



# Shepherd Community Center

- Mission:** Shepherd is a faith-based, non-profit organization. Our simple but staggering goal: Break the cycle of poverty on the near east side of Indianapolis by cultivating healthier children, stronger families, and safer neighborhoods through supportive relationships that meet the physical, emotional, academic and spiritual needs of area residents.
- History:** In 1985, Indianapolis' Westside Church of the Nazarene reached out to provide Thanksgiving dinner to a century-old, inner-city church. When the suburban volunteers saw the need in the neighborhood where hunger is common, education lacking, and hope is in short supply, they were touched. A number of them agreed to come and worship at the church for a period of time.
- Officially organized as Central Nazarene Mission, they met in the basement of the original church. Eventually, the organization moved to an empty car dealership next door, and were renamed Shepherd Community Center in 1988. As programs and the number of people served grew, Shepherd outgrew the facility, and in 2006 moved into a facility that doubled our available space. The Reverend Jay Height has been the organization's director since 1998.
- Programs:** Shepherd's programs span the lifetime of those we serve—from pre-natal care to pre-school; elementary through high school; college preparedness and access; and adult and family programs. Together they create a Continuum of Care that addresses the needs of the members of our community at all ages and all stages of their lives.
- A core set of programs make up the Continuum of Care including emergency/basic services, preschool, after-school and summer programming, college access programming, family relationship programming, and job training and placement assistance.
- Support:** Shepherd Community Center draws support from a broad base of individuals; churches and other non-profits; corporate sponsors; and grants from local and national foundations. Our services could not be fully achieved without the dedicated efforts of hundreds of volunteers.

**Successes:**

*In 2009:*

In neighborhoods where 80 percent of children eat two meals a day only when they're in school—and most go hungry when school is not in session to provide those meals—Shepherd served nearly 100,000 meals to kids and families.

Where fewer than 30 percent of students graduate from high school and 50 percent of adults are illiterate, all the seniors in Shepherd's programs graduated. Nine went on to college.

Our Health Clinic treated 550 patients.

More than 3,200 backpacks filled with school supplies were distributed prior to the start of school.

At Christmas, thousands of donors and more than six hundred volunteers helped us:

- Distribute 1,377 food totes to children who would go hungry without school meals
- Serve 500 people at our Christmas Festival
- Provide gifts to more than 3,000 kids

**Contact:**

Shepherd Community Center's Media Relations team handles all media contact for the organization. We respect the deadline-oriented nature of the news industry and will work to provide access to information in a timely manner.

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