



Family Learning Center Newsletter

Out of Love for Christ and the diversity He has created, the Family Learning Center provides educational support for the refugee community.

High School Students

On November 17, 2018, twenty Karen high school students attended a conference put on by the South East Asia Education Coalition (SEAED) at the University of Washington. We learned that most South East Asian ethnic groups don't have their own country, and many of them have experienced war or persecution which resulted in their families coming to the US as refugees. Students were encouraged to take pride in their cultures and to find people in their communities who could help them achieve their goals.

The Family Learning Center is committed to helping these aspiring students achieve their goals, and we are doing it with help from our partners. Money from **Soroptimists International of Pasco-Kennewick** and from **United Way of Benton & Franklin Counties** helped pay for our trip.

Committed volunteers meet weekly with students to help them overcome the language barrier and grow their academic skills. Currently we have 14 volunteers working with 21 different students. Whether the students go on to college or a trade, there are many skills we can help them develop skills that would help them be better prepared for life after high school.

There are many ways you can engage with high school students:

- **Volunteer to share about your profession** with a student or group of students.
- **Invite a student or group of students to visit your workplace.**
- **Become an academic mentor**—meet weekly with one student at a preferred location to build a relationship, help with school work, and encourage the student with his/her future plans.
- **Volunteer to share your story** about perseverance with our students.



ESL

If you were to visit the Family Learning Center on a weekday morning, you'd find it to be pretty close quarters. Over 50 people are attending classes this fall. Adult students come from Burma, Syria, Iraq, Eritrea, Morocco, the Marshall Islands, Afghanistan, and Somalia. Since we allow mothers to bring their children, it can be noisy as well as crowded! But somehow, our wonderful students and volunteer teachers manage to teach and learn.

We are excited at the possibility that we may hold these morning classes at the new Boys and Girls Club in the new year. To do that, we'll need to provide a nursery so the children will be more directly supervised. We are grateful to our friends at **Grace United Reformed Church** for help with toys and supplies. But we're still seeking additional funding for staffing. If you would like to enable a refugee mother to be a better parent, citizen, and community member, consider donating to provide childcare for our ESL Classes.



What's been happening after school

We have had a few new things going on in our afterschool program this fall.

We kicked off the school year with a field trip to Heritage days at Sacajawea Park. The kids had a great time learning about Northwest American history through hands on activities.

For Halloween we had our second annual Halloween STEAM party. Students earned candy by completing STEAM projects. These activities included; candy corn catapults, decorated masks, gummy pumpkin toothpick structures, roll-a-pattern pumpkin drawings and more.

Recently our middle school students prepared for and taught the lower elementary students a



pattern art lesson. They took the responsibility very seriously. It was really fun to watch them imitate teachers and encourage the younger ones. We're hoping to give our middle school students an opportunity to teach the younger kids more regularly.

With Thankful Hearts

In this season of the year, we have so much to be thankful for:

- Staff and volunteers who work hard to help our newcomer friends learn and grow
- Partnerships with school districts and other community organizations who want to see our families thrive
- Supporting churches and individuals who help us pay our bills each month
- Opportunities to learn with and from each other
- The beautiful diversity that God has blessed us with in our world

We know that without your help we couldn't do the work we're doing. You can partner with us in this work by:

- Remembering us in your year-end giving. Look for our updated website in the next 2 weeks. We'll now be able to receive online donations.
- Volunteering — we're always looking for more volunteers.
- Praying for us and for the families we work with. Learning to live well in a new place takes a lot of energy and hard work.
- Praying for our country, our leaders, and the many conflicting messages that people hear about race and immigrants. May we seek truth.
- Learning more about the current policies changes that affect refugees. <http://justice.crcna.org/refugee-resources> is a good place to start.
- Advocating for more refugee arrivals.

Our prayer is that many more will join us in knowing how blessed we are when we bless others.