



March 2023 Letter

Sharing the World of Atlas With Our Supporters



Dave

Our greatest desire and hardest task is to share the amazing things that God is doing in the Atlas ministry and in our clients' lives. In my monthly communications, I share what is happening in one or two pages packed with as much information as I can provide in the space. Often sharing that information wins out over the amazing stories of our clients. This month I have decided to make one such story the feature article of this letter. Our friend Laurie Thompson shares her story below.

I felt it necessary to add a special note to Laurie's story about her first two interview appointments. She was referred to us by Family Crisis Center in Sioux Center, an organization that works with abuse situations in our area. When Laurie came to her first appointment, at Atlas, we asked her to share her story with us. She immediately burst into tears of shame and desperation. An hour and a half later, she was calm and smiling. We had accomplished our goal of having our clients leave with more hope than they came in with. At her follow-up appointment, her situation had worsened and she again burst into tears, later to again leave smiling. Those were the last tears that we witnessed. From then on things began to rapidly change for her. Since then, she has always come in with a smile on her face and leaves expressing her gratitude for all that she has gained. Enjoy as Laurie shares her story below and how her story is God's story for her as He has worked in her life.

Laurie and Melaney's Story

I am the single mother of Melaney, my very fun, beautiful, and smart 14-year-old daughter. She moved away for two years to Oklahoma to be with her father after we divorced. This past October she decided to move back and live with me and my boyfriend so she could be back with her friends at her old school and because her needs were being neglected. I spent my savings to make the trip to Oklahoma to move her back and meet her other needs. Things were going great up until 2 weeks before Christmas when our lives were turned upside down by the person that we thought loved us.

Melaney, her dog, and I were forced out of our home with nowhere to go and no car to drive until my adult son said we could stay with him until I could get back on my feet. That situation didn't go as planned and we had to leave his home after a short month. We then went to stay with one of my friends in her cold, cold basement, sleeping together on a mattress on the floor. That's when I knew I needed someone's help finding a home so my daughter could have a better life.

A friend told me about Atlas of the Lakes Area and how they helped another person in a situation like mine. I swallowed my pride and contacted Dave at Atlas. I was lost, shaken, and not sure where to turn until I talked with Dave, Tonya, and Jodi. They made me realize I had to give all my worries to God and I was in the right place for the help I was seeking. In our first meeting, it took me a little while to become comfortable but they have a way of making you feel so welcomed and loved that it wasn't hard to trust them. They gave me the resources and strength to be able to contact the right people for the help I needed. I was ashamed and hated asking for help but I am so glad I did. Within 3 weeks of coming to Atlas, they helped me find a home and a loaner car to use and encouraged me to get a full-time job. The job was better than I could ever have dreamed.

Because of God leading me to the wonderful people of Atlas, my life with my daughter is starting over with fresh hope and we could not be more appreciative and happier. Thanks to God, and thanks to the people of Atlas for working through God to help people through very dark times when they truly need new hope for a fresh start in life.



Melaney and Laurie

Thank you for the many ways you support our work with our clients!