

# Specific Ways YOU Can Help

# Service

EMPOWERING VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE IN AREAS WHERE THEY HAVE A PASSION TO LEAD.

### GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

**Health Clinic:** Serve breakfast on Saturday mornings from 8:00am-noon

**Shepherd Buildings:** Deep cleaning needed at Shepherd's Main and off-site buildings

**Garden:** Bring friends and family to Shepherd's Gardening Days on September 13th or October 11th.

### INDIVIDUAL OPPORTUNITIES (some may require orientation)

**Academy and After-School:** Tutor students 1 hour per week anytime between 8-5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**After-School:** Lead a club activity for a small group of students once a week from 5-6 p.m.

**After-School:** Give guitar, bass, piano, or drum kit lessons to students from 4- 6p.m.

**Kitchen:** Prepare and serve breakfast on Monday mornings from 7-10 a.m.

IN ADDITION TO VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, THERE ARE MANY ITEMS NEEDED TO HELP OUR FAMILIES:

**IN-KIND NEEDS:** Toilet Paper / Shampoo and Conditioner / Antibiotic Ointment / Hand Sanitizer / Black Pens / Bags of Potting Soil / Weed Killer

Shepherd believes in empowering its volunteers to serve in areas where they have a passion to lead. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering in one of these areas or any other area at Shepherd, please **contact Phil Merki at 317-375-0203 or philm@shepherdcommunity.org.**



# COMMUNITY.

A publication of Shepherd Community Center



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 Eastside 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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Volunteer Erika Leinbach from Whitestone Church in Hesston, Kansas spent a week pouring into kids at Shepherd's Summer EXCEL.

## Transforming Lives through Education

*Education, or lack-there-of, is a key barrier* in the vicious cycle of poverty. Giving children in our neighborhoods a quality education - without the financial resources - presents a considerable challenge. Parents want to give their children a better education than they had but face the challenge of access and a critical amount of resources to give children the hand up they need.



But, Shepherd Community gives an affordable, accessible option for quality education to families living on the near Eastside of Indianapolis. In 2002, Shepherd developed the Academy, an elementary school program that has grown to include pre-school for 3 and 4-year-olds as well as Kindergarten through Fifth grade, which is being added for the 2014-2015 school year.

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YOU Can Help

Thank you to our partners for making Shepherd's newsletter possible.



## Transforming Lives through Education *(continued)*

Shepherd's Academy will serve over 150 students during the coming school year, nearly 95% of whom will qualify for free or reduced lunch according to the state's income eligibility standards.

"The Academy is about more than just educating a child," said Sonna Dumas, Shepherd's Academy Director. "It's about educating the entire family."



Shepherd's Academy is just one piece to the Continuum of Care that holistically serves the children and families in our neighborhoods. Our families receive access to Shepherd's complete set of services; ensuring students have access to everything they need to succeed, including healthy food, mentoring, health care, and quality community.

"Quality community allows families and students alike to grow into deeper relationships with each other and ultimately a more intimate relationship with Christ," said Shepherd's Co-Director of Programs Eric Weidman.

Shepherd's Academy teachers and staff have worked to develop personal, trusting relationships with our families. "We want parents to feel comfortable coming into the Academy office to talk with our staff, no matter the issue - financial, emotional, or spiritual," said Sonna Dumas. "That's a key piece to developing a strong community."

Shepherd's Academy has experienced significant success due to key partnerships with other organizations, volunteers, and financial supporters. One of those partnerships is with Horizon Christian School, who now has been a daily presence through Shepherd's Kindergarten through 4th grade since May 2012. This partnership is mutually beneficial, helping Shepherd provide high-quality education and curriculum while giving Horizon greater diversity and intercultural exchanges.

Volunteers also play a vital role in Shepherd's Academy, helping to reach at-risk students through tutoring, serving meals in the kitchen, teaching science, playing in gym and recess time, and providing additional classroom support to teachers.

