ANNUAL REPORT
2021
NAM SERVES
Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM) is a nonprofit, community-based, multi-program social service agency that strives to meet basic human needs through Neighbors Helping Neighbors. NAM provides assistance in areas including food, shelter, clothing, education, children's health, domestic violence, behavioral health, and more.

ABOUT US

Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM) is a nonprofit, community-based, multi-program social service agency that strives to meet basic human needs through Neighbors Helping Neighbors. NAM provides assistance in areas including food, shelter, clothing, education, children's health, domestic violence, behavioral health, and more.

Our Mission
NAM’s mission is to strive to meet basic human needs through Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

Our Vision
NAM’s vision, grounded in its mission and true to its values, is a community in which Neighbors care for Neighbors through collaborative efforts with area congregations, community partners, donors and volunteers. Resources are pooled and leveraged to meet basic needs and to help individuals regain their self-sufficiency, thereby creating a safer and more stable community for all.

Our Values
NAM’s values include: maintaining a strong commitment to its mission of meeting basic human needs through Neighbors Helping Neighbors; fostering a spirit of respect and charity; striving for excellence in all areas of service; and strengthening connections with its spiritual, funding and volunteer partners.

This year NAM served 136,676 Neighbors in Need (based on monthly totals for individuals served)
NAM COLLABORATIONS

- 24 Hour Fitness
- AARP
- Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse
- Aldine ISD
- American Lung Association in Texas
- Assalam Clinic
- Avenue 360
- Beacon Law
- Between Jobs Ministry
- Brightwood College
- Christus Health Foundation
- Cities Changing Diabetes - Novo Nordisk
- Coalition for the Homeless/Harris County
- Continuum of Care
- College of Healthcare Professionals
- Community Health Choice
- Cy-Fair ISD
- DePelchin Center
- Gateway to Care
- Green and Healthy Home Initiative
- Harris County Area Agency on Aging
- Harris County Community Services Development
- Harris County Department of Education
- Harris County District Attorney's Office
- Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
- Harris County Housing Authority
- Harris County Public Library
- Harris County Sheriff's Office
- Harris County Social Services
- Harris County's Curiosity Cruiser
- Harris Health System
- Houston Community College
- Houston Food Bank
- Houston Methodist Healthcare System
- Houston Northwest Medical Center
- Interfaith CarePartners
- Karya Properties
- Klein ISD
- L.I.F.E Houston
- Life Care Pregnancy Center
- Lone Star College
- Meals on Wheels Texas
- One Voice Texas
- Reach Out & Read – Texas
- Retired & Senior Volunteer Program thru Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center Houston
- University of Texas Health Science Center
- Sam Houston State University, LBC Program
- Santa Maria Hostel, Inc.
- Sea Smiles Dental
- Senior Rides and More
- SPCA Houston
- Spring ISD
- Superior Health Plan and DFPS
- Texas A&M University
- Texas Association Against Sexual Assault
- Texas Council on Family Violence
- Texas Department of Agriculture
- Texas Domestic Violence Shelters
- Texas Pediatric Society
- Texas Southern University
- Texas Women's University
- Tomball ISD
- United Way of Greater Houston
- University of Houston Clear Lake Healthcare Administration Program
- University of Houston, Graduate College of Social Work
- University of Houston, Nursing Program
- UT Arlington College
- UT Health Science Center
- UT Physicians
- UT Prevent Blindness Texas Program
- UT Psychiatry
- UT Wellness
- Volunteers of America
- Walgreens
- WIC and SNAP Programs
- Women's Resource of Greater Houston
- Workfaith Connection
- Workforce Solutions
2021 could not come soon enough. After enduring the global pandemic in 2020 with its life-altering consequences, everyone was ready for a new year and a fresh start. Vaccines were on the horizon. Restrictions were starting to ease. There was great hope that life would return to normal.

But it wasn’t long before 2021 dealt its own hand of trouble. Winter Storm Uri brought dangerously cold temperatures to Texas, knocking out electrical grids and disrupting water service—for days. The Delta variant brought another surge of COVID-19, with more illness and death despite the valiant efforts of exhausted healthcare workers. And the pandemic’s economic impact continued to mount as families struggled to catch up on rent, feed their families, and return to work.
Through it all, NAM was there. Providing food for thousands of families. Delivering meals to hundreds of seniors. Lifting huge burdens with rental assistance so neighbors could avoid eviction. Caring for children’s health in the midst of a pandemic...offering safety for women and children trapped in violent homes...and equipping adults with skills for life-changing jobs.

No other organization in our area can do what NAM does. In every crisis, large or small, NAM serves. The community relies on us to be here. But with that expectation comes the support to make it all possible.

Thank you for being part of Neighbors Helping Neighbors. Thank you for being part of NAM.
ILLNESS AND LOSS OF LIFE
As of December 1, 2021, more than half a million people in Houston and Harris County have had confirmed cases of COVID-19. Of those, 6,544 people lost their life. A study estimated that for every person who dies of the coronavirus, nine family members are affected. That means nearly 60,000 people in our community are grieving because of this disease alone. Children have lost parents, spouses have lost their partner, families are without primary wage-earners. Residents of low-income communities have been hit disproportionately hard.

VACCINES
In December 2020, the Pfizer vaccine became available for adults ages 16 and older. Because of limited availability, the vaccines were rolled out in phases to prioritize those most at risk.

Getting a vaccine was hard at first; at one point Harris County had more than 300,000 people on a waiting list. But as supplies increased, another shift occurred. Fear about the vaccine began to outweigh concerns about the virus, especially among people of color.

Early on, NAM’s zip code had the highest number of COVID-19 cases in Harris County. Harris County Public Health asked NAM to serve as a testing site for the coronavirus, and later to administer vaccines. NAM gladly agreed, but the response from the community was less than expected.

THE DELTA VARIANT
As cases began to drop due to vaccinations, a new mutation of the coronavirus emerged, known simply as the Delta variant. First identified in India, by June 2021 it had made its way to the Houston area.

The Delta variant is more than twice as contagious as previous strains. Its greatest risk is to people who are not vaccinated for COVID-19. As infection rates began climbing from this variant, NAM had to close the Young at Heart Senior Center again and revert to virtual programming, to keep seniors safe.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19
Between March 7, 2020 and February 13, 2021, nearly 910,000 residents of the greater Houston area filed for unemployment. Not surprisingly, the loss of income had devastating consequences for families in terms of their ability to meet basic needs, such as food, clothing, and housing.

Throughout the pandemic, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted Pulse surveys to assess the needs of major metropolitan areas. In 10 of 25 surveys, the Houston Metro Area reported the highest levels of food insecurity of any major metropolitan area in the United States. Likewise, Houston ranked among the top three cities nationwide for evictions filed during the pandemic.

Of course, food and housing were two of the areas where NAM had a massive impact. The Joanne Watford Nutrition Center provided food for 31,307 individuals this year. Another 10,256 families received food through the Super Site Food Distributions held by NAM and the Houston Food Bank. Meals on Wheels at NAM delivered 244,714 nutritious meals to 1,416 homebound seniors.

And every month, NAM provided rental assistance to as many as 150 families so they could stay in their homes. Another 1,945 households received funding through the Houston/Harris County Emergency Rental Assistance Program, thanks to NAM’s help.

