *-Buckner Family Place Resident Vanessa Brown*





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"You couldn't wait to get to work (at NASA). We worked day and we worked nights. We worked weekends and we didn't care. It was, 'Get that man on the moon and get him back home safely.'" *-Buckner Parkway Place Resident Billie Schmidt*



# 'I'm free'

How foster parents Crystal and Arnold Ochoa answered Arianna Roque's prayer

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How desperate does a child have to be to contact Child Protective Services and ask to be removed from her home?

As desperate as Arianna Roque, who was 15 and pregnant at the time. It was a call, though, that changed her life and gave her a new vision of what home could be like.



"My mom was on drugs. The desperation was overwhelming because it's like I didn't have a mom," she recalled. "I was about six months pregnant, I had nothing for my son and I had four younger siblings living with me. I would cook and I'd clean. I'd take care of them while she claimed to be at work.

"One day I called and asked her boss where she'd been, and she had quit her job," she said. "I found out she was out doing drugs, and we had no money coming in. We didn't have food in the house and I didn't know what I was going to do. I felt hopeless. I felt lost. I didn't want to live anymore. I didn't feel like I had a purpose. It was kind of like, 'God, when is this going to be over?'"

"I remember calling CPS and it was the hardest thing I'd had to do. When CPS showed up at my door, I said, 'Thank God.'"

Arianna admits being "so mad at God, because I'd pray, and I'd pray every night for her; I prayed over my siblings; I prayed over them daily for God to just come in and do his work, and it was like, 'Are you going to come? Are you going to come and

do this, God?'"

Her prayer was for her mother's freedom from addiction, but in reality he answered her prayer for the courage to leave.

"He did and he did it not in the way I thought he was – with my mom being sober. God knew how desperate I was, even when I thought he didn't, he knew."

And God knew, she said, that she would eventually be placed as a foster child in the home of foster parents Crystal and Arnold Ochoa. The Ochoas, a young couple with four children of their own, foster four children and act as foster grandparents to Arianna's son, Tristen.

The Ochoas first felt the call to foster parent during a sermon at their church, Mid-Cities in Midland, Texas. Both see their fostering role as a ministry.

For Arnold, his role as a father is to provide children "a home and love, (modeling for) what it is to be a family. The way they were growing up is not the way it's supposed to be. We just try to put in the right guidance, plant that seed, point them where

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they're supposed to go and, hopefully, they'll go from there."

"I think we provide for the foster kids a family, love, hope," Crystal echoed. "Just letting them know that there's a different way; that no matter what they've been through, it doesn't have to be who they are. I think that gives them a new meaning to life and lets them know there is another way."

For Arianna, it means love and stability from a couple she now calls "mom and dad. Now, I know I have a forever home and they're not going to kick me to the side. They're always going to take care of me and I don't have to worry about if I'm going to get fed tonight, if I'm going to be able to sleep, if someone's going to get in my house. I'm safe and I'm secure."

Arianna also appreciates the parental roles Arnold and Crystal fill. "It's so cool to say I have a dad because I never had a dad. Just to say, 'My dad' – that filled a big hole in my life. I have someone to protect me. And my mom – my biological mom was physically there, but emotionally she was a mess, she wasn't there. And my foster mom, she's amazing. She's my role model, my mentor. She's my mom. She's my mom given to me by God. Those are my parents.

"I'm free. I matter. I'm a mom...I'm a great mom. And my son, he has everything he could ever want and anything he could ever need. I'm in a great place. I'm in a godly home. I'm in a home, not a house." ■

## Foster Care and Adoption

Foster care is designed to provide a safe and caring home for children who are unable to remain in the care of their biological family. Buckner Foster Care trains and supports families who want to provide a safe, nurturing home environment for children victimized by abuse, neglect or abandonment through foster care, kinship care and state-placed adoptions (foster-to-adopt initiatives and adoption through Waiting Texas Children)

**In 2014, 802 children in Texas and 536 children in other countries were placed in loving homes through foster or kinship care and 195 children now have a forever family through domestic and international in-country adoption.**





LIVE YOUR DREAM  
BE BRAVE  
BE FEARLESS  
TODAY IS THE DAY.

# Back to school

Family Hope Center, volunteers teach participant joy of reading



Jerutha Pratt needed to pick up her medication, one of many errands she had to run. She wanted to bounce in, pick up her pills and hop right back in her car to get on with her day. She didn't have time for what she saw standing in front of the Walgreens entrance entrance – a lady with a handful of paper talking to everyone who passed.

She got lucky as she approached the door of the South Dallas store. The lady was talking to someone else, and Pratt slipped by unnoticed. She picked up her medication with ease and headed out of the store.

"Hello," a calm voice greeted her. *Drat*, Pratt thought. There's only so much luck in the world, and she felt hers dry up on the way in. *Here it comes.*

"Would you or someone you know be interested in learning to read?" the lady at the door asked, offering a card. "We're about to start a class at the Buckner Family Hope Center at Wynnewood."

Lives change through daily effort, small steps that, when combined, lead to drastic lifestyle differences. Those journeys, the cliché says, start with one step, the hardest one of all. An alcoholic attending his first recovery meeting. A debt-ridden couple cutting up their credit cards. Or a woman who couldn't read accepting a flier from a stranger and asking when classes would start.

"I could read a little, but I wanted to do better," Pratt said. "I do a lot of work at the church, and it all involves reading and writing. I'm over the finances, the mission [visitation] and the usher committee."

A few weeks after meeting Cheryl Williams, director of the

Family Hope Center, outside Walgreens, Pratt started class. It meets twice a week for two hours at a time.

Students spend much of the time going through a workbook with a video course on a television. Facts, rules and questions come quickly, but Pratt keeps pace, responding aloud when appropriate and writing notes.

When the volunteer teachers see Pratt having trouble with parts of a lesson, she knows they're there to help.

"When my teachers see me fumble with it, my teachers immediately go to the board and explain it to me," she said. "They take the time out to catch me

back up. When I go home, if I can't figure something out I call them at their house. They're always there for me."

Pratt speaks highly of all three of her teachers, but she has particularly connected with Debbie Epperson. The two converse like old friends who care for one another.

"We have a special bond," Pratt said. "It's like a friend, a mother and a pal. And don't mess with the bond. Every time I dial the number, she's there to support and help me. Even when I say something that isn't even close to being right, she's supportive and encourages me."

