



Julia C. Hester House

## 2020 Julia C. Hester House Annual Report

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***“The mission of the Julia C. Hester House is to enhance the quality of life in Houston’s Fifth Ward and surrounding communities through programs and services that promote self-empowerment.”***

When you talk about the Julia C. Hester House, located in the heart of Houston’s Fifth Ward, there’s only one word that comes to mind. What is it? Impact. In the midst of a global pandemic, Julia C. Hester House continued to strive to serve our community in 2020.

The children of our community continued to learn more about math through the game of chess and utilized virtual tutoring programs to stay on top of their learning. Our seniors loved our virtual gardening, prayer lines, and other programs which helped build community and combat loneliness. Overall, in 2020, we served over 1,250 Greater Fifth Ward Houstonians through youth programming, social services and case management, senior services, wellness programs, and regular food distributions.

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Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## 2020 Highlights

### Youth Services:

2020 was yet another successful year for The Julia C. Hester House Youth Services! Our youth participants kicked off the year strong, placing second in the first division and first in the second division in this year's Knowledge Bowl competition held at Lincoln City Park. We also had a record number of participants achieve academic excellence, due not only to their energetic efforts, but also thanks to the encouragement and dedication of our parents, staff, and partners. Over 100 children and their families walked through our doors on a daily basis at the start of the year. During the school year they participated in chess club, robotic kits and even traveling naturalist workshops – learning about and interacting with rare mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Some of their favorite ways to have fun and get moving included modern and classical dance, organized games of Dodgeball, Basketball, Asteroids, Cat and Mouse and Chair Volleyball with our Hester House Seniors. Over 20 of our children began or continued Learn to Swim lessons.

Shortly after the year started, our in-person programming was quickly suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of this global pandemic, Hester House became a food sorting and distribution site. The Houston Food Bank provided vegetables and dry goods which our Youth Specialists helped sort daily in our recreation center. On Tuesdays, staff helped distribute sorted items to the Fifth Ward community and any other persons in need of food. Staff contributed to this work from March 2020 to May 2020. With social distancing requirements in place due to the pandemic, this year's summer camp ran online starting in June 2020 and ended in August 2020. In the previous year we had a total of 80 participants and this year we had a total of 35 participants join virtually. The number of virtual Zoom sessions we held during our Summer Enrichment Program was eight sessions per day, five days per week and eight weeks in length. This gave us a total of 320 Zoom sessions hosted for the Summer Enrichment Program. Parents and guardians were able to pick up materials for any hands-on activities and sessions through a safe, contactless drive-through process the week prior to the scheduled Summer Camp zoom sessions. Programming continued to take place virtually throughout the second half of 2020 for our After-School program with holiday breaks in accordance with the Houston Independent School District's schedule.

In spite of the challenges, 2020 has truly continued the reestablishment of Hester House the tradition of empowerment and wellness. Our computer lab was improved due to the addition of five new computers which were generously donated by the Harris County Public Library. These computers were beneficial to Youth Staff who utilized them to host multiple Zoom session during our Virtual Summer Camp as well as our Virtual After-School Program. Adjustments were made to the classrooms, including new chairs in the first two classrooms and foldable tables

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replaced in the third classroom as well as the music room. There were new rolling chairs replaced in the Youth Manager's office as well as two waiting chairs.

We continued our partnership with the Children's Museum which often donates a number of math kits consisting of numerous math activities for our youth to utilize. Youth Staff duplicated these kits so that youth would be able to participate virtually when utilizing these kits. For the holiday season we continued our collaboration with the National Charity League Bayou City Chapter, which sponsored and put on our annual Holiday Dreams event where more than 200 youth, families and friends were able to participate in a holiday drive. At this event, our youth still had the opportunity to pick a gift for themselves, their caregiver, take a picture with Santa standing outside their vehicle and celebrate the joy of their accomplishments in 2020.

### **Social Services and Case Management:**

The Social Service and Case Management program continued to partner with Harris County Federal Credit Union in 2020. The Credit Union also encouraged its members old and new to learn how to access their accounts on line. However, due to the pandemic, representatives were not able to come out to the center to assist our adult and senior clients. The beginning of May, Case Management and Social Services partnered with Harris County Precinct One Horticulture Department to start our Gardening Program, which allowed both adults and senior participants to learn helpful gardening tips and how to plant a garden via Zoom, as part of our continued commitment to supporting Fifth Ward residents with health and wellness education.