NAM SERVES
In every moment of this crisis, the community has looked to NAM. Leaders have looked to NAM as an essential partner in delivering solutions. Neighbors, desperate for help, have looked to NAM for the very basics of life: Food. Housing. Hope.

And because of you, NAM says yes. Because of you, NAM Serves.
At first the forecast sounded fun. A little snow, some cold temperatures, maybe a day off school for the kids. A rare taste of winter for Houston.

But then Winter Storm Uri arrived and it was anything but fun.

A dusting of snow led to icy roads as temperatures plummeted below freezing. Then the power went out—and stayed out, in many neighborhoods, for days. Without heat, pipes froze and burst, causing significant damage to homes and businesses. Water service was disrupted. Cell phones had no signal. And as the temperatures inside homes grew colder and colder, people used dangerous alternatives to try to keep warm.

A report by the Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston found that 91 percent of Harris County residents lost electrical power at some point during the storm, between February 14 – 20, 2021. Almost two-thirds of Harris County residents were without running water; in places where there was still water, it was often not safe to drink.

Worst of all, more than 50 Houston-area residents died as a result of the storm. They died from hypothermia, carbon monoxide, house fires, or were killed in car accidents on icy roads.

COUNTING ON NAM TO HELP

As with any disaster, neighbors were counting on NAM to help. And NAM came through.

Calls came from neighbors whose pipes had burst and damaged their homes. Some were staying in hotels and needed food. Others were stuck at home, unable to work, and concerned about lost income.

In response to those calls, NAM sought resources to help. Thankfully the Greater Houston Community Foundation had established a fund for winter relief and was able to support NAM in meeting the needs of the community.

KEEPING SENIORS SAFE

Throughout the pandemic, staff from NAM’s Senior Services have been calling each senior every day to check on them—which proved to be lifesaving during the winter storm.

“Every part of our 24-zip code service area had seniors with pipes that had burst, seniors without electricity or water,” says Grace Jackson, director of Senior Services for NAM. “But because we were calling them every day, they could immediately tell us what was going on.”

REPLACING WHAT WAS LOST

For those who lost belongings during the winter storm, NAM Resale offered very affordable options to help people get back on their feet. Many were struggling with insurance claims, but had urgent needs for furniture or clothing. At NAM Resale, they were able to meet those needs at a very nominal cost.

The same was true for residents of Louisiana who evacuated to Houston because of Hurricane Ida. Many left ahead of the storm, expecting to be gone just a few days. When the storm’s wrath kept them in Houston longer than anticipated, they too were able to receive food and clothing from NAM.

For neighbors near and far, when storms strike—NAM Serves.
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Dear Friends,

There’s a beautiful synergy that exists between NAM and our community. In times of crisis, leaders and neighbors alike count on NAM to provide tangible assistance wrapped in encouragement and hope. With that expectation comes the support to make it possible.

It’s an equation we've seen time after time, as together we have faced economic downturns, hurricanes, floods, and an unrelenting global pandemic. Neighbors come to NAM by the thousands, seeking basic necessities like food, shelter, and clothing. What they find is an outpouring of support from local congregations, businesses, government, community organizations, and donors large and small—each doing their part to make sure needs are met.

This year, NAM helped 28,410 neighbors with basic needs like food, rental assistance, clothing, transportation, and prescription medicines. We answered 4,510 calls from victims of domestic violence who were in crisis or needed assistance. Delivered 244,714 nutritious meals to homebound seniors through Meal on Wheels, and cared for the medical needs of 1,728 pediatric patients. To bring joy to children in a very difficult year, we distributed 17,000 toys last Christmas. And believe it or not, that’s just the tip of the iceberg.

Your support makes all of that possible. No other organization in our community has the capacity to meet such deep needs for so many people in such life-changing ways. To see this generous spirit of Neighbors Helping Neighbors lived out makes me enormously proud of our community, and enormously proud of NAM.

Thank you for partnering with us in this mission. Because of you, NAM will continue to serve our community in ways that change all of our lives.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rodney Watson

Chair, Board of Trustees
MEET NAM’S LEADERS & STAFF

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Director, Client Services

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Director, Behavioral Health

JASON WOODS
Director, NAM Resale
Dear Friends,

NAM has a heartbeat. It's the steady rhythm that drives everything we do; the pulse that keeps us in sync with our community and mission.

NAM's heartbeat links all of us together. Donors and clients, staff and volunteers, individuals and organizations. It reminds us with every breath that we are here for one another, that we are Neighbors Helping Neighbors, and we will do whatever it takes to lift one another up in the hard seasons of life.

There are neighbors who are hungry...we feed them.
There are neighbors who are homeless...we provide a home.
There are neighbors who are sick...we care for them.
There are neighbors who are lonely...we introduce them to new friends.
There are neighbors who are in danger...we find a path to safety.

To put it simply, NAM Serves. With compassion, dignity, and grace, we come alongside those who are hurting and walk with them to a better day.

Like any meaningful service, it often requires great sacrifice. But as we have seen through a global pandemic, hurricanes, economic downturns, and a myriad of personal storms, nothing stops NAM's heartbeat. We are here for our community, and we are exceedingly grateful that our community is here with us.

Thank you for partnering with NAM in yet another extraordinary year; for giving of yourself sacrificially so that together we can serve our Neighbors in Need. Because of you, NAM’s heartbeat is stronger than ever.

Sincerely,

Les Cave

Linda & Harlan Martens Endowed President & CEO
One of the greatest needs during the COVID-19 pandemic has been for assistance with rent or mortgage payments. Last year NAM saw lines of people wrapped around the building, desperate for a chance to apply.

Out of concern for their well-being, NAM moved to an online application process which has remained in place this year. Clients complete their application online, and from those, 150 are randomly selected each month for consideration.

“The stories are heartbreaking,” says Allison Booker-Brooks, Chief Program Officer for NAM. “You have people coming in who haven’t been able to work in six months, and they’re concerned they’re going to be evicted. That’s the story we hear over and over.”

NAM’s rent and mortgage assistance program is for clients who are no more than two months behind on their rent due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance. With the new Centralized Intake process that was implemented last year, each applicant also learns about other ways NAM can help, such as food, children’s healthcare, or vocational training for a new career. The goal is to provide clients with a complete overview of the services available to them at NAM, right from the start.

In April 2021, Harris County and the City of Houston launched the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), and sought out NAM to serve as a Navigator Organization. Designed to help tenants who are at least 3 months behind on their rent due to COVID-19, the program helps prevent evictions by paying their overdue rent and up to one month forward. Funds go directly to the landlord.

Through ERAP, NAM employed an additional six case managers whose sole responsibility was to reach out to the community, find neighbors who qualified for the assistance, and help them file an application. For this program alone, case managers typically screened about 500 clients each month.

“People have been petrified,” says Karen Weakly, director of Client Services for NAM. “They’re months behind on rent with unemployment running out, and they don’t know how they’re going to make ends meet.”

According to an August 2021 article by The Kinder Institute for Urban Research, it’s not known how many Houston-area households are at risk of being evicted—but it could be between 109,000 and nearly 172,000.