Pratt works hard, studying six days a week. She began with

Recently, Jerutha Pratt walked into a store and saw a sign hanging from the ceiling. A smile burst from her cheeks. For the first time, she was able to read and understand it.





small words. Then she put words together to create sentences. Eventually, the words and sentences got longer. By then, she had gained confidence and improved daily.

Now in the middle of book two, she comfortably reads complex sentences and words. Occasionally she stumbles, but no more than most people reading aloud. Her ability grows with each class, as does her determination.

"I don't know how many books there are, but I'm going to sit through all of them," she said. "I'm going to keep going until my teacher says, 'Jerutha, that's your last book.' I'm going to say, 'Hallelujah!'"

Quite simply, the ability to read has made a difference in Pratt's life every day. Recently, she walked into a store and saw a sign hanging from the ceiling. A smile burst from her cheeks. For the first time, she was able to read and understand it. When her social security check and explanation of benefits came, she could read every word but one – and not even her daughter knew what the word was.

"This school means way more to me than prime rib," she said. "And there's nothing like a prime rib. There's no earthly thing better to me than this school. This schooling has been one of the most joyful, blessed things in my life." ■

## Buckner Family Hope Centers

Family Hope Centers are locations where Buckner provides social services and programs to attract and support families and individuals. Families are identified, restored and empowered through individualized case management. Based in fragile communities, Hope Centers are a catalyst for redemptive transformation for those families receiving case management. Buckner currently operates 25 Family Hope Centers in:

Dominican Republic	Mexico
Ethiopia	Perú
Guatemala	Russia
Honduras	United States
Kenya	



# A blossom 'out of the dirt'

Buckner Family Place brings healing to recovering mother

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Five years ago at the edge of a bayou, Vanessa Brown of Houston had reached the edge of her life when addiction, depression, her car and a tree all intersected.

Brown, now 30, recalled the night she tried to take her life by drowning herself. High on the drugs that had plagued her life since she was 12, Brown sped down a road in her car "just to escape the mundane – the hurt, the pain of life. I closed my eyes, put my foot on the pedal, and I drove towards the bayou."







But she chuckles at what happened next – and saved her life. “I didn’t know there was a tree smack dead in front of the bayou.”

Reflecting on the wreck, she now sees it as an “edge kind of experience, where you’re just over the edge, kind of fighting to get where you want to go, and God is saying, ‘No, you cannot go.’”

“So when I think about the bayou experience and what happened and what really went on, it was really, really close. Looking back over it, it was really crazy. But sometimes you feel like there’s no other hope, no other way.”

The near-tragedy, however, was also a turning point; the edge of an old life and the beginning of hope.

Brown’s childhood years were fraught with many of the traps common to growing up in urban poverty. “I grew up in not-as-good of a situation. I fought to get out, moved out on my own, and then I had so many high and low points in my life where I was able to work it out and go to school. Then I ended up falling back down, not able to go to school.

“It was drug addiction,” she explained. “And then I would rise back up and kind of overcome drug addiction. And then, once again, something would happen – I guess they call them triggers in life – and I would fall back down to drug addiction.”

Later, she broke her addiction to cocaine in a parking-lot experience with God and would begin searching for a future for herself and her two sons, Averen and Jamarius.

“It was simple words from a 7 year old at the time – when he said to me, “Mother, who’s going to take care of us if you don’t take care of yourself? You continue to feed us (but) you’re not feeding yourself.”

The road to hope wasn’t instant or easy. After the wreck, she was placed in a psychiatric ward for monitoring. She lost custody of the boys for a period. In the next few years, she struggled with finances and became homeless, living with different relatives and friends. Then a shelter. Then hotels.

It was a low point in her life verbalized by her son Averen when he looked up at her during a meal and told her she needed to change. “I think that [turning] place is when my son, he kind of said, ‘You can’t keep doing this, because you have to take care of us. If you don’t take care of you, you can’t take care of us. So what you’re doing is directly affecting my life.’”

“It was simple words from a 7 year old at the time – when he said to me, ‘Mother, who’s going to take care of us if you don’t take care of yourself? You continue to feed us (but) you’re not feeding yourself.’”

His words spurred change.

When she finally was able to afford her own apartment, the boys had their own room, but it was in Houston’s Fifth Ward, as she describes it, “in the projects.” She also enrolled in Houston’s College of Biblical Studies to earn a bachelor’s degree in business administration, hoping to better her family’s financial situation.

Then God brought her hope in a providential meeting at a local gym. “I came into contact with Buckner Family Place during an encounter with a young lady I met at the YMCA.”

It was Wendi Hay, a mother of four and an alumna of Buckner Family Place in Houston, a program designed to help single parents earn an education and gain valuable life skills while providing them and their children a safe living environment. Like Brown, Hay struggled with addiction prior to the program.

"We were communicating and had similar story situations, and so we were just talking, and she told me about it, and I was like, 'Wow, really?' Because out of all my fight and struggle, I had no idea that they had places who helped you to reach your goals and succeed in life."

Hay gave Brown the name and contact information for Cari Latimer, Family Place's program director. When Latimer told Brown she would put her on the waiting list for the program, Brown's response showed desperation.

"I told her, 'OK. I just need a little hope and so you can just be my ray of hope,'" said Brown, "And so she was. She called me later and wanted to talk to me, interview me, and so I did. I

was impressed with her, and I think she was impressed with me."

The interview resulted in a placement in the program. "I was so excited. I was ready to go. I had the kids and we were packed – well, kind of halfway packed already, ready to go somewhere. It was time to go."

From the time she moved in, Latimer provided Brown support she'd never had in life. "What I didn't have, she provided for me. She talked me through so many things. She'd sit me down and went over a lot with me and told me that, 'I'm a friend, and I'm here.'"

The support also led to a renewed emphasis on education, Brown said. "Education is very important to me. My mother and father didn't graduate high school, so everyone attempted to go to school in the family; most of them dropped out.

"Actually my youngest sister has her degree. I started and stopped, and started and stopped. So I haven't really completed things in life," Brown acknowledged. "It's been a cycle of failure



in my family, and it has to be broken. So coming to the end of my schooling and being able to go to school and not worry about rent and bills, I can just focus to break this cycle. Words can't even describe how that feels."

"It's huge really, especially when you look at families in poverty," Latimer added. "A key to changing that generational poverty is often education. It's not always, of course, but often. Higher education helps lead the next generation out of poverty. Vanessa recognizes that."

