

CENTER OF HOPE



ANNAM COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

2019

*This booklet is dedicated
to all donors and volunteers
who have contributed time, treasure,
and talent to build
the Annam Community Center.*





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ANNAM COMMUNITY CENTER
9530 Antoine Drive
Houston, Texas

Welcome to the Center of Hope



From the desk of the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

The previous year was marked by unforgettable memories for the Board of Directors, Advisory Board, volunteers, and aid recipients. From its distribution of food and household items and supply of community healthcare to its cultural activities and social events, the Annam Community Center has unquestionably touched thousands of families in 2018 alone.

Since its establishment in 2000, the 18-year-old non-profit group has always strived to listen to its community members and improve its operation and outreach every year. In 2018, the most significant advancements of the Center were expanding both its targetted demographic groups and scope of activity. We have come a long way from our initial mission of assimilating Vietnamese immigrants and seniors to presently helping all low-income Houstonians. The great effects of allowing the Corporation to serve a broader range of disadvantaged people can be seen with the growth of registered families from its humble conception when the Center was able to assist 100 low-income families; today, that number has reach 1,900 today.

Given the common occurence of natural disasters in Houston, the Corporation has offered robust relief programs for every major hurricane since 2000. This includes the storms of Allison (2001), Rita (2005), Ike (2008), and Harvey (2017). According to the Weather Forecast Center, at least one hurricane is expected to hit Houston every six years. During those difficult times, the Center will continue to assist as many families as it can.

On the issue of social security, the Center has continually improved its infrastructure to more effectively provide food, water, health, and general wellness. Most notably, the Center has added or enhanced its kitchens, warehouses, and frozen food storage in order to store and distribute food items. The importance of these developments cannot be understated - food insecurity is a public issue that naturally hinders one's ability to grow, learn, and live.

In the past year, the Corporation has maintained its central activities at the Center and concurrently has improved its facilities and infrastructure to better serve the community. The Corporation is deeply grateful and humbled by the dedication of organizations, associations, businesses, individuals, and volunteers in building a stronger community. In essence, the future of the Center and its community is growing bigger and brighter every day.

*Joseph Do
Executive Director*

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January 27, 2019

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to have the opportunity to send greetings and Happy New Year to all of you. I hope that you all gleefully celebrate this Lunar New Year Celebration on Sunday, January 27, 2019 at the Vietnamese American Community Center put on by Annam Community Development Corporation, with family, friends and neighbors.

I have personally been involved with Annam CDC for many years and know of the tireless efforts of the Executive Director, Board Members and its volunteers as it served the community admirably for more than 20 years. I am grateful for their efforts that help the community through the various Annam CDC programs.

Annam CDC's community service has not gone unrecognized. It is my hope that Annam CDC's efforts will inspire communities across the city and state to follow their example. Please accept my sincere New Year's greeting and best wishes for an enjoyable and successful New Year.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila Jackson Lee".

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

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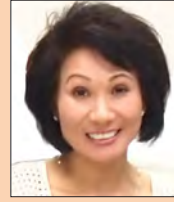
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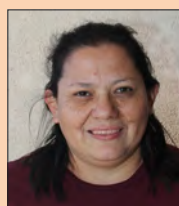
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Tuyetnga Lephuoc
*Coordinator
General Community Food Fair*

The Annam Community Center

The Annam Community Development Corporation (ACDC) is a non profit 501(c)(3) organization, established on August 15, 2000, with the purpose of enhancing and promoting healthy living conditions for disadvantaged families and senior citizens. Three years after its establishment, ACDC applied to CDBG funds of \$1,052,000 for the construction of The Vietnamese American Community Center for Seniors. In 2005, the Center was built and furnished with continuous support from Houston Endowment, Sisters of Charities of the Incarnate Word, and local businesses. As the need for development and community service grew, the Board of Directors changed the name of the Center to Annam Community Center in 2015.

The Annam Community Center is comprised of a cafeteria which may be converted into an auditorium, a commercial kitchen with a walk-in cooler and freezer, an extensive library, a fitness room, a medical room, a computer lab, an abundant food pantry, storage rooms dedicated for the gifts-in-kind, a park, and a community garden.

The Annam Community Center is a proud recipient of the Bandini Award (Houston Food Bank's Agency of the Year) in 2016 and The Marcia Johnson Outstanding Public Service Award in 2017.