Thanks to the Houston-Harris County ERAP, by early July more than $163 million had been distributed to about 43,000 families. Over $6.1 million was successfully distributed in roughly three months to 1,100 households in the 77090 zip code—the most in Harris County. And yes, that’s NAM’s zip code. By the end of September, 2021, NAM had helped 1,945 eligible families apply for this assistance.
UNWAVERING COMMITMENT

Through it all, NAM’s staff never wavered in their commitment to serve. They listened to story after story with compassion and understanding, offering support, guidance, and the chance to be heard.

“I think [what kept us going] is the fact that we know there are people who really need the help,” says Karen. “You know you’re not going to get rich in social services. Our richness comes because many of us believe this is a call on our life: the opportunity to help people.”

MICHELLE’S STORY

Michelle has been a graphic designer for 25 years. When she and her husband separated, she thought she could work from home. But with a 2-year-old, that was challenging.

She found a job, but the work disappeared when the pandemic hit. “Nobody was hiring marketing people during COVID,” Michelle says.

Unemployment benefits kept her afloat until June. Then in August, she found out she was pregnant—a miracle since she had gone through three rounds of IVF to have her first daughter. At age 46 her pregnancy is considered high risk, and she has restrictions on how much she can lift. She has applied for hundreds of jobs, with no success.

Michelle received rental assistance from NAM, for which she is grateful. But as with so many in our community, there is no clear resolution to her story yet. She is still figuring it out one day at a time.

“All I want to do is work and take care of my daughter,” she says. “It’s tough, it’s really tough.”
The line of vehicles stretched as far as the eye could see. Cars of every make and model, trunks raised, driving slowly past a series of tents, as volunteers loaded in boxes filled with groceries, fresh produce, milk and protein.

It didn’t matter how much food they could have purchased before the pandemic. COVID-19 had affected them all, and NAM was ready to serve.

From August 2020 to November 2020, in partnership with the Houston Food Bank, NAM held a series of Super Site Food Distributions twice a month at Spring ISD’s Planet Ford Stadium or the EcoPark at George Bush Intercontinental Airport. Each one served an average of 1,500 to 2,500 families per day.

Since that time, NAM has continued to hold large food distributions on a quarterly basis. As recently as September, 2021, more than 600 families drove through the parking lot at NAM to receive much-needed food.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Mark and Paula Stoebner

When the pandemic hit, Mark and Paula Stoebner knew where they needed to be.

The couple has been volunteering at NAM for years. Mark began serving in the Joanne Watford Nutrition Center (JWNC) in 2005 after he retired, and Paula joined him a few years later. They also volunteer with NAM’s Meals on Wheels, Thanksgiving, and Holiday distributions.

Mark and Paula knew that people would be counting on food from the JWNC, so in the height of the COVID-19 shutdowns, they showed up. Every day they came back, working tirelessly with servant hearts. And they’ve continued to do that—every day—for more than a year and a half now.

“Mark and Paula go above and beyond in everything,” says Kerima Pizarro, supervisor of the JWNC. “Without hesitation they decided, since day one of COVID, to be here. It’s amazing the time they give to NAM.”

In gratitude for their efforts, Mark and Paula were honored as Volunteers of the Year at the 2021 Jeans & Jewels Gala. Going forward, a volunteer will be chosen each year to receive an award named in their honor: the Mark and Paula Stoebner Volunteer Appreciation Award.
"The need is still here," says Allison Booker-Brooks, Chief Program Officer for NAM. The hardships caused by COVID-19 have resulted in more neighbors than ever before turning to the Joanne Watford Nutrition Center (JWNC) for help. Every day, an average of 50 households come to the JWNC for food. Normally guests would walk the aisles and choose their own items, but for now groceries are pre-packed and loaded into the guest’s car for contactless delivery. The JWNC also serves clients from NAM’s Housing Services program, as well as about 100 seniors from Meals on Wheels who receive supplemental groceries. Regardless of how they receive the food, their gratitude is evident.

“They’re very grateful, especially our seniors," says Kerima Pizarro, supervisor of the JWNC. “You go beyond what you can do to help the clients. We know people are desperate, they’re going through very difficult situations—COVID, storms, cuts to their income. When you see people that are so in need, I’m here to help.”

Such massive distributions of food are only possible because of volunteers, who do everything from unloading trucks and picking up donations at local grocery stores, to stocking shelves, packing bags, and loading food into cars. Most of all, they bring positive energy and a personal touch to every interaction.

“What kept me going through all of this is my volunteers," says Kerima. “There were still so many people and companies who were willing to come and help, no matter the circumstances. It feels like a big family.”

This year, the Joanne Watford Nutrition Center provided healthy, nourishing food to 31,307 Neighbors in Need.

Feeding thousands of neighbors is an orchestrated effort, with many different players doing their part.

The Houston Food Bank is a major partner of NAM’s JWNC and provided all of the food for the Super Site distributions. Throughout the year, NAM also orders food from the HFB at greatly reduced prices.

Other food comes from a network of local grocery stores, including Kroger, HEB, Walmart and Aldi, who donate their surplus to NAM on a daily or twice-weekly basis. Kroger also donates food from their Red Barrel program to NAM.

This year NAM added a new partner: The Common Market. This network of local family farms includes many that are minority-owned. Their fresh produce has been a wonderful blessing to JWNC and Meals on Wheels clients alike.

Finally there are the grassroots efforts of local congregations, organizations, businesses and individuals, who conduct food drives to benefit NAM. Sometimes it’s a young Scout who collects a trunk full of groceries; other times it’s a semi-truck full of food as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has donated three times during the pandemic.

But no matter the portion, with each bite these generous partners are making a difference for Neighbors in Need.
When the pandemic began, NAM’s Learning & Vocational Training Center quickly transitioned to online learning. Today, some classes continue to be offered in a fully virtual format, while others are a hybrid of online and in-person learning. The shift has been a struggle for some. An estimated 40 to 50 percent of new students at the Learning Center lack basic computer skills, such as logging on to a Zoom call or attaching a document to an email. But as NAM staff patiently walk them through those obstacles, a world of opportunity opens up.

With training for careers in healthcare, office work, information technology, forklift driving and more, students can gain the skills for a career that will change their lives by providing

Having a stable place to live can make all the difference. So NAM offers a variety of life-changing solutions for individuals and families who are homeless, or on the brink of becoming homeless.

There are long-term programs for individuals and families with special circumstances, where rent is paid in full as long as they remain compliant with the program. Another program reaches out to veterans, providing support such as rental assistance, utility assistance, food and furniture over the course of three to six months, so they can stabilize and get back on solid footing.

There are even programs to help those who are “couch surfing” and living with friends, or who need assistance getting to a family member’s home in another state.

Each circumstance is unique, so the solutions NAM devises are one-of-a-kind as well. But through each one, NAM provides comprehensive support to help individuals or families who are homeless move toward a path of self-sufficiency.

This year, 178 individuals received support from Housing Services including case management, housing placement, and subsidies.

LEARNING & VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER

EQUIPPING ADULTS WITH THE JOB SKILLS FOR FINANCIAL STABILITY
financial stability. And by changing one life, future generations are impacted as well.

“Our ultimate goal is always to move people toward financial stability,” says Elaina Albarez, director of the Learning Center. “So we hope the work we’re doing here sets that path, not only for the individual but for their family members.”

The Learning Center made other significant changes this year as well, moving its offices to NAM’s Harrell Family Opportunity Center, and restructuring staff responsibilities so each student is assigned one staff member who supports them through all aspects of the program. In addition, they launched a Work Readiness Week as a prerequisite for students to receive their scholarship. The orientation has been a powerful tool in making sure students have the commitment necessary to complete a full course of training.

