

COMMUNITY.

A publication of Shepherd Community Center



The Holidays at Shepherd

“Last December, a couple of players from the Colts came to Shepherd to give twenty or so kids a shopping spree; I think they were going to spend about \$150 on each child. The interesting part was that a lot of the kids spent most of the money on Christmas gifts for their family members. That says a lot about the values they’re learning at Shepherd.” – RYAN BROWN

Kids like that will be empowered to keep on giving in Shepherd’s newest holiday program. On December 8th, 9th, and 11th; kids will shop for their families, choosing from among hundreds of free gifts at Shepherd’s Christmas Gift Shop. Similar to the Shop that Shepherd has hosted for years where parents pick gifts for their kids, now there will be a separate shop just for kids. The gifts for this program will be provided through the generosity of donors like you, and we believe that the habit of generosity that these kids are learning will not only have short-term benefits, but will have positive implications that last a lifetime.

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That's just one of the many ways that Shepherd is helping more than three thousand neighbors during the holidays. Here are some more ways that together we can make the holidays brighter:

- Christmas Gift Shop: On December 22nd and 23rd, it's the parents turn to shop for their kids at no charge. Parents will pick gloves, socks, underwear and a hat for each child and have a choice of other gifts for their children. The gifts will even be wrapped for them by volunteers. We are counting on donors like you to provide those gifts, and we also need people like you to help man the shop.
- Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners: This is our chance to share our faith and our table with our neighbors. This year, we will be hosting three Thanksgiving dinners on November 22nd and three Christmas dinners on December 20th, hosting 1,500 people in all. Each event will be complete with a church service, entertainment, and family photos, and there will be special services just for our Spanish-speaking neighbors. Volunteers like you will help prepare and serve all of these meals.
- Holiday Baskets: Each basket contains enough groceries for an entire holiday dinner and enables our neighbors to not only eat well, but to host a big holiday meal. You can get involved by helping deliver about 250 baskets at Christmas and about 1,100 at Thanksgiving. Volunteers can also help assemble the baskets before delivery.
- Christmas Food Totes: Can you imagine kids on Christmas vacation wishing school would start again so that they won't be hungry? It's true: eight out of ten children in the neighborhoods we serve will not get two meals a day when school is out. Volunteers will play a crucial role alleviating hunger this Christmas by filling more than 800 Food Totes with easily prepared foods. ■

ALL OF THESE PROGRAMS ARE DEPENDANT ON DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS. WON'T YOU HELP US WITH ONE OF THESE? **CALL KEN WILLIAMSON AT 317.375.0203.**

Area Youth Ministry Merges with Shepherd

To break the cycle of poverty on the near east side, Shepherd has joined with Area Youth Ministry, a partner equally committed to young people. AYM has ministered to high-school and middle-school students since 1970 with the goal of changing the world one kid at a time through faith and hope in Jesus Christ. AYM engages in one-on-one relationships with as many as 900 kids a year.

Scores of those kids visit AYM's main location, The Drop-In, across from Arsenal Technical High School every weekday. It's a safe place where teens can go after school for Bible studies, life-skills development programs, abstinence-based sexuality and drug presentations, or just for someone to talk to. Their core outreach program, Young Champions, brings a character-development and life-skills curriculum into local IPS schools, reaching several hundred middle-school and high-school students annually. Shepherd will carry on the thrust and spirit of all these ministries.

AYM is the third of five ministries to join Shepherd this year. Jireh Sports merged with Shepherd in January. In March, when a local ministry suspended its youth and family programs, hundreds more women and young people joined our programs. AYM joined in July. The next will be Down But Not Out, a ministry that works with at-risk young people, including some who



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GIFT DRIVE NEEDS LISTS

(ALL ITEMS NEW & UNWRAPPED)

INFANT TO 12 YEARS

Books

Board Games

Soccer Balls, Basketballs,
Footballs

13+ YEARS (MIDDLE SCHOOL THROUGH COLLEGE)

Jewelry

Bath and Body Works

Memory Boards

Mp3's

Flat Iron

Table Lamps

Gift Cards

Sports Equipment & Team

Pocket Video Games

(Walmart, Meijer, Dots,

Memorabilia

Men's/Women's Wallets

Clarie's, Dick's Sporting

Cameras

Handbags

Goods, Finish Line,

Room/Dorm Décor

iPod speakers/
docking stations

Starbucks)

Twin Size Bedding

Sports Jerseys

Throw Pillows

(football & basketball)

ALL AGES/SIZES

Socks - boy/girl

Packages of underwear -
boy/girl

Winter hats, gloves, scarves

MISCELLANEOUS

Wrapping Paper

Scissors

We also need volunteers
for Christmas events.