Under One Roof

Currently, the Center is a hub for the Seniors, Culture, and Community Garden Clubs, Zen Tai Chi Association and the Hispanic Community. There are 14 programs/services/activities offered at the Center, including Computer Training, Field Trip for Seniors, Well-balanced Meal Services (free breakfast, lunch, and meals-on-wheels), Photography Class, Food Fair, CSFP (Commoditive Supplemental Food Program, a federal food program designed for seniors), Bingo, Go Western, Monthly Birthday Parties for seniors, Free Haircuts, Mammogram Screening, Community Healthcare, Referrals, and the Mutual Aid Fund. The newest program is the International Festival designed to unify all people at the Center at the end of October.



Center of Hope

Since the beginning of the year, the Center has continued to assist victims of Hurricane Harvey. Due to the great devastation that was unprecedented for the city of Houston, our rescue programs lasted until the first six months of 2018. For nine consecutive months, hard-working community members of the Center, from its board directors to its local volunteers, have contributed to both short-term and long-term disaster relief efforts. Notwithstanding, we are more than a distribution center, enriching a beautiful community with daily activities, annual festivals, legal support, and much more.





Annam Community Center joins the Houston Food Bank and television channel ABC13's Share Your Holidays Food Drive in this annual tradition. This year, it has distributed fresh meat, grocery and produce to 719 low-income families.

Long before Hurricane Harvey, the Center has served the Greater Houston Area in various ways. As an immediate responder, we have donated stockpiles of household items, clothes, and blankets as well as regularly distributed fresh produce, meat, and drinking water. Within the first six months of 2018 alone, the Center delivered food and household items, which totalled to 567,535 pounds, from the Houston Food Bank, Costco, and Prince of Peace Church. Additionally, the Center has continued to partner with Prince of Peace Parish who gifted excess donation items to the Center, helping a total of 2,358 families in the process.



This year, the Center also reprised its monthly Food and Health Fair, which falls on every last Wednesday of the month. For each event, about 40 new families apply to regularly receive goods. Considering the abundance of General Food and Health Fairs attendants, we have scheduled another fair for the middle of the month, focusing our outreach to the the local Hispanic community and serving 1,523 families.



To improve the health of low-income elderly persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) collaborates with Houston Food Bank, hosted by Annam Community Center helping more than 300 seniors.

With a grant from the Houston Food Bank, the Center's freezer has increased by 280 sqft, in total of 444 sqft. From now on, the Center can extend the shelves life of produce and frozen food to better serve the low-income families.





In gratitude for your generosity following Hurricane Harvey. 
Annam C.D.C.

Following Hurricane Harvey and the unprecedented flooding caused by the storm, the Houston Food Bank was in turn inundated by a tremendous outpouring of support from donors of food, funds and time.

As an expression of the Houston Food Bank's gratitude, artist Larra Lopez Canon created a one-of-a-kind piece of art to commemorate the experience. Her unique style blends acrylics with oil on large canvases capturing the beauty, strength, elegance and pride of Latinas and all people of color.

This referenced card was sent by the Houston Food Bank as a gesture of gratitude to the Annam Community Development Corporation.

In addition to hosting monthly fairs, the Center has also collaborated with the Mexican Consulate in order to assist community members with legal issues. In 2018, the first visit lasted from March 19th to 30th and the second lasted from September 17th to 28th. During these two occasions, more than two thousands people were issued passports, marriage certificates, birth certificates, work permits, and voting registration at the Center.



Madame Georgina Saldana Diaz of the Mexican Consulate (second row, third person from the left) and her staff on Consulate on Wheel program, visited the Annam Community Center twice this year, serving thousands of undocumented persons.



In 2018, the Center also partnered with both the Harris County Precinct 4, Department of Transportation and the City of Houston Police Department. The former helped organize an astonishing 12 field trips for seniors to experience Houston attractions. The latter, helped arrange a public safety and awareness program. In this program, various city officials delivered educational presentations on public and personal safety, theft and fraud prevention, and domestic violence.



Community Awareness is conducted by Houston Police Department at the Center



Most notably, the Center offers a host of weekday activities such as daily lunch, computer and photography classes, karaoke, and dance. In term of promoting health and wellness, the Center, in cooperation with the Rose Clinic, has continually administered a mammogram program to more than 80 low-income women over the age of 40.



- 1 Mammogram onsite screening provided by The Rose
- 2 Community Healthcare provided by Christus Healthcare Living Mobile Unit
- 3 Mother's Day
- 4 Grandparent's Day



We draw from the same well, stay under the same sun, and enjoy the cultural exchange.