“One of the things that excites us most is when you see a client land that dream job,” says Elaina. “You see all the fruits of their labor pay off, and it makes everything worth it.”

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**NATALIE’S STORY**

Natalie was a college student in Florida when she found out she was pregnant. Her school only offered support for an abortion, so she came back to her hometown of Houston.

She lived in two homeless shelters during the course of her pregnancy. Then her ex-boyfriend found her and convinced her to leave. After giving birth to a baby boy, she moved in with him.

But it was not a safe or loving home. Natalie’s boyfriend began to severely abuse her, and she had a vision that he was going to kill her. Badly hurt, she managed to escape and go into hiding with a relative.

In the midst of it all, she completed her bachelor’s degree and graduated in July, 2020. She quickly realized, however, that most jobs in her field required experience, and she had none. That’s when she got an email about the Community Health Worker program offered through NAM’s Learning & Vocational Training Center.

“I knew that’s what I needed so I could get a job, and that way I could sustain being a single mom,” says Natalie.

Natalie was accepted into the program at NAM in February, and also began graduate studies at Houston Baptist University for clinical mental health counseling. Her goal was to work as a community health worker to give her experience working with underserved communities.

Just as she was beginning the Community Health Worker program at NAM, however, the relative she was living with assaulted her. Natalie and her baby boy lived in a shelter for the next three months, while she completed her NAM coursework online.

Natalie is now certified as a Community Health Worker and earning straight A’s in her graduate studies. She was eager to go right into the work force, but four weeks ago her son was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes. As she navigates that new diagnosis, she does so with great hope for their future.

“Right now, if I was looking for a job online, they’re hiring Community Health Workers,” she says. “So as a single mom I have that job security. NAM’s program provided me with what I needed, and that to me is the biggest blessing I’ve had this year.”

“I have hope that in the future things will look very different for me. It can’t end here. This can’t be my final point. So anytime something happens, I push through it because I think this can’t be the end. I have so many dreams for my son, and so many hopes for myself.”

*Name has been changed.*
OLAPEJU’S STORY

Olapeju has five children—four boys and a girl—ranging in age from 3 to 15 years old. She has been bringing them to the Pediatric Health Center (PHC) at NAM for about eight years, and has always been pleased with the care they receive.

“They’re willing to listen and follow through,” she says. “My children enjoy the doctors.”

But in recent weeks, life has changed dramatically for the family. They found out—too late—that her husband had lymphoma. Then he contracted COVID-19. With a weakened immune system, he developed pneumonia and died.

“It left me with five kids now,” Olapeju says. “It’s hard, but with God’s help....”

The PHC staff is standing by, ready to help as well. With behavioral health therapists, case managers, and access to NAM’s resources for food, clothing and other assistance, they offer more than the typical pediatrician’s office can provide.

The road ahead will be long for Olapeju and her children. But with the PHC’s holistic approach to care, NAM is ready to walk with them on that journey.
Neighbors who come to NAM are often dealing with extreme stress due to a lack of housing, unemployment, domestic violence and more. Now, NAM has a way to help them not only with their physical needs, but with the mental and emotional impact as well.

On June 3, 2021, NAM launched a new Behavioral Health program. With a full time therapist and three interns, the program provides counseling to clients served by any of NAM’s programs, including children, adults, seniors, individuals, couples, and families.

“When people are struggling, if they don’t have someone to talk to and process the information, that’s when more severe mental health issues can crop up,” says Candace Runaas, Director of Behavioral Health for NAM. “Behavioral health services help people think about things differently, think about themselves differently, and be able to reframe that information.”

In addition to therapy, Candace’s team offers workshops for clients as well as NAM’s staff, on topics such as stress management, mind-body workshops, burnout prevention, and self-care. “We have to help the helpers,” says Candace.

“I love doing this work, and I love doing it for this organization,” she adds. “If you ever wanted to have a career that felt like your life had purpose and meaning, this is it. I dance into work. I love it.”

In frustration and grief, Marco shouted at the department store staff so they banned him from returning. He knew he was at his breaking point—angry and hopeless, with crumbling relationships all around. The grief of losing his young adult son to gun violence was too much to bear.

Like many of NAM’s clients, Marco was facing multiple issues like unemployment, chronic health problems, transportation, and financial pressure. For more than 10 years NAM has helped bridge the gap for Marco and his family, providing food, school supplies, and medical care through the Pediatric Health Center.

When he contacted the behavioral health therapist at NAM, Marco initiated the slow and gentle process of healing. He confessed his attempts to try to control everything in a world where he had no control. Marco shared painful and beautiful memories, sobbing, weeping, smiling, laughing.

Together, Marco and his therapist ministered to the emotional and psychological wounds, taking the precious time he needed to heal.

Today, after two years, Marco smiles when he enters the therapy room. He no longer thinks of killing himself. He remembers his grandmother, who took him to church every Sunday as a child, and always saw the good in him. He talks about living a life of purpose, expresses surprise at his ability to share his story as an advocate for himself and others, and shares his hope for a day when the legal system delivers justice.

“I’ve learned to see the big picture,” he says. “Others are hurting too, and anger was only pushing people away. I know now that if I use my coping skills, take a moment to breathe, think positive and use a little humor, it helps me get through the challenging times each day. I’m doing better, and it makes me proud of myself.”
There is perhaps no greater joy than seeing loved ones after a long absence. And that’s exactly what happened when the Young at Heart Senior Center reopened on June 1, 2021, after being closed for 14 months due to COVID-19.

A huge banner welcomed everyone back, as laughter and conversation filled the space. The staff’s hardest job in those first few days was reminding seniors not to hug each another. Numerous safety measures had been implemented, including floor markings to keep everyone six feet apart, mask requirements, signs about social distancing, and sanitizing after every activity.

As wonderful as it was to see everyone, the heartbreaking piece was to see the noticeable decline and frailty of many seniors. Isolation and lack of exercise had taken a significant toll.

“We could visibly see the difference,” says Grace Jackson, director of Senior Services for NAM. “When you’re at home, you’re isolated, you’re not exercising—we could visibly see the aging process occur.”

**It was a clear message of just how important NAM’s services are, to help seniors stay healthy, active, and independent.**

After two wonderful months together, Young at Heart had to close again at the end of July 2021 due to the Delta variant and rising numbers of COVID-19. Staff once again resumed virtual programming, including Bingo, coffee and conversation, exercise class, French lessons, and nutrition workshops—all on Zoom. The staff also call each senior every day, to check in and keep people connected.

“The idea of going back into isolation mode, it’s pretty hard for everybody—staff as well as seniors,” says Eva Galloway, social services supervisor. “But we’re in it for the long haul. We do whatever is necessary to keep our seniors connected and keep their spirits up.”

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Ken and Paulette’s Story

Ken and Paulette have a love story that spans the globe.

In the 1960s, he was in the Navy; she lived in France. Ken’s uncle owned a lamp company in Chicago, where Paulette’s uncle also worked. Their families played matchmaker and suggested that Ken pay a visit to Paulette—so he did.

They had a blind date in London 58 years ago, and were married two years later. “It was love at first sight on a blind date,” laughs Ken.

