

All About AGAPE

CENTER



MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

To make a difference in someone's life right here in Atlanta, volunteer at Agape! For more information on how you, your civic group, business or organization can make a difference, call 404-367-3946 or email rlewis@agapecc.org.

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**WSB-TV Channel 2 Action News Anchor
Monica Pearson to Keynote Agape's 3rd Annual
Spring Benefit, Thursday, April 29, 2010**

A Word from the Executive Director



Executive Director Nell Benn

This fact alone has a direct impact on their performance in school. It fosters shorter attention spans, frequent illnesses and contributes to an overall lack of ability to function at their best in class. In many cases, parents in the community elect not to enroll their children in the afterschool programs offered by area schools, but rather opt for Agape's program knowing their children will receive a nutritious meal.

In addition, providing well-balanced evening meals are also important in the fight against childhood obesity—a major U.S. initiative recently launched by First Lady Michelle Obama. According to data from the 2007 National Survey of Children's Health, the state of Georgia was ranked third in the country in overweight and obese kids. The survey also indicated that children from low-income backgrounds are disproportionately impacted by obesity, which is closely related to the lack of nutritional awareness.

Research has also shown that afterschool programs can—and do—play an important role in promoting healthy lifestyles for youth. Emphasizing the value of a nutritious diet sets our children up for physical, emotional, social, and academic success. Providing and supporting an inclusive after school program in a safe, nurturing, comfortable environment not only touches the hearts of the community, but it nurtures the souls of our children—the leaders of tomorrow!

In Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nell Benn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nell Benn, LCSW

Community Volunteers Provide More than 3,000 Dinners in Agape After School Program

The Agape Community Center after school program offers tutoring, homework assistance, educational activities, and provides wholesome evening meals for more than 150 economically disadvantaged youth throughout the school year.

Last August, as part of a plan envisioned by Agape Board President Bonnie Harris, we increased the number of groups contributing to our after-school meal service. To support this undertaking, Agape reached out to area civic organizations, congregations, parents, school groups and corporations for help. Dozens in the surrounding community answered the call. These special volunteers have not only given their time, but they have personally provided and served well-balanced dinners to numerous students. To date, this effort has totaled more than 3,000 nutritious dinners!

Many of our youth come from backgrounds where it's not uncommon for their parents to have two or three jobs to make ends meet. Numerous studies have revealed that "latch-key kids" or children whose parents are away from the home working, many times go to bed hungry during the school year.

Volunteers Bring Everybody to the Table

Agape salutes our many “Food Volunteers.” They donate food for special events; groceries for families in need; snacks for children; dinners for our afterschool program; and meals for our seniors. Everyone from individuals to businesses have filled the stomachs of our community bringing all walks of life to the table to break bread.



Agape afterschoolers enjoyed holiday treats provided by local food donors.



E Rivers Elementary School Principal David White (r) brought along teachers and friends to help serve and provide dinner to Agape’s Growing Geniuses after school program.



Families at “Fiesta Friday,” a fun-filled community event held March 26, savored free authentic Mexican food generously provided by Nuevo Laredo Cantina.

Volunteers from The Westminster School served fried chicken, macaroni & cheese, green beans, salad, rolls and dessert for Agape afterschoolers.



The Lovett School Girl’s Basketball team proudly provided groceries collected from a school food drive for families in need during the holiday season.

Georgia State University, Rooms To Go, & Atlanta Law Firm Provide Extreme Bedroom Makeovers



Yolanda Figueroa's son, Israel (l), wrote the winning essay about why his bedroom needed a makeover citing that he, his mother, and siblings all shared one bed. He is pictured with his two sisters Valeria and April, and his brother Randall.

"You'd be surprised when the holiday seasons come around each year and our families make wish lists for Santa how many children simply want a comforter or towels," said Nell Benn, executive director of the Agape Community Center. "Many of our children have never had their own beds before."

"I'm happy because now I can sit down, relax, and do my homework," said Israel, who is preparing for the CRCT (Criterion Referenced Competency Test), a critical state standardized test.

On Saturday, March 20, community volunteers began priming and painting the walls in the second bedroom at the Figueras in preparation for the new furniture, décor and finishings that would arrive a few days later. "I was so surprised because we never ever thought this would happen," said Figueroa wiping a tear. "Kids need their own space too. Now they can read a book, watch TV and play in their own room."

Although the Figueras are a close and loving family unit, there have been plenty of nights at the family's home that some may say were just too close for comfort.

