

# Open Door Ministries



Down to Business: Phinix works on his first project with the new airbrush. Soon after this picture was taken, he decided to start his own airbrush design business called Phinix Rising.

## What's In a Name?

When you walk into the small studio located at 1520 Marion your eyes begin to dart around the room, taking in the numerous creations made by the artists who call this space their own. From paintings, to chalk drawings, to airbrush designs, the room is full of the handiwork of the streetkids that are ministered to through the hard work of Bex Drake and Bruce Vlieger.

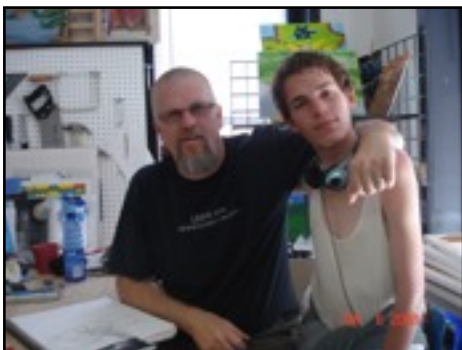
What has been called the ArtZtudio for years, now has a new name; Ezra. And with the new name, is the addition of a new face, the aforementioned Bruce. Bruce and Bex now serve as co-directors of Ezra, and Bruce explained why they decided on the name change.

He clarified that though art is an important component of their ministry with the kids, it is not the focus. The focus is rebuilding. In the Old Testament, the prophet Ezra worked with the exiles in Israel. He worked with them on spiritual rebuilding and renewing worship. In today's society, Bruce sees the street kids as our exiles. Most have twisted and distorted beliefs about Christianity, and the staff and volunteers of Ezra want to work on rebuilding their spiritual lives.

God gave both Bex and Bruce a vision for Ezra years ago, though at the time, they did not know each other. Late in 2007, God brought them together in ministry, and the results have been remarkable. Bruce came to Open Door from another Denver ministry to street kids, Sox Place. Before that, he had worked as a designer in the engineering world, and in his words, "dreaded every minute". It was at Sox Place that God began to allow the dream Bruce had to develop, and now at Open Door, it is even more fully realized.

There are regular weekly hours for the Studio, staff and volunteers are interacting with more kids on outreach, there is a meal served on Sundays, and one of their kids, Phinix, has started his own airbrush design business, thanks to the support and mentoring of Bruce.

Bex and Bruce want to see kids like Phinix and Spaz, engaged in a life that looks beyond the street. A life that is characterized by a relationship with Christ. As Ezra continues to grow, please pray for workers and resources to help achieve these goals.



Bruce Vlieger pictured with Spaz.

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## OPEN DOOR MINISTRIES



Meeting Needs and Making Disciples in the Urban Community

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## On Par for the Urban Poor

### Open Door Ministries Golf Tournament

Thursday, July 17th 2008  
7:00am to 1:00pm

Black Bear Golf Club  
(formerly The Canterbury Club)

Price includes continental  
breakfast, lunch, range balls,  
green fees, use of golf cart, and  
a \$100 donation to Open Door  
Ministries.

Please visit [www.odmdenver.org](http://www.odmdenver.org)  
for more information.

### \*SAVE THE DATE\*

The Open Door Ministries  
dinner and fundraiser  
will be held on  
NOVEMBER 14TH, 2008

As in years past, the  
*Renaissance Denver Hotel*  
will be the location.

### Interested in Volunteering?

Still Waters Housing will be hosting a  
Volunteer Training on the evening of July  
18th. This training is for people that are  
interested in being directly involved in  
the lives of the women and children who  
live in the three homes that make up  
Still Waters Housing.

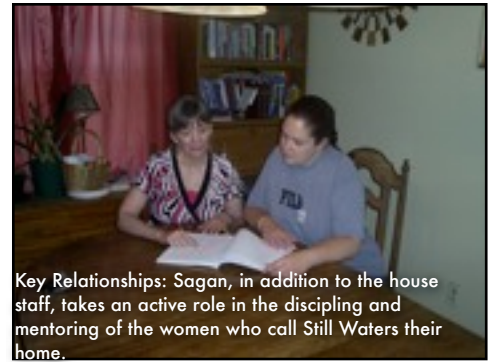
Please contact Kim Hurst at  
[karoselkween@comcast.net](mailto:karoselkween@comcast.net) or  
303-438-1238 for more information.

## Soul Restoration: The Promises of Psalm 23 Realized

Sagan Fabiano's story is one of  
redemption and grace. God brought  
her from the precarious streets of New  
York City to the homes on Marion  
Street. He brought her from  
dependence on drugs and alcohol into  
freedom from those chains of addiction.  
He brought her from being a resident at  
a sister program (Providence House I)  
over 12 years ago to coming on staff  
with Open Door Ministries as the  
Director of Still Waters Housing.

