

community.

A publication of Shepherd Community Center



FALL2022

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Engaging Deeper in our Neighborhood

Poverty takes away our neighbors' ability to advocate and navigate. Shepherd Community helps families by advocating for them and navigating alongside them to meet their needs so they can break the cycle of poverty. Unfortunately, many neighbors living in poverty also face an epidemic of loneliness. Building relationships with our neighbors is the first step to helping them live long, healthy lives of hope.

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Engaging Deeper in our Neighborhood

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We believe that by focusing on building deeper relationships within our Shepherd neighborhoods, we will create a more stable, healthy community for all ages to better meet our neighbors’ physical, emotional, spiritual, and academic needs.

Two ways we connect personally with each of our neighbors are through the Shalom Project – meaning peace – and the other is Paraclete – meaning to come alongside and advocate for – to build one-on-one relationships with our neighbors.



The Shalom Project pairs up IMPD Officer Adam Perkins and IEMS Paramedic Shane Hardwick to be first on-site and build relationships with our neighbors when calls come in to create access, stability, and health.

“Showing our neighbors that we care about their well-being seems to have a direct connection to them taking ownership of their health,” says Shane. “Adam and I see this time and time again throughout our work. Going into the community, meeting patients in their homes, and building authentic relationships is the key to our continued success and our neighbors’ ability to break the cycle of poverty.”

As Paracletes, we weekly connect with the same neighbors by visiting their homes, phone call check-ins, and even attending family events around Indy together. During these connections,

Paracletes learn more about the specific needs of our neighbors and provide the necessary resources to meet those needs. Paracletes build intentional relationships with **more than 300 neighbors every month, empowering them with the love, care, and resources they need to grow and break the cycle of poverty.**

“Our goal as Paracletes is to empower our neighbors through cultivating meaningful connection as we walk authentically and intentionally alongside them,” says Karalee White, Paraclete Program Coordinator. “When you look at Shepherd’s 10 Assets – essential areas of life that allow people to transition from poverty to stability – it is not difficult to identify the importance of relationships in achieving most of them. While every program at Shepherd focuses on relationships, being a Paraclete allows staff to come alongside the families we serve on a deeper, more individualized level, creating space to navigate each asset together.”

Most importantly, we care enough about our neighbors to listen to them and care about their needs. And, as it often does, both initiatives are created to help empower our neighbors, but they also end up transforming our lives.

Learn more about our Vision2030 plan to Re-Neighbor Our Hood by engaging deeper in our neighborhood at ShepherdCommunity.org/Engage.



Our top priority is to get to know our neighbors, not simply by name or address, but by who they are on the inside, and empower them to be who God created them to be.

Did you know?



meet

Dr. John Kuykendall
board member

When Dr. John Kuykendall first met Jay Height in 2019, it was evident that the heart of Shepherd Community aligned with his passions and skills in education. So, when a Board position became available in 2021, John was honored to be added.

“The Shepherd mission connects with my values and beliefs. I feel like God put me on this earth to give others the tools they need to be who they are created to be. I am proud to be a part of an organization that does the same.”

Dr. Kuykendall currently serves as the Dean of the School of Education and Associate Professor at the University of Indianapolis and uses his roles to bring UIndy writing experts, college tutors, and early childhood educators to Shepherd to benefit both programs.

“As a lifelong educator, I want to use mine and others’ giftings to make sure kids can read, write, and count at grade level. We want to ensure everyone gets the resources and experiences they need to achieve their best for a better future.”

John grew up in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, to two educator parents and a family passionate about education. John has four children – twins Jackson and Neala (17), Monroe (5), and John IV (2) – and a beautiful wife, Megan, who is also a teacher.

We are all Legos, except we’re all different shapes, different sizes, and different colors. And yet, every Lego connects because that’s what they were created to do, **just like us.**

The epidemic that ravages our communities is loneliness. Nothing can replace those face-to-face and heart-to-heart conversations, smiles, hugs, and genuine care for another human being. People need to be connecting, and yet so many are not.

Created to Connect

relationships with our neighbors.

Through our staff and volunteers, we are working hard to make connections, check in weekly, and ensure no one goes overlooked.

Our goal is to *Re-neighbor the Hood*, making those connections and helping our neighbors break the cycle of poverty.

To battle the tragedy of loneliness, we are working hard to make personal connections with each of our neighbors. We’re working to do more than just supply programs or distribute items. We want to connect, stay in touch, and build authentic



Jay Height
Executive Director

Development

Save the Date: Virtual Banquet 2022

Mark your calendars for **Shepherd’s Virtual Banquet 2022 on November 1, 3, and 10 at 6:30 pm each night.** All meetings will take place on Zoom, and we will cover two topics each evening about our initiative to “Re-Neighbor Our Hood.” Keep an eye on your email and Shepherd’s Facebook for links to each Zoom meeting and the topics to be discussed each night. No need to pre-register. More details to come soon.

No Matter How You Give, You Make a Difference

Did you know your belongings can help someone in need? Your unused valuables – such as collectables, land, houses, vehicles, estates, boats, stocks, or bonds – can be the key to bringing our families hope. Consider donating unneeded assets or even establishing a planned gift to help further Shepherd’s mission to break the cycle of poverty. Best of all? You get a tax deduction for your gift!

For more information about non-cash giving, contact Kolton Williford at koltonw@shepherdcommunity.org or call (317)375-0203.



Volunteers

Volunteer to Make a Difference

Helping our neighbors: Help beautify our neighborhood by assisting neighbors with light landscaping and house painting needs.

After-School Tutors and Homework

Help: Help students in grades 1 – 5 with homework. Volunteers needed Monday – Thursday from 4 – 6pm.

Fall Festival: Donate candy and/or decorate your car and hand out candy for Trunk or Treat on Monday, October 31.

Questions? Contact Director of Volunteer Engagement, Donna Alexander at DonnaA@shepherdcommunity.org or (317)375-0203.

Thanksgiving Boxes: Help hand out or deliver Thanksgiving meal boxes to our neighbors (date TBD).

Thanksgiving Day Meals: Serve and deliver Thanksgiving meals to community members on Thursday, November 24.

Christmas Store: Donate toys, sort and set up, help families shop, wrap gifts, and more to make the holidays special for our neighborhood families (dates TBD).



Give In-Kind to Shepherd

88 Playdough tubs (2oz)

Crayola crayons

Sticky tack

Washable paint (16oz bottles)

Hand soap

Construction paper

Paper towels

Clorox wipes

For a full list of our in-kind needs, visit shepherdcommunity.org/give/critical-needs/

Shepherd is a faith-based, non-profit organization established in 1985 with a simple but staggering goal: **to break the cycle of poverty** on the near Eastside of Indianapolis. Located centrally within the community it serves, Shepherd offers programs for children, teens, adults, and families. Our primary tools?

Education and love.



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www.shepherdcommunity.org

breaking the cycle of poverty

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Thank you to our partners for making Shepherd's newsletter possible.