

Christmas Newsletter 2009

Volume 3, Issue 3



Teachers and students engage during ESL classes held every Saturday 10am-11:30am. See story on page 2.

The Family Center is happy to announce the implementation of its first ever Youth Development Internship! In October, the Family Center announced to families in the neighborhood that we would be hiring 10 teenagers to help us with our programming for the next six months. After interviewing several applicants, the Family Center took on its first class of 10 Youth Development Interns. Throughout the year, the teen interns will help implement Family Center Programs, and, more critically, will be invested in spiritually, develop invaluable life skills, and grow in responsibility.

The teen interns...will be invested in spiritually, develop invaluable life skills, and grow in responsibility.

The Family Center has long been known for its tutoring programs. The teen interns are now heavily involved in this program, performing one-on-one tutoring for younger students on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This is an exciting new step in the tutoring program as we now have older students from the neighborhood tutoring the younger students. The interns are also involved in helping with our Kids' Club and providing childcare during ESL classes.

The interns are not only providing a valuable service to the Family Center, but they are also making an invaluable step in their own growth and development. Throughout the application and interview process, it has been stressed that this internship is a job. The interns are expected to be

timely and responsible, and we hold their work to a high standard. The interns are paid a stipend for their services to the Family Center, which further solidifies the sense of responsibility and privilege that comes with the internship. The interns are also offered many opportunities for self-development throughout their service. These opportunities include two nights per week when Family Center staff or volunteers are available to help them with their homework, and opportunities for field trips and workshops that are geared toward preparing them for college and employment. *Continued on page 2.*



Mike (far left) and Gloria (far right), two of our volunteer staffs, with our 2009-2010 Family Center teen interns at the first meeting playing hunter, gorilla, or babe.

Interested in partnering with us? We are looking for partners in the following areas:

Prayer | Financial giving | Volunteering

Please use the enclosed response card to indicate your interest.



P.O. Box 50234
East Palo Alto, CA 94303
www.okeefefamilycenter.org

After-school Tutoring Program by June Park

This year's tutoring program kicked off in fall and continues to be held twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons (4-6pm). We have an increased number of students this year; about 15 K-7th graders regularly attend this program. Because our model of tutoring requires a low student-to-tutor ratio, this increase meant that we needed more help than ever! Luckily, our new teen interns have been able to help tutor the children as part of their teen internship responsibilities. Each student is paired with a tutor who remains with that student for the duration of the tutoring program. In addition to helping with homework, we also work on fundamental reading and math skills, since many of the students

are below grade-level in their subjects. Tutoring is intended to give students a safe place to improve their academics. The format helps tutors and students get to know each other well, so tutors can learn to work with their student more effectively, and students have a consistent person to go to during this program. This has already had noticeable results. Mary,* one of the new students in the tutoring program, recently had a parent-teacher conference. During this meeting, her teacher told her mom that her schoolwork had been "outstanding", and asked for our tutoring program's contact information so she could send more students to us. May we have even more stories like this to share throughout this year!

Teen Internship continued...

The Family Center also has a unique opportunity to provide spiritual mentorship and development for the interns. Each intern is partnered with a Family Center volunteer staff in a mentoring relationship. This relationship is a weekly commitment by both parties and fluid in its structure, allowing each pair to focus on its own priorities.

The final component of the teen internship is a weekly Bible study time. The interns gather each Friday night and study passages of scripture. Many of the interns have come from Catholic backgrounds and are familiar with church culture, but have never had the opportunity and encouragement to study scripture with their peers and to pursue a deeper, more personal understanding of their faith.

The estimated cost to run the Youth Development Internship for the year is \$20,000. If you would like to contribute to this exciting new program, please make checks payable to The Family Center on O'Keefe St. and send them to P.O. Box 50234, East Palo Alto, CA 94303. If your church or small group would like to support a single intern through the program, this would be a \$1,400 commitment and would be the opportunity to truly bless this intern in his or her personal development as well as bless the other programs of the Family Center that this intern will be contributing to. Another way to help would be to volunteer during one of their homework tutoring times on a weeknight during the year.

ESL Classes by Annie Cheng



One of the tutors from Breakaway Church working with ESL students.

We're so grateful for friends from Breakaway Church who have started to host ESL classes for adults in our neighborhood. We started classes the week before Thanksgiving, have had ~10 adults come each time, and continue to grow in size. Classes are 10am to 11:30am on Saturdays and have been a time not only for learning English in a fun setting, but also for adults to connect with one another.

Classes have been so much fun! People gather in groups or one-on-one, and have mastered phrases such as "I/he/she/they go to the school/hospital/church" or "We/they are in the kitchen/bedroom/bathroom." Pictures are used to aid in the learning. At the end of every class, we go around and everyone says, "My name is _____." Right after Thanksgiving, they also added, "...and I am thankful for _____." Many of them said, "I am thankful for people from church who come to teach us English."

We don't have a set place to meet for the ESL classes yet, so please pray that God would open doors and provide a location. May He be glorified through these ESL classes!

Prayer Needs

- Pray for our ongoing financial and prayer support-raising.
- Pray for the deepening of relationships between the teens and their mentors.
- Pray for salvation to come to all in this neighborhood.
- Pray for God to provide a permanent place to host these ESL classes.
- Pray for the breakdown of strongholds in the community, especially areas we live.
- Pray for reconciliation between couples, mothers and fathers.

*Name has been changed for privacy