Lunar New Year Celebration

With its rich history and timeless customs, Tét, or simply Tet, is the first day of the Lunar calendar and is the most important holiday in Vietnam. In fact, the celestial and cultural significance of the Lunar New Year in the Vietnamese culture is no different than that of other Asian countries, each celebrating their own version of the event.

Due to the presence of leap years in the lunar calendar, the first day of the Lunar New Year will never fall before January 21st or after February 20th. This year, Tet will take place in early February and as usual, will last about seven to eight days.

Traditionally, Tet is a long series of festivals that includes both spiritual and worldly elements. Since the central theme of the New Year involves presenting the souls of the deceased with the opportunity to return home, it is reasonable that many Vietnamese families will participate in the curation of altars filled with food and gifts, ancestral veneration, prayers, and visits to cemeteries. On the other hand, Tet is also an exciting, entertaining holiday that encourages dressing up, decorating flowers, lion dancing, and cooking and eating delicacies.

Paying respect to the long-standing practices of Tet, the Annam Community Center has retained the main features of the Lunar New Year with many Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese community members alike. At the Center, Tet includes a mesmerizing a lion dance, musical performance, feast, and the exchange of good wishes.

A grand welcoming of the Lunar New Year by the all-girls Lion Dance Group from Vien Thong Pagoda.





Performing “Ly Ruou Mung” by Zen Tai Chi Group



Wishing the elder longevity



... with the hope of getting back a fortune



A



B

THÁNG TƯ
April * Avril

30

Thứ tư
Wednesday * Mercredi

THÁNG BA (1964)	19	NĂM ẤT MÈO
Ngày 1/1/1965		Hành THỦY
Khoá * ANH THỜI		Sao SÂM
Thế LỘC 20		Trực MẾN
GIỜ	TỬ * Thìn, Ngọ, Tỵ, Sửu	Hợp tuổi: Mão, Mùi
	VĨA * Mìn, Ngọ, Dậu	Kỵ tuổi: Tỵ

SAO TỐT : Lập khố, Thăm hỏi
NÊN : Tục táng, làm lễ, ăn uống, nhập học, nhận học, đi học
SAO XẤU : Thăm người, Phi lễ, Thôn cầu
CỬ : Đeo mũ, lập huyết, nghĩ học các nhà học, lập học

Given its open floor plan, the Center serves as a hub for many organizations and events. In particular, the Senior Club, Cultural Club, and Zen Tai Chi are organizations that consistently gather at the Center. Likewise, thousands of people celebrate annual festivals and holidays at the Center.

The Center accommodates both traditional Vietnamese observances such as Tet and the Fall of Saigon, as well as other holidays such as the Fourth of July, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Considering our deeply-ingrained commitment to diversity and inclusion, the Center, through the talent and determination of our affiliated ethnic and cultural groups successfully hosted the International Festival in late October. The festival provided food and entertainment from eight countries: Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Peru and Vietnam. Lastly, the Center also celebrates collective Wedding Anniversaries, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and perhaps most importantly, Grandparent's Day.



The Mutual Aid Fund hosted its 2018 general annual meeting



Computer Class

(Left) The Center commemorates the Fall of Saigon every April 30th in the hopes that younger generation of Vietnamese-Americans will too understand the sacrifice behind the symbolism of that day.

A *Commemorating the Fall of Saigon*

B *Coming to America with her family as a child, Ms. Tuyetnga Lephuoc remembers the 30th of April each year*



United Healthcare has sponsored all transportation fee for the Center

Zen Tai Chi Association



Practicing Zen Tai Chi regularly help these members promote a healthier body and mind.



Kids Café

During the summer of 2018, the Corporation piloted the Kids Cafe Program to support the low-income families who have children living around the Center. The Houston Food Bank sponsored Kids Cafe program collaborates with chefs, dietitians, students, and volunteers. Its mission program is to help alleviate hunger by providing children with nutritious meals during the summer. This is especially helpful for kids who otherwise depend on school lunches for their daily nutrition. Kids Cafe Programs provide free meals and snacks to low-income children.



Pinata fun marking the end of Summer session

An introduction to self-expression through art





Happy Wedding Anniversary

All members of the Kitchen Team are certified Food Handlers or Food Managers by the State of Texas



Fundraising Team



H



O

P



E

Multiculturalism

Culture is used to refer to the customs, traditions, and values of a community. As its name would suggest, multiculturalism is emergence of several different cultures within a society. The Annam Community Center not only operates in but promotes a diverse, multicultural environment.

The United States was founded and forged as a country of immigrants. Therefore, the uniqueness and beauty of racial diversity have always been ingrained in American culture. The United States harbors a vast set of social identities and customs such as language, music, art, and food from around the world.

