

# From Teka Childress House

by Robert McGee

When my family and I first met the Karen House Catholic Worker community about four years ago, we were transitioning into Karen House, a women's shelter. There we met Annjie, Jenny, and a bunch of others who would eventually play huge roles in our lives. After almost a year of living at Karen House, we moved into Gateway Christian Service Center. Living at that shelter did not work out well. Eventually we were kicked out because of a rumor that was dispersed around the shelter. Fortunately, Annjie and Jenny were there to catch our fall. Since that moment, we have been living at Teka Childress (TC) House.

TC House means a lot to my family and me. It has helped us during a rough period in our lives. My family and I have been scarred emotionally from all of the shelter-hopping and pressure my mom has endured. Jenny, Annjie and TC House have shown great hospitality over the years. They gave us a home and only asked little in return. We have had our bumps and ditches in the road, but we prospered through it, and we are really grateful.

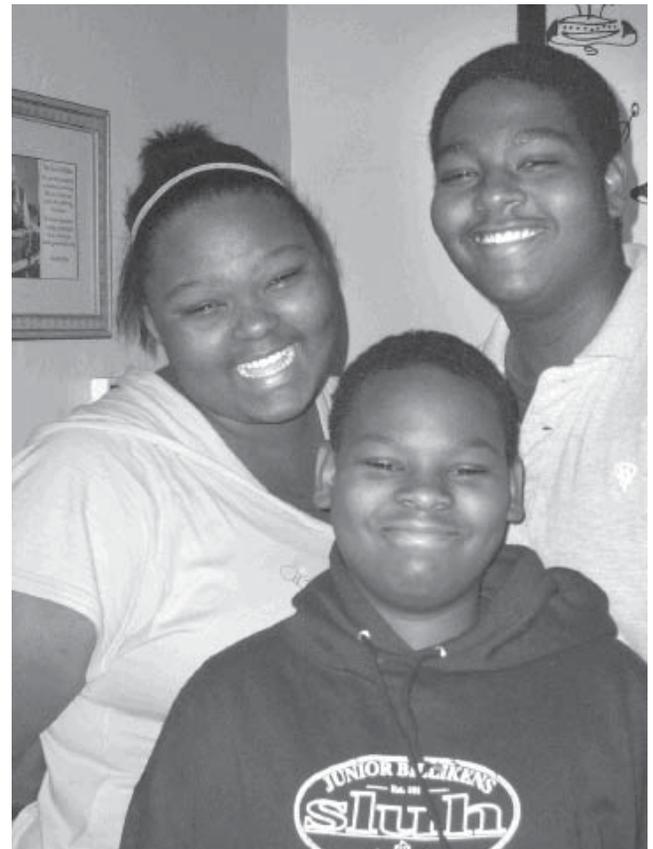
Living at TC House for the past two and a half years, I have grown in maturity, intellect, and spiritually. When my family and I first moved into TC House, I had a really low maturity level. I took a South Park movie of Annjie and Jenny's that I was not supposed to watch. I left the house and on my way out, Annjie and Jenny were returning home. I called my cousin to tell him to return the movie, not knowing that the answering machine was recording our conversation. I was caught red-handed and I disliked Annjie and Jenny for being so hard on me. That event has allowed my maturity level to rise.

However, I have also improved intellectually. Because my family moved into TC House, I was introduced to De La Salle Middle School. Attending that school was one of the best decisions of my life. They taught me things like the Pythagorean Theorem and polynomials, things I had never heard of before. With their help, I was able to score a 91/100 total on the ITBS standardized test, and I got accepted to the best high school in St. Louis. I am really thankful for that.

Not being a spiritual person, I have developed a more spiritual path towards God, and towards becoming a man for others. I volunteer at Karen House and help cook there occasionally. Other times, I may take out the trash, or answer doors if I'm there. I also help out at De La Salle. There, I aid students with math work, or help out with cooking lunch. Now, I stop and have reflective moments with myself. Prayer falls on me as I think about my life. I thank God for Jenny, Annjie, and TC House.

Currently, I am a freshman at St. Louis University High School. I take Chinese, and I have a GPA of 3.11. My sister, Macean, is a seventh grader at De La Salle. She is on Student Council, and is doing very well there. Laurence, my little brother, is a fifth grader at Confluence Academy. He loves math and playing basketball. My mom is a great chef, both for us, and at the Marriott Hotel downtown. Jenny volunteers at Karen House, and continues to get my siblings and me to try her butternut squash fries. Annjie is a Nurse Practitioner at Grace Hill, and always tells us stories about her most interesting patient of the day.

We have enjoyed each other's company over the past two and a half years. Besides the fact we annoy each other, we have become close. We are family. I thank God for people like Jenny and Annjie, and all that they have done for my family and me. I look forward to the time ahead that we will be spending together at the TC House.



**Robert McGee** is currently exploring all the extra-curriculars he can at SLU High, including rugby, the Chinese Club, the Aces club, and the Gaming club.