



November 3, 2014

Greetings friends and supporters,

Did you notice Christmas came to Costco before Halloween this year? Trees, twinkling lights, wrapping paper, toys and more! Time flies – and our retail establishments seem to be trying to make it fly just that much faster. But thankfully, no matter how much the retailers want us to hurry, there are still 365 days in a year, and at Path To Shine®, that has given us time for good work.

I know that some of you want “data” and I promise you can find numbers on the back of this letter. But, we are an organization committed to helping individuals, and I believe it is within *their* stories that we best demonstrate our accomplishments.

Amy was one of our very first students. She lived with her mom, grandma and five siblings in a one bedroom apartment. The children were eventually taken into foster care. However, *Path To Shine was such an important stabilizing factor that the authorities told the foster parents they had to bring the children to Path To Shine every week.* Three years later, all six children have been adopted. Amy is now in Middle School and doing well. She has been back to visit us, and we are always excited to see the young lady she is becoming.

Julie never wanted to read but now she reads all the time. Julie and her mom both *attribute this turn around to Path To Shine* and the close relationship between Julie and her mentor, who faithfully volunteers every week.

Ruben knows only a handful of sight words yet his second grade peers are reading Curious George books. His mom cannot read English and is unable to help him, but she makes sure he attends Path To Shine each week while she goes to her class to learn English. In tears, and struggling to read even one sentence, Ruben worked his way through a book with his Path To Shine volunteer who encouraged and supported him. At the end of the book there was a sense of accomplishment, and it was time to do a puzzle. *But Ruben asked to read another book!*

Every week there are stories unfolding at our Path To Shine programs. These are stories of love and perseverance, stories of students and volunteers working together. And every week we are thankful for the bright and genuine smiles – on the faces of children and adults alike. Path To Shine is making a real difference in the tender hearts, growing minds and emerging futures for under-served children.

Path To Shine® is a self-sustaining ministry of St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, located at 2160 Cooper Lake Road, Smyrna, GA 30080, providing after-school mentoring and tutoring for elementary school children. For additional information please visit [www.pathtoshine.org](http://www.pathtoshine.org) or contact Lesley-Ann Drake, Director, at [lesleyann@pathtoshine.org](mailto:lesleyann@pathtoshine.org)

I ask you to please thoughtfully make a donation in support of Path To Shine. Your generosity enables us to continue our work –one new book at a time, one caring adult at a time, one promising child at a time.

In faith,

Deacon Lesley-Ann Drake,  
Executive Director, Path To Shine®

p.s. If you and your family are planning to buy a wreath or a Christmas tree this season, please consider purchasing from Path To Shine. Each sale helps support our work. Please visit [www.pathtoshine.org](http://www.pathtoshine.org) to view our gorgeous fresh greenery and to purchase via our easy online store. Now, as promised:

### **Path To Shine® 2014 Accomplishments**

We currently support 8 programs with 120 children and 70+ volunteers. All volunteers are carefully trained and pass a background check. Programs are up and running in Canton, Columbus, Macon, Marietta, Morrow, Norcross, Northlake, and Smyrna.

Edith Woodling has joined us as our Educational Consultant (please read her bio on our website).

Ciara Rowley from The Road, Episcopal Service Corps is with us four days per week, helping at the Main Office, as well as with the Marietta and Northlake locations.

Winner of Miriam's Gift Award, presented by the Commission on Human Trafficking in the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta.

Our first student was accepted into a private school on full academic scholarship and is doing great!

Established the PTS Scholarship Fund and developed the Scholarship Committee. This committee is charged with finding resources to assist bright Path To Shine "graduates" with scholarship opportunities for Middle and High School. Path To Shine will provide monies to cover costs beyond tuition such as uniforms, activity fees, books, transportation costs and more. If you would like to send a gift specifically for this fund, please mark your check accordingly or add a comment to the appropriate PayPal field.

Our training curriculum has been updated and we have added both an online version and completion test. A 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and volunteer recently reviewed the materials and rated them as "excellent".

Our Handbook for Affiliates has been expanded and now includes two full years of curriculum.

Path To Shine® is now a registered service mark.