She's just months away from earning her bachelor's degree and already is talking to Latimer about extending the program to include a master's degree.

Buckner Family Place, she said, "has been a blessing to me. I was still fighting so hard to grow and to get to higher places in life and to have stability for my kids and to provide for them what they need to grow. Because when you have kids, it's no longer about you; it's about them."

Latimer agreed Brown's progress has been striking. "It's hard to describe in six months the progress she's made. Knowing her story and how she grew up, the things that she's experienced – everything from poverty to abuse and drug addiction, homelessness – obviously she's come a long way from those things. She's stable. She's not using drugs, she's clean. She is determined to live a life outside of poverty.

"I think she is just learning more about who Vanessa is and embracing that. She is embracing who God has created her to be and the vision that he has for her life. She's really seeking him to understand what the next steps are."

"With Buckner, I was a seed in the ground, growing through the dirt, fighting through the mud and the dirt," Brown explained. "And when I met Cari, I was able to sprout and kind of come out of the dirt and grow up to the point where I can blossom. That's really how I feel about Buckner. It's the place that allows you to grow out of the dirt. And that's an awesome place to be, when all of your life you've been in the dirt."

She also found a renewed hope through the help from Family Place. "It's hope in Christ," Brown said. "Until you really have a relationship and really know him, then you really don't know the hope the way you should.

"Everybody has a whole book written about them in heaven somewhere, telling what they're going to do. The end of the story is bigger than a bayou. The end of the story is bigger than death. It's life. And so when I think about hope for the future, I think about life." ■

## Family Transition Programs

**In 2014, 158 families (446 individuals) were served through the Buckner Family Place model. Buckner family transition programs are designed to help single parents strengthen their families and reduce barriers to self-sufficiency, lack of education and independence life skills. These programs offer single parents enrollment in an academic, vocational or rehabilitation program, and assistance with child care is also provided for their children. Currently, Buckner has seven Family Place models, including:**

**Buckner Family Pathways Dallas  
Buckner Family Place Amarillo  
Buckner Family Place Conroe  
Buckner Family Place Houston  
Buckner Family Place Lufkin  
Buckner Family Place Midland  
My Father's House Lubbock**

**Transitional services are also provided to youth who are aging out of care. Through these services, 589 lives were impacted and 14 clients were provided vocational training.**



# Moonstruck

Parkway Place resident remembers her part in America's Apollo program

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On May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy stood before Congress and called the country to a monumental task: "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to Earth."

He might as well have been speaking directly to Billie Schmidt. She was moonstruck.



"I decided, oh gosh, NASA, that sounds good," she said. "So I immediately went and got a civil service application and filled it out and attached copies of job descriptions and awards, and all that sort of thing that I had gotten through my career with the Air Force, and shipped it off to NASA. And I got a call and said, 'Are you interested in working for NASA?' And I said, 'Yes, sir.'"

In many ways, becoming the assistant to the associate director of NASA defined much of Schmidt's life. Working for NASA was everything many people dream it is: riveting, challenging and incredible.

In many other ways, Schmidt, a resident of Buckner Parkway Place in Houston, reflects the wealth of experience shared by so many residents of Buckner Senior Living communities. Those communities across Texas are full of people who have lived, and continue to live, dynamic lives.

Americans were driven by pride. The Russians had beaten the United States into space. NASA was determined to put the first person on the moon. Members of the nation's space program challenged each other daily.

"You couldn't wait to get to work," Schmidt said. "We worked days and we worked nights. We worked weekends, and we didn't care. It was: Get that man on the moon and get him back home safely."

Schmidt worked for NASA for more than 20 years, including the entire landmark Apollo program. During her tenure as assistant to the associate director of NASA, the United States launched a series of unmanned and manned missions that continually pushed the boundaries of space exploration.

Schmidt beams with pride as she gracefully and effortlessly recalls details of each mission like she's sharing a family story over a church potluck. She has photographs and various pieces of memorabilia that marked each effort.

A model of the Apollo 11 moon lander stands out among the items like the mission stands out in Schmidt's mind. There was no other mission quite like that one, Schmidt recalled.

"It was the first flight I attended at the Cape [Cape Canaveral]," she said. "That was one of the prerogatives. And we didn't have an up-close seat; we were back a ways, but before you could even hear the rocket, you could feel the ground shaking because, I mean, it was so powerful, that rocket was, it was just shaking the ground where you were standing. And we were – all of us standing there, even my husband, with tears rolling down our cheeks because we were so – we were so caught up in it. We were part of something so much larger than we were."

Neil Armstrong, the first man to step on the moon, remains Schmidt's favorite astronaut. "He was very quiet, very unassuming, but a marvelous person. He had faith. He had character. He was just everything that you'd want your big brother to be."

Schmidt worked closely with Armstrong during the Apollo 13 mission, which was forced to cancel its moon destination when an oxygen tank exploded, crippling the spacecraft. The crew and the NASA leadership on the ground scrambled quickly to bring the astronauts safely back to Earth.

"We lucked out that time," she said. "We were very, very fortunate that those three guys could get into that little-bitty LEM and make their way back to earth. It was a miracle. There's no doubt about it being a miracle. And there was a lot of praying going on, I'll tell you, organized and unorganized."

Still as enthusiastic, energetic and independent as ever, Schmidt is proud to call Parkway Place home. Her memorabilia dot her room, regular reminders of all that she played a part in accomplishing.

In many ways, she's found the same familial feel at Parkway Place as she did with the staff at NASA.

"I have not met one soul who is not just friendly as anything, would do anything in the world they could for you," she said. "The staff is magnificent and talented. I mean they put on little plays and skits; they decorate; they celebrate. It's wonderful; it really is. And you feel like, OK, if I've got a problem I can go to one of them and say, 'I've got a problem; can you help me?'" ■

"I have not met one soul who is not just friendly as anything, would do anything in the world they could for you. The staff is magnificent and talented... And you feel like, OK, if I've got a problem I can go to one of them and say, 'I've got a problem; can you help me?'"





# Buckner Retirement Services: A Distinctive Senior Lifestyle

**B**uckner Retirement Services offers a distinctive lifestyle for seniors and their families by promoting an active, healthy approach to living, in a faith-based environment, while encouraging personal independence. At each community, staff focus on supporting residents in their day-to-day activities, so they can focus on leading the kind of vibrant life they desire. Buckner Retirement is committed to the ideal that senior living is enriched by fellowship, purpose and active engagement. Buckner offers a continuum of care at five of their seven senior living communities, and is one of the largest not-for-profit senior living organizations in Texas. Buckner communities are committed to the ideal that senior living is enriched by fellowship, purpose and active engagement. That's where our dedication to service really shines through.