Ken and Paulette moved to Houston in 2007 to be near grandchildren. They attended a few events at NAM’s Young at Heart Senior Center, but were busy retirees with a full schedule.

Then came the shutdowns for COVID-19. Ken and Paulette heard through a friend that Young at Heart was offering virtual Bingo, and immediately logged on.

**“It saved us,”** says Paulette. **“Before the vaccines, we sort of quarantined ourselves in our own home and literally didn’t do much visiting at all,”** explains Ken. **“So it was a way to reconnect with people.”**

“We have a blast doing it,” Ken says. “You can’t become totally isolated and maintain your thinking. It’s the camaraderie of being around other people that helps maintain your mental balance.”
When the coronavirus came to Houston in March 2020, NAM’s Meals on Wheels program immediately shifted to delivering 10-day packs of shelf-stable meals, to minimize exposure between seniors and the volunteers who deliver their food.

Now, more than a year and a half later, the program continues to operate in a modified fashion to keep seniors safe. Every Monday, dedicated volunteers deliver a week’s worth of frozen meals to nearly 900 seniors across 24 zip codes in northwest Houston. And every day, the Meals on Wheels staff call each senior to check in—nearly 900 phone calls, every day.

“That’s our commitment to them,” says Grace Jackson, director of Senior Services for NAM. “We are here to serve them, to help in any way that we possibly can, pandemic or no pandemic.”

Those daily phone calls were critically important during the winter storm of 2021. Living in their own homes, dozens of NAM’s Meals on Wheels clients were without electricity or water. Others had pipes burst due to freezing temperatures, damaging their homes. Yet they were not alone.

Throughout the week-long storm, NAM’s staff continued to check on every senior, every day. They coordinated deliveries of drinking water and served as a triage center for seniors whose homes were damaged by broken pipes, immediately referring those needs to the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) so repair teams could be dispatched. In all, NAM facilitated home repairs for 95 seniors due to damage from the storm.

“Having NAM here as a hub is critical, because we’re meeting people’s basic needs,” says Grace, adding that NAM is the only organization serving northern Harris County. “Food is a basic need, and we never want to see seniors standing in food lines. Delivering the nutrition they need is extremely important.”

This year, NAM’s Meals on Wheels provided 244,714 nutritious meals to 1,416 homebound seniors and disabled adults.

JANICE’S STORY

For Janice, Meals on Wheels at NAM is part of the family. Over the past 19 years, Janice’s aunt, mother, two daughters with disabilities and a granddaughter with cerebral palsy have all received the meals. Now at 81 years of age, Janice has enjoyed the meals for more than a decade herself.

“The meals are more than helpful,” she says. “All of them are favorites to us. There is not one bad meal.”

Having food delivered to their home became especially important during the pandemic. “I’m afraid, now more than ever,” says Janice. “I’ve had it (COVID-19) twice, and going to the store for me was scary. I’m sitting here at home and trying to go out as little as I can.”

With special health needs in her family including high blood pressure, diabetes, and kidney dialysis, Janice is quick to point out that Meals on Wheels entrees are safe for people with a variety of health issues. And they address another aspect as well: her soul.

With each meal that arrives, Janice knows there are people who care about her family and are thinking of them each day.

“(NAM) has never let us down,” she says, her voice choked with emotion. “Christmas time, they’ve never let us down. Thanksgiving, they’ve never let us down. When we couldn’t get a turkey, all of a sudden Meals on Wheels was at the door with a turkey for us.”

“The people that get these meals to us, I’m so grateful to them,” she adds, mentioning one of her favorite drivers, Quinton. “Meals on Wheels has top of the line people on their team, and they feel like family to me.”
It’s 2:30 a.m. and the phone rings. The FVC (Family Violence Center) staff member has already worked a full day, but now she grabs the phone and iPad and takes a deep breath. Sitting on the edge of her bed in pajamas, she listens to a desperate story of domestic violence or sexual assault. Then, she joins with the caller in making a plan for rescue.

Each of the seven staff members at NAM’s Family Violence Center take their turn answering the hotline. For two weeks at a time they are on call throughout the night, responding to emergencies, getting victims to a safe location, involving hospitals and law enforcement when needed, and making a plan for next steps. They are passionate in the care they provide, and unwavering in their commitment to serve.

The FVC also advanced their care for sexual assault victims this year, partnering with Texas Forensic Nurse Examiners to open a small clinic in the FVC that can provide specialized medical exams and collect necessary evidence. Exams are available 24 hours a day, in a private environment with fewer interruptions than a busy emergency room.

Domestic violence increased significantly last year due to COVID-19, and remained high this year as families struggled with finances, employment, and other stressors. The FVC Hotline received 4,510 calls this year from individuals in crisis or seeking assistance.

Beyond the walls of NAM, the FVC takes their messages to local schools to raise awareness about teen dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual assault. Schools were operating in various states of in-person or virtual learning this year, so the FVC’s educator offered presentations on Zoom as well as pre-recorded sessions. Despite the pandemic, the FVC made 103 presentations at 18 middle schools and high schools.

“We have an amazingly wonderful staff, and the services we offer would not be the same without the team we have right now,” says Sheryl Johnson, director of the FVC. “I truly believe that.”

For clients who have a protective order but are still being harassed, it can be a frightening and dangerous situation. So Ring video doorbells has launched a pilot program in Harris County, donating 500 systems and lifetime contracts for survivors of domestic violence who are establishing their own households.

With recorded proof of harassment, the systems have already collected enough evidence to lead to arrests. The FVC has given away 10 systems so far, providing long-awaited hope and peace for survivors beginning a new chapter in their lives.
As COVID-19 restrictions began to ease and more customers were allowed back into stores, NAM Resale adapted once again. The warehouse showroom initially welcomed customers by appointment but was soon open at 100% capacity, as was the store in NAM’s main lobby.

“People are discovering us every day,” says Jason Woods, director of NAM Resale. “We’re re-establishing relationships with our regulars, and getting new customers as well.”

This year, NAM Resale has been an important resource in numerous ways. There are families who need to furnish an apartment quickly and affordably, after going through an eviction. Others needed to replace belongings lost during the winter storm or Louisiana’s Hurricane Ida. And a voucher system allows clients in NAM’s Housing Services program to select the items they need for their apartment.

“We see our impact with that,” says Jason. “Every day we’re seeing people who are immediately in our community. It shows how close the needs are.”

There is another group of growing customers: mothers of young children who purchase items to resell as a way of supporting their family.

“We’re supporting their entrepreneurship,” says Jason. “Ultimately some of these moms are clients of NAM as well. We’re helping to create some financial means for their families.”

Even as NAM Resale supports the community through merchandise, it also generates income to benefit NAM’s programs and services. Donations and volunteers are essential to that cycle, and both are always needed.

Volunteer opportunities abound for service groups as well as individuals and friends. In terms of donations, high quality items including furniture, dishes, pots and pans, and home décor are especially needed, as is clothing for all ages and sizes.

To learn more about how you can lend a hand, visit namonline.org.

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“Ultimately some of these moms are clients of NAM as well. We’re helping to create some financial means for their families.”
Centralized Intake offers a single starting point for all of NAM’s services. Clients meet with a case manager to fill out an application, then receive information and referrals to any of NAM’s programs that are relevant to their situation. Assistance may be available for food, clothing, rental or mortgage assistance, gas cards, bus tickets, and prescriptions. Centralized Intake also offers seasonal help with school supplies, summer food, and holiday food and toys.

