

Moses Dobbs is an observant, witty, genuine, understanding young man. He was open, so very honest, and excited to share his story. He laughed when I told him he had an old soul, but he most definitely does. At the same time, however, Moses Dobbs is also just your average college freshman, enrolled at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in Stillwater, Ok. He lives on campus. He plays inter mural sports and hangs out with all his new friends. But if it were not for his experience at Tulsa Boys' Home (TBH), as he told me, none of that would be Moses' reality.

Moses was a resident at TBH from early 2015 to late August 2016. He had been in foster care since he was two years old and came to TBH after his case worker realized that his previous living situation was not a good fit for him. She scheduled meetings with the TBH Director, because she felt this agency could help Moses.

Moses said his experience at TBH was "absolutely" enjoyable and changed his life. "They did so many great things for me, and I could never return that" for everyone at TBH "went way beyond the call of the duty".

Moses thinks the best parts of TBH are the equine program and the work program. He worked two jobs while he was at TBH, one in the ceramics studio and the other one with the horses. During the year and half he was at TBH, he made enough money to save for college. Of the program, Moses said, "What really stood out to me personally, to make the [TBH] program work you have to be ready to receive it and be honest. Everything is there for a reason, the mentor program, the recreational program, and the therapists."

Moses left TBH at age seventeen to live with his grandmother. Moses thought she could help him rebuild some of his relationships with his family. He had previously visited her a

couple times, using his TBH weekend passes, and it was always a lot of fun. He lived with her while attending high school in Cleveland, Oklahoma, but it was not working out the way they both had hoped. When his grandmother asked him to leave, his church in Cleveland allowed him to live in the church fellowship hall until his high school graduation a few weeks later.

After he graduated, he moved to Tulsa where he worked three jobs. He was able to find an apartment and work because of connections he had made at TBH. Moses said this was “definitely a God moment. It was one of those things no man could do”. He worried about money, but always managed to pay for his rent and insurance. He took on more responsibility than most 18 year olds have to deal with, and he is proud of himself for getting through that.

In the summer of 2017, Gregg Conway, TBH Director, contacted Moses. Gregg offered to help him get into college. Moses applied for grants through “Oklahoma Promise” and other sources. DHS also helped him. As a result, Moses does not have to pay tuition, only a small amount for textbooks.

Moses is doing very well in college. He said, “OSU is probably the third best decision I’ve ever made in my life. The first was to work the TBH program and let people help me. The second was when I got baptized”. He has made many new friends, reconnected with others he knew from Cleveland High, and more through his church group. He spends his free time working out and going to the gym, playing inter mural volleyball and basketball every week, and spending time with his church group. Moses said, “If I could tell the boys at the Boys’ Home anything, I’d say go to college”. At first, he did not want to go to college, for he thought it was just a “glorified version of high school”, but he sure changed his mind. He feels a part of something, like he is finally a member of a family.

Not only was TBH instrumental in getting him in college, the agency also provided him with a donated car that was given to TBH. Moses had been invited for lunch on campus and while he was there the “mystery car” in the parking lot became his! Moses did not know what to say or do. He was in shock, he said it was “just one of those moments that are once in a lifetime. It was awesome”. The agency had the car fixed up to so he would not be stranded in Stillwater. Moses struggled to find words, saying “it’s just... I do my best that I can to treat that car with the upmost respect because the people who gave it to me treat me that way”.

On coming to TBH, Moses said, “It’s the best decision I ever made”. If he had not decided to come to TBH or work through the program with an open mind, he believes he would not be where he is or who he is. TBH became the turning point in his life. He learned to be less socially awkward by speaking at special events. He learned how to save money, how to be fiscally responsible, and how to have and maintain nice things.

The TBH teaching staff taught him how to write academically, which is helping him in his college composition class. But more importantly, TBH taught him to listen and understand. He used to be an impulsive thinker and actor, but now he can sit back, grateful for the world and for TBH. He thinks TBH taught him lessons he felt a father should have, saying, “The Boys’ Home was like my father, or at least a father figure, and for this the agency definitely was the greatest positive impact on my life”. TBH shaped him into who he is today. They evened out all his rough edges.

Moses said TBH could have easily given up on him, he gave them plenty of reasons, but they did not. Moses said, “I’m just really thankful. I think that sums it up”.

(interviewed by Cheyenne Green in 2017)