

A Letter to Our Neighbors

VOLUME 25 | NOVEMBER 2019

A Word from our Director

Important Dates:

November 25-29:

LCISD Thanksgiving Break: No You Can Academy.

November 28-29:

FNR Offices Closed for Thanksgiving

December 13:

You Can Academy Christmas Party

December 19:

Pink Elementary Christmas Market, 7am-4pm

December 21:

FNR Christmas Market (1305 Clay St.)

December 21:

Nery's Promise Christmas Program (Collins Rd.)

December 23-January 3:

LCISD Christmas Break

During the past month, the Lord has moved in big ways in the lives of our neighbors. Each day, we hear stories of mothers and fathers passing their GED tests, earning gainful employment, and receiving a living wage to support their family. We are brought to tears as volunteers joyfully purchase and donate the food necessary for the 50 children in You Can Academy to have a final hot meal of the day as they complete their homework. We celebrate as companies sacrifice work hours to complete a home repair with our neighbor still recovering from Hurricane Harvey. We are in awe as we watch God re-write narratives for individuals from "I can't" to "I am, I will, and I can!" With each passing day, we see stories of empowerment, and we invite you into these stories! We pray that with every sentence in the following pages, you see the work of the Holy Spirit awakening potential and provoking a transformation in the North Richmond Community.

But we cannot do this work without you! Through your giving, you are breaking the cycle of generational poverty. Your gift propels us forward in 2020 to awaken potential and provoke transformation in even more lives! Our goal is to raise \$10,000 before the end of the year and set the stage for all God has ahead of us. We've already seen several gracious donors provide \$1500 donated. Can you help us meet the remaining \$8,500? Thank you for being a part of Friends of North Richmond's story and so many more happening throughout our organization. We pray you have a blessed holiday season and are so grateful to partner with you!



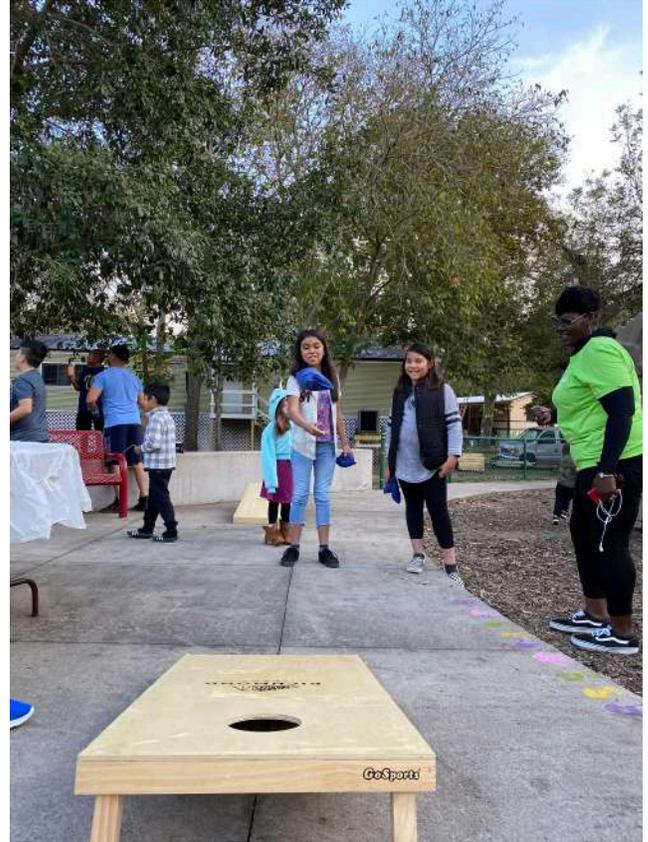
Elise Kaufman, Director

For more information on ways to volunteer or donate, email our Director Elise Kaufman: elise@attackpoverty.org



Riveredge Fall Festival

November is here, marking the time for the FNR annual Riveredge Fall Festival. The festival is a fun way to gather together with our Riveredge neighbors, enjoy some good food, play some games and reflect on their lives since Hurricane Harvey. This event takes place at Clay Park in Riveredge but welcomes all former and present residents. Collaborative partnerships with the City of Richmond, iBow, Mighty Moose Printing and lots of wonderful volunteers working together is what makes this event extra special.



Over 100 people shared a meal, music, games, and fun at the 2019 Riveredge Fall Festival.

Friends of North Richmond was blessed to serve over 100 residents a scrumptious fully loaded Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings this year. Over 150 gifts were given away to the kids for winning various games like corn hole, Big Jenga, Basketball shoot out, bobbing for apples and a coloring contest. There was even a huge piñata filled with goodies for the kids and adults at the end of the night.