## **Buckner provides senior living in seven Texas cities:**

### **Continuing Care Retirement Communities Austin**



Buckner Villas is a 25-acre senior living neighborhood close to everything you've grown to love about Austin. It's the one place in Austin with the perfect mix of spacious apartments and

inviting villas, giving you the independent living you need – and just the right level of care you require. And if your needs change, so do our services: we offer the best in assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing and hospice. Here, it's just like family.

### **Beaumont**

Calder Woods is a 17-acre senior living community in the heart of Beaumont. It is a continuing care retirement community, meaning that as your needs change, so do the services. From independent living



to assisted living to memory care to skilled nursing services, Calder Woods staff provides a warm, friendly place to call home. Residents enjoy state-of-the-art wellness equipment and eating gourmet meals each day. It is Beaumont's best choice for an affordable senior lifestyle.

## Dallas

Coming in 2018: Ventana by Buckner. Buckner has announced plans for Ventana by Buckner, a 314-apartment North Dallas senior living community scheduled to open in 2018. The proposed construction will sit on nearly



three acres of land in Dallas just west of North Central Expressway and south of Northwest Highway. Ventana by Buckner will be a continuing care

retirement community with 182 independent living residences, 36 assisted living apartments, 24 memory care apartments, 48 skilled nursing apartments and 24 short-term rehabilitation apartments. It will include three dining areas – formal, casual and bistro; a wellness center featuring a fitness room with weights, cardio machines and a host of other amenities, including a pool, aerobics room, chapel, movie theater, roof terraces with gardens, business center, library, day spa, 24-hour security and indoor parking.

## Houston

Parkway Place is located on a 15-acre, well-manicured campus, and one of the few independent living communities in West Houston that has no entrance fees, no long-term contracts and provides spacious apartments on a rental basis. Parkway Place has beautiful walking paths, benches, gardens and an indoor/outdoor heated pool. As a continuing care community, Parkway Place offers independent living apartment residences, spacious assisted living, innovative memory care and skilled nursing services. Buckner is a place to live in an atmosphere of warmth. It's a place to socialize with close friends, rest your head, put your heart at ease and grow in faith. But most of all, it's a place you can genuinely call home.



## Longview

Buckner Westminster Place is a non-profit, faith-based senior living community that offers independent living apartments and patio homes, assisted living, memory care residences and Green House® homes for skilled nursing care. The community includes a

16-acre lakeside setting with walking trails and spacious well-manicured grounds. Residents also have access to an on-site life enrichment coordinator, chapel, full-time chaplain, on-site worship services, beauty/barber salon and weekly housekeeping/linen service.



## San Angelo

Baptist Retirement Community is a 100-acre neighborhood serving seniors in the Concho Valley. Baptist Retirement offers independent living, assisted living, skilled or long-term nursing care, memory care, home health, hospice, a peace of mind program, outpatient therapy and the Rotary House of Hope as your



needs change. Residents have access to on-site amenities like a pharmacy, health clinic, a chapel, beauty salon, restaurants and fitness centers. Baptist Retirement boasts the newest, most innovative approach to memory care with Green House® Homes at Sagecrest. Baptist Retirement has begun a \$22 million renovation and expansion project, to be completed in two phases.

## Independent Living Communities

### Burnet

The Woodlands is an independent living campus set in the beautiful Texas Hill Country. The Woodlands sits on 30 acres of gently rolling hills located in Burnet, the official bluebonnet capital of Texas. The independent living homes at the Woodlands are all brick, all electric and reflect a design approach where quality is king.

### Dallas

Buckner Retirement Village is a friendly neighborhood located just a few miles from bustling downtown Dallas offering a big-city retreat to independent residents. For more than 60 years, Buckner Retirement Village has provided a compassionate, nurturing environment that promotes independence and community. ■

# Stories that shine



**1.** Skydiving had been on Sue DeCostanza's (above) bucket list since she turned 75, so it was only natural the resident of Buckner Westminster Place in **LONGVIEW** jumped out of a plane in June to celebrate her 85th birthday. "We are all getting older every day, so if we want to do something, we should just make it happen," she said. "Living like this means we won't have many, if any, regrets. People should do the things they want to do. I like experiencing new things and want to have fun in retirement."



**2.** After fostering **Cheyenne**, Ayden and Abby Mae, Joshua and Jeralee Redmon of **SPRINGTOWN** adopted their children in a ceremony in the Fort Worth court of Judge Ralph Walton Jr. Following the ceremony, Mother Jeralee told newly adopted Ayden, center, "You're going to be with us forever and ever." His reply: "And never, never leave."

**3.** Single mother **Beletu Benti of Bishoftu, ETHIOPIA**, was hard-pressed to provide for her three children until Buckner Ethiopia stepped in to help. In addition to providing food and an education for her two daughters, the Buckner Family Hope Center in Bishoftu also invested 2,000 birr – the equivalent of about \$100 – for her to start raising and selling cows and goats. Her son, Firaol, holds one of the keys to the family's new financial success.



**4.** Baptist Retirement Community resident **Flo McKinney** continues living a life of service in her **SAN ANGELO** community after serving 30 years as a missionary in China. She volunteers in various capacities but one of the things she loves most is talking to other residents and helping them get to church services. She can be spotted wheeling her friends around the campus, talking and laughing to each one of them.



**5.** **Pam Peoples, left, hugs a girl living** in an orphanage in **PERÚ** during a Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls® trip. The distribution trip was the third one led by Peoples, the morning co-host for Christian radio station WBGL in Champaign, Ill along with her co-host Tim Sinclair. According to Sinclair,



# across the globe

Buckner's shoe collection ministry is "more than just shoes. It's a sense that there are people other than those who are taking care of them at the orphanage who love them, who care about them; and then ultimately, the opportunity to share Jesus."

**6. At the Buckner Family Hope Center in Las Brisas, HONDURAS**, members of a medical mission team from North Way Community Church in Wexford, Penn., saw about



765 patients during a medical missions clinic. Lead doctor Andrew Adams said the team noted striking health differences between families in Family Hope Center case management and those from the community who were not. One set of children came in complain-

ing of stomach pain, leading Adams to initially believe they were afflicted with parasites. But after more questioning, he discovered the real source of their pain: "They were hungry, and that was what was causing the pain more than anything else." The North Way Church volunteers were among 518 international mission trip participants providing 27,560 hours of service in 2014. An additional 42 Project Go participants provided 8,064 hours of service.



