The girls at Boys Town cried. Five of them, all graduating seniors, squeezed onto the couch in their aptly named “family home.” They reflected on their remarkably unbroken two years together — which is unusual here — and passed the Kleenex.

Graduations are bittersweet occasions, marking both an end and a beginning. While this was certainly true, these young women weren’t just graduating from high school. They were leaving home. For good.

This is a familiar experience at Boys Town. But what made this group unique was the rarity of being together for two whole years. Children cycle in and out of Boys Town, where some children stay years and others a few months. They live in family-style arrangements with married couples who head the households and where the ages of the children are staggered, the way they would be in a typical family.

So it was unique for this many in one household to graduate at the same time and prepare to leave. No other family home, among the 60 at Boys Town in Omaha, had as many graduates.

So their tears carried something beyond the typical poignancy of this annual May ritual. They were sad about what had brought them to Boys Town’s gate and grateful for what happened over the next months and years. They were about to do something a few hadn’t imagined — finish high school; and they had gotten something they hadn’t believed existed — a stable and happy home. So while they had entered Boys Town dreaming of the day they’d leave this place, they were also apprehensive about their coming departure and anxious about what was next.

All five reflected on what they had gained at Boys Town.

“It’s a family I never had,” said Jordan Burton, whose next home is the campus of Iowa Western Community College. She wants to be an occupational therapist.
Miracles of the Heart Fill Boys Town Youth with Gratitude

Dear Friend,

When our boys and girls bow their heads at the dinner table to say grace this Thanksgiving, they will have so much more to be thankful for than just the roast turkey, dressing and pumpkin pie they’re about to enjoy.

Jordon is thankful she’s been part of a family that really loves her and cares about her (read more about Jordan and her four Boys Town “sisters” in this issue’s cover story).

Luis is thankful he no longer has to take three doses of three different medications every day to control his behavior because he’s learning more positive ways to do that.

Angela is thankful that her dream of becoming a doctor is alive because she is receiving a quality education that will prepare her for the demands of college.

And Jamal is thankful he is in a safe place, where he won’t be beaten or locked in his room for days at a time like he was before coming to Boys Town.

On this wonderful Thanksgiving holiday, which marks the start of the joyous Christmas season, every one of our kids has something to be grateful for. In their minds and in their hearts, they know they are in a special place where they can turn their lives around and make changes that will help them grow to be good citizens.

This Thanksgiving, take stock of the good things in your life. Count your blessings and ask how you can share your blessings with others. It is in the spirit of giving that we find our true life’s fulfillment.

At Boys Town, we are thankful for the miracles of the heart our kids experience every day. These miracles would not be possible without your generous support. Thank you. You are in our prayers every day because we know how much you care.

God’s Blessings and Happy Thanksgiving,

Father Steven E. Boes
Boys Town National Executive Director

I’m Thankful For...

Thanksgiving is a wonderful time for Boys Town youth to reflect on their blessings and express their gratitude for the good things that are happening in their lives. Here are some Thanksgiving thoughts from our boys and girls.

I am grateful for Boys Town. If I was not here, I would be home partying and not going to school. At home, there are many temptations. Boys Town has helped me learn how to push on and move past these things. Boys Town has also helped me get back on my feet.

— Eric, 15

I am grateful that when I come home in the afternoon there is a family there who loves me and cares for me. Everyone should be able to come to a home like that after school and many do not.

— Alexa, 11

I am happy for the incredible family that does not just pretend to be happy, but really is happy. I am grateful because they support me. I love them. They always try to help me, even when I am acting up. Thank you Boys Town family.

— Bruce, 14
Congress Honors Father Flanagan’s Boys’ Home with the Boys Town Centennial Commemorative Coin Act

The Boys Town Centennial Commemorative Coin Act (Public Law 114-30) was passed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States to celebrate and honor Father Flanagan’s Boys’ Home’s 100th Anniversary which will take place on December 12, 2017. The bill was then presented to the President for his signature on June 26, 2015 and signed into law on July 6, 2015.

The law authorizes the United States Mint to strike three different 2017 commemorative coins. The three coins to be minted will be: a $5 gold, a silver dollar and a half dollar clad. These coins will be available with proof and uncirculated finishes.

The first modern commemorative coin program was authorized by Congress in 1982. As of the 2014 fiscal year, only 62 commemorative coin sets have been released. These coins are unique in that they honor important people, organizations, places or historic events.

