



# 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.

## Graduation 2020

Graduation was bittersweet this year. We were thrilled to see so many of 'our' students--21 total--graduate, but sad that there was no ceremony. Some of these students have been part of the Family Learning Center family since elementary school, one even from first grade; others we've known less than four years. Some are going on to college; others are planning to work. Everyone is glad to have reached this milestone.

In addition to our young adult high school graduates, we are celebrating with 2 other friends and long-term volunteers who are finishing their high school diplomas at CBC. Irene Tha finished in March and SuSu Moses finished in June. They've worked hard to achieve this goal while also being busy wives, mothers, and helpers for their community.

We're grateful for the opportunities to support these students and their families as they pursue their educational goals. Your financial support of the Family Learning Center allows you to be a partner in empowering them too. Please consider a gift that will help us continue this work. Checks can be mailed to our address: 505 S. Olympia St. B5 Kennewick, WA 99336.



Graduates are: Esther Mutesi, Nay Ta Moo Say, Hel Sai Paw, Say Gay Htoo, Pla Set Doh Htoo, Rachel Blue Bell Lawson, Dae Ya Wah, ShintSue Lay, Moo Ta Low, Zin Mar Oo, La Hsee Wah Paw, Saif Alhumrani, Lay Gler Paw, Hser Leh Pleh Moo, Julie Maria, Vrajeshvay Alonso, Hsa Mue Na Htoo, Ku Shee Wah, Fathi Mohamud, Paw Rah Wah, Nasteha Saney



## Masks for Essential Workers

The Family Learning Center has been closed this spring, not holding classes or programs in person. But workers in the refugee community have continued to work in essential industries, like health care and food production. Outbreaks in care homes for the elderly, and at the Tyson plant in Wallula threatened these workers and their families. Some people were sick with COVID-19, and needed help navigating healthcare and the process to get unemployment and sick pay. Others were concerned about protecting vulnerable people who lived in their homes.

The Family Learning Center worked with groups like Friends of Tyson Workers to advocate for the safety of workers at Tyson. Home-made cloth masks were donated for us to distribute to our families. We also created simple English information sheets based on information from the Benton-Franklin Health District and the state health department. The BFHD also helped us find some information in languages our friends could understand.

We distributed over 600 masks, along with hand sanitizer, soap, and good information, to families connected with the Family Learning Center.

Please pray for these families who do this important work. Pray for their safety and health, and that they will be given the respect and help they need, both to stay safe, and to care for themselves and their families if they become ill.

## Closed for COVID but not shut down

When schools closed in March, so did our English classes at the Family Learning Center. We don't think any of the 45 students or 18 volunteers who were part of our program expected that we wouldn't return this year.

But thanks to caring volunteer teachers, we haven't stopped serving refugee families. Initially, some teachers reached out to students with notes, phone calls, or text messages. We made contacts with parents who attend our Ready! for Kindergarten classes.

Many of our families had workers in essential jobs, and were exposed to COVID-19. Some teachers were among our mask-makers, others helped make contacts and delivered masks and information.

As we learned to connect with people while being physically distant, we began to look for ways to help our students continue to learn English.

Four volunteer teachers, Lois Douglass, Suzanne Benfield, Brenda Draper, and Tanya Lasuk, met with our level 4 students via Zoom. Only a handful of students were able to connect that way, but they met faithfully with Suzanne and Lois until early June. Brenda and Tanya have reached out to other students to work one-on-one with them.

We don't know exactly what fall will bring. We hope for in-person classes, but might need to find other ways to help refugees and immigrants learn English. What won't change is the need for welcoming friendships and opportunities to learn. We hope you'll join us, as a supporter or volunteer!

### Ways to Be Involved:

**Donate**— We now accept donations on our [website](#), and as always, by mail.

**Pray**— for the families we serve, and for our staff and volunteers.

**Keep in touch** - follow our [Facebook](#) page  
Bookmark our website: <https://www.flcatb5.org>  
(509) 491-1226 or [familylearningatb5@gmail.com](mailto:familylearningatb5@gmail.com)