

Outreach grads honored

Eight celebrated for completing center's program

Amanda McElfresh
amcelfresh@theadvertiser.com

The Acadiana Outreach Center celebrated new chapters in the lives of eight people Friday night during its Job Opportunity and Training Center commencement ceremony.

The program helps those who have struggled with homelessness, substance abuse and other problems by providing job training and

placement, transportation, food, lodging, counseling and other services.

Graduating from the program were Edith Edgerton, Shirley King, Flynn Parker, Shirley Francis, Justin Lavigne and Arthur Vincent.

"Each of these candidates have undergone some huge changes in their lives," said Outreach Center Chief Operating Officer Vicki Boudreaux. "They're doing different things and better things, not just doing things

better."

Jim McGehee, Outreach Center board chairman, also congratulated the family and friends of the graduates for continuing to stand by their loved ones through their troubles.

"This is a joyous occasion, and we are all very proud of them," McGehee said.

Special milestone awards were also presented to Stephanie Wright and Josephine Roque, who went through the Outreach

Center's Lighthouse program and have been able to create new lives for themselves and their family members.

City-Parish Councilman Brandon Shelvin told the graduates to have faith in God on their new paths in life, a faith he said would help them endure life's little problems. Shelvin also encouraged them to embrace the new tools they've been given through the Outreach Center.

"Remember, if you always do what you always did, you always get what you always got," Shelvin said.