

NEWS & NOTES

A monthly newsletter to keep you informed.



CCSC Garden bounty brought to our clients by the hard work of the Garden team.

Food Pantry Visitors Enjoy Fresh Produce From Garden

The Christian Community Service Center Garden, located on the Gethsemane campus of St. Luke's United Methodist Church, has not missed a beat through this highly unusual year. In the first six months of 2020, dedicated garden volunteers have harvested 3,800 pounds of fresh vegetables.

Food insecurity is increasing in Houston and CCSC is grateful that its volunteers have been able to maintain safe operations and continue to bring fresh produce to our clients.

Food pantry visitors are always excited to receive fresh tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, squash, grapes and watermelon along with their nonperishable food packages.

Watermelon was one of the top producing items of this growing season, yielding nearly 200 pounds.



"One client recently mentioned that she was so excited about the beautiful peppers and tomatoes that she was going home and immediately making her favorite salsa," said Emergency Services-Southwest Manager Pat Weatherspoon-Hall.

Summer crops are coming to a close and the CCSC Garden team is gearing up for fall planting, which will include leafy greens, such as spinach, as well as sweet potatoes and squash.

CCSC to Help 6,500 Students At Home or At School



Atherton Elementary School students with their 2019 CCSC school supplies.

Every year since 1986, CCSC supporters like you have provided low-income students with new school supplies and clothing vouchers so they can start the school year feeling great about themselves and ready to learn.

This year, CCSC is even more passionate about its Back To School program because we know how important it is to families in need given the severe economic impact of the pandemic. With families struggling to stretch their limited incomes, the supplies that students need--whether for classroom learning or in-home learning--are more critical than ever. Students living in poverty can't count on academic supplies and resources being available at home.

Each year, children outgrow their clothing and shoes, and families living in poverty struggle to keep their children adequately outfitted. Whether heading off to the classroom or learning from home, or some combination thereof, children require the basics: shoes, socks, underwear, shirts and pants to meet their basic clothing needs.

Although we had to cancel our community distribution event to ensure safe social distancing, with your help CCSC will still serve 6,500 students in 2020. Here's how: This year, CCSC is partnering with even more local schools to deliver supplies directly to students at their campuses. CCSC has always partnered with schools to deliver much-needed school supplies, and we are confident this approach will result in successful

support to students who need help in this unprecedented time.

While we will miss seeing many of you at the distribution event, your spirit of generosity can still equip students with brand-new school supplies and a clothing voucher to start off the new academic year strong. Your gift of \$50 can sponsor one child. To sponsor one (or more!) children, please click [here](#).

Rental Payments Provide Bridge to Self-Sufficiency



CCSC's financial assistance supports clients until they can support themselves.

Elaine, like many in our community, needed help to get past the financial fallout of the pandemic.

This hard-working 44-year-old was furloughed from her job and received that dreaded final paycheck.

Elaine began an immediate online search for new employment, but despite a

concerted effort she was unable to secure a new position, and her unemployment benefits application process was taking longer than expected.

With mounting bills and no additional income, Elaine reached out to Christian Community Service Center's Emergency Services program for assistance with paying her rent. Due to increased funding resources provided by a Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund Grant jointly led by the United Way of Greater Houston and the Greater Houston Community Foundation, CCSC was able to provide a generous amount of rent relief that kept Elaine in her southwest Houston apartment.

Elaine was grateful for our service and contacted us to say she was called back to work by her previous employer. She feels confident that she will now be able to catch up on her other bills and continue to cover her rent.

In the first six weeks of implementing Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Grant funding, CCSC provided deeper levels of rent assistance to 114 families. These households were comprised of 290 individuals, and 39% were children. All had experienced job loss or decreased earnings due to the pandemic and nearly \$94,000 has been committed to their recovery (average of \$823 per family).

CCSC is grateful for the opportunity to help Elaine, and dozens in similar situations, maintain stable housing and get back on the road to self-sufficiency.

CCSC's J. Dean Robinson Building Hits a Milestone

There was LOTS of excitement here on Tuesday when this sign went up on the new J. Dean Robinson Building.

Just as much progress is happening on the interior of the building. Exterior metal panel installation and restroom tiling is ongoing, along with painting. The ceiling grid is nearly finished and millwork has begun.



The J. Dean Robinson Building as of July 14.

Four Easy Ways to Support CCSC While You Shop

Donating to CCSC while you shop is simple, but it can make a big difference. Check out these easy ways to help needy families in Houston through CCSC.

Introducing Shop & Support

We are excited to show you a new way to provide extra support to CCSC with your everyday shopping.

Shop & Support is easy, secure and only takes a few minutes for a one-time enrollment. Participating merchants return a portion of each purchase, up to 20%, to CCSC. There are no costs to you or CCSC. Link any credit or debit card and then shop as you normally would and donations are automatically sent to CCSC on your behalf. Linking your cards is secure via standard bank encryption. Your cards will never be charged or stored. Learn more and sign up [here](#).



Amazon Smile

Choose CCSC at smile.amazon.com and have 0.5% of eligible purchases donated to CCSC. Find out how it works [here](#).

Kroger Share Card Community Awards Program

Raise funds for CCSC while you shop at Kroger by connecting your Kroger Share Card to CCSC (#80790). If your Kroger Card is already linked to us--GREAT! But cards must be re-enrolled each year after August 1. To connect or reconnect your card to CCSC, visit Kroger's website at www.KrogerCommunityRewards.com.



Randalls' Good Neighbor Program



You can also support CCSC when you shop at Randalls. Once enrolled, you do not need to re-enroll annually. [Link your Randalls Remarkable Card](#) to start raising funds for CCSC.

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.

I WANT TO
DONATE

To donate nonperishable food to CCSC's food pantries, LIKE us on [Facebook](#) to find out when and where drive-thru food drives are happening, and then share that information with your friends via social media. You may also drop off donations at 3230 Mercer St., Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. or Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., or at 6856 Bellaire Blvd. Mondays and Tuesdays or Thursdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. THANK YOU!

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