“We are thrilled with the passage of this bill and grateful to lawmakers who worked tirelessly to spread the message of the good work Boys Town has done for youth in America for the past 100 years,” said Father Steven Boes, President and National Executive Director of Boys Town.

The Boys Town Centennial Commemorative Coins, displayed on this page, will be minted and issued by the United States Mint and will be available to purchase in early 2017. Final price of the coins has not yet been determined. Anyone can order these commemorative coins directly from the US Mint beginning the day of their release at catalog.usmint.gov, while supplies last.

2017 Boys Town Centennial Commemorative $5 Gold Coin

**OBVERSE:** Features a portrait of Father Flanagan. Inscriptions include “BOYS TOWN CENTENNIAL,” “IN GOD WE TRUST,” “FR. EDWARD FLANAGAN,” “LIBERTY,” and “2017.”

**REVERSE:** Features an outstretched hand holding a young oak tree growing from an acorn. As stated in the idiom “Mighty oaks from little acorns grow,” this design represents the potential of each child helped by Boys Town to grow into a productive, complete adult. Inscriptions include “UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,” “THE WORK WILL CONTINUE,” “FIVE DOLLARS,” and “E PLURIBUS UNUM.”

2017 Boys Town Centennial Commemorative Silver Dollar

**OBVERSE:** Features a young girl sitting alone and gazing upward into the branches of an oak tree looking for help. The empty space around the girl is deliberate and meant to show the child’s sense of loneliness, isolation, and helplessness. Inscriptions include “BOYS TOWN,” “When you help a child today...,” “IN GOD WE TRUST,” “LIBERTY,” and “1917-2017.”

**REVERSE:** Features an oak tree that offers shelter and a sense of belonging to the family holding hands below it, which includes the girl from the obverse. Inscriptions include “...you write the history of tomorrow,” “UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,” “ONE DOLLAR,” and “E PLURIBUS UNUM.”

2017 Boys Town Centennial Commemorative Half Dollar Clad

**OBVERSE:** Features an older brother holding the hand of his younger brother in 1917. They walk toward Father Flanagan’s Boys Home and the 1940s Pylon representing what would become Boys Town. Inscriptions include “BOYS TOWN,” “1917,” “2017,” “IN GOD WE TRUST,” “LIBERTY,” and “Saving Children.”

**REVERSE:** Features a present-day Boys Town neighborhood of homes where children are schooled and nurtured by caring families. Out of these homes come young adults who graduate from high school and the Boys Town program. Inscriptions include “UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,” “E PLURIBUS UNUM,” “Healing Families,” and “HALF DOLLAR.”

Artist renderings of final 2017 Boys Town Commemorative Coin designs. Coins not to scale.
The Boys Town Behavioral Health Clinic offers services to children of all ages who have emotional or behavioral problems, as well as family therapy.

Our staff is comprised of professionals with the training, experience and expertise necessary to provide the support and guidance that children need to succeed. We work with families to develop effective assistance for a wide range of challenges.

The Boys Town Behavioral Health Clinic specializes in creating a comprehensive care approach. Our mission is to care for problems before they develop into more serious health and behavioral issues by involving the whole family.
The Boys Town Residential Treatment Center is changing the lives of children ages 5 to 18 who have severe behavioral and mental health problems through our proven medically-directed treatment program. Our goal is to help children gain the self-assurance and academic and social skills to succeed in life.

The Center for Neurobehavioral Research combines the latest brain imaging technology with behavioral measures that are already well established as part of the Boys Town program.

The Center for Neurobehavioral Research actively partners with researchers both locally and nationally to develop the best practices to treat behavioral and mental health problems in children.

The Center focuses on research programs in four areas: mood and anxiety disorders (depression, PTSD, generalized anxiety), disruptive behavior disorders (conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, ADHD), substance abuse and web and computer-based therapeutics.
Jordan, 17, is the neatnik of the bunch. She also is the family clown, eager to break tension by cracking a joke. But on this recent spring day, Jordan wasn’t laughing.

She was reminiscing about how nice it was to wake up with 29-year-old “mother,” Jackie Taylor, saying good morning. House “father” Andrew Taylor, 33, drives the van to school. Jordan likes having eight other “sisters” in this house, including the couple’s 4-year-old daughter, Lydia, three other Boys Town residents and her four classmates.

The other classmates who live in the house are: blond-haired, glasses-wearing Kaileigh, the messiest and the most veteran. Kaileigh O’Donnell has been at Boys Town since 2012. She’s going straight into the workforce as a certified nursing assistant.