Fostering cultural diversity can be challenging at times, but Annam Community Development Corporation has shown that the Center is willing to open its doors to welcome all cultures through the celebration of the International Festival. The festival, featured eight countries, including Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru and Vietnam.

The purpose of the International Festival is to grant all ethnic groups the opportunity to express and share their cultural identities through music, dance, and food. The Center hopes that this initiative will give community members the opportunity to rise above their differences and achieve mutual appreciation and understanding.

International Festival opening





- 1 Mexican exhibition booth
- 2 Dancing performed by Katy Folkloric Dance Group
- 3 Costume contest finalists
- 4 Games hosted by Dr. Alicia Bordon





Happy Thanksgiving 2018



Monthly field trip sponsored by Harris County Precinct 4 - Seniors Adult Program.

Finalists and sponsors of the annual 2018 Golden Voice Award





The Hispanic Community gathers to warmly celebrate the meaning of family at Christmas.





Vietnamese-American Community had its own Christmas Celebration



Dancing to usher in the New Year at the end of 2018

The Annam Community Center has distributed more than 2,500 blankets donated by the Houston Food Bank and Walmart to children in need.



“Que Sera Sera”

There are many obstacles a single mother could face to adequately take care of her children. In times like these, the lyrics “Que sera sera”, translated to “What will be, will be”, gives her and her children strength and hope. Means of securing food, shelter, health, transportation, and communication will be difficult and without help, their futures will certainly be arduous.

Although the Center broadly serves low-income families, it has a special program to help the most vulnerable groups in society, namely single mothers, senior citizens, and large families with young children.





All was quiet in the early morning of Christmas Eve 2018; most were asleep before they were awakened by the horrific, ear-piercing sound of sirens. A deadly fire had ravaged a multi-complex apartment in southwest Houston, forcing sixty people to be displaced and claiming the life of a ten-year-old boy. Six apartment units were totally destroyed and some others were substantially damaged. A lot of people were directly impacted by this terrible event and many still struggle to carry on with their daily lives. Annam Center has since reached out to many of these displaced fire victims and was able to extend the gift of sharing including household items, produce and frozen food during this Christmas holiday. The Center will continue to lend much-needed support to the dispatched until they can regain some sense of stability and normalcy.

Vietnamese people have a saying: "The mother's heart is as big as Pacific Ocean" (Lòng mẹ bao la như biển Thái Bình). The mother must be willing to sacrifice much for the betterment of her children. At the Annam Community Development Corporation, there will always be a place for these mothers and their families - at their best or toughest moments.





Community Garden

Community gardens offer many benefits. Depending on the variety of plants, they can be classified as food production. Locally sourced foods are often healthy to eat, thereby improving health and wellness. Community gardens are also great for the environment as they contribute to biodiversity, as well as reduce green house gases. Finally, they function to bring people together and engage citizens in positive initiatives.

Community gardens contribute to healthy lifestyles by providing fresh and affordable herbs, fruits and vegetables. Not only do they help to relieve stress and encourage wellness, but they also provide social opportunities to build a sense of community and share a knowledge of gardening, and cooking.



Volunteers prepare soil for seeding.

Labor always comes with a prize.







The landscaping surrounding the facility plays such an integral part of the Center where memories are created and cherished among families, friends and community members.

(Left) Joseph Do, Executive Director, congratulates Vanessa Do and Taylor Tran, recipients of the Girl Scout Silver Award for the beautification project of the community garden. The Silver Award is the highest honor a Cadette can earn from the Girls Scout.





The harvest brings pure joy for our community members; a wonderful outcome has resulted from their hard labor and sacrifices.





Looking Onward

In the coming months, the Center hopes to better serve its community by becoming even more welcoming. First, this goal can be achieved by the ongoing land beautification efforts. The Center's gardens, ponds, orchards, and animal enclosures are all wonderful ways to forge a peaceful and inviting environment for all. Secondly, there must be an understanding of the unique needs of the growing Hispanic Community. In doing so, the Board of Directors has decided to reserve one day each week for them to host their desired activities.

In the upcoming year, the Center also strives to modify its distribution strategy by rescheduling Food and Health Fairs from every month to almost every week. This was a direct response to the plentiful crowds who gather at the Center for the general fairs, who would often find themselves waiting longer than anticipated.

It is our greatest hope that the Annam Community Development Corporation will bring happiness and health to every family in need of help within the Greater Houston Area.

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“Love cannot remain by itself — it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action and that action is service.”

- Mother Teresa