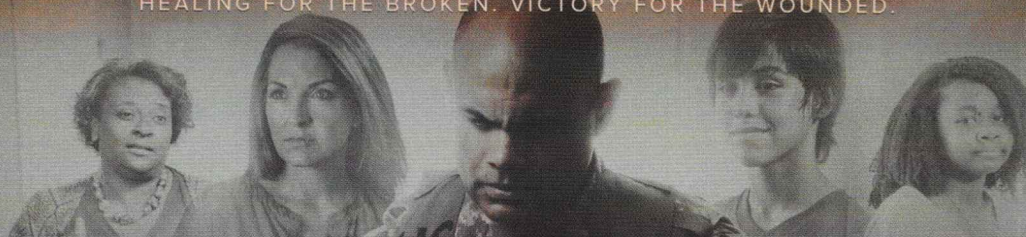


# STRONGER

HEALING FOR THE BROKEN. VICTORY FOR THE WOUNDED.



WWW.STRONGERMOMIE.COM



Angela filming Stronger



Angela on the set for Stronger



Carla McDougal, Founder of RLM

## ANGELA SWEET

### *Making A Difference*

Written by Woodforest  
Resident Julia Byrd

## Becoming STRONGER

### Building Communities to Help Those in Need

It takes a village to raise a child, the proverb says. But what happens once these children grow? Who supports them as adults in their time of need? Carla McDougal, founder of Reflective Life Ministries (RLM) in Montgomery County, knows that it's vital to be able to count on that same village to support and lift up those children as adults, especially those who have been emotionally wounded. It has been her life's passion to create a village that supports other individuals, groups, and ministries, and she's well on her way to her greatest achievement yet: creating a larger grassroots alliance that will revolutionize the way Christ-centered organizations work together. She's doing this with the strength and support of our local community, with some Woodforest residents playing a literal starring role.

### Overcoming Personal Fears to Meet a Greater Need

Before you hear of the revolution, you must first understand the history. It starts in 2005, when Carla first felt a calling to speak to women. To many, this calling may have seemed simple enough. But to Carla, it came at a great price: She must overcome her fear of speaking in public. This was a deep-rooted fear that stemmed from suffering from dyslexia as a child, during a time when learning disorders weren't commonly recognized or treated. Reading and writing were difficult; public speaking was unimaginable. After much reflection, she put her trust in her calling, understanding that she, of all people, wouldn't be called to such a task if she weren't uniquely capable. With the support of family and friends and a reliance on her previous experience with bible studies and women's ministries, she moved forward. Quickly gaining confidence and experience by speaking at retreats, organizing and going on missions, and starting a blog documenting her experiences, Carla had no idea that each step was taking her on a unique journey that would touch so many others.

## Dear Mother Nature,

## Bring It!



**TRANE**

*It's Hard To Stop A Trane.*

Since 1978

**Country Air**  
Quality, Comfort, Trust Air Conditioning & Heating

**Call Us Today 291.356.8564**



## Creating an Inspired 'Ministry to Ministries'

On this journey, Carla saw the clear need to help other organizations that were lacking in resources of their own. She formed RLM in 2008 to serve as a "ministry to ministries" and began creating materials like Bible studies, original faith-based movies, and devotionals to inspire and encourage other groups. As she saw the popularity of RLM's "entertainment-based" materials, she realized that this medium uniquely captured an audience's attention, allowing organizations to more effectively convey their messages. By 2010, Carla was a published author, and RLM began converting their skits and dramas into original, full-length movies. *Behind the Veil*, produced that same year and written by Robin Murray, served as a companion piece for Carla's *Reflecting Him* bible study. The film tells the story of the enduring legacy of a dedicated servant of God, Mr. James, who lived his life as a devoted friend, ever-present encourager, and sage advisor. *First Love* (released in 2013 and a winner of Dove Foundation Awards' coveted five-star seal of approval) told the biblical story of Peter with a modern-day slant, focusing on Joe, who struggled with his heart to find his higher calling.

## Together, We Are STRONGER

Understanding that we are strengthened when we join forces and work together, the ministry began planning its third movie, *STRONGER: Healing for the Broken. Victory for the Wounded* (targeted release: February 2017) in 2014. This production is aimed at bringing awareness to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a diagnosis affecting military veterans, first responders, abuse survivors, and others. With so many suffering from these invisible wounds, Carla and the ministry knew they needed to partner with other organizations to give the subject the attention and respect it deserved and ensure help was available to those in need.

One of the ministry's first partnerships in this endeavor was with Camp Hope, a PTSD Foundation of America Outreach organization with a three-fold mission: to bring awareness to and combat PTSD and to give back to those who have given so much of themselves. They also partnered with Master Chaplain Skip Strauss and the Emergency Chaplain Group, an organization providing both on- and behind-the-scene crisis chaplaincy for first responders. Recognizing that our heroes often bear witness to great tragedies and crimes that most of us are sheltered from, Carla knew that these links would provide guidance and compassion to those who needed it most.

As RLM did its research and spoke with veterans, first-responders, and other PTSD organizations and survivors, it began to understand that PTSD has increasingly become not just a diagnosis, but also a potential death sentence. The Emergency Chaplain Group conveyed shocking news about the increase in first-responder suicides—numbers that reaffirmed RLM's commitment to the film and to the supporting organizations.

## Harnessing Your Power to Make a Difference

As the project continues to move forward, Carla is struck by how far her calling has taken her. The lesson is simple: Never underestimate the power of the strengths and weaknesses that God has given you. You have the ability to harness both for greatness

within yourself and for the greater good. As a young girl with a learning disability, Carla had no idea she could transform this "weakness" into a strength that would create an organization that would touch so many. You have the power. You have the choice. But you are not alone. Together, we are STRONGER.

*Next month, we continue our three-part series about the purpose for, development of, and execution of "STRONGER." We delve into the Woodforest—and Montgomery County—ties to the movie, discover what makes the actors' contributions so unique, and speak with our resident actors themselves.*

### Resources

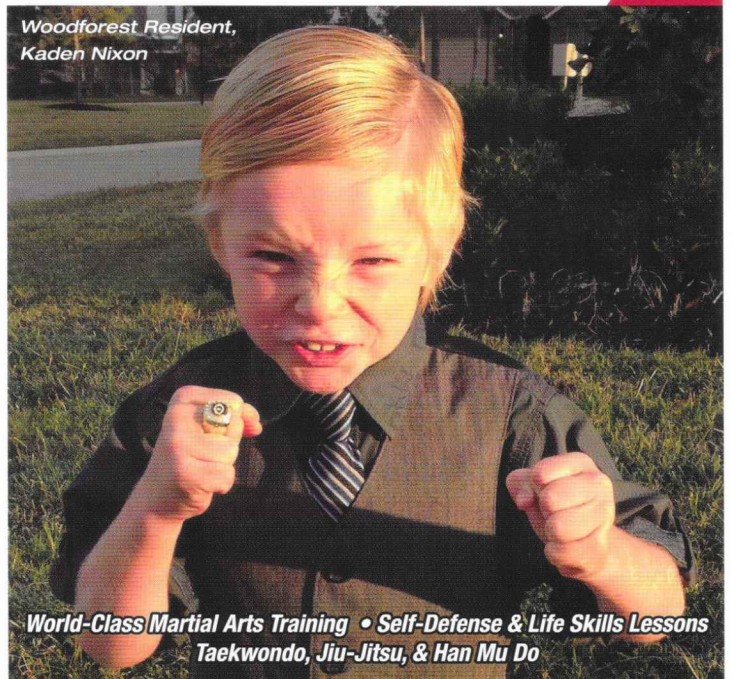
For more information on PTSD, we encourage you to access the below resources. New resources will be included in future articles.

- Reflective Life Ministries—[ReflectiveLifeMinistries.org](http://ReflectiveLifeMinistries.org)
- *STRONGER: Healing for the Broken. Victory for the Wounded*—[strongermovie.com](http://strongermovie.com) and [facebook.com/strongerthemovie](https://facebook.com/strongerthemovie)
- Camp Hope—[ptsdusa.org](http://ptsdusa.org)
- The Emergency Chaplain Group - [emergencychaplain.org/resources/](http://emergencychaplain.org/resources/)
- *When War Comes Home: Christ-Centered Healing for Wives of Combat Veterans* (Bridges to Healing Series), by Rev. Christopher Adsit, Rev. Rahnella Adsit, and Marshale Carter Waddell.
- *The Combat Trauma Healing Manual: Christ-Centered Solutions for Combat Trauma*, by Rev. Christopher Adsit



**Challenge Today.  
Exceed Tomorrow.**

Woodforest Resident,  
Kaden Nixon



**World-Class Martial Arts Training • Self-Defense & Life Skills Lessons**  
**Taekwondo, Jiu-Jitsu, & Han Mu Do**

Located at 1488 at 242 next to Randalls  
9420 College Park Drive, Suite 185  
**TRMAWOODLANDS.COM**  
**936.273.2268**