

A Voice for Residential Education

Henriatta

Henriatta has lived with Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children since September 2004.



Residential Education Day is May 4

Residential education programs like Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children help economically and socially disadvantaged youth reach their full potential. Residential education is an umbrella term for community-like settings where at-risk children live and learn together, outside their homes within stable, supportive environments. OBHC is a member of CORE: the Coalition for Residential Education, the national nonprofit organization promoting and strengthening residential education programs.

Henriatta is one of those people with the uncanny ability to make you feel like an old friend within moments after an introduction. Her broad smile and deep laughter make you feel happy and eager to get to know this remarkable young lady who “gets along with everyone.”

During the summer of 2004, she and her sisters went to Illinois to spend some vacation time with her aunt. When they returned, they found that they had no house to live in.

“My mother said that she didn’t care if we slept on the streets,” explains Henriatta, her smile momentarily gone. “I still love her and respect her, though. I always have.” The girls ended up moving in with the family that had adopted Henriatta’s sister’s baby. Through this

family’s influence, Henriatta came to Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children. “I’ll stay here until I’m on my own,” claims Henriatta, a smile back on her face. “This is home.”

Henriatta lives in a cottage with house parents and associate house parents, whom she loves and respects. “They are a lot of things,” she explains. “They are parent figures and friends, and when anything goes wrong, they are right on it.” In this secure and loving environment, Henriatta has been free to get her life in order, to make plans for her future, and to make some memories that will last a lifetime.

Everyone at the cottage makes a real effort to help the girls feel like members of the family. “The second day I was here, they had a father/daughter dinner. The house father cooked dinner for all of us. It was decorated all nice with candlelight. He also rented a big limo and took us all to the movies. I will NEVER forget that day...EVER!”

Someday, Henriatta hopes to have her own family and to raise them the way God intends for her to. She also hopes to be a lawyer and enjoys the business law class she is now taking. All in all, Henriatta’s future is as bright as the expression she wears.

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