**7. Amber and Scott Hawk** raise five "super-powered" foster children as Buckner foster parents in **SOUTHEAST TEXAS**. Their super powers, says Amber, come from their close-

ness as a family. "Becoming a foster mother has taught me the biggest lesson about family: We need each other. There's power there. I need them because I'm learning that together we can display the gospel of Jesus Christ in a way that we can't by ourselves."

**8. Representatives from Buckner GUATEMALA and Semillas de**

**8. Esperanza**, a project of Buckner International, Buckner Guatemala, USAID and Guatemala governmental organizations, cross a footbridge into a Kekchi Maya village with food. Semillas de Esperanza seeks to provide permanency to abandoned, neglected, abused or orphan children in the country.



**3**

# A Shining Year

## The milestones that shone most brightly



**In January, Buckner Retirement Services broke ground** at Baptist Retirement Community in San Angelo on a \$22 million renovation project that includes construction of two new Green House® homes, two new memory care homes and campus beautification. According to BRS Senior Vice President Charlie Wilson, the project also will include expansion and renovation of the community's high-rise residences, adding a new wellness center, library, new dining areas, a bistro and community rooms.

**The beginning of the year marked the 15th anniversary** of the Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls® ministry and the 20th year since it started in 1994 with KCBI radio. Buckner President and CEO Albert L. Reyes said SOS "embodies, perhaps as much as any program you'll ever see, both the literal and the

figurative meaning of hands-on ministry." In 2014, volunteers in 40 states held 1,204 shoe drives, collecting 218,111 pairs of shoes, 68,337 socks. In addition, 5,425 volunteers provided 15,652 hours of service processing shoes for distribution of those, 184,542 were distributed to 29 countries.

**Early in 2014, CNA Healthcare presented its CNA Leadership**

in Risk Control Award to Buckner Retirement Services for its commitment to risk management and resident safety. BRS earned the accolade through policy and procedure development for all campuses, participation in risk management education, team communications and a dedicated frontline staff. "We are honored to receive this prestigious award," said Charlie Wilson, senior vice president of BRS. "At each of our facilities, our residents' health and happiness come first. CNA's recognition is a sign that we are doing just that and doing it well." The CNA Leadership in Risk Control program recognizes those CNA Insured who demonstrate remarkable results from their risk control initiatives.

**Buckner trustees and executive leadership adopted the**

"Shining Hope Strategic Ministry Plan" to strengthen and deepen the vitality of Buckner into the future. The plan focuses on the understanding of six key goals, including program priorities, measurable outcomes, engagement with supporters, an emphasis on spiritual development, the structure of international ministries, fundraising priorities, and organizational continuity and messaging.



**In March, Buckner announced it will open Ventana by Buckner,**

a 314-apartment North Dallas senior living community, in 2018. Featuring twin high-rise towers, Ventana will measure approximately 450,000 square feet and sit on nearly three acres of land just west of North Central Expressway and south of Northwest Highway. Ventana will be a continuing care retirement community with 182 independent living residences, 36 assisted living apartments, 24 memory care apartments, 48 skilled nursing apartments and 24 short-term rehabilitation apartments. In addition to apartments, the community will include three dining areas – formal, casual and bistro; a wellness center featuring a fitness room with weights, cardio machines and a host of other amenities, including

a pool, aerobics room, chapel, movie theater, roof terraces with gardens, business center, library, day spa, 24-hour security and indoor parking.



**In 2014, Buckner helped 63,266 people domestically with**

basic physical needs through aid and support programs, including 51,137 people through client assistance and 12,129 through family and community support.

**Buckner continued to provide a global slate of ministries through its international programs in 2014, serving a total of 270,177 people in eight countries through such diverse ministries as Family Hope Centers, aid and support, foster and kinship care, schools and group homes. A summary of those served internationally by country includes:**

<b>Dominican Republic....</b>	<b>19,766</b>
<b>Ethiopia .....</b>	<b>16,575</b>
<b>Guatemala.....</b>	<b>54,471</b>
<b>Honduras.....</b>	<b>3,496</b>
<b>Kenya.....</b>	<b>10,888</b>
<b>Mexico.....</b>	<b>42,132</b>
<b>Perú.....</b>	<b>120,174</b>
<b>Russia .....</b>	<b>2,665</b>



### Three Buckner senior living communities earned top honors

from U.S. News & World Report. Buckner Westminster Place in Longview, Buckner Calder Woods in Beaumont and Buckner Villas in Austin all were recognized as among the “Best Nursing Homes” in the country. Communities were ranked in three categories; state-conducted health inspections, the amount of time nurses spend with residents and the quality of medical care.



Throughout 2014, 13,608 community volunteers performed 78,439 hours of service with Buckner. Some served as part of a group, church or organization, while others like Kaylie Treadaway, above, served individually. Treadaway, a student at Dallas Baptist University, tutored students as part of an after-school program in Dallas. Treadaway said she feels called to “the tougher neighborhoods, the tougher kids, maybe the kids other people don’t want to speak to.”



Buckner responded to what became an international crisis in the summer of 2014 as the United States was flooded with a surge of immigrant children. Buckner sent 8,000 pairs of shoes donated through Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls® to the Rio Grande Valley, where children and families were being processed after crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. In addition to shoes, Buckner responded by consulting with government officials working on the crisis, both in the U.S. and in the immigrants’ origin countries.

### On June 14, families who have adopted internationally came

together to celebrate their heritage and culture at the Buckner Mosaic of Culture event on the Buckner Children’s Home campus. Since 1995, Buckner has placed 369 children with families through international adoption. During the year, 1,113 people were provided adoption services through programs ranging from the heritage camp to post-adoption services for birth and adoptive families, birth searches, and pre-adoption training. Buckner facilitated a total of 98 adoptions through foster-to-



### Buckner officially opened a newly-expanded Buckner Family

Hope Center in Peñitas, Texas, Aug. 26 with a ribbon cutting and ceremony. The Family Hope Center, which seeks to improve the lives of impoverished families by providing a holistic ministry response, has served more than 20,000 people since it opened in 2011. In 2014, 736 national missions volunteers provided 30,367 hours of volunteer service, most of them in the Peñitas area.