All in all, the Riveredge Fall Festival was a great success, but it was also a beautiful reflection of what being Better Together should look like. God has created us all in his image and, many times, gentle reminders are often necessary. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

Spirit of Christmas Market



One of the ways we collaborate with our community is to join with other organizations that are doing amazing work. Nery's Promise, along with Friends of Vince, are coming together with us to provide a fun filled Christmas Market for the students of Pink Elementary. On December 19, the kids at Pink Elementary will have an opportunity to shop for Christmas gifts for their families, using tickets that they have earned at school. Some of the ways that the kids will earn tickets are helping others, working hard, treating others with respect, and being kind. We are accepting small \$5 gift donations for the market at our Resource Center. If you'd like to sign up for a volunteer shift, go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/spiritofchristmas>

To donate for the FNR Christmas Market or Pink Elementary Christmas Market, simply drop off items at our Resource Center: 1305 Clay St. during our office hours: M-F 9-5.

FNR Christmas Market

Our Christmas Market is a time for adults in the North Richmond and Riveredge communities to shop for Christmas gifts, using points earned through attending classes or volunteering. Shoppers are welcome to come and look around, enjoy some hot chocolate, avoid the hassle of busy stores, and use their points to purchase gifts for their families. We are looking for volunteers to help organize, set up, and run the Christmas Market. We are also accepting gift donations. To learn more, email: emilio@attackpoverty.org.



Meet Lucinda

Born and raised right here in North Richmond, Lucinda is no stranger to hardship. The youngest of 10 kids, Lucinda lost her mother to cancer at a very early age, and her father left when she was 5 years old. Lucinda married and had six wonderful children of her own. Going through divorce and becoming a single mom, Lucinda worked two jobs to keep food on the table and make ends meet. Her children worked while



going to school so they could meet their own career goals, and she is so proud of the adults that they have become.

"If we helped one family put food on the table and move forward from poverty, we are doing God's work."

-Lucinda Cortez

Lucinda later married Roy, whose parents lived in the North Richmond community. In 2009, Lucinda and Roy were caring for Roy's aging dad, a recent widower. Some Friends of North Richmond staff stopped by to see if he needed help doing repairs on his home, and about 50 volunteers came to repair his wheelchair ramp. The love and care from the volunteers and staff impacted this family greatly, and Roy and Lucinda joined FNR as volunteers.

After working 34 years with the same company, Lucinda was on the path to retirement. God had other plans for her when she received the opportunity to join the staff of Friends of North Richmond as the Adult Education Coordinator. In this role, she provides educational tools to adults in the community, facilitating volunteer led classes. The Adult Program equips adults to become literate and have the skills necessary to provide for their families and future.

Being a North Richmond community member, Lucinda loves being a part of changing lives in her own neighborhood. The greatest rewards Lucinda gains are hearing an ESL student greeting her in English; celebrating a student that completes her GED; and watching a student find his first job after completing the Jobs for Life course. Lucinda is thankful to be a part of the Friends of North Richmond | Attack Poverty team. They have become like family, eating together, praying together, checking on each other, and supporting each other.

Volunteer Classifieds

Stay in the Loop!

To receive **Reminder Texts** about upcoming volunteer opportunities, **TEXT @fnrvol to 81010**

To register to volunteer, go to <https://attackpoverty.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

Questions about volunteering? Email: sarahbeth@attackpoverty.org

- **Spirit of Christmas Market** | December 19 @ Pink Elementary. Volunteer for a shift:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/spiritofchristmas>
- **FNR Christmas Market** | December 21, 10:00am-1:00pm
Assist with shopping event for adults to purchase Christmas gifts.
- **Computer Class** | Wednesdays 5:30-7:00pm
Assist students with basic computer skills for a 6-week class.
- **ESL Teacher** | Monday evenings or Saturday Mornings.
Lead a class to help adults learn English as a Second Language. Spanish speaking not required.
- **Spanish Teacher** | Schedule according to volunteer availability.
Teach Spanish skills to those wanting to learn a second language.
- **Second Sunday Workdays** | 2nd Sunday of every month. Help with a home repair in the North Richmond area.
- **You Can Academy** | Monday-Friday, 2:45-4:45pm
Sign up to volunteer one day a week for after school tutoring (1st-5th grade). Speak Spanish? We could use your help with our Spanish speaking students!
- **GED Tutors** | Evening or Daytime
Assisting students one-on-one working toward their GED.
- **FNR Office Support** | Help with ongoing organizing, data entry, and art projects.
- **Nutrition Class** | Schedule according to volunteer availability
- **Prayer Team** | Tuesdays at 1pm
We welcome prayer warriors to come pray weekly at our Neighborhood Resource Center.

Thank You for Reading!

**From,
The Friends of North Richmond Team**

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