Housing Services at NAM is a comprehensive program to put individuals or families who are homeless on a path toward self-sufficiency. Services include housing subsidies, help finding affordable housing, case management, and referrals to address other needs the family may be facing.

The Joanne Watford Nutrition Center (JWNC) is a choice food pantry that normally functions like a grocery store, with guests choosing their own food from designated categories. During COVID-19, the JWNC is operating as a drive-through pantry. Clients are given bags of food including fresh produce, meat, dairy and frozen items.

Behavioral Health Services is a new program at NAM as of 2021. Counseling is available in areas including depression/anxiety, parenting/family counseling, marriage counseling, substance abuse, and grief counseling. Referrals come from NAM’s programs as well as direct requests from the community. Thanks to significant funding from Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation and NAM’s partnership with Our Lady of the Lake University, counseling is provided at no cost.
THE YOUNG AT HEART SENIOR CENTER

Monday
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Tuesday – Friday
8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

The Young at Heart Senior Center is designed to help anyone over the age of 60 meet new friends, stay active, and have a fun outlet for mental and physical activity. Young at Heart offers an exciting array of activities for seniors, including cultural trips to the theater or museums; virtual activities; games; educational classes; exercise and yoga. Seniors can also receive a nutritious meal three days a week—free of charge.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Monday – Thursday:
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Friday:
8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Meals on Wheels delivers well-balanced meals—free of charge—to the homes of seniors and other neighbors who are homebound because of disability or illness. Each weekday, more than 900 individuals throughout 24 zip codes receive meals. Some seniors also receive meals on Saturdays, monthly grocery deliveries, and/or pet food. The program is possible only because of hundreds of volunteers who deliver the meals and provide a wellness/safety check.

FAMILY VIOLENCE CENTER

Monday – Thursday:
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Friday:
8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The Family Violence Center at NAM provides crisis intervention, safety planning, a 24-hour hotline, adult and children’s counseling, emergency shelter, and legal advocacy for those in abusive relationships as well as victims of sexual assault. Free educational programs about preventing dating violence are available to middle and high schools. Through NAM’s comprehensive array of services, FVC clients can also receive food, clothing, transportation and more, to help them out of dangerous situations and put them on a path toward a new beginning.

LEARNING & VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER

Monday – Thursday:
8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The center helps adults gain the necessary skills to chart a career path that will lead to financial stability. Adults can prepare for the GED or take an English as a Second Language class. A variety of vocational scholarships are available for qualifying adults to train in careers such as phlebotomy, community health worker, computer training, and more. THRIVE students also receive job search assistance and financial coaching to meet their goals.

NAM RESALE

Store Hours:
Monday – Thursday:
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Warehouse Showroom / Donation Center Hours:
Tuesday – Thursday:
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Friday: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

NAM Resale offers gently-used clothing, household items and more at very affordable prices. Income generated helps support NAM’s programs and services. Of equal importance, Resale serves NAM’s clients when they have a need for clothing or household items by allowing them to choose exactly what they need in the styles they prefer—free of charge.
Abiding Word Evangelical Lutheran Church
Ahmadiyya Muslim Community - Baitus Samee
Atascocita Community Church
Bammel Church of Christ
Bishop Center Storehouse / The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Christ the Good Shepherd Catholic Community
Church at Creek’s End
Congregation Jewish Community North
Crossover Bible Fellowship Church
Cy-Fair Christian Church
Cypress Creek Christian Church
Cypress Trails United Methodist Church
Faithbridge Church
Fallbrook Baptist Church
Fruto De La Vid Houston
God’s Word of Deliverance Apostolic Faith Church
The Foundry United Methodist Church
The Good Shepherd Christian Church
Greenwood Baptist Church
Harvest Christian Academy
Harvest Time Church
Holy Comforter Episcopal Church
Hosanna Lutheran Church
Houston Bishop’s Storehouse
Houston Northwest Church
Immanuel Church of Spring
Immanuel United Church, UCC
Jesuits of St. Ignatius Parish
John Wesley United Methodist Church
Kinsmen Lutheran Church
Klein United Methodist Church
Lakewood United Methodist Church
Lifepath Church
Little York Church of God in Christ
Millbend Coffee House / Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Church
New Destiny Praise and Worship
New Jerusalem Community Baptist
Ninth Church of Christ, Scientist
North Oaks Baptist Church
Northeast Houston Community Church
Northwest Bible Church
Northwoods Baptist Church
Northwoods Presbyterian Church
Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Church
Open Arms UCC
Pass-A-Grille Beach Church
Plymouth United Church, UCC
Prince of Peace Catholic Community
Riverview Baptist Church
Resurrection Lutheran Church
Sisterhood of Congregation Jewish Community North
Spring Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church
Spring Cypress Presbyterian Church
Spring Interfaith Dialogue Council
Spring Woods Presbyterian Church
Spring Woods United Methodist Church
St. Anthony the Great Orthodox Christian Church
St. Dunstan’s Episcopal Church
St. Edward Catholic Community
St. Ignatius of Loyola Catholic Community
St. James the Apostle Catholic Church
St. Timothy’s Anglican Church
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston
The Brook Church Community
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Klein Stake
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Houston North Stake)
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Ward (Spring Creek)
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Spring Texas Stake)
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Tomball Texas Stake)
The Daily Bread Inc.
The Good Shepherd Christian Church-Disciples of Christ
The Harvest
The Joseph Storehouse Group Inc.
Time of Celebration Ministries
Trinity Klein Lutheran Church
Trinity Lutheran Church
Trinity Lutheran School
Unity of The Woodlands
Unity Spiritual Center of Greater Houston
Valley Rise Church
Victory Christian Center
Willowbrook Terrace Chapel
Wildewood Baptist Church
Windwood Presbyterian Church
For more than 35 years, congregations have been at the heart of NAM. Back in 1983, ten congregations came together to form Northwest Assistance Ministries and love their neighbors in a tangible way. Today that network has grown to include dozens of congregations, representing a diversity of denominations and beliefs, who support NAM on a regular basis in a variety of ways.

Support from NAM’s congregations is always essential, but that was especially true again this year.

**Congregations adopted 1,500 children for the 2020 Holiday Project, providing toys and gifts so children in our community could experience the joy of Christmas despite a very difficult year.**

They held food drives and faithfully continued their financial support. And they sent volunteers who served in a multitude of roles, accomplishing the work of NAM while providing a steady source of encouragement and hope.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints went above and beyond to meet the needs of the community. On three different occasions during the pandemic, they donated a semi-truck full of food to the Joanne Watford Nutrition Center at NAM, along with volunteers to unload it. When NAM was running low on peanut butter, they answered the call by donating 240 cases of peanut butter from their cannery in Humble.