The residents of Treasure House, Esther  
House, and Chayah House come into  
these programs with stories that begin  
similarly to Sagan's. They are worn  
down, have often been involved in  
numerous abusive situations, and need a  
place of rest. Over the past six months,  
the staff of those three homes, under the  
leadership of their new director, have  
sought to join the three houses beneath  
the umbrella of Still Waters Housing.  
The new organization allows single  
women to take care of needs such as  
obtaining identification, completing a  
physical exam, beginning counseling,  
and learning about basic Christian  
practices in the first three to six months  
at Esther House, and then once they are  
in a stable situation with work and/or  
school, they are given the opportunity  
to move to Chayah House. Women with  
children are invited to move into  
Treasure House, and can remain there  
for up to two years.

The staff of Esther House, Jennifer  
Duncan and Kelsey Jenks, describe their  
home as a place of "Cultural Detox".



Key Relationships: Sagan, in addition to the house  
staff, takes an active role in the discipling and  
mentoring of the women who call Still Waters their  
home.

Their desire in providing services for these  
women is to work with where the women  
are at, the own goals they have for  
themselves, and to try to guide them along  
the way and display the Gospel to them.

The commencement of Still Waters Housing  
has brought relief to the dedicated staff of  
the three houses. They are being cross-  
trained in order to alleviate co-workers in  
times of demanding ministry. Staff are  
able to enjoy more weekends "off the  
clock" because of a new house coverage  
structure. Sagan wishes to utilize each  
staff member to the best of her abilities,  
keeping in mind what specific  
characteristics God has gifted each woman  
with.

A resident of Treasure House recently  
remarked, "No matter what our  
background, it's nice to know there are  
people out there who won't judge us." It is  
the desire of Sagan Fabiano, and the  
entire staff of Still Waters Housing, that  
more women and children will come into  
these homes in search of rest, and find  
people who love and serve selflessly and a  
God who seeks to restore their souls.



Summer Help: Still Waters Housing is blessed to have three interns  
this summer who will be of enourmous support to the staff and  
residents. Pictured here are Valerie, Sagan, and Stacy.

Center Time: "Miss Ida Mae" enjoys some time in the Science Center with three of the preschoolers.



## Experience and Heart: Open Door Preschool's New Director

Ida Mae Custer knew in 5<sup>th</sup> grade that she wanted to be a teacher when she grew up, and she hasn't looked back since. She has experience teaching in the inner-city of Los Angeles, a private school in California, a Colorado homeschool program, to a suburban preschool in Littleton. Since being introduced to Open Door Ministries through her previous church, she often thought about working for the Open Door Preschool someday, but thought it was "way down the road". It seems God's plans were different though, and in January of this year, Ida Mae joined ODM as the new Preschool Director. Now, she has the opportunity to be involved with the children she so dearly loves, but also help train and develop the staff under her towards excellence in teaching.

In addition to the vast array of experience she brings to Open Door, Ida Mae is especially drawn to those kids who need a little extra loving, to those that have a harder time adjusting to certain new ideas and situations, and those that have a hard time expressing themselves. She appreciates the value that Open Door Preschool puts on allowing the children to have freedom to learn through play. An important part of her job is interacting with the parents (primarily single mothers) on a daily

basis. Oftentimes the families who are involved with the preschool have harsh home lives, characterized by undue amounts of chaos. Ida Mae has had multiple opportunities to step away from the activity of the classroom with these moms and listen to them and pray for them.

When asked what a strength of the preschool was, Ida Mae spoke of the high educational level found both in the staff and what they put into the kids, but even more important was the extraordinary amount of acceptance the children and parents receive, no matter what their situation.

Through different experiences in her own personal life, Ida Mae has learned about the amazing grace that is promised by God, and the importance of living a life of total dependence on Him. Through her work at Open Door, she hopes to instill these lessons, and more, into the staff, parents and children.



## More than Mom Support Group

In an effort to encourage more parental involvement with the Open Door Ministries Childcare Center, the staff developed a mom's group called "More than Mom". This group allows moms to support each other, share what they are going through in life, and realize that they are not the oddity. The group meets monthly for dinner and encouragement. ODM staff is intentional about connecting parents over specific situations. Moms often remark how nice it is to be able to talk with fellow mothers and learn from each other based on everyone's individual experiences.

If you would like to know how you can support "More than Moms", please contact Melissa Hunt at 303-813-0878.



