

Waco Community Development

"Helping to inspire and cultivate healthy neighborhoods."

August 2015



Parents Brewing Ideas at Brook Avenue: by Alexis Christensen



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It was 8:10 am on a Tuesday morning and the library at Brook Avenue Elementary was buzzing. Familiar faces and new faces mingle together, happily greeting each other. Dining on coffee and donuts, parents, grandparents and other family members gather at round tables, catching up and asking each other how they are doing. This was the third and final *Coffee*

and Conversation, before summer break; with the largest attendance yet. The energy and excitement was tangible.

During the spring semester a growing number of concerned and engaged family members gathered every other month for coffee and dialogue about how to support their student's success. The group touched on many topics like how they could engage the school in a positive way and creating planning teams for school events. Parents also worked on reviewing the year's activities, providing feedback and prioritizing work for next year.

As we began to broach the topic of prioritizing next year's activities, a parent spoke up and said, "Well, why can't we meet this summer to work on this for next year?" Many others nodded their heads in agreement. "Yes, let's meet in the summer. We want to be ready for next year!" Thrilled, I take the names of parents who are interested in meeting in the summer and offer everyone a chance to attend a leadership development training called Grassroots Leadership Training (GLT). And indeed a small group of parents met this summer, filled with ideas to implement during the school year and excited about the possibility of gaining new leadership skills.

I think the words of Starbucks CEO, Howard Schultz rings true for what took place last semester with families at Brook Avenue.

"I was taken by the power that savoring a simple cup of coffee can have to connect people and create community."

We are looking forward to continuing our work with the families of Brook Avenue this new school year!



Welcome to
Our Neighborhood
New Homeowners!



"Helping to inspire and cultivate healthy neighborhoods."

254-235-7358

CALENDAR

Classes

Financial Literacy
Accelerated Classes

Thursdays
6 - 8 pm

Homebuyer
Education II

Saturdays
1:00 - 6:00 PM

Call for details about
the next classes

Board of Directors:

Billy Davis Jr. -Pres
Dr. Van Allen
Josh Caballero
Ken Cooper
Carol Dugat
Tim Holtkamp
Walt Keeler
Johnny Mankin
Rev. Frank Montgomery
Jon Spelman

Hard Hat Tours

1st Thursday
of each Month

At 1pm

1624 Colcord

*Come learn about
Waco Community
Development*

www.WacoCDC.org



Issue 55 - 2015

The newsletter of Waco Community Development whose mission is to help inspire and cultivate healthy neighborhoods throughout Waco.

Contact Us

Mike Stone

Executive Director
mike@WacoCDC.org

Elaine Seeber

Development Director
elaine@WacoCDC.org

Darrell Abercrombie

Program Administrator
darrell@WacoCDC.org

Alexis Christensen

Community Organizer
alexis@WacoCDC.org

M.L. Dickey

Construction Manager
ml@WacoCDC.org

Verlyn Johnson

University of Southern California School of Social Work Intern

The Path to Homeownership

By Darrell Abercrombie

William has been in our program a few years. He had been living in an apartment but a couple of years ago he had to retire due to complications from an injury to his back. He is receiving less income now and thought he would never get a chance to buy a home.

William came to Waco Community Development to check his credit score and learned that if he would pay off a few creditors, stay on an assigned budget so that he could make on time payments, his FICO score would go up and he would be able to get a mortgage. So he did just that for a couple of years. Then he took our Financial Literacy and Homebuyer Education Classes. Last month William went through the process for a mortgage loan. He finally heard the words that every homeowner loves to hear, "Set the Closing Date."

In a few short weeks, William will be in the home that he has worked so hard for these past few years. We are honored to have been part of the process of helping William achieve his dream of being a homeowner.

Summer Fun Includes Reading at Brook Avenue

by Alexis Christensen

Summer is coming to a close but the learning never ceases at Brook Avenue Elementary thanks to the dedicated members of Columbus Avenue Baptist Church. Throughout the summer they hosted a "Book Nook" at Brook Avenue for children in the neighborhood to have a place to read and hang out. They took the "Book Nook" idea to another level with their Summer Reading Fun



Bookcases for families



Books to give away

Fair. Church members constructed 100 book cases and collected thousands of books for Brook Avenue families

to enjoy. This was a great continuation of their partnership with Brook Avenue Elementary. We at Waco Community Development commend them for their service and dedication to our partner school, the neighborhood and the students. We look forward to working with their mentors this new school year to see Brook Avenue students and families thrive!