Then there’s animal-loving Tessa Miller, who once horrified the home’s assistant when she brought home a dying squirrel she’d found lying on the road. Tessa is thinking of a career as a veterinarian and is headed to Metropolitan Community College in Elkhorn.

Makayla Boswell had cycled through three high schools before landing at Boys Town. She is planning on going to Iowa Western.

Last is Adjanate Taliaferro, who was known for her speed on the track and her slowness getting out the door.

All five have been together under this roof with Jackie and Andrew long enough to jell as a family unit. As in any family, there have been ups and downs, which were almost always shared around the large dining room table during the daily family meetings held after dinner. Topics included what was appropriate to wear and what wasn’t, and a vexing rule about no cellphones until they leave.

Jordan, who says she’s very protective of her food, was

“Sisters, definitely.... My religion teacher says it’s good to have a ‘sister-friend.’ I have eight of them.”

— KAILEIGH O’DONNELL
FORMER BOYS TOWN YOUTH
stunned that Jackie and Andrew would dip into their own pockets to buy treats at the movies or other snacks.

Makayla, who said she’d never had friends, quickly found them on a campus where no one judged. “Before I came here,” she said, “I was willing to drop out.”

But at Boys Town, Makayla got involved and formed friendships, and now believes that the placement saved her life. “I get to have a future,” she said.

Life wasn’t perfect. Soft-spoken Adjanate described herself as a “yeller,” something I found impossible to believe until her four “sisters” quickly chimed in with a definitive: Yes, she is!

Adjanate gave a vague explanation. Growing up, she said, she did not “get my needs met” until she got to Boys Town.

She struggled at first, racked up “a ton of noncompliances” and pushed back against Jackie and Andrew. But no matter what she did, they were steadfast, and that shocked her and won her over.

“I really adore them,” she said. “Jackie is my idol. She is my mother no matter what. I look at Lydia as a little sister to me.”

And she asks Andrew, who was in the U.S. Army, for career advice. Adjanate is thinking about joining. Or becoming a nurse.

Having little Lydia around broke the ice.

Lydia, a sprightly preschooler who drags around a teddy bear, recently told Tessa that she had something on her lip. Before Tessa knew it, the little girl had licked her finger, the way a mother would, and wiped Tessa’s lip.

“Let me get it for you, Sissy,” she’d said, an act that touched Tessa.

“I found a family,” Tessa said.

“Sisters, definitely,” Kaileigh said. “My religion teacher says it’s good to have a ‘sister-friend.’ I have eight of them.”

The “sisters” showed a natural comfort with one another. They gently ribbed one another but spoke affectionately. All but Jordan were moving out right after their May 15 graduation. And Jordan blanched at the idea of newcomers taking the places of her “sisters.”

“It’s going to be hard,” she said. So was the prospect of leaving. “This is my home,” she said. “I don’t know the adult world. It’s really cruel out there.”

Jackie, the house mother, piped up. “Yes, graduation marks a difficult transition. But these “daughters” are ready. They have spent the past two years developing skills, strengthening relationships and becoming strong young women.

“These girls,” she said, “are going to do well.”
You Might Be Surprised at What You Own

What types of noncash assets do you own? A gift of any of these assets may provide you with benefits (such as income or tax savings), and help further Boys Town’s cause.

» CDs and money market accounts
» Securities such as stocks, bonds and mutual funds
» Real estate such as commercial, rental, farm, ranch and vacation homes
» Life Insurance Policies
» Tangible personal property such as art, coins and collectibles
» Retirement accounts

Getting & Giving the Most from Your Assets

When most people think about making a charitable gift to Boys Town, they think of giving cash from a checking or savings account. While we appreciate gifts of any kind to help support our mission, there are many ways that you can give and benefit through making a gift of other assets to us. And there is no better time than now to make such a gift.

Making a gift of noncash assets can help you in the following ways:

» If you give appreciated assets, you can avoid paying capital gains tax
» You could receive a charitable deduction for your gift, potentially lowering your tax bill.
» You can make a gift today while preserving your cash for immediate or future needs
» Certain types of gifts could establish lifetime income or other benefits for you or your family
» You may be able to make greater gifts than you ever thought possible

For more information about these types of charitable gifts, please visit our website at boystowngift.org or contact our Office of Gift and Estate Planning today at 888-332-3219 or giftplanning@boystown.org.

INQUIRE TODAY!

The information contained in this briefing does not constitute legal or tax advice, and it is recommended that you seek the advice of your attorney, professional tax advisor and/or financial planner prior to making arrangements for a planned gift.