



### Benefits of the Open Arms Tutoring Program | Cheryl Weiss, OA Tutor & Volunteer

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Matthew 19:14

The Open Arms Hispanic Ministries Tutoring Program, with dedicated leaders and tutors inspired by Jesus’ love for children, has become a very helpful community resource. The number of Latino students we tutor keeps increasing as the word spreads about the program’s availability and benefits. Currently, twenty-one students are being tutored by our volunteer tutors. We would like to share with you some of the benefits of the tutoring program and encourage you to consider joining our tutoring team.

After a parent requests tutoring for their child, Kathy Troyer, the program’s Tutoring Coordinator, and the Open Arms Executive Director, Haroldo Nunes, arrange a home visit to meet with the student and his/her family. This visit helps the



family to better understand the program and provides the coordinator with information about the child’s specific tutoring needs so that tutors and students can be well matched. Tutors try to gear lessons that reinforce what is being taught in the student’s classes and allow time to work on difficult homework assignments or projects. But tutors may also

be the sounding board for students to talk about other issues in their school and home life, giving tutors the opportunity to talk about how to make friends, or why completing homework or school projects is important.

**Benefits of tutoring from conversations with students:** As students become more confident through tutor encouragement, they are better prepared to keep up in classes and to have successful social interactions with their classmates and

teachers. One fourth grade student came to her school with little previous math instruction. Her tutor has helped her from “square one” to a point where she is now proud of her success with classroom math assignments.

Students report enjoying learning and love some of the subjects we focused on in summer camp, such as U.S. geography and state

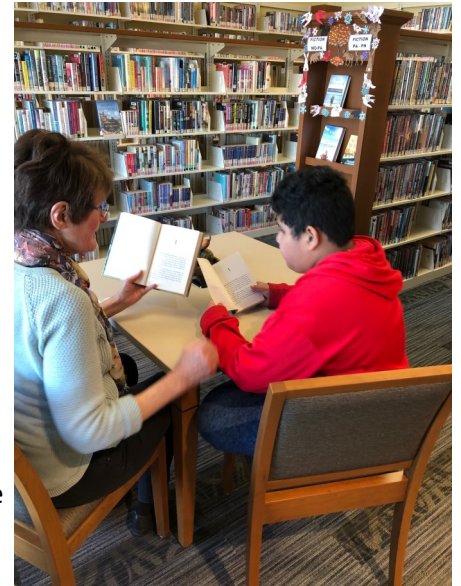
facts. They take delight in understanding and mastering what is being taught in class. Working with tutors gives students the opportunity for one-on-one attention, something they especially appreciate if there are other children at home.

Our students appreciate seeing themselves as the capable individuals they are. They are encouraged to participate in class and take part in school activities such as band or after school enrichment classes. They are gaining a sense of hope and confidence as they experience academic success and envision a positive future for themselves.

**Benefits to tutors as revealed in tutor interviews:** Many tutors interviewed reported the joy they experience as they accompany students on their journey toward success in their school environments. One tutor says, “It fills my heart to see the progress my student is making.” Another tutor says, “Working with my student and seeing other children in the program is “like a bright light” to me.

Although not required, tutors show support in various ways, such as celebrating a student’s birthday with an outing to the doughnut shop or helping to prepare a costume for a school event. These extended times with students add to the sense of joy tutors express at seeing their students having fun while learning more about this culture in which they now live.

A heartfelt “Thank you” to our tutors and to the wonderful students and their families with whom we work.



## Here I am, Lord | Dan King, Board Chair

*"Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart."*

*At Billy Graham crusades, millions worldwide dedicated their lives to Jesus Christ during the singing of "Just As I Am". I have been told that the hymn mentioned above is becoming the new "Just As I Am", touching countless hearts with the call of Jesus to follow him.*

You may recall the story of the rich young ruler, who sadly rejected Jesus' call because he could not part with his wealth. Such may be the case with many in our present culture. Homes are being built larger and more luxuriant, more "toys" are accumulating, vacations are becoming more extravagant. Yet in spite of our comfortable standard of living, cases of depression and suicide continue to rise. Consider the following solution: that those who claim the name "Christian" dedicate their time and resources to help those who are less fortunate.

My life was forever changed because of the two years I spent in voluntary service as a young single adult in Nicaragua in the early 1970's – 15 months in a jungle clinic and 9 months of youth ministry and earthquake relief in Managua. Countless others give testimony to their life-changing experiences in developing countries. High school graduates who are uncertain of their future careers should consider a year or two of voluntary service in another culture before pursuing higher education. Those presently in the work force could forego next year's European vacation to serve the needs of immigrants at our southern border. Retired persons could serve in homeless shelters, hurricane relief, or immigrant resettlement. Faith-based organizations and programs like MCC, SOOP, MVS, Heifer International, and YWAM are worthy of our support. The possibilities are endless!

There is also much that can be done "right here at home." Accompanying articles in this newsletter describe the present ministries of Open Arms and the variety of ways that you can support us. If God touches your heart, may you answer, *"Here I am, Lord."*

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## From the Desk of the Executive Director | Pastor Haroldo Nunes

*"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations". Psalm 100:4-5 (NIV)*

In my daily work with the Hispanic community, I have been busy going back and forth in the last two months accompanying people, but it is incredible to see how God is using the ministry in a way that lets our sisters and brothers experience the Father's love through the compassion and love of many in our local community. Our Hispanic community has many challenges in these days, but we feel blessed to have caring doctors, dentists, volunteers and many other professionals that are taking care of them. The Good News of our Savior Jesus Christ, the generous actions of our supporters and stakeholders, and the work of our Board of Directors in addition to our compassion fund and many services available, fill me with hope, love and humility to keep working hard to help the less fortunate. Please receive my sincere appreciation and thanks

for your prayers and for your financial support, which is such a help in providing for the material needs of many Hispanic families.

Our tutoring program is going well. We are experiencing so many challenges, but our tutors are doing a great job in helping Hispanic children from Orrville, Dalton and Smithville schools with reading, fun activities, and support with their academics. We are focusing on these kids because we want them to have the best chance possible to succeed with language skills and school work and to gain self-confidence. Their successes will impact not just them but their parents as well.

At this moment, I feel blessed to be an instrument of God's Kingdom, helping and walking along with the Hispanic families. It is incredible to see how our Creator prepared me and my family for this moment. It is an honor to work for God and I really appreciate having all of you in addition to our board members and staff helping in this effort. Please stay safe and healthy! God bless you!

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## Strategic Planning Update | Nate Scott, Board Member

As we near the end of the year, we are also nearing the end of our strategic planning process - one that has been incredibly productive in terms of the clarity and direction we now have for the future of Open Arms.

The plan is organized around four priority areas - Programs, Staffing, Leadership and Sustainability - with the purpose of maximizing our efforts as we pursue our mission to "welcome, accompany, and partner with Latino immigrants in building a safe and sustainable life." Specific goals for growing and strengthening Open Arms in each of the priority areas have been drafted by

the Strategic Planning committee and will be finalized by the Board before the end of the year.

We thank you for your prayers and support during our planning process and ask that you continue to do so. A plan is only as good as the actions taken on it, so we know that the most challenging work is ahead of us. We move forward with confidence, though, knowing that God has established our steps so far and believing that he will continue to do so as we attempt to extend his open arms.

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