New house on 5th Street



Our new house going up at 1224 N. 16th

Thank you Jon and Jean Spelman for your donation in memory of David Beasley

Support
Waco Community
Development Corporation.

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
Amazon donates.

Go to smile.amazon.com



Parents Making a Difference:

By Verlyn Johnson

It's that time of the year parents, time for children to return to school. Time to get back on that daily school schedule, watching our children head to the bus stops or walking to the place where the education and community journey begins. This is also the time of the year where parents have the opportunity to bridge education with the community as well as being involved in their children's school.

So what is parent involvement? Parent involvement is the participation of parents in school activities and a commitment of time, energy, and goodwill to promote success for students. Parents can volunteer to support school projects like participating in fundraising, chaperoning field trips, acting as a room parent, tutoring, and working in a classroom or even being a representative for parents at school decision meetings.

Maria Sardaneta, the proud mother of six year old Carlos, who attends Brook Avenue Elementary school, is one of the engaged parents at her son's school. Maria sees being involved at Carlos' school a blessing. As a single parent she and Carlos are on this journey together. She finds it refreshing to participate in school activities with Carlos. Maria reflected back on her school years in Honduras and how different it was from the education that her son is experiencing today. Though Maria had not thought about it much before she realized the impact her family had on her education. "My mother was very involved with my school and education. She continuously encouraged me to do my best. Thinking back now I see I never made the connection of my mother's school involvement and how it was the key to my success." This is the same success she wants for her son Carlos.

Maria's faith is important to her. She praises God for allowing her to work three days a week at the Head Start program and the other two days are spent at Carlos' school. She feels blessed to be able to spend her lunch breaks eating lunch with her son and now Carlos knows that those days and times belong to the two of them! "I have seen the change in my son's behavior since I became actively involved in his education", said Maria. Another benefit is that communication lines with her son have opened to the point that they both feel comfortable to talk about concerns or fears Carlos may have at school.



Maria Sardaneta

When asked what advice can she give to parents to motivate them to engage more in their children schools, she reflected on the experience of a young child whose parents didn't show up for his classroom graduation. The boy came up to her and said, "You came; why didn't my parents come?" That broke her heart. "Parents need to see the difference it makes in their child lives when they get involved. As parents, we want to see our children be and do their best and with our help they can achieve that," she explained.

Children whose parents are involved not only benefit from it personally, but it also benefits our community by developing children who will invest and care about where they live. We encourage parents to take an active role in the schools and to become leaders in their schools. This is part of inspiring and cultivating healthy neighborhoods, healthy families and healthy communities. To get involved at Brook Avenue, J.H. Hines Elementary or West Avenue Elementary contact our community organizer, Alexis Christensen, to learn how you can become invested in your child's future.



Save the date

Announcing The Open

Golf Scramble

benefitting Waco Community Development

Monday, October 26th

Cottonwood Creek Golf Course

Check-in & Lunch @ 11:30 a.m. , Tee off @ 1:00 p.m.

Come join us for an afternoon of fun!





1624 Colcord Ave.
Waco, TX 76707

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Issue 55 - 2015

Waco Community Development helps to inspire and cultivate healthy neighborhoods.



<https://www.facebook.com/WacoCommunityDevelopment>



Youth roofing

Youth Serving

By Mike Stone

In a time that some people think that youth are not hard working, this summer 140 youth proved just the opposite. Bounce Waco was a huge success with youth from all over Texas coming to serve homeowners in need in Waco. We were able to re-roof 6 houses, paint 3 houses and re-

build one ramp . We are grateful for the youth, for the City of Waco for funding the materials, and for all of the local churches that provided lunches to the hardworking participants. Thank you all for making it a successful week.



Councilmember Dillon Meek speaking to the youth and bringing them popsicles.

We are already planning for Bounce Waco 2016. If you are interested contact Mike Stone at 254-235-7358 ext. 206 for more information.



Even had time to install a post for a Little Free Library



BY THE NUMBERS

Housing:

Homeowners: 248
New Homes: 54
Renovated: 18

Education:

Counseled: 1839
Active: 128

Maintenance:

Volunteers: 7,119
Vol. Hours: 68,003
Lots Mowed: 3,086