Kimberlee Westlake first visited the Source of Light Center in July 2017 as part of a youth team from Coastal Community Church in Virginia Beach, VA. She fell in love with the children during her time there and was thrilled for the opportunity to visit again in December 2017, during which she had the following experience.

As a mom, I couldn’t help but notice some of the daily chores at the center when I visited. The kids all seemed happy, well fed and clean. I know that accomplishing these things can present challenges at times in my own family of five, so it made me curious as to how it was possible in a home of FORTY children without the conveniences that I am used to!

As we played in the courtyard with the kids one afternoon, I looked over and saw Madam Mimose sitting on a cinderblock, bent over a large metal bowl, scrubbing each individual piece of clothing that the kids had worn. I was so intrigued. I went over to talk to her and she was sweet to share her process with me. She showed me that she soaks the clothing in small batches and begins to scrub each individual piece with her ball of soap. She rubs the fabric vigorously against itself to loosen any dirt and grime. This process is repeated several times until the piece of clothing is clean and ready to be rinsed. She then puts the piece of clothing into another...
basin to be rinsed with fresh water and begins all over again with the next piece of clothing. When the clothes are all scrubbed and rinsed free of soap, they are wrung out and put into a bucket to be taken to the roof and hung to dry.

You can imagine that this is a full-time job. In fact, there are two ladies that work throughout the week to keep everyone’s clothing clean. Madam Mimose takes care of the clothes for the 14 girls and Madam Rita works on the clothes for the 26 boys! On this particular day, Madam Mimose was working alone but some of the kids had stepped in to assist. Marley helped to wring out the clothes, placed them in a bucket. She walked us upstairs to the rooftop to show us how she secures each piece of clothing to the railing or lays it on a surface to dry.

I am thankful for the work that these ladies do. It is arduous work that keeps them very busy!