### Buckner’s community programs continued to have a deep

impact on domestic families and children. In addition to 98 domestic adoptions, Buckner served 452 people through family care, 802 children through foster care statewide in Texas, and 92 additional children through residential care in Beaumont and Mission, Texas.

### In November, Buckner officials announced the \$6 million

“Shining Hope Longview” capital campaign. During a Nov. 17 news conference in the East Texas city, Buckner unveiled details of the campaign, which include building a new campus with a new Buckner Family Place, a transitional housing ministry for single parents and their children; and a new Family Hope

Center to replace the current building in downtown. During the news conference, Buckner also revealed that an initial \$2 million lead gift had already been given.

**The next day, Nov. 18, Buckner Family Place in Midland** celebrated the grand opening of two new apartments and the Bridges Activity Center with a ribbon-cutting and open house. The activity center will serve as a hub for training and family activities for single parents and their children enrolled in the Family Place program. Anna Rodriguez, program director for the Family Place ministry in Midland, pointed to the importance of local support in the expansion. "We are so thankful for the community's support and for their vision to help vulnerable children and families in Midland."

**In November, Buckner President and CEO Albert L. Reyes** named JoAnn Cole to lead Buckner Adoption and Maternity Services as vice president and separated the division from Buckner Children and Family Services. The newly-created division will focus on four distinct areas of ministry: domestic foster care and adoption services; post-adoption and counseling services; global in-country adoption and permanency services; and inter-country adoption services.

**B**y year's end, Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls® celebrated its anniversary by reaching a 15-year total of 3 million shoes collected. And on Jan. 12, 2015, Dulce Alquijay Raymundo, 5, of Jocotenango, Guatemala, received the 3 millionth distributed pair of shoes with a smile as Buckner social worker Perla Maldonado crouched beside her and slid new pink and white athletic shoes on her feet. Shoes for Orphan Souls is the largest humanitarian aid project of Buckner International. Since 1999, individuals across the United States have donated shoes, led shoe drives, sorted the footwear and placed them on the feet of vulnerable children around the world.

Buckner President and CEO Albert Reyes was emotional when speaking of the accomplishment. "This is a tremendous moment for the Buckner family and a testimony to the power of God," he said. "While we celebrate the 3 millionth pair of shoes being distributed, the Lord has touched many more lives through Shoes for Orphan Souls, bringing people together every step of the way to live out the James 1:27 mandate of ministering to vulnerable children.

"As a result of the shoes that have been distributed, children are healthier, they're able to attend schools and their families can spend scarce resources on other necessities. We thank God for the opportunity to have ministered to these children, and look forward to serving many more."

Dulce's shoe story is just part of the help Buckner has provided her family. Dulce's mother, Maria Elena Raymundo, came to the Family Hope Center in 2012 when they lived in the neighborhood. At the time, Maria Elena's husband, Oscar Francisco Alquijay, was unemployed and Maria Elena was cleaning houses trying to scrape a living together. It wasn't enough; the family couldn't afford to eat. She met Maldonado and received food assistance immediately.

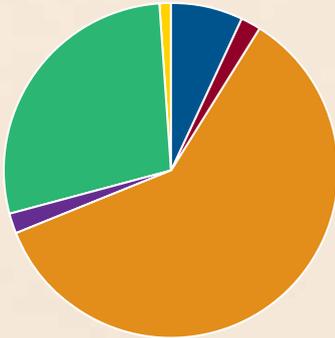
Soon Maldonado visited the family's home where conditions were poor. Oscar was dealing with a drinking issue that kept him from keeping a job. It also contributed to violent outbursts that frightened Maria Elena and her girls.

Maldonado told Maria Elena about parenting classes offered at the Hope Center and invited the girls to the children's devotionals. The family's visits to the center's doctor revealed that the oldest, Michel, was suffering from malnutrition and her growth was stunted. The doctor prescribed a special diet, supplemented the family's food supply and provided vitamins. Now 13, Michel is healthy again. In 2014, Buckner Guatemala provided a stove for the family.



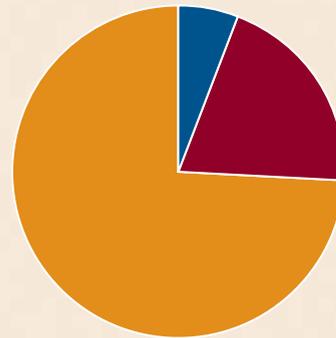
 **BUCKNER**  
**SHOES**  
FOR ORPHAN SOULS®  
Hope shines here.™

# Buckner International Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2014 (Unaudited)



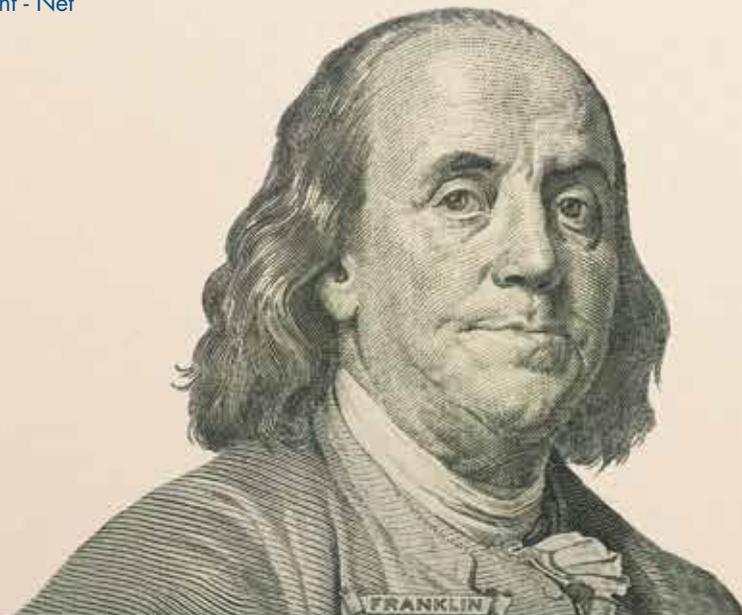
## Assets

- Cash and Investments 7% - \$37,054,000
- Receivables and Prepaids 2% - \$11,605,000
- Investments 60% - \$336,210,000
- Revenue Bond Proceeds Held by Trustee 2% - \$9,447,000
- Facilities Property and Equipment - Net 28% - \$154,796,000
- Other 1% - \$3,662,000
- Total \$552,774,000**



## Liabilities and Net Assets

- Other Liabilities 6% - \$35,206,000
- Notes and Revenue Bonds Payable 20% - \$109,834,000
- Net Assets 74% - \$407,734,000
- Total \$552,774,000**

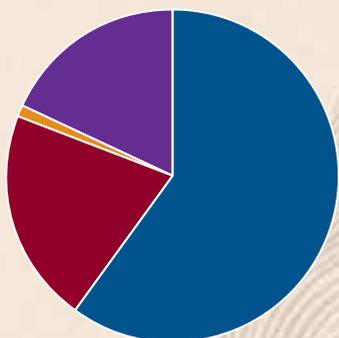


Weaver LLP audits the financial statements for Buckner International and Subsidiaries.  
Audit reports are available upon request.

