

Vendor Spotlight:

T.A. Robertson

BY ZACHARY JONES

Staff Writer

T.A. Robertson, 46, has made many adjustments for the better in the past few years. One of them is becoming a certified vendor of *The Bridge*. But he's not done. Robertson shares a strong passion for Christianity with his wife, Lisa, and the two attend weekly services at Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church. He also plans to channel his flow by becoming an ordained minister in the near future.

But the future didn't always seem so bright. For many years, Robertson struggled with addiction. In 2004, he began rehabilitation in Memphis, and after nearly four years, he was ready to begin life on a new path. He met Pastor Roderick T. Williams of Starting All Over Outreach Ministry, who, according to Robertson, ended up playing a huge role in Robertson's turnaround. Robertson married Lisa in winter 2011. She considers herself his biggest supporter, especially regarding his deci-

sion to use Christianity to help others. "What I love about T.A.," says Lisa, "is that he is encouraging, God-fearing, humble, and just loves to give hope everywhere he goes. What drew me to him was that he is rich in spirit."

Robertson's ministerial mission is to help people overcome similar trials to those he has endured himself. Robertson wants to, in his words, implement righteousness. During his own struggles, he says, "The things that

I had to hold onto [were] the prayers poured into my life ... for me to pick up my cross and follow truth. This is where my ministry begins."

Robertson is now an experienced and successful vendor of *The Bridge*. When he's not spending time with his family, he remains an active volunteer in his community. He also now owns an apartment. All in all, Robertson serves as a great example to others that, although, they may be struggling, desire to make a change.

"What drew me to him was that he is rich in spirit."

-Lisa Robertson



BILL PIACESI/Focus for the Good

Letter from the Editor

BY CHLOE BRYAN

Editor-in-Chief

This is my last issue as editor in chief of *The Bridge*. I began last June with only one article under my belt and almost zero newspaper experience. To say I was apprehensive would be an understatement. In fact, I was terrified. What if I wasn't good at this job? In fact, what if I stunk at it? What if I let this organization down, this important group of people doing good work in the city I love?

But that is one of the difficult lessons of nonprofit work, isn't it? When a vendor comes to Thursday distribution, when he chooses to invest time into selling the paper, there's a chance it won't work out, that it won't be as lucrative as he'd thought. When a contributing writer submits a poem about her struggles

with homelessness, there's a chance it won't inspire action, that it won't change anyone's perspective. In fact, when it comes to endeavors like *The Bridge*, it's easier to dismiss radical ideas entirely, to assume that the odds aren't in your favor. When Evan, James, and Caroline started this paper from a college dorm over a year ago, they weren't 100 percent sure it would be a success. But they cared enough to try anyway.

It's risky to want to change things. It's not safe to look the status quo in the eye and tell it you're not satisfied with what it's dishing out. But when you do, that's when the magic happens.

Thanks for everything, *The Bridge*. Keep risking it.

Corrections: April 2014

Several of the poems from contributing writers were misattributed in the April issue of *The Bridge*. The correct authors for each submitted piece are as follows:

Untitled, Tina Robinson
Bridges, Askari Shabazz
Cool Water, Clyde Thomas
Detroit City, Askari Shabazz
My Life, Askari Shabazz
 "Let's Keep in Basic," Minister T.A. Robertson
What Is Jail?, Pierre Kelly
It's a blessed day today, Robbin Kindell
Untitled, Charlie Finnie
Snow Day, Pierre Kelly
My Life of Writing, Cynthia Crawford
Agendra, Theodora P. Brownard
My Blessing, Mila Shaw

The Bridge regrets these errors.