Our Academy would be unable to serve and educate without the generous support of our partners, volunteers, and financial supporters, providing supplies like lamination, copy paper, tissues, and basic classroom supplies. For over 8 years, every Academy student has received a new backpack filled with supplies to start off their school year thanks to several Indianapolis churches. Students receive a multi-faceted educational experience, which includes field trips to the Indianapolis Zoo, Kelsey Farms, and the Indianapolis Children's Museum, thanks to our generous financial supporters.

As we begin another school year, we are excited for all that God has in store for these students. Helping children succeed in education takes many different groups of people working together. But through partnerships, volunteers, financial support, and the dedication of Academy teachers and staff, Shepherd is providing hope for a brighter future. ■

## THE POWER OF ONE

### Diana Petty



For almost 12 years, Diana Petty has taught in Shepherd's Academy, but her journey with Shepherd began as most do, volunteering. After serving in the Kindergarten 4-year-old class for a quarter, Diana was asked to consider becoming a full-time teacher. Diana attended a teaching seminar in Florida and began teaching the Kindergarten 3-year-old class the following fall. During her time with Shepherd, Diana has earned her Associates and completed her Bachelor's Degree in July 2014 from Ashworth College, all while balancing the management of a classroom and her own family. Diana believes the potential Shepherd saw in her made all the difference in her life.

Diana believes Shepherd's Academy is built on a foundation of love the teachers have for each and every child. "Despite the poverty of our neighborhoods, the teachers see the potential in each child and encourage the students to learn and achieve," said Diane. "Some of my 4-year-olds are already reading books. I am so proud that we challenge our students to achieve high standards."

For Diana, teaching is more than a job; she feels her purpose is to educate these students physically, emotionally, spiritually, and academically. Her whole family sees Shepherd as their place of ministry. Diana's husband, Kevin, is a member of Shepherd's Board; her two children are involved in the After-School Program; and each family member volunteers throughout the year. "Working and living in the Shepherd community has blessed my entire family."

## Did You Know?

**70% of Shepherd's ESL students** in Kindergarten through 4th grade showed measurable improvement in Language Fluency during the 2013-2014 school year

**Shepherd is expanding the Academy** to offer 5th grade for the 2014-2015 school year

**Volunteers gave over 3,400 hours** to help serve Shepherd's Academy during the spring semester of 2014.

**90% of Academy students** are able to read by the time they graduate from Kindergarten.

## Giving a Legacy

### A new school year has begun, and we need your help!

Planned giving can be as simple as including a bequest provision in your will or naming Shepherd Community as a beneficiary. For over a decade, Larry and Jodi Groves have helped Shepherd families break the cycle of poverty on the near Eastside of Indianapolis. As a result, Larry and Jodi have decided to leave a legacy with Shepherd Community through their estate plan. "Shepherd is a place we trust and know they will use our money to produce life-changing results," said Larry.

To find out more information on how Shepherd can be a part of your legacy for years to come, contact **Rex Fisher** at [rex@shepherdcommunity.org](mailto:rex@shepherdcommunity.org).

### Thanks!

**Thank you to Jay's Moving, Co. for sponsoring this Shepherd Community Newsletter.**



## RACE FOR LIFE.



Indianapolis is known as a place with a very big race - the Indy 500. Although there is so much that goes into winning the race, a driver recently said, "It all starts with the right equipment."

I couldn't agree more. Our Shepherd kids are in a race, a race for their life. And they need the right equipment. We want them to have the strong academic skills as they race through life.

And that's exactly what we are doing. In the 2013-14 school year, Shepherd's Kindergarten through 4th grade English as a Second Language (ESL) students took an English Proficiency Test, one at the beginning and one at the end of the year. Of those students, **70% improved 1 or more levels in English Proficiency.** That's 70% of native Spanish-speaking students who are now more adequately equipped to face the world ahead and break the cycle of poverty.

Our Academy and After-School Programs are busy giving Shepherd kids the right tools everyday. You are an important part in providing them this opportunity. **Thank you for your continued support.**

**Jay Height**  
Executive Director