# Buckner International and Subsidiaries Statement of Activities

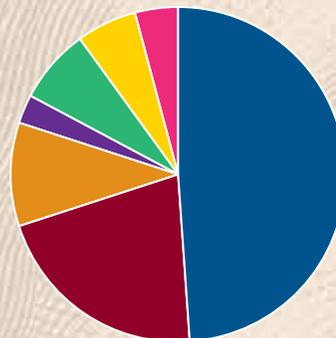
## December 31, 2014

*(Unaudited)*



### Revenue and Investment Income

- Client Support and Related Income 60% - \$78,296,000
  - Investment Income 21% - \$27,974,000\*
  - Investment Income, Other 1% - \$1,764,000
  - All Contributions and Bequests 18% - \$23,274,000
- Total \$131,308,000**



### Expenses

- Salaries and Benefits 49% - \$61,656,000
  - Supplies and Direct Expenses 21% - \$27,250,000
  - Facility Related Expenses 10% - \$12,206,000
  - Travel and Transportation 3% - \$3,803,000
  - Administration 7% - \$9,145,000
  - Depreciation 6% - \$7,638,000
  - Interest 4% - \$5,171,000
- Total \$126,869,000**

\*Additional investment income earned above operating needs is reinvested into the endowment portfolio.

# Transformational Giving

**Buckner works with people compelled by faith to bring Christ-centered, redemptive ministry to the most vulnerable, from the beginning to the ending of life.**

Throughout this report we have shared stories of hope and transformation and all of the small steps in between required to achieve success. The work of Buckner has always been a partnership between Buckner, those we serve and supporters who believe in our mission. The stories you have read represent the profound difference that collectively, donors have made in the lives of those Buckner served in 2014. We take this opportunity to again thank the thousands of individuals, families, churches, foundations, corporations, and other community groups for investing their time, talent and treasures in the lives of vulnerable children, families and senior adults.

## Buckner and Philanthropy

Buckner was founded in 1879 by Dr. R. C. Buckner to care for widows and orphans. 'Father' Buckner was a progressive, insightful and wise man. Not only was he concerned about caring for the widows and children in his day, he wanted to ensure children and families in crisis could be cared for, for many generations. Father Buckner invested in the future of Buckner by purchasing land in East Dallas. As East Dallas grew and Buckner sold parcels of land, the proceeds were put into an endowment and invested for growth. Buckner leadership has continued to invest other assets, including some contributions, into the endowment fund in an effort to produce adequate income to cover Corporate

and Foundation expenses. By doing so, 100 percent of any new contribution goes directly to support ministry programs.

## Accreditation

Accreditation is an important part of our giving philosophy. It's a great validation from independent sources and shows we maintain good practices with those who choose Buckner as their charity. Buckner became a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability in 2007. The ECFA is an accreditation agency dedicated to helping Christian ministries earn the public's trust. We're also a member of Local Independent Charities of America as Buckner Children and Family Services. The Independent Charities Seal of Excellence is awarded to the members of Independent Charities of America and Local Independent Charities of America that have, upon rigorous independent review, been able to certify, document and demonstrate on an annual basis that they meet the highest standards of public accountability, program effectiveness, and cost effectiveness.

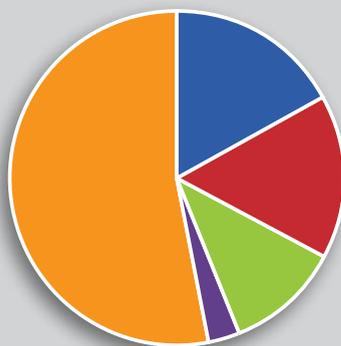


## Contact Us

Buckner Foundation  
700 North Pearl St., Suite 1200  
Dallas, Texas, 75201  
214-758-8000  
Foundation@Buckner.org

## GIVING AT A GLANCE

**We thank the many individuals and organizations that gave more than \$25 million in cash, stock and gifts-in-kind to support those in need.**



- Foster/Care Adoption – 17%
- Family Ministries – 16%
- Family Hope Centers – 11%
- Senior Adults – 3%
- Where Needed Most – 53%

\*The above chart reflects cash donations by ministry.



# Leadership

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**Albert L. Reyes**  
President and CEO  
*Buckner International*



**David M. Slover**  
President  
*Buckner Foundation*



**JoAnn Cole**  
Vice President  
*Buckner Adoption  
and Maternity Services*



**Henry Jackson**  
Interim Vice President  
*Buckner Children  
and Family Services*



**Tony Lintelman**  
Senior Vice President  
and CFO  
*Buckner International*



**Stephen N.  
Wakefield**  
Vice President, General  
Counsel and Secretary  
*Buckner International*



**Charlie Wilson**  
Senior Vice President  
*Buckner Retirement  
Services*

**PRESIDENT EMERITUS**  
Kenneth L. Hall

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Dallas, Texas

Susan Williams  
Dallas, Texas

# Comprehensive services. Deep focus. What we do.



## \*Foster Care

Community-Based Foster Care  
Campus-Based Foster Group Care  
Kinship Care

## \*Family Place/Pathways

### \*Family Hope Centers:

#### Domestic Family Hope Centers

Case Management  
Spiritual Development  
Client Assistance  
Financial Empowerment  
*Job Skills Training*  
*Technology Training*



#### International Family Hope Centers

Case Management  
Spiritual Development  
Client Assistance  
Financial Empowerment  
*Job Skills Training*  
*Vocational Training*  
*Income-Generating Activities*  
Health Services



#### Other services may include:

Family, Parent, Life Skills Training  
After-school/Summer Programs  
ESL Classes  
Formal Education  
GED Classes  
Healthy Families  
Literacy Programs  
Mentoring Initiatives

## Adoption

Inter-Country  
Intra-Country  
Domestic Infant  
Foster-to-Adopt  
Texas Waiting Children

## Community Adoption Services

Birth Searches  
Birth Parent Case Management  
Home Studies  
Post Adoption Services  
Pre-Foster/Adoption Training  
Adoption Heritage Tours/Camps  
Child Advocacy Centers

## Community-Based Services

Transitional Case Management  
Youth Transitional Homes  
Child Development Centers  
STAR (TDFPS Contract)  
Camp Buckner

## Residential/Family Care

Emergency/Assessment Centers  
General Residential Operations

## Senior Living

\*Continuing Care Retirement Communities  
Independent Living  
Assisted Living  
Skilled Nursing  
Memory Care  
Hospice  
Home Health  
Outpatient Therapy  
Personal Care Services  
Chaplaincy Services



\*Denotes Buckner's four focus areas of ministry.

