

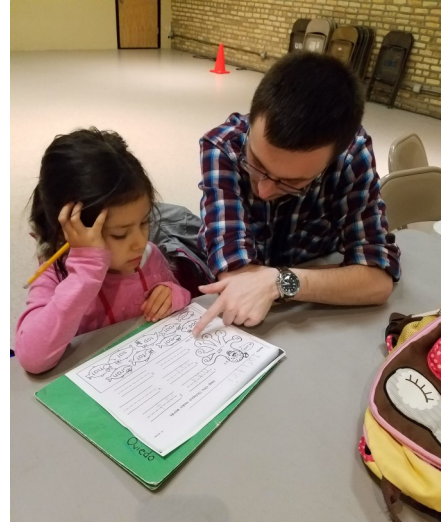
Thankful For A Greenhouse Partnership

By Scott Manke, Director

It does not take long to realize that the world is far from healthy. The concern that seems to weigh heavy upon my heart, especially as I read the headlines, is that without some sort of reformation of leadership in this world we are going to pass on a legacy of apathy and a broken spirit to our children. The older I get the more I realize just how important it is that we create the space for young emerging leaders to be equipped to carry the mantle of Christ into their future leadership roles.



Dylan (left) has been mentoring Gael this year in addition to directing our after school program. Gael began his journey with us 8 years ago. Long term influence is critical for the success of youth. Casey (right) is gaining a variety of experiences at the Center. Here he is helping one of our students with their homework.



I had not realized it but something that we have been doing, especially over the past 3 years is creating that type of space. The more I/we creatively give away ministry opportunities to the younger staff of our team the more they get to experiment in a healthy environment of observation and reflection and the more we get to experience the richness of a team working and learning together.

In addition to our staff being mentored into strong leadership, we have a continual flow of college students in internships, serving as volunteers, and youth that come through every summer that are given opportunities to learn experientially as our staff graciously guide and shape that experience.

In 2018 we are taking that leadership development to another level as we formalize becoming a Greenhouse environment. This environment takes the shape of a "Residency" in which the resident makes a 2 year commitment to a rigorous process of real ministry exposure in our diverse cross cultural environment and balance that with a systematic approach to working through 7 spheres of holistic development (Comprehensive Health, Spiritual Intimacy, Self Awareness, Character, Disciplines, Knowledge, Competencies).

Two of our staff, Dylan and Casey, will be entering this process and we expect that at the end of the two year window they will be more than qualified to take on greater leadership at the Center or beyond. They will bring to the world around them the reformed leadership our world needs.

The next steps in this developing program will be to launch a campaign to raise money for a 2 or 3 flat in the community that will house residents, and offset current fiscal costs associated with renting apartments. Our community has a strong Real Estate market and therefore any investment in property would be a secure venture that will create long term equity for the organization. If you want more information visit the web-site 80plusmillion.org and you can learn more about becoming a resident and the values we agree with in our partnership. Of course you can always just give me a call and we can talk about it as well.

Pray that we would have the influence we hope on future leaders.

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Family Empowerment Centers Newsletter

November 26, 2017



Banquet Summary: What A Year!!

By Scott Manke, Director

What a great time we had this fall connecting with some of you and making new friends at our annual fall banquets. We had a \$20,000 match grant opportunity and with your help and generosity we were able to meet that goal. Thank you!

There is a phrase that is credited to author and pastor, Henry Blackaby, that goes something like this, "Watch to see where God is working and join Him there." Spend a few hours or days at the Center and you will quickly realize that there is a lot going on that God is directing.



Here is just a short list of what we have seen God do in the past year.

- We delivered more than 4000 lbs of chicken to families in need
- We make sandwiches and hot stew almost daily for the homeless and semi-homeless of the community
- We provided winter coats, clothes, backpacks, and blankets to those who are under-resourced within our community
- We hosted 350 youth and adults during the summer for short term mission trips
- We ran 10 straight weeks of camps this summer (soccer & day camp) and impacted over 100 unique families in the process. We also were able to provide children who participated in all 10 weeks with nearly 50 hours of discipleship.
- We allowed close to 50 students a week to receive "Practical Christian Ministry" experience through our Center.
- We operated ESL Classes, Men's Bible studies, and Women's Bible studies throughout the week as well as a worship service on Sunday mornings.

In everything that we do we are always sensitive to make sure that for as much social care we provide we are also steadfastly concerned with revealing Christ to those we serve.

Now, if you were at our banquet you heard me say "It is not about 1 or 2 superhero's that God is most glorified, it is through the collective coming together of His people, the Church and working together like a well oiled machine to accomplish his will that most adequately brings 'Glory' to God." So I want to invite you to be part of the team. In order for us to continue raising up leaders while we compassionately care for and empower families and their children, we need to increase our revenue through individual donors and receive those revenues on a more regular basis.