During the summer (June to August) the Case Management and Social Services Manager assisted with Houston Food Bank food sorting and bi-weekly food distribution to the community. In the month of November, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee provided sixty-five (65) families with a Thanksgiving Food Box that included a turkey and dessert during a contactless drive through event.

### **Senior Services:**

The year 2020 challenged our ability to provide services to the community but we did it and learned through the process. From early 1n 2020 on, programming to our seniors was provided through Zoom. Some of our seniors were not computer literate which posed a challenge, however, with technical support from Hester House; they conquered their fears and were able to

learn how to use their computers, phones and tablets to participate in activities. Those activities included a weekly devotional time and playing bingo which they truly loved.

Sunday dinners were well attended by senior participants. Our chef provided over 400 meals for our seniors to have a Sunday meal with four options to choose from. Seniors came together via Zoom, ate, enjoyed musical programming, socialized and fellowshipped with one another.

Senior Services also provided participants with needed cleaning supplies, mask and food boxes throughout the year. Daily calls were made to ensure seniors were doing well and their daily needs were being met.

In October of 2020 a weekly group therapy session began to assist the seniors with handling anxiety, depression, solitude, and loneliness brought on by the pandemic. Each session was successful in meeting the needs of our participants.

In the month of November, Congresswoman Shelia Jackson Lee provided sixty-five families with a Thanksgiving Food Box that included a turkey and dessert, made available for pick up through a contactless drive-through event.

While the year started with numerous challenges, Senior Services and the community served succeeded in learning new technology and ways of communicating.

### **Wellness Center:**

2020 began as a year where individuals in the community were able to maintain their physical health by participating in services offered in-person through our Wellness Center. There were 90 new participants in the month of January with daily average attendance of 15 individuals utilizing the weight room and seven individuals utilizing the gymnasium. In the month of February we welcomed an additional 20 participants and continued to serve a daily average attendance of 15 individuals in the weight room and nine individuals utilizing the gymnasium.

In March 2020, the Wellness Center was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From March on, it was impossible for individuals (adults and seniors) who participated in our bike program to continue engaging in this activity. At the beginning of April 2020, the managers of the Aquatic and Wellness Centers guided the partnership with the Houston Food Bank and Harris County Precinct One, to sort, package and distribute food to individuals in the Fifth Ward community. Food distributions took place periodically throughout the month of April 2020 and ended in January of 2021. During the summer (June 8 – July 8, 2020), the Wellness Center

hosted numerous bi-weekly food drives alongside Virtual Zoom Exercise Class for youth participants.

### **Aquatics Program:**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Harris County Aquatic Program partnered with The Houston Food Bank to help pack and sort vegetables and dry goods for families and members of the Fifth Ward area, beginning in April of 2020 and running through January of 2021. Starting in the month of June, the Houston Food Bank started food distributions at Hester House where we were able to see our adult and youth participants come through the line. In the months of May and June, the Aquatic Program hosted Virtual Exercise Classes for the adult program utilizing Zoom and YouTube videos.

In the month of September, we hosted Virtual Zoom Adults Aerobics as well as Virtual Zoom youth dryland exercises (swim team). The Aquatic Program hosted a school supply drive for members of the swim team on August 20, 2021. Harris County Aquatic Program had one of its swim team members go to State in the 100 and 200 meter butterfly and the 50-meter freestyle after swimming only a few months with another team, to which he and his sister were referred by the Coach.

## **Julia C. Hester House Leadership 2020 Board of Directors**

### **Chairman of the Board**

Charles E. McCloud

### **Directors**

Sidney Braquet	Jim Lemond
Lester Byrd	Johnnie Means
The Honorable Harold Dutton, Jr.	Matt Milligan
Dr. DoVeanna Fulton	Darry Wilson

### **Executive Director**

Daisy A. Stiner

### **Manager – Youth Services**

Ashley Khan

### **Manager – Social Services and Case Management**

Marie Mure

### **Manager – Senior Services**

Edna Pickens

### **Manager – Wellness Center**

Brian Purnell

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**JULIA C. HESTER HOUSE, INC.**  
**2020 Financial Summary Report (Unaudited)**

The following is the summary of Julia C. Hester House's unaudited financial report for the calendar year ended on December 31, 2020.

Total Support and Revenues	\$523,192.00
Total Programs' Expenses	\$649,865.00
Total Management and General Expenses	\$113,717.00
Total Fundraising Expenses	\$75,651.00
Total End of Year Net Asset Balance	\$4,372,377.00

This information is provided to Better Business Bureau of Greater Houston and South Texas per their request(s).

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