

Photojournalist Helps Kids Create

By Deborah Ziff / Journal Staff Writer

Their hopes are lofty and practical and heartbreaking.

They hope to make a difference; for happiness; to be famous race car drivers; to go to college; to be superstars; for all kids have shoes; to live in a pink house or to have any house at all.

On Tuesday, at The Barrett Foundation, a shelter and support network for homeless women and children, about 15 kids shared their hopes and dreams through a program called "Pictures of Hope." Photojournalist Linda Solomon, who started the national project, was in Albuquerque to teach them how to capture photos of those hopes.

Online

For more information on The Barrett Foundation and its programs, go to barrettfoundation.org

In turn, the photographs will be made into holiday greeting cards. All of the proceeds will go to The Barrett Foundation.

"When you show children that you care about what they wish for in life, it builds self-esteem," said Solomon, a photographer who takes pictures of celebrities.

Albuquerque was one of 12 cities chosen this year to take part in Solomon's program.

Most of the children participating in "Pictures of Hope" had been through The Barrett Foundation shelter but are in long-term housing now, said Michael Gaylor, executive director of The Barrett Foundation.

Solomon gave the children a quick photography lesson, with tips such as when to hold the camera vertically or horizontally, how far to be from the subject, and how to avoid blurry photos. She handed out photos of pop star Justin Bieber she had taken at a recent photo shoot each time a child answered a question.

"You've got to think of creative ways to capture your hopes and dreams," she told them.

Cori Galles, vice president of Galles Chevrolet and

Don Galles, vice president of Galles Chevrolet and a sponsor of the project, gave out disposable cameras to each child and vinyl bags to carry them.

Then, the children paired up with mentors who took them around the city to snap photos.

Trinity Smith, age 11, had a long list of hopes: to be a doctor, to care for her family, to give food and water to homeless people and for her mom to feel better.

“I want my mom’s kidneys to be better,” she said.

Smith’s mom, Halo Smith, isn’t working because she has a kidney disorder and a tumor on her pituitary gland.

The Smiths spent about four months at the Barrett House shelter, leaving in February when they got a house through Albuquerque Heading Home, an initiative headed by Mayor Richard Berry and local nonprofits.

Trinity Smith and two younger siblings, Maaliyah, 10, and Lewis, 9 – along with their mom and a mentor from The Barrett Foundation – went to Kaseman Presbyterian Hospital to capture photos of hope there.

“We’re here because we were homeless,” Trinity Smith told a volunteer. “And we’re here to take some pictures and to help some people.”

The children at the Barrett Foundation will see their “Pictures of Hope” cards for the first time at a celebration at Galles Chevrolet in November.

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Darrionte Thomas smiles after he takes a photograph with Linda Solomon's camera while participating in the “Pictures of Hope” program at The Barrett Foundation. Solomon, a photojournalist, provided about 15 children there with a photography lesson, disposable cameras, and gave them an assignment to take pictures of their hopes and dreams. (MARLA BROSE/Journal)



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