Yolanda Figueroa, her four children, Valeria, 1, April, 3, Randall, 8, and Israel, 9, all share one bed in a small two-bedroom apartment at Moore's Mill Village in Northwest Atlanta.

"Some nights I sleep on the couch, and give my children the bed," said Figueroa. "But on most nights, all five of us sleep in the same bed."

Figueroa's oldest son, Israel, recently crafted a heartfelt essay in the Agape Community Center's after school program about why he deserves an extreme bedroom makeover. He was named one of four family winners whose households received a free makeover of a lifetime.



An extreme makeover team from Atlanta law firm Swift, Currie, McGhee & Hiers, LLP converged at the Figueras's apartment to clean, prime, paint and repair a hole in the wall of the children's room.. From left, George Smith, Alex Ficker, Bobby Johnson, Jonathan Johnston, Doug Bennett, Rusty Watts and GSU team leader Joseph Ellinger.

“Research has shown that students exhibit higher confidence levels and better school performance when they have the appropriate sleeping and studying environments,” said Lisa Watts, a Georgia State graduate student who helped spearhead the project. “When we did our surveys on area families that could benefit from a makeover, in some cases, we found three and four children sleeping on the floor.” Watt’s chose the makeover as her community service project to meet graduation requirements for her master’s degree in social work.

The family’s second bedroom which formerly housed just a broken dresser, now has two bunk beds, a matching dresser, desk, brand-new, colorful bedding and a decorative play area for the baby, courtesy of Rooms To Go, Swift Currie Attorneys and community supporters.

“I am blessed to have found Agape. When I have nowhere else to turn, Agape has always been there to help us,” said Figueroa.



The Figueroa’s were ‘all smiles’ when their brand new bedroom was unveiled.

CONGRATULATIONS
TO EXTREME
BEDROOM
MAKEOVER FAMILIES

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Special Thanks To Extreme Bedroom Makeover Sponsors

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Rosing Paints

St. Anne’s Episcopal Church

Susan and Doug Brown

Swift, Currie, McGhee & Hiers, LLP

Trinity Presbyterian Church

And the generosity of dozens of Metro Atlanta families

Monica Pearson to Keynote Agape Spring Benefit

The Agape Community Center, will host its 3rd Annual Spring Benefit, Thursday, April 29, 2010, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., at the Ansley Golf Club in Midtown.

The fundraiser titled "Giving Wing to Better Tomorrows" will feature a cocktail buffet, a live auction and special guest speaker Monica Pearson, Emmy Award-winning anchor for WSB-TV Channel 2.

"In an effort to continue helping

increasing the importance of this event."

The evening's theme, "Giving Wing to Better Tomorrows," coincides with Agape's butterfly logo, which represents rebirth or giving the community new hope that they can achieve and succeed.

"From Former Mayor Shirley Franklin to Ron Clark, each year we have been fortunate to have wonderful keynote speakers at our annual fund-

the children, families and seniors of the Bolton Road area in Northwest Atlanta. Proceeds from this event will enable Agape to continue as well as expand its many vital programs including:

- Providing 150 children tutoring and nutritious meals each week
- Assisting more than 60 middle and high school students in completing college tours



Several long-time supporters and new donors attended Agape's 2009 Spring Benefit held in Buckhead last year. The successful garden affair yielded nearly \$50,000 in donations and support from area philanthropists.

those affected by the economic downturn and recent area floods, we are hopeful that this event will bring in funding to serve the dozens of families that come to us every month for support," said Nell Benn, executive director. "The demand in our service area for assistance with rent, utility bills, food and the overall encouragement offered through the programs at our center has nearly doubled this year thus

raiser," said Bonnie Harris, president of Agape's board of directors. "We are even more delighted that Mrs. Pearson will join us this year in raising awareness about the good works of this fantastic organization."

Agape is an eminent model in Atlanta for successfully providing programs that empower families to break the cycle of poverty. Its strong volunteer base provides vital connections for

- Allowing more than 50 families in crisis to keep the heat and electricity on in their homes
- Helping 80 youth to participate in a five-day-a-week summer camp for the entire summer

To purchase tickets or become an individual or corporate sponsor, call Nell Benn at 404-367-3950 or email nellbenn@agapec.org.