To all of our congregations, we say thank you. With every new challenge you have served our community with compassion, grace, and generosity. You are what makes NAM so special and so unique. And as a community, we are forever grateful.
CORPORATE GROUPS

- AbbVie
- Advance Auto Parts on North Gessner
- Argo Surety Group
- BXS Insurance
- CenterPoint Energy
- CHI St. Luke’s
- CHI St. Luke’s Health–The Vintage Hospital
- Congressman Dan Crenshaw District Office
- CWS Property Management
- Cypress Creek Hospital
- Eagleburgmann
- ExxonMobil Employees
- ExxonMobil: Admin Team
- ExxonMobil: Caspian OBO Team
- ExxonMobil: Chemicals Team
- ExxonMobil: Global Controls Team
- ExxonMobil: Govt. & Public Affairs Team
- ExxonMobil: Infrastructure and Environment Team
- ExxonMobil: Intermediates Team
- ExxonMobil: IT Team
- ExxonMobil: Law Team
- ExxonMobil: SeaRiver Team
- Flowserv
- Gexa Energy
- Hancock Whitney Bank
- HCA Houston Healthcare Northwest
- Houston Methodist
- HPE Interns
- Illinois Tool Works
- Jack Henry & Associates
- Klein Grove Community of HistoryMaker Homes
- Larson Storm Doors Manufacturing Company
- Lewa-Nikkiso
- Lone Star Student Nurses Association Montgomery
- Loyalty Plumbing LLC
- Molen & Associates
- National Oilwell Varco
- Origin Bank
- Paychex
- PV Fluid Products
- ReMax Universal- Matthew Guzman Team
- Sabinal Energy
- Screen Print LLC
- Southwestern Energy
- Technoholics Anonymous
- Technip FMC
- Veritex Bank
- Woodforest National Bank
- World Market
- WorldPay

SERVICE AFFILIATES

- AARP- Senior Employment
- Abiding Word Lutheran School
- Alpha Kappa Alpha, Omicron Tau Omega Chapter
- Boy Scout Phoenix District and Troops 217, 300, 321, 920, 1655, 1995, 3461, 1323, 1332, 1550
- Champions Sunrise Rotary Club
- Community Connections
- Cypress-Woodlands Junior Forum
- Da Gang Golfer’s Club
- Dekaney High School-Athletic Trainers
- E.B.O.N.Y.
- Faithsbridge “The Road” Missionaries
- First Choice Homes
- Houston Northwest Filipino American Community
- Interactive College of Technology
- Junior Guild
- Junior League of the Woodlands
- Klein Collins Cultural Heritage Appreciation Club
- Klein Forest High School Life Readiness Program
- Klein High School
- Klein High School FCCLA
- Klein High School Life Readiness Program
- Klein ISD
- Klein Oak High School Life Readiness Program
- Klein UMC Youth Volunteers
- Leadership High School Lone Star College
- Legacy League
- LifePath Youth Group
- Lone Star College Cy-Fair
- Lone Star College- Tomball
- Lone Star College-North Harris
- Lone Star College-North Harris Student Ambassadors
- Lone Star Leadership College
- National Charity League - Champions Chapter
- National Charity League - Cypress Belles Chapter
- National Charity League - Cypress Creek Chapter
- National Charity League - Cypress Gems
- National Charity League - Wildflower Chapter
- National Charity League - Yellow Rose Chapter
- Northland Christian School
- Northwoods Presbyterian Youth Group
- Philippine Nurses Association of North Houston
- Precinct 4 Senior Adult Program
- Primrose School of Champions
- Reach Unlimited
- Sam Houston State University – School of Nursing
- Spring High School
- Spring High School National Honor Society
- Spring ISD
- Spring Texans Youth Football
- St Pius X High School
- St. Martha Catholic Church of Kingwood S.H.I.N.E. Catholic Mission
- TEAM Abilities
- Texas National Guard
- Texas Women’s University
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Willowbrook Rotary Club
NAM VOLUNTEERS

Carrying out NAM’s mission every moment of the day

NAM’s volunteers are an amazing gift. In the midst of an ongoing pandemic, NAM was blessed with more than 2,000 volunteers who gave 36,784 hours to serve our community this year.

Every moment of service was a conscious decision to put others before themselves. A calculated risk to care for neighbors at a time when it would have been easier to just stay home.

The work they accomplished touched every program at NAM. Volunteers answered hotline calls at the Family Violence Center, packed bags of groceries in the Joanne Watford Nutrition Center, delivered Meals on Wheels, and sorted gifts for the Holiday Distribution, to name just a few.

In doing so, they were a beautiful reflection of our community. NAM volunteers span all ages, ethnicities, abilities and experiences. They volunteer as retirees, mothers and daughters, corporate co-workers, students, faith communities, and individuals.

There’s a place for you at NAM as well. You have a one-of-a-kind contribution to make, because no one else has your unique blend of skills, experience, and personality. No one else is you.

To learn more about the difference you can make, simply visit NAM’s website at www.namonline.org/volunteer or contact us at (281) 885-4604 or volunteer@namonline.org.

This year, NAM was blessed by more than 2,000 volunteers who gave 36,784 hours to serve our community.

Volunteer Spotlight:

Chip Webb

“Chip Webb is one of our most dedicated volunteers,” says Grace Jackson, director of Senior Services for NAM. “He never stopped coming, even during the pandemic. Chip is always concerned with our clients and their well-being, offering to help in any way he can.”

For the past six years, Chip Webb has been a volunteer driver for Meals on Wheels at NAM. He is generous and kind-hearted, willing to drive multiple routes a day if needed. And he does it all with a big smile and a twinkle in his eye.

“It’s just a really wonderful atmosphere,” Chip says of volunteering at NAM. “The people that do Meals on Wheels, every one of them is just super. There’s a lot of smiles. They don’t do this because they’re forced to, they do it because they love people. I think that’s extremely important.”

Over the years, Chip has gotten to know many of the seniors, who look forward to his visits.

“Just about everybody you see, you’re only with them for seconds,” says Chip. “But if you have the same route over a long period of time, then even for those few seconds, you get to know folks. It’s a really great thing that happens, for them and for the person who delivers the meals.”

Volunteering has been a way of life for Chip, and he’s also served in the singles ministry at his church as well as teaching Sunday School to fourth and fifth graders with his wife, Martha. At age 75, he shows no signs of slowing down when it comes to serving others.

“I like helping people, I just do,” Chip says. “That’s the main thing.”
Boxes of gorgeous, fragrant, fruits and vegetables. They look beautiful enough for a photo shoot—but these healthy treats are headed to Neighbors in Need.

This year NAM began a new partnership with The Common Market, a non-profit, regional food distributor whose mission is to connect communities with good food from sustainable family farms.

In May 2021, NAM began ordering fresh food boxes—filled with food directly from family farms—to supplement other groceries at the Joanne Watford Nutrition Center. By late summer, boxes were also being delivered to Meals on Wheels seniors and distributed at Back to School events.

Box contents are different each week, based on what Houston-area farmers are growing. There might be cabbage, bell peppers, carrots or potatoes, oranges, watermelon, strawberries or tomatoes. “The boxes are never the same,” says Allison Booker-Brooks, Chief Program Officer for NAM. “But to be able to get fresh, beautiful food directly from the farm—it’s been a huge success with our clients. Our seniors are calling to say how much they appreciate the fresh vegetables.”

Even as the food has been a blessing to Neighbors in Need, NAM’s business has blessed the farmers who grow it. In fact, because of NAM’s support, 26 jobs were created—and two family farms were saved from foreclosure after the winter storm. Many of The Common Market farms are minority-owned, which aligns with NAM’s model for diversity, equity and inclusion.

NAM is currently seeking additional funding to be able to continue its partnership with The Common Market. With benefits in so many directions, it seems clear that it’s an idea worth growing.

BACK TO SCHOOL

With limited virtual options remaining this fall, most students returned to school in person. That meant a huge need for school supplies—so NAM responded in a big way.

In partnership with Spring ISD, NAM joined the district’s Back to School Expo on July 31 at Planet Ford Stadium to distribute school supplies and boxes of food. A second distribution day was held at NAM on August 7. In all, 800 school supply kits were given to students of all ages—along with 1,000 boxes of food and fresh produce.

With nourishing food and brand new supplies, students were ready to start the school year with confidence and the tools they needed to succeed.
It was a Christmas every bit as magical as the North Pole itself.

In an explosion of color and community generosity, the 2020 Holiday Project gave more gifts to more children than ever before: 17,000 toys to 5,500 children.

Along with that, more than 1,700 families received a turkey and all the trimmings for complete holiday meals at Thanksgiving and again in December.

Registration for the Holiday Project opened in October—and in less than 24 hours, it was filled to twice the number of families NAM typically serves during the holidays.

“We knew the community was hurting, and we had to step up,” says Samantha Anchia, Director of Development for NAM. “When you think of children going without, you have to do it even if it seems impossible. Because it seemed impossible in the beginning.”

First to lend a hand were NAM’s congregations, who quickly adopted 1,500 children. Next came corporations, many of whom conducted toy drives for NAM for the first time. Toys for Tots also provided significant support.

Then there was the NAM Board meeting when Dr. Rodney Watson, Superintendent of Spring ISD and chair of NAM’s Board of Trustees, posed a challenge to the superintendents of Klein and Aldine ISD’s. He proposed a friendly competition between the districts—and they accepted. By the end, each had collected thousands of gifts—with Aldine ISD claiming the trophy.

Like Santa’s elves, more than 1,000 volunteers worked on the Holiday Project from October to December. Volunteers as young as five years old through seniors in their 80s worked together to pack food boxes, sort toys, load items into cars and much more.

And because of everyone’s efforts, Christmas was a day filled with joy all over our community.

“It was the brightest spot for parents because they didn’t know what they were going to do,” says Karen Weakly, Director of Client Services for NAM. “We had parents who were really, really concerned. So this was lifesaving.”

In fact, one mom went into labor while waiting in line—but didn’t want to go to the hospital until she had picked up the toys for her other children. NAM’s team found her gifts right away, and she went on to have a beautiful, healthy baby.

“I was so proud of NAM, because we were able to put a smile on so many faces,” says Samantha. “It’s such a special feeling, but it’s also bittersweet because you see the need in the community. I remember leaving the last day in tears because I was so overwhelmed. But you also know you made a difference.”
It was a night to celebrate as Jeans & Jewels returned—and raised **more than $520,000** for NAM’s programs and services!

With the cancellation of last year’s event due to COVID-19, everyone was excited to gather and reconnect with friends old and new. Plans had been made to host the event at a local golf club, but the venue sustained significant damage during the winter freeze.

So a month prior to the gala, NAM called their dear friends at Shirley Acres to ask if the event could be moved there. And Bob Shirley said, “Let’s do it.”

With a theme of “On the Acres,” Jeans & Jewels utilized every space at Shirley Acres including the Garden Room, Pavilion, and Courtyard. Each area had food, live entertainment, and a special feature such as roulette, casino tables, or dancing to Top 40 music. Guests were free to move between the settings and enjoy everything the event had to offer.

Woven throughout the night was a celebration of all that NAM had accomplished in response to COVID-19. When it came time to “Stand Up for NAM,” guests didn’t hesitate to show their support. **In a matter of minutes, $135,275 had been raised.**

Another special moment came when Mark and Paula Stoebner were honored with the Volunteer of the Year Award for their extraordinary service. The couple have volunteered at NAM for years, but made an enormous impact by serving in the Joanne Watford Nutrition Center nearly every day since the pandemic began. Going forward, a volunteer will be honored each year with the Mark and Paula Stoebner Volunteer Appreciation Award.

To **all who made this special night a reality, thank you for a Texas Size Party we will never forget!**
NAM is blessed with some of the most generous donors on the planet. They see the difference NAM makes in our community, believe in its value, and invest strategically to make NAM’s work possible.

Through all the uncertainty of the pandemic, NAM’s donors never wavered. In fact, 680 new donors contributed to NAM this year, some with first-time gifts of $5,000 or more.

“Those type of statistics are mind-boggling when you think that a lot of non-profits were really struggling or not able to continue,” says Brian Carr, Chief Advancement Officer for NAM. “We are incredibly grateful for the support of our funders, in grants as well as individual giving.”

The NAM Endowment Fund

One of the ways you can have a profound impact on the future of NAM is by making a gift to the NAM Endowment Fund.

The NAM Endowment Fund was created in 2000 to enhance the financial stability of NAM, and ensure that NAM will always be here to help Neighbors in Need.

Planned gifts to the NAM Endowment Fund can be made through stocks, bonds, life insurance, retirement assets, real estate and more. Planned gifts do not affect current cash flow, and may even provide tax benefits. Best of all, they can make a significant, lasting impact on the lives of Neighbors in Need.

To begin the conversation or for more information please contact Brian Carr, Chief Advancement Officer, at (281) 885-4605 or bcarr@namonline.org. Additional details are available at neflegacy.org, or by subscribing to NAM’s planned giving newsletter.

GRACE’S STORY

In the spring of 1997, Grace made her first donation to NAM. It was a simple gift of $25, going to a good organization that helped a lot of people. In November she made another $25 donation. She continued to give the same amount twice a year until her death in 2017.

Grace and her family moved to Houston in 1937. She worked at Peden Iron and Steel where she met her husband. They didn’t have children and never considered themselves wealthy, but they lived a comfortable life in the Heights neighborhood.

Along with charitable giving, Grace and her husband were savers. They wanted to be prepared for any emergency, and looked forward to a retirement of traveling and blessing others.

After her husband’s death, Grace worked with an attorney to plan the distribution of her estate. She wanted dearly to make a sizable gift to NAM and a handful of other charities.

In late September, 2020, NAM received that gift from Grace’s estate. It was one of the largest estate gifts ever given to NAM.

Thank you, Grace, for living in a way that will continue to make a difference for years to come.

DONNA’S STORY

Donna and Tom Asbill had never heard of NAM. But when their friends, Joe and Linda Fowler, invited them to one of the first Jeans & Jewels galas, they graciously accepted.

Later, Donna attended a volunteer orientation at NAM and signed up to deliver Meals on Wheels. Over the years she delivered hundreds of meals to homebound seniors, drove seniors to medical appointments, and attended numerous events to benefit NAM.

"When I went through NAM’s volunteer orientation, I was blown away by all that NAM does," Donna said. "And once you meet the people that you’re helping...well, it was an awakening."

After Tom’s death, Donna decided to continue their support through a planned gift. She designated a portion of her IRA, estimated at $200,000, to NAM.

On November 6, 2020, Donna Marie Asbill passed away. Her generous support of NAM continued to the very end, and she left a significant bequest to support NAM’s programs and services.

“We give so people will be cared for,” Donna once said. “It’s what God called us to do.”
## Community

### $1 Million +
- The Brown Foundation