

NEWS & NOTES

A monthly newsletter to keep you informed.



There were thousands of smiles at CCSC's August Back To School community distribution event.

Back To School 2019 Outfits 6,534 Underserved Students

Happy students, parents and volunteers filled Faith Lutheran Church during the distribution days of Christian Community Service Center's Back To School program, which provides underserved youth Pre-K through 12th Grade with new grade-specific packages of academic supplies and vouchers for new uniforms/shoes.

For Gladys Rodriguez and her children Back To School means peace of mind. "It's great because it's such a help for us," Rodriguez said. "Everything you hand out, the supplies and the way you treat us. It's wonderful. My children are happy because they sometimes know we can't afford the supplies and because now they will have the same as others on the first day of school."

Marbella Baltazar and Melvin Leiva were attending Back To School for the

first time, picking up supplies for their 9-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter. "This is lots of help, a big help," Leiva said. "Life is hard and this helps the family a lot and we appreciate it. We are so happy we came."

This year CCSC expanded the age group served by Back To School to include high school students. At the August community distribution event 2,792 students were served; 3,742 children will be served directly through their schools. In total, 6,534 students will receive school supplies and vouchers through CCSC's Back To School 2019.

From May through August, more than 900 volunteers contributed approximately 2,700 hours to Back To School. CCSC thanks its volunteers, community funders, and caring donors for helping students to start the school year with confidence.

For more information or to donate to CCSC's Back To School Program, visit CCSC's website www.ccschouston.org or call Cathy Brown at 713-961-3993.

"Community Kids Cook" Participants Visit CCSC Garden

Christian Community Service Center's Garden volunteers were thrilled to host Houston Chef Tarsha Gary and her students from the ECOTONE World "Community Kids Cook"™ program.



CCSC volunteers and members of the "Community Kids Cook" class share time and knowledge in the Garden.

Gary, an award-winning executive chef/owner of "CRAVE" Gourmet Bakery & Catered Café, is the founder and president of ECOTONE World, a green vision catalyst promoting urban community gardening, food education, sustainability and global enrichment. Gary's "Community Kids Cook"™ with Chef Tarsha is a healthy food education camp targeting urban youth.

Chef Gary brought about two dozen 10- to 14-year-old students to tour CCSC's Garden located at the St. Luke's Gethsemane Campus. Gary's mission is to teach her students not only how to cook simple and healthy meals, but also about the origin, cultivation and special attributes of the ingredients used in food preparation.

During their visit to the CCSC Garden, the students helped harvest herbs, eggplants and peppers, some of which they would later use to prepare a Mediterranean dish. Garden volunteers were happy to share information about their year-round work to offer fresh produce to community members in need. The CCSC Garden produced almost 8,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables in 2018.

It was a great day of multi-generational sharing, everyone enjoyed the

exchange of information about gardening, healthy foods and recipes, and helping those in need.



Volunteer food packers fill orders for CCSC clients at the new Emergency Services-Central food pantry location, 3230 Mercer Ave. 77027.

Emergency Services-Central Settles into New Home

You may have heard that Christian Community Service Center is in the process of renewing its campus. This process was initiated after CCSC's building repeatedly sustained flood damage. Early on, the decision was made to stay in the current location and continue to serve the community WHILE the new building is being constructed.

How are we doing that? The Administrative Office, previously located at 3230 Mercer St., has relocated a block away to 3501 West Alabama allowing Emergency Services-Central to move into the 3230 Mercer St. building. ES-C's new home is half the square footage of its former space so it's a challenge, but our staff and volunteer team have totally met that challenge!

With the help of forward-thinking staff, nimble volunteers, patient clients, good signage and God's grace, ES-C is settling into its new home. A few tweaks are needed, but in just the first two weeks of operations 278 families were served.

What's the same?

- Our Administrative Office phone number is still the same, 713-961-3993.
- The Emergency Services-Central client line is still the same, 713-871-9741.
- We are still offering well-balanced 5-day food packages, hygiene kits, diapers and financial assistance for rent and utilities.
- Our volunteer teams and staff are still doing great work!

What's different?

- The new Emergency Services-Central address is 3230 Mercer, 77027.
- Due to space limitations, the only donations we can receive in this location are food, hygiene, clothing and shoes. (We can no longer accommodate household items, toys, furniture, etc.)
- Our new address for the CCSC Administrative Office is 3501 West Alabama, 77027.

Please let community members in need know that we are still here to serve them as we build new possibilities for the future. Feel welcome to stop by and see the new set up!



Sunshine Shop to Close on Sept. 28, Thank You for 35 GREAT Years!

Christian Community Service Center's Sunshine Resale Shop will close its doors permanently at 5 p.m. Saturday, September 28.

Thank you to all who have volunteered, donated and shopped at Sunshine over its 35 years in the community. CCSC appreciates the support you gave to its mission to serve our neighbors in need.

Stop by and shop the clearance sale Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., 5413 Bellaire Blvd. 77401.

How You Can Help Grow, Gather & Give! 2019

Help Christian Community Service Center to host the BEST Grow, Gather & Give! event yet by donating an item to the silent auction and--most important of all--purchasing your reservation!



We can't wait to see you at this year's "Around the World" themed party on Saturday, November 9, 6-8 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church's Hauser Hall.

To donate an item to the event's silent auction or wine pull please contact Erin Donohue at volunteer@ccschouston.org

To provide underwriting or purchase a table contact Sharon Current at scurrent@ccschouston.org

To make your reservation visit www.ccschouston.org/growgathergive/

Now is the Time to Reconnect Your Kroger Share Card

Shopping at Kroger can also raise funds for Christian Community Service Center. If your Kroger Share Card is already connected to CCSC that's GREAT! However, **you must reconnect it each year after August 1st.**



Follow these steps to connect or reconnect your Kroger Share Card with CCSC.

To reconnect your card, go to Kroger's website at: www.KrogerCommunityRewards.com

- If you have an account, sign in. You will need your email address and account password. If you do not have an account, create one following the online directions.
- On the "Find Your Organization" page type in Christian Community Service Center or enter 80790.
- Click the link to Christian Community Service Center, then click "Enroll"

Anytime enrolled supporters shop at Kroger using their Kroger Plus Card, they will be accumulating monetary rewards for CCSC!

Randall's Good Neighbor Program



Don't forget to link CCSC's Good Neighbor Number (#1439) to your Remarkable Card and help us raise funds the easy way!

The mission of the Christian Community Service Center (CCSC) is to serve the poor, hungry, disabled, and otherwise needy while respecting their religious, ethnic or cultural differences.



Stay Connected





3230 Mercer; Houston, Texas 77029 · 713.961.3993