2010 Agape Community Center Spring Benefit

Thursday, April 29
Ansley Golf Club in Midtown

To purchase tickets or make a contribution to our Spring Benefit, call 404-367-3950 or email nellbenn@agapecc.org



Guest Speaker
Monica Pearson



From left, Sally Mefford, Bobbi and Charlie Hurt, Deedee Glass and Amy Garner were among more than 250 guests that attended Agape's Spring Benefit last year.

2010 Spring Benefit Sponsors

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Community Volunteers Make a Difference for Agape



On March 20, members of Trinity Presbyterian Church volunteered to conduct minor repairs and yard work in the home of Agape senior citizen George Bowens, Sr. (center) as part of Trinity Serves Day. From left, Stefanie and Ben Curran, Lu Allgood, Grace Andrade, and Jody Andrade.

Below, Volunteer Christy Davidson enjoyed serving as a tutor for Jennyfer Sanchez in Agape's after school program.



Rusty Watts of the Atlanta law firm Swift, Currie, McGhee & Hiers, LLP, traded in his business suit for a Santa costume during the holiday season and volunteered for Agape children.



Right, Dozens of families from Jack and Jill of America, Inc., lent a hand at Agape during National Volunteer Week in April for a special clean-up project at the Center.



Nonprofit Offers Career and Life Coaching Skills to Help Agape Inner City Youth

Passion for Life, an Atlanta-based nonprofit that encourages and directs high school students in pursuing their talents, partnered with Agape Community Center in September 2009. In just six months, Agape’s teenagers have successfully learned a wealth of information including skills, tactics and strategies towards identifying and fulfilling their personal and career goals.

“We are taking their passions and what they love to do and helping them transform it into a rewarding career path,” said Cicely Anderson, president and founder. “Expanding the student’s vision to think beyond their circumstances teaches them to have the world as their playground.”



Agape high school students participated in a group discussion about making good decisions with Passion For Life Founder Cicely Anderson.

Passion For Life facilitators work one-on-one with youth and in small focus groups almost as their individual life coaches. They provide a series of informational workshops, field trips, group discussions, counseling and activities to help tap into and guide them to become confident and empowered. Dress-for-success workshops, financial planning, self image and confidence building seminars, college and university sessions, and peer pressure guidance are all a part of the weekly Monday meetings at the Agape Center.



Jessica McAuley Young, M.Ed.

Agape Welcomes New Community Organizer

Jessica McAuley Young joins Agape from her most recent post at Communities In Schools Atlanta (CIS). She brings more than a decade of experience to Agape in working with youth. Her responsibilities include leading community action and resident involvement, and addressing the various needs of the population in North-west Atlanta. She holds a master’s degree in educational leadership from Strayer University.

Special Thanks to our Nonprofit Partners

-
- All Saints Christ's Church United
- Atlanta Fulton County Library – Perry Homes Branch
- Buckhead Christian Ministries
- Carl E. Sanders Buckhead YMCA
- Chi Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Alumni Morehouse College
- Collins Memorial United Methodist Church
- For the Kid in All of Us
- GA Tech Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity
- Hampton Oaks Learning Link
- Imagine It! The Children's Museum of Atlanta
- Junior League of Atlanta
- Kappa Alpha Sigma Alumni Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma
- Latin American Association
- Morehouse College
- National Charity League Buckhead Chapter
- Northwest Presbyterian Church
- Pace Academy
- Passion for Life
- Peachtree Presbyterian Church
- Spelman College
- St. Anne's Episcopal Church
- The Lovett School
- The Northside Shepard Center
- The Westminster Schools
- Transitional Family Services - Tucker
- Trinity Presbyterian Church
- UGA Cooperative Extension Office - Fulton County

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Honorariums to the AGAPE Community Center are a thoughtful way to Honor a person on a birthday or special occasion.

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AGAPE apologies for any errors in spelling or omission which might have occurred in preparing this list

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Whole Foods Donates \$4,000 to Agape



A special promotion that allowed customers to support the Agape Community Center by simply shopping at the Buckhead location of Whole Foods Market on Wednesday, April 7, yielded exactly \$4,206. Titled "Whole Foods Market Community 5% Days," the store dedicated five percent of the day's net sales to benefit Agape.

The Agape newsletter is published twice a year by Editor/Writer Natasha Daniels. Please direct any omissions or questions to Natasha@Agapecc.org or 404-931-7107.

AGAPE COMMUNITY CENTER

Celebrating 13 Years

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Address Correction Requested

Special thanks to Lisa Bankoff and Capital Directions without whose support this publication would not be possible.