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*so children can
focus on learning*

NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

COR Celebrates Third Anniversary

On November 6, approximately 50 COR volunteers and supporters gathered at the home of Anne Hutton and Mark Fiedorek to celebrate the growth of the organization and its many successes in meeting the needs of HISD students over the past three years. COR volunteers Kathleen Holt and Nancy Hosman provided a wonderful buffet of food for the event, while Anne Furse and Lara Powers provided wine. The house was decorated with posters, slide shows, and displays highlighting the work of the organization.

During the event, Founder and Executive Director Kay Wasden talked about the challenges facing COR Houston and new initiatives the organization is undertaking to expand its reach. Esmerelda Barnett, a Counselor at Elrod Elementary School, spoke about how COR is making a difference in helping the neediest students at her school, while emphasizing just how great the needs of these students are. The celebration was a wonderful celebration of all that COR Houston has accomplished, and served as an inspiring kick-off to

our fourth year of operations providing essential items to help HISD students succeed in school. A huge thank you to all who contribute to the organization!



Karen and Paul Davis tell guests about their sponsorship of the 2025 College Packs.



(From left) Anjelica Almaraz, Kay Wasden, and Esmerelda Barnett celebrate at the COR Houston Third Anniversary Party.

Partnership with YMCA Delivers the Goods

This month marks the pilot of a new Community Partnership with the YMCA of Greater Houston. COR is working with two YMCA programs: Community and Family Resiliency Services; and the Trafficked Persons Assistance Program (TPAP). 95% or more of the clientele of these two programs are HISD students and their families. The mission of TPAP is to serve all survivors of human trafficking, regardless of background, through comprehensive services and a client-centered approach. The goal of the program is to meet survivors where they are and help build a more self-sufficient life.

The students and families served by COR and by these YMCA programs have a wide range of needs. As part of this partnership, COR Houston will provide food and hygiene packs to the YMCA personnel. They will deliver these items to students in their programs, along with other services they provide to the families. In our pilot month, COR Houston will deliver 60 food packs and 50 hygiene packs, which will go to students in several of the neediest schools in HISD. Starting in December, we expect to deliver to YMCA 100 food packs and 100 hygiene packs each month; these deliveries are in addition to the large number of packs we are already delivering to HISD Title 1 schools. The YMCA packs will go to students and families who have likely not been receiving support from the HISD contacts to date, given their support from the YMCA. This new Community Partnership will enable us to reach so many more students in the coming months, helping keep them clean and fed in preparation for school.



YMCA Board Member Ronnie Hallenberger and Senior Outreach Director Shaun McCowen pick up food and hygiene packs at COR.

November Highlights

School Distributions

- Over 70 deliveries made to high-need schools, including large deliveries of food and hygiene packs, uniform tops and bottoms, school supplies, and several beds and sets of bedding
- Provided large playground games, as well as snacks and other activities, for Community Engagement events at Braeburn and Foerster Elementary schools

In-Kind Donations Received

- West University Elementary - mini-toys, Play Doh, and stress toys for sensory development
- Parker Elementary - school uniforms and school supplies
- Emery Weiner School - uniforms, jackets, and backpacks
- Kay Dotsey's Hygiene Product Birthday Donation Drive - shampoo & conditioner, soap, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, and more
- Amy Richards, Julie Fehl, Kelly Bourgeois - hygiene products, school supplies, and shoes

Volunteer Packing Sessions

- McDaniel Family - Counted and sorted jacket inventory and assembled more than 50 food packs for delivery to HISD families
- University of Houston Pre-Law Society - Counted and sorted jacket inventory and assembled 150 food packs and 50 cleaning packs



Left, COR School Liaison Kathleen Holt makes a delivery to Juwan McDaniel at Kelso Elementary. Right, a delivery of teen food packs to Stephanie Aguilar at Bellaire High School.



Left, Counselor Maria Martinez receives a delivery of food packs for Pilgrim Academy. Right, Juwan McDaniel and her daughters, Leah and Madison, with food packs they assembled in the warehouse.

Volunteer Spotlight

Pamela Lemoine and her husband, Robert Blome, have been foundational investors in COR for the past three years. With a Masters in Education and work experience as a teacher, career trainer, and immigrant paralegal, Pamela brings a wide range of skills to her volunteer work. Pamela volunteers on an ad hoc basis for COR, proofreading grant applications, helping to sort and count, fold and package and more at the storage house, and driving her truck for large pick-ups and deliveries.

As a former HISD parent, Pamela understands the high level of need in the district. She loves COR's easy, effective, and innovative way of meeting that need and is proud to be a supporter of COR's work and mission. We are so grateful for all Pamela does for the organization.



Shopping for Winter Wear

COR Houston expects to deliver more than 2500 warm jackets to students in the coming month! December chills can be very hard on families who don't have the money to invest in children's cold weather gear that will only be worn for a few days and then outgrown. COR Houston was fortunate to receive several large in-kind donations of jackets and our team is working to purchase many more in a variety of sizes. Thank you to all of our donors who have contributed to this special project.



Warm jackets ready to be packaged for delivery.



Members of the UH Pre-Law Society help sort and package jackets.

In this season of thankfulness, COR Houston is extremely grateful for all our donors and volunteers. Your support helps us to provide essential items to tens of thousands of economically disadvantaged students in HISD.

Thank You for Donating to COR



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