A group shot of the May "MTM" meeting

## Staff

Lara Allen  
Kelsey Anderson  
Marcus Bratton  
Walter Carman  
Ida Mae Custer  
Eric Davis  
Carol Delcamp  
Bex Drake  
Jennifer Duncan  
Sagan Fabiano  
Tim Floyd  
Lena Greenfield

Jon Hielt  
Nate Hill  
Melissa Hunt  
Micah Hutchison  
Kelsey Jenks  
LeaAnne Maloney  
Nick McRee  
Daniel Mendivil  
Randy Milliken  
Gary Mullins  
Molly Orr  
Aaron Runnells

Laura Shank  
Kim Sierra  
Matt Smith  
Matt Staley  
Laura Stokes  
Bruce Vlieger  
Marla Vlieger  
David Warren  
Michelle Warren  
Jessica Wilson  
Lindsay Wirt

## Board of Directors

Terry Bratton  
Jude DelHiero  
Jessica Dunbar  
Bill Eucker  
Kathy Leslie  
Michael Fen  
Mike Harrison  
Haydn Hirstine  
Christopher Hooper  
Sheila Johnson  
Jeanne Osness  
Dave Reeves  
Kim Sierra  
David Warren

## Advisory Council

Paul & Dawn Anderson  
Sid & Debbie Cook  
Scott & Cheryl deBeaubien  
David & Sharon Dadrill  
Clarence & Janet Ellis  
Dennis & Chris Ferrigno  
Curtis & Mavis Holmes  
Nils & Cathy Holtestaul  
Chuck Hutchcraft  
Greg Jones

Dan & Donna Layne  
Garry & Connie McRee  
Michael & Rita Murphy  
Doug & Jeanne Osness  
Patrick & Jan Ruffy  
David & Jackie Schmidt  
Jerry & Marianne Sommer  
Doug & Jackie Swartz  
Don & Patty Wolf

## From the Director...

Michelle and I were blessed earlier this year to be able to get away for a three month sabbatical. The board of directors and staff were very gracious to us in making this possible. Thank you!

A big part of the sabbatical was simply being away, resting, and refueling. We did that in a variety of ways. We were able to take two trips out of Denver. We spent some time at the beginning in Carbondale, CO playing in the snow and relaxing in front of the fireplace. At the end, we drove to Santa Fe for a warmer experience exploring some of the history of the southwest. In between, some great skiing was had. I taught both my boys how to ski this season, our family of five skied together for the first time ever, and I personally was able to hit the slopes with friends on a regular basis. I also "rested" by finishing some stubborn house projects that just wouldn't go away until I actually did them. That helped me want to go back to work! ☺



In addition to the rest, I was able to have some focused time for thinking and reflecting on my relationship with the Lord and our ministry in the city. I started journaling again. That's something I've wanted to do for a long time but kept putting it off. I was also able to read many great books. From Oppression to Jubilee Justice by Lowell Noble was one of the books I read. It focuses on the application of Biblical justice to American life and history. Another was Leading with a Limp by Dan Allender. It's all about the character of a leader and leading out of our brokenness rather than out of our "togetherness." I tend to be a task oriented person so this special time to read, study, learn, and grow was especially helpful. I've made it a goal to continue studying one morning each week.

One ministry related project I was able to accomplish was the writing of a support raising manual for staff. For many of our staff, raising their own personal support is the hardest part of the job. It is likely their first time to do this, it's intimidating, and many don't naturally have the contacts to make this happen. The manual is a step by step guide leading them through the process of building a support team. This was on my heart for a long time and it's good to finally have this tool for staff to use.

It was great to be away and rest for a while, but it is also great to be back. I've been back since April 4<sup>th</sup>, so I am feeling back in the swing of things. I love this ministry and feel blessed to be a part of the work God is doing in the city.

In Christ,

David Warren  
Executive Director

## Open Door Ministries is an outreach of Open Door Fellowship Church

Chayah House: Serving single women by providing housing, life skills, and basic Christian discipleship

Cornerstone Home: Providing housing and companionship for disabled men

Esther House: Providing transitional housing for women leaving the sex-trade industry, addictions, and other dangerous lifestyles

E.A.T.: (Eating All Together) Reaching people through eating a meal together after church services on Sunday evening.

The ArtStudio: Building relationships with street kids through art.

Nehemiah House: Providing housing for staff, low-income families, and dorm space for Urban Mission teams.

Preschool: Providing inner-city children a quality education founded upon high academics and Christian character development.

School-Age Program: Providing elementary-age children with before-and-after school care, including tutoring and mentoring

Treasure House: Serving single moms and their kids by providing housing, parenting skills, and basic Christian discipleship.

TRYAD: (To Reconcile You Able-bodied and Disabled) Reaching some of the many disabled in our community through needed companionship and evangelism

Urban Missions: Bringing youth and adults to Open Door Ministries for an inner city, short-term mission trip

Youth: Sharing the message and love of Christ to urban youth through Bible studies, activities, and one-on-one relationships

## Welcome to our 2008 Summer Interns!

Ali McHodgkins  
Rebecka Neyman  
Stacy Phillips  
Charissa Rowe

Azusa Pacific University  
Cedarville University  
Cedarville University  
Cedarville University

Urban Missions  
Childcare Center  
Still Waters Housing  
Childcare Center

Aubrey Senyard  
Rachel Shedd  
Valerie Yeo

Wheaton College  
Moody Bible Institute  
Wheaton College

Ezra  
Esther House  
Treasure House