Gift Bags

Scotch Tape

Call **Ken Williamson** at
317.375.0203 to help.

Bows/Ribbon

Lawn-size Trash Bags

Gift Tags

YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED.

Ecclesiastes, that short, pithy book in the middle of the Bible, isn't exactly what you would call feel-good reading, but it does have some pretty good advice. Like, life is short, so remember God. The downside is that life is short, and that it will end pretty quickly for all of us, and few of us will be remembered for very long.

If you're already planning for retirement, it's probably time to think about what you're going to leave behind—how you're going to be remembered. Here at Shepherd, we have some innovative ways for your generosity to continue after you're gone, even if you don't have a lot right now. A well-considered, well-crafted estate plan can proclaim your faithfulness to the next generation.

If you would like more information on how you can remember Shepherd Community in your will—and be well remembered yourself—please **contact our Director of Development, Heidi J. Baniszewski** at **317.375.0203** or **e-mail at heidib@shepherdcommunity.org**.

From our Director

This year, Shepherd Community is serving our largest number of students ever. We are so excited because this means we have a greater opportunity to help our families break the cycle of poverty.

We supported the IPS uniform requirement initiative this fall by outfitting more than 500 students. Shepherd's Jireh Sports also provided backpacks full of school supplies to over 3,000 students!

This summer, our middle school students took on a challenge to raise baby chickens from eggs. I've not seen such excitement as I have with the pending "cracking of the egg." When the first chick arrived, we had so many proud parents running around yelling their joy. Then, two more joined the first. I was so impressed as the students began to understand an important part of life and the beauty of creation. In a society that does not always value life, they experienced the joy of birth and have a new sense of excitement.

Now we're headed toward the season that we celebrate the joy of the most important birth. This Christmas we'll be serving three times the number of people we served last year. Please check out ways you can help us by donating items we need, or make a monetary gift at this important time of the year. Your help will go a long way in our making a difference in all these students' lives.

Enjoy the beauty of life,
Jay Height



De'Chelle's Story

When I went to Tech High School, there was a lot of gang activity there. My classmates would talk about how life was hard. They didn't have that firm foundation that I found at Shepherd. Just having a hope that there was a better future made the difference for me.

I had been going to Shepherd since I was about ten years old, but that difference started when I became a Christian. Colby Grindean led our Shepherd Youth Group on a summer service project trip for Urban Connexx, in Chicago. We stayed in a college dorm with a bunch of other youth groups from around the country. After working all day, we would have a big worship service every night. I decided to give my life to Christ during one of those worship services.

I was fourteen years old.

That was five years ago. Today, I'm going to the University of Indianapolis, majoring in Law Enforcement and Archeology. The classes are small and the professors are easy to talk to. And I'm able to afford it, because the staff at Shepherd helped me find a scholarship. I'm even playing on the Powder-Puff Football Team with the other girls here.

The help that Shepherd gave us over the years has been phenomenal. If you're reading this and you've given to Shepherd before, I just want to say thank you for your financial help. You're changing families spiritually and emotionally—I and all my friends have been helped at Shepherd because of you. ■

Merger

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are incarcerated. And the last to merge will be Seeds of Success, a program in which retirees mentor disadvantaged elementary students.

Shepherd is committed to maintaining the philosophies and relationships of these ministries, as well as the commitments they've made to their neighbors, their volunteers, and their staffs. Each has similar goals but different resources. The combined resources will not only make the merged ministries more effective, but Shepherd will be gaining specialized programming and expertise that will help more successfully deliver the Continuum of Care. The cycle of poverty will be more easily broken together than apart. ■



Shepherd is a faith-based, non-profit organization established in 1985 with a simple but staggering goal: to break the cycle of poverty on the near east side of Indianapolis. Located centrally within the community it serves, Shepherd offers programs for children, teens, adults, and families. Our primary tools? Education and love.

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