



DECEMBER 2025

Christian Encounter NEWSLETTER

STUDENT PROFILE

Hannah

When Hannah was eight years old, she started acting out in school. She began to have outbursts in class and would disobey her teachers. She received an in-school suspension for her behavior, and after her third grade year, her parents decided to pull her out of public school. Though in a different environment, Hannah's behavior persisted.

Hannah's brother was born around this time, and adjustments were made as a little one entered the family. Hannah adored her brother and loved entering her little brother's world, matching his goofiness and playfulness. The years went by, and Hannah soon entered her teenage years when her inner turmoil intensified. It felt at times her brother was her only friend.

Hannah hid her tears from her parents, and as she continued to receive discipline for her behavior at home, she was not only confined to the house, but her voice

began to falter as she struggled to understand her own actions.

Hannah's parents brought her to Christian Encounter for a tour, and a month later she arrived as a student. She remembers standing in the reception office on her first day, reading the decal on the wall: "Overcoming the cycles of brokenness, one story at a time." That statement settled into her heart, and it occurred to her this would be her home for the next year.

"I wanted to disappear into the floor," Hannah recalls at her first mealtime announcement circle. "I was the homeschooled kid that didn't talk to anybody. I was just trying to get straight A's in class." Hannah would check the chore chart several times a day, terrified of making a mistake.

Hannah's struggle was continually directed inward. When she didn't perform to her own expectations in school, her response was, "I hate myself." These three words were her exhale of disappointment. (*cont. on pg. 2*)



DIRECTOR'S VIEW

The year in review

September 8th marked 55 years of ministry at Christian Encounter. Staff, students, and interns gathered together to look back at what the Lord has done and hear stories of God's guidance and faithfulness in the early years. But we don't have to look to the distant past to see clear examples of the Lord's care for this ministry.

Last December we made a fundraising push for \$45K for the downpayment on a house to use as a Guys' Transition House. We far surpassed our goal as a total of \$193K poured in from generous supporters. This enabled us to pay cash, with the transaction facilitated for free by a couple of local Christian realtors. The Guys' House opened in April—a long-held hope since its closing 11 years ago due to financial reasons.

The facilities staff and a team of skilled

volunteers tackled another ambitious slate of projects, continuing a strong push to update facilities and enhance the ministry. The women's restroom in the main lodge building was remodeled and the high school building was expanded by four hundred square feet. This project involved expanding the largest classroom to accommodate more students, adding two offices, and installing a new HVAC system for the whole school. This marks

another dream fulfilled, enriching the educational experience for our students for years to come. Another crew of volunteers replaced the gazebo near the main lodge building and rebuilt the adjacent dock. (*cont. on pg. 2*)



Hannah (cont. from pg. 1)

With limited social interaction prior to coming to the Ranch, living in a community was a big adjustment. As Hannah began to share with others her vast knowledge of chickens and her love of horses and LEGO, doors for relationships were opened, and she began to find her place in the family. She started to learn how to maintain healthy relationships and the importance of open communication. "It would take me a month to say sorry, or I would say sorry for everything."

In February on the Girls' Igloo trip, Hannah's discomfort was heightened in this new environment. However, over the four-day trip she realized there was a freedom to being outdoors in the snow with just the girls. As she saw the others having fun and making the most of the experience, Hannah joined in. She had thought, "I'm ashamed of who I was, so I'm going to hide who I am." Then on the trip she realized, "Who I was is not who I am. I felt so free and for the first time in a while, I felt joyful. I found that the walls I put up in self-protection can be just as harmful as what I am trying to keep away."

As Hannah began to take responsibility for past actions, instead of blaming herself, she learned the path forward

meant forgiving herself for the hurt she had caused others. Her understanding of God's love grew as those around her continually challenged the beliefs about herself she was hiding behind. Experi-

encing the Agony Ride in July drove the point home in her heart of the power and reality of Jesus' act on the cross. "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8)." Forgiving herself was choosing to truly trust in God's forgiveness.

On the Wilderness Trip in August, Hannah was once again confronting her fear of the unknown. But now, it seemed that her faith was overcoming her fear. She decided to get baptized on the trip - publicly declaring her trust in the Lord.

In September, Hannah got to serve at a fundraising banquet for a local nonprofit - another opportunity to step outside of her comfort zone. And just last month, Hannah completed the program and moved into the Girls' Transition House (pictured on front page).

Zoya Lee

"But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me." Psalm 13:5-6



Hannah and the girl students performing a song they wrote together at Fellowship Cafe skit night.

Year (cont. from pg. 1)

A Bible verse was engraved in each plank of the dock, which is a favorite spot for students to spend time in rest and contemplation.

Our Meadow Venue continues to serve as a resource to churches and ministries throughout the summer and is offered free of charge. Adult retreats, evangelistic children's camps, an evangelism training camp, college groups, and family camps are all meeting with the Lord and strengthening their connections with His people. One of the events this summer was a weeklong camp for teenage refugees from Russia and Ukraine, and afterward the leader reported 60 teens responded to a call to repent. Most of these teens have remained connected to the church following the camp.

Funding for student scholarships through the 43rd Agony Ride enabled us to continue offering aid to every student—even if they have no other resources at all. About \$465K was raised by 139 riders

and their teams of sponsors this year.

A few weeks ago, we celebrated the Sunday School ministry team which is caring for the exploding number of little children at Ranch Church. And just a week before, a couple of boys who are part of church were baptized on a chilly Sunday morning, testifying to Jesus' love and their commitment to follow Him. Sunday services at the Ranch, which began in the first few years of the ministry's existence, continue to anchor the community as we worship Jesus together. (If you're in the area, come visit on a Sunday morning at 9:30!)

Over the course of the year, several



vehicles were donated, in addition to thousands of pounds of food and truckloads of other supplies. God's provision for our needs has continued unabated in year 55. This is important for us to remember and celebrate, even as the list of needs and projects for next year is already taking shape. (cont. on back pg.)



PROTECT THE MISSION, GIVE A GIFT

Because we're committed to operating as a church, we don't take government funding. Because we're committed to money not being an obstacle to healing, 100% of students receive scholarship money, up to a full ride. This is only possible because of our generous community of supporters.

TUITION SPONSORSHIP

To give directly to a student in need, give to the Jim Parker Student Scholarship Fund. Your dollars translate into transformed lives like Hannah's.

Scan to
give!



ADDITIONAL WAYS TO GIVE

Non-cash gifts

You can make a significant impact by giving stocks, real estate, jewelry, personal property, etc. For more info, please contact Nate at nate@christianencounter.org or 530-268-0877.

A gift in your will

Whether designating a specific amount or leaving a percentage of your estate, your legacy gift will provide for the mission of Christian Encounter into the future. You can also designate the Ranch as a beneficiary on your life insurance policies, retirement plans, and annuities.

Give tax-free from your retirement account

If you have to take the Required Minimum Distribution, a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) allows you to give from a tax-deferred retirement account (like an IRA) directly to a nonprofit ministry. The amount given via the QCD bypasses your personal checking account and so reduces your income and also your tax. Ask your financial institution to mail you a check made out to Christian Encounter, which you can then pass on to us. We will send you a contribution statement for your records.

GIVE TO AN UPCOMING PROJECT

Mini-split HVAC for Girls' Transition House | \$5,000

Replace main entrance sign | \$8,000
Includes adding lighting and landscaping.

Pickleball complex | \$18,000
Includes court, swing set, and playground. \$12K of \$30K raised.

20' x 24' Storage building | \$20,000
Initial permission received from the Planning Department.

Remodel Girls' Dorm exterior | \$50,000
Replace siding and exterior trim, remove and replace sinking patio, cover patio, and add patio furniture for girls' gathering space.



Christian Encounter Ranch
PO Box 1022
Grass Valley, CA 95945

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Christian Encounter is a non-profit, non-denominational, residential community helping 16- to 24-year-olds by providing love, spiritual guidance, high school education, counseling, and 24-hour supervision.

Internships are offered to young adults 21 years and older. We are a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, and all gifts are tax deductible.



Year (cont. from pg. 2)

We've also begun pursuing another big development project that will meet a long-term need, and we hope to have more good news to share soon. The Lord knows each need, and He knows the name of every student that He will

lead to the ministry. And He is working!

As we wrapped up our celebration of the Ranch's 55th birthday, we spent time praying for the fullness of God's vision for the Ranch to shape its future—and that Jesus would always be the strong foundation everything else is built on.

Nate Boyd, Executive Director



MEMORIALS

*In memory of Dennis P. Davidson,
given by:
Susan Davidson*

*In memory of Jim Parker, given by:
Norma Baker*