

# ROMANIAN CHRISTIAN ENTERPRISES

Placement • Prevention • Provision

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## What I Learned in Romania

Ceau! My name is Karen and this summer I spent two months in Arad, Romania interning for Romanian Christian Enterprises along with one other American intern and about twenty Romanian interns.

I interacted with the kids from the Darius Houses on a daily basis and volunteered in the Sunshine School. I interviewed members of the staff, families that have adopted children, local pastors and public officials – all in an attempt to chronicle the impact of RCE on the people of Arad.

Mary Ann asked me to tell you some of what I learned. So here we go!

## It Takes a Family

A family has the unique ability to transform a life. Mariana Neagui believes this not because she's seen it happen, but because it has happened to her.

She was three when RCE intervened into her abusive situation and placed her in an adoptive family. Since her arrival in her "real family" (as she calls it), Mariana has experienced the love and affection every child needs to function and develop properly.

"My new parents -- they spoil me. And when they saw me for the first time, they just fell in love from the first second."

Mariana says the love she has experienced in her new family has resulted in her heart overflowing with love for children in need.

"I always want to work for children. I want to adopt a lot of children -- this is my plan. God put in my heart a big, big love."

And so she has returned to RCE to give back some of the love that was shown her. Now 18, Mariana has participated for the past two summers as an intern in the Darius Houses, caring for the children's developmental needs and helping with daily routines.

That's good enough in itself, right? RCE helps a child, and the child returns as an adult to help further the work of the ministry. But Mariana's work at RCE has also led to some of the most exciting news of the summer.

Two weeks before I left Romania, three-year-old Florinel left the Darius Houses to go home permanently with a family -- and all because of Mariana's influence. Florinel has cerebral palsy and will require several expensive surgeries and intensive therapy to walk on his own. Still, his new family has welcomed him and is prepared to sacrifice to meet his special needs.

Mariana said encouraging the Roxins to take Florinel home was simple.

"Take this baby home and just see how he really is," she said. "[I told them] if you take a child home from an institution, you will see the difference in him."

So the Roxins brought Florinel to their home for a weekend and "became in love with him." One weekend turned into



several weekends, and eventually into permanent placement for Florinel. The Roxins came to visit several times a week while the paperwork was in process, and it was obvious how much Florinel looked forward to the visits. For some children, being brought from an institution into a home for the first time can be radically life-changing. Kids that are normally unresponsive suddenly perk up and want to be involved in their surroundings. In Florinel's case, he was given an outlet for his already bubbling-over love for life.

Cipri, the Roxins biological son, commented enthusiastically after Florinel had been living at home for nearly three weeks.

"He is a blessing. He is in love with my father -- and we are all in love with him."

One week after the placement was finalized and Florinel was home with his family, I went with the visiting American team and RCE's psychologist to see him. As his father proudly walked him back and forth in their small apartment, Florinel was laughing so hard he was tearing up. As everyone in the room caught his laughter, we witnessed firsthand that a family is the proper place for a child.

## More Good News

Florinel isn't the only child from the Darius Houses who went home this summer. Claudia, a six-year-old with Down syndrome, was also welcomed into her new family the week after I left. Her older sister, Kristina, was an intern this summer for RCE. God is working in the hearts of Romanian Christians. Pray that the adoption process will go smoothly for Ema, Cosmina and Emilian, each of whom have a family intent on adopting them.



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*Claudia is seen here with another summer intern, Nicoleta, who was placed in a family by RCE when she was Claudia's age.*

## Celebrating Celebrations

Angi and Cristi Bene, siblings placed by RCE into separate families more than a decade ago, were both married in August. Both of them now work for RCE – Cristi in the Learning Center and Angi part-time as a physical therapist. At her wedding, Angi thanked God for using RCE to rescue her. She expressed a desire to always honor God and reflect the goodness that has been shown to her.



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**Save the Date:** November 5th is RCE's annual fundraising event at the Romanian embassy in Washington, DC. Please be thinking of friends to invite. Details to follow.

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Romanian Christian Enterprises - USA  
21058 Unison Road  
Middleburg, VA 20117  
540.554.4255  
e-mail: [mbell@rcenterprises.org](mailto:mbell@rcenterprises.org)

Romanian Christian Enterprises - Romania  
Str. Diogene nr. 12  
Arad, 3 Cod 310257 ROMANIA  
40.572-53633