Let me take this opportunity a step further and challenge you to consider the rest of the information in this newsletter and when you're finished, to consider how you might join God where he is at work in and through the Family Empowerment Centers and support us in prayer, volunteerism, and/or financially. We need at least 28 new regular monthly donors and an additional 55 new donors who make one-time and non-regular donations to the Center. I have included some financial charts that were presented at our banquet to help you understand our financial needs and if you have any other questions feel free to reach out to me via e-mail or by phone.

"Your support financially, in prayer, and in service is valuable to us. We work hard to maximize our ability to make sure as much of that resource and our time is vested in real service, with real people, with real needs."

Do you want to keep up with the day to day activities of the Family Empowerment Centers?

The best way to do that is through our many & various Social Media platforms. On Facebook you can like our pages, Family Empowerment Centers, Envision Chicago, and Donate Your Boat. We can also be found on Twitter and YouTube.

The way social media works in a positive way to garner support for the Family Empowerment Centers is for you to:

- 1) Like our page
- 2) Share our posts on your own timeline. The more that happens the more viral we become. The more viral we become the greater the potential to raise funds and have people praying for us on a regular basis.



Safe Haven After School Program Update

It is a great responsibility to care for and raise up children. Every school year we have the opportunity to invest in the lives of 35 plus children, many of whom are in situations at home that are challenging and that add stress to their lives. At the Center we become a place of hope, rest, and opportunity as we offer them a place of belonging and stability.

This fall, our life skills training, which happens daily, has been teaching about bullying and helping our students know how to identify it and get the help they need if they are experiencing bullying or know someone who is. We also took time the week before Thanksgiving to go over what it means to express gratitude for the things that we encounter in life, both the good and the bad.

Jesus tells us that children should have the opportunity to draw close to Christ because “the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” That is probably the most important aspect of our program. Our kids are exposed to men and women who exhibit the image and love of Christ on a regular basis and as we speak to our children, or pray over our meals, or simply laugh and play with them, they are being invited to sit with Christ.

Pray for our team as we are the only Christian influence for many of the children.

Feeding Our Neighbors And Those We Serve

One of our values at the Center is that when it comes to our most basic human needs that if anyone should come and ask, and we have the ability to meet that need than we should, without much question, provide for that need (Luke 3:11). We greatly enjoy our partnerships where we are enabled to provide for the most basic needs of our neighbors and those we serve. Pray with us that these partnerships would remain strong and new ones would open up.

In November we were able to acquire 1600lbs of frozen chicken through the Hunger Resource Network and 100 baskets of food (including a ham) through the North Suburban Church. As we distributed the food this year, in preparation for Thanksgiving, we were able to pray for the these families and, as is usually the case, there was great joy and a sense of relief that a burden or concern was lifted for many of these families. Below are some of the children of the Center helping to build the baskets and a photo of the assembly line at our partnering church where we help build the baskets.



ESL Classes Update

Tuesday & Thursday nights at the Center become a learning ground for those new to America to learn the English language and also for TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) students from Moody Bible Institute to meet graduation requirements teaching our classes.

John, the writer of the Book of Revelations, saw heaven in a vision; “*After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.*” What a joy it is for us at the Center as we get a glimpse of heaven as well through the many activities of the Center where many people from various nations, and tribes and languages gather to grow.

Pray for our ESL program as we have some shifts in our leadership over the next few months and that our care EL learners would remain strong.



Volunteers Who Make A Difference

Volunteers are such a blessing to us and our ability to make a Kingdom difference in and through the Center. These three ladies helped serve the day we handed out baskets of food, but that is not the only way they are involved.

Monse (Middle), a first generation Mexican woman, who served as a camp counselor this summer, provides hospitality on Sunday mornings, and is always smiling. Maria (left), is a first generation Guatemalan woman who has served by running sewing & craft classes with the women and children during summer camp, helped to serve at our banquets, and also provides hospitality on Sunday mornings. Uzma (Right) is a Muslim woman who began her journey with us as an ESL student a few years ago and since that time has been drawn more and more to serve as a volunteer at the Center. She is an after school program tutor and comes to special events and lends a hand. She feels a deep sense of being loved and accepted at the center and by her being present she too is learning about Jesus. Pray with us that God would continue to raise up laborers for the harvest (Luke 10:2) and volunteers for all our activities.



Training Up Men And Women To Pray Together

Prayer is such a vital part of what we do at the center and it is pretty apparent if you stick around the Center for a half day. We pause at around 2:00 every day to invite God into our busy schedule and ask that he would graciously lead us and the activities around us. We pray for the children of our community and their families and if you are part of our programs or participate in one of the women’s and men’s groups it is clear that we believe that divine expectation and engagement leads to divine encounters.



Pray with us that we would experience the movement of God in our lives and those we serve as we do our best to walk humbly with our God. God moves as His people pray and look to follow Him!