



PHOTOS SPEAK M1



REPAYING A GIFT OF LIFE

IMAGINE

Photos courtesy of Mikey Carraway and Shaheda Wright

... it's a dark, stormy Halloween night as you lay in a hospital bed fighting for your life. Your doctors know what's wrong with you and know how to heal you. They are just waiting. But in the meantime, you are getting closer to losing your fight for life. You see, in order for you to live, someone else has to die.

Mikey Carraway had been healthy until he became very sick when he was 11 years old. His health worsened until doctors determined that his liver was failing. He had less than two weeks to live. And so that Halloween night found him waiting for a new liver. Mikey's gain would be someone else's loss. Across town, an 18-year-old man, Johnny, was killed in a tragic motorcycle accident. Johnny's family, gathered at the hospital, discovered that he was signed up to be an organ donor. While Johnny never met Mikey, he saved Mikey's life. Doctors were able to harvest Johnny's heart, lungs, kidneys and liver, which saved the lives of five people. Three of them were children, just like Mikey.

Acts of compassion, like Johnny's, result in double joy. Joy for the receiver and also the giver of sincere caring. When Johnny chose to become an organ donor, he showed compassion for others in his community. He had strong behavior muscles. Thanks to Johnny, Mikey would get the chance to exercise his behavior muscles too.

Mikey recovered from his life-saving surgery in time to go back to school shortly before Thanksgiving. His mom, recognizing the immense gift he'd been given, asked Mikey how he wanted to show his appreciation. Out of his compassion, he replied that he wanted to feed the homeless. "It was the first thing that popped into my head," Mikey said. It soon became his very favorite thing to do.

On Christmas day, Mikey and his family served their first meals to the homeless out of the trunk of their car. It wasn't fancy, but it was warm and it was served with a smile. Mikey's family continued to serve meals to the homeless. They paid for the food themselves and called their mission, Mikey's Meals. They felt it

was a small way they could pay Johnny back for the gift of his liver. What began as a way to honor Johnny's memory quickly became a way for Mikey to continue to get joy from helping others.

Mikey's family estimates that they have served meals to over 4,000 homeless people. At each meal, they ask people to sign up to be organ donors. Hundreds have done so. With each meal served and each new organ donor signed up, Mikey shows that compassion can be paid forward. "Mikey is an extraordinary young man," says a friend. "He's really taking this cause to heart. It's a powerful message from him." These are both powerful examples of compassion. How can you be like Johnny and Mikey and initiate the double-joy of compassion as you write your own best TrueSuccess lifestory?

Note: See more lifestories, videos and more: www.TrueSuccessTools.org.

QUESTIONS LEAD TO UNDERSTANDING M2/5

1. What evidence is there that Mikey exhibits compassion? What shows that it has positively affected others' lives and his life?

2. How did compassion spread from Johnny's life to Mikey's? Why do you think Mikey continued to feed the homeless through Mikey's Meals?

3. How can you learn from Mikey's lifestory and show compassion? What specific actions can you take to show compassion in your life?
