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Please visit our website to see an Honor Roll of our individual donors

Sponsors noted as of June 30, 2010



Our Neighborhood
Homework House
Serving the children of Azusa since 1997

NEWS

July 2010

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Over \$20,000 was raised the night of the Live and Silent Auction! You all invested in the Faces of the Future !

We were delighted to have you join us along with more than 150 of our closest friends to invest in the next generation. Who will ever forget Barbara standing in the back of the room frantically motioning to the MC to keep the bidding process moving? Hilarious!

You appeared to enjoy meeting our staff and our students, partaking of the hors d'oeuvres and desserts, and seeing who would win a Silent Auction bid. A special note of appreciation to those who generously donated auction items we were all overwhelmed!

We are grateful to those foundations, businesses and community groups who invested financially to meet our \$200,000+ budget needs for the 2009-2010 years.



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End of Year Celebration 2010

Too much fun! I wish we could bottle this feeling. I was so taken at being recognized that it brought tears to my eyes.

These were the statements that were heard after our first End of the Year Celebration so it won't be the last! The staff thought this would be a great way to say thank you and celebrate our students and their parents. We celebrated the parents who gave extensively of their time to supporting other parents at Homework House and our students who excelled in academic and social ways. Our four graduates: **Ashley Martinez, Shaila Salmeron, Jessica Rodriguez, and Yuri Mancilla** are all college bound with three identifying a community college and the fourth calling Cal State Northridge her college home. We are proud of them and wish them well!

An invitation was extended to some of our faithful individual supporters. They were surprised to find that they too were celebrated and honored for their individual support.

The wonderful Spaghetti Dinner was provided at cost by a local restaurant, Aldolino's, and the dessert, drinks, and tableware were provided by Waste Management. The new Teen Center, located on the Foothill Community Church campus, provided a spacious venue for the more than 80 guests and staff together to honor and celebrate our students, parents, and supporters.



A Message from the Board President

Dear supporters,

Thank you for your continued investment in our 150 students and their families. These last two years have been an amazing journey for the board and we have seen how Homework House is greater than any of us. During the two years, the board created an executive management team to manage and oversee Homework House.



The close up provided board members the opportunity to be more hands on and also helped us realize this was not the ideal model for continued growth. So at the February board meeting, we voted unanimously to appoint Dr. Barbara Dickerson as Executive Director. She has graciously offered her services

for \$1 for the 2010-2011 years. While we realize that this is a gift we also recognize that we have the responsibility to build a model of growth that will allow us to provide a market salary; we recently approved a four year model to accomplish this goal.

Your investment continues to make a difference. We have highlighted the foundations, businesses and community groups who gave financially, but we would be remiss not to also thank individuals: those who gave financially, as well as the over 200 volunteers who provide tutoring, mentoring and other critical services (such as this newsletter). The ACCU team deserves special thanks for their exceptional support with our operational expenses.

So again we thank you and pray God's blessings on you as together we continue to strengthen and build neighborhoods; one student and family at a time.

Sincerely,

Board Members

Jan Wickersham, President
Tom Clark
Ginny Dadaian
Stephanie Deal
Bryan London



Those Who Give and Give

Black Sheep and Aztec Riders Raise over \$1,200 in a Fundraiser for Homework House Kids!

A spouse of one of the teachers in Azusa happened to hear about Homework House and felt compelled to get involved. Eddie Abalo is an unassuming gentleman who wanted to first hear more about Homework House and then used his sphere of influence to open the door so that the biker groups: Black Sheep and Aztecs Riders could hear about the work of Homework House. After inviting a team member to address the group, he then single handedly organized a Fundraiser for Homework House on May 8! The outcome was a generous donation to Homework House as well as introducing others to the work of building and strengthening neighborhoods by focusing on students and families.



Helping Hands Extends a Hand

Crystal, the Ninth Street Program Director, had just completed a conversation with one of the Homework House families. The father had just become disabled due to a car accident and can no longer work. While the family had food assistance, they had contacted Homework House about resources to purchase things like toilet paper and soap. Crystal connected with Helping Hands of Azusa, a local community group, and they provided for the Salazar Family in a major way! The organization presented to Mr. Salazar a Target gift card for \$250! Mr. Salazar had tears in his eyes as he accepted with appreciation and humility the gift that would help provide for the basic needs of his family.



Homework House Honors A Legacy.....Karen Pihlak

Karen Pihlak's family will bring donations to us from her Celebration Service, this is what was stated or read in an email. However nothing could prepare the team for the truck load full of supplies that were brought to the Homework House Office. (See picture, at left) This was an amazing way to honor a life of service and we were grateful to be the beneficiary. Karen, an Azusa Police Captain, served for 25 years on the Azusa Police Department. She died in 2010 after battling cancer. Those who loved and appreciated her continue to honor her legacy of service to the community.

Message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

The newly elected board president, Jan Wickersham has expressed our appreciation for your support and investment in our students and their families. I would like to share with you changes that you can look forward to as we move into the 2010-2011 years as well as to begin introducing you to the amazing staff!



The team is using the month of June to work on clarifying goals for each of the program sectors. We have great plans for sharing with you as the year unfolds our student successes and achievements. We also look forward to allowing you to hear from those who give of their time. Our desire is that their words will affirm the work that we are attempting to do. 2010-2011 will also be a year for more intentional focus on equipping some of our parents to assume leadership roles so that they can be viewed as a resource to their neighbors and neighborhood. We are excited about this new direction for building community.

Finally, the Teen Project will have an intentional focus on Life After High School. We are pleased to report that of nine graduates over Homework House's lifetime, two were accepted and planned to attend a four year university, one has entered the world of work and the remaining six indicated that they would be attending a community college.

July is our month for delivering programs. So our K-5 students are involved in Summer Splash. We are always looking for those who are willing to be drivers as we partner with other organizations and take the students out of their neighborhoods. The Teens are off to camps, becoming interns and enjoying the city pool. We are pleased that you continue to invest in our students which allow us to offer to most of our students a structured summer experience.

Please contact us if you would like to be involved directly this summer.

The team that I referenced earlier, many of you were introduced to at the Live and Silent Auction but I want to over a period of time feature each of them. In this issue, I'd like to feature our Director with the most tenure at Homework House: Shana Urive. Please enjoy reading about Shana's introduction to and journey at Homework House in her own words.



Meet Shana!

I began with just wanting to get more involved with a local ministry. After two years tutoring, my heart literally felt imbedded in the neighborhood, the City of Azusa, and the kids. My educational background was a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Azusa Pacific University, but I was continually being called to working with these kids who deserved a fair shot at higher education. I came on as Program Director for the Parent Resource Center and Kinder-5th grade program in 2007.



I knew there would be challenges and a learning curve but I didn't expect the overwhelming support from the families. Members from the Parent Advisory Group helped me make connections with the community, aided me in my language acquisition, and accompanied me on home visits. Today, the parent program is one of the most vital elements and I'm excited everyday as to what we can accomplish with so many hands.

Every day is a struggle to provide answers to so many issues: health care deficiencies, immigration policies, fair housing issues, the education system for English Language Learners, gang violence, and the lack of role models in low-income neighborhoods. Our volunteers enter with such a heart for this community that I am rejuvenated every time I see them tackling these issues with bravery. I would not choose to be molded and grow in any other environment than by the staff, leaders, volunteers, and students that I am surrounded by daily here at Our Neighborhood Homework House.

Contact Us

Our Neighborhood
Homework House

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