## The adventure continues

Buckner Villas residents Anna Gatti has lived an exciting, adventurous life as the wife of a foreign diplomat. At 91, she's nowhere near slowing down. She still volunteers several times a week in downtown Austin



# The year in photos

OPEN  
HERE



BUCKNER®

Hope shines here.®



## Arms around the globe

Buckner ministry stretches from a retirement community in Austin (left-right clockwise) to medical missions in Peru to foster care and adoption in Amarillo to Family Hope Centers in Ethiopia and Lubbock, impacting the lives of families, children and senior adults.



## Lost and Found

When she was born premature in Guatemala, Sara was transferred from hospital to hospital and eventually reported as dead to her family. But Semillas de Esperanza caseworker Dina Tomás searched the country to find Sara's family, who were stunned and overjoyed when Tomás brought them the news their youngest daughter was alive.





## Arms around the globe

Buckner ministry stretches from a retirement community in Austin (left-right clockwise) to medical missions in Peru to foster care and adoption in Amarillo to Family Hope Centers in Ethiopia and Lubbock, impacting the lives of families, children and senior adults.





## Faces of Hope

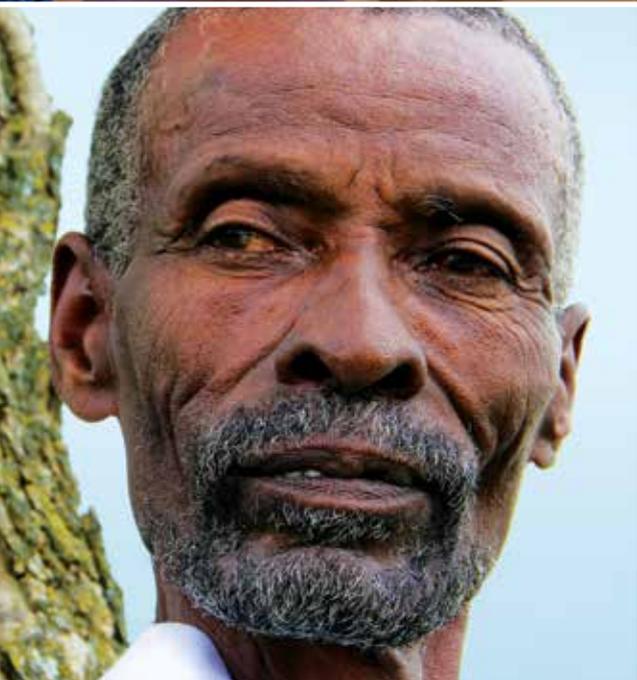
Hope often reveals itself in the smiles of those Buckner serves, whether it's a young girl in Latin America, (left-right clockwise) a mother who has been reconnected with her baby in Guatemala or a blossoming family in Houston. Buckner ministry runs deep, transforming lives in a multitude of ways.





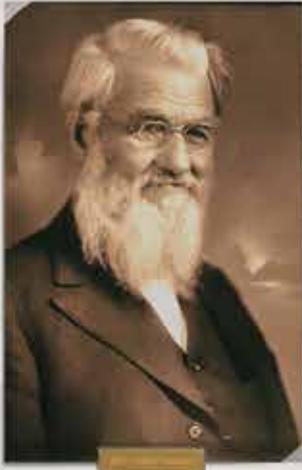
## Ministry, throughout life

Buckner ministry begins with the very young, helping children find loving families, nurtures strong families and continues into the later years of life. At each stage, individuals and families discover and embrace hope.



# Our legacy of hope





*Jan 1879,*

Dr. Robert Cooke "Father" Buckner founded Buckner Orphans Home in Dallas after seeing the needs of hurting and orphaned children in post-Civil War Texas. In the first years, Buckner Orphans Home was filled with children left parentless due to disease and hardship.

It was Father Buckner's deep compassion for the hopeless and helpless that served as the driving force behind his ministry. He constantly looked for innovative ways to deliver social ministries, including those to elders, combining his theological beliefs with a progressive social conscience.

James 1:27 became the ministry's guiding verse: "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress." As needs changed over the years, so did the ministry. In 1995, Buckner moved toward a more global footprint and a charge to protect, preserve and provide for families.

Today, the ministry has diversified into many different programs, but continues to carry out "Father" Buckner's vision to care for the least of these among us. Buckner International has always been a movement for transforming the lives of vulnerable children, families and elders through faith-based ministry.

Buckner serves more than 450,000 people each year in the United States and around the world through more than 50 unique programs designed to transform the whole person – physically, mentally and spiritually. In all of its programs, Buckner seeks to partner with organizations and individuals to ensure self-sustainability. We do not start new programs where others are already doing good work, but we collaborate and improve upon existing structures, working with local citizens, organizations and governments domestically and internationally.

**"Not one orphan  
child, but all  
orphan children."**

– R.C. "Father" Buckner



**Buckner International** is a global, faith-based ministry dedicated to transforming the lives of orphans, vulnerable children, families and elders in the United States and around the world. Founded in 1879 in Dallas, Texas, today Buckner serves people through a variety of programs designed to protect children and build strong families. These programs include foster care and adoption, family transition programs, community-based family preservation programs and retirement services for the elderly. Buckner also provides humanitarian aid and crisis relief to poverty-stricken families in the United States and worldwide. Learn more and get involved at [buckner.org](http://buckner.org).



BUCKNER®

Hope shines here.®

[Buckner.org](http://Buckner.org)

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Dallas, Texas 75201