

GAYLE JOSEPH

Gayle is a resident of Sterling Heights who went above and beyond her responsibility as a parent and as a neighbor when she asked Nick McDonald, a friend of her daughter Meghan, if he would like to come live with her family.

Nick's birth mother died when he was just 14. One year later, his father moved to Louisiana, leaving Nick and his three siblings behind in Sterling Heights. They were soon evicted from their home and went their separate ways to live with friends. Nick was living across town with his grandmother and commuting a long distance to Utica High School when Gayle approached him with the opportunity that would certainly change the course of his life.

"When Gayle came into the picture, she took me in like her own and treated me like a son," said McDonald. "I'm really fortunate to have those people around me after everything that happened." Gayle said that adding a third child to the house did cause a hectic schedule at times, but remembers one prom night and taking photos of Nick and his friends. "It became evident that Nick was my son that I never had," said Gayle. "I loved every minute of it.

I kind of feel like, who in my situation wouldn't do that?"

Nick recently graduated from Grand Valley State with a degree in criminal justice and starred on the Lakers football team. He is now enjoying his rookie season with the Green Bay Packers as a 6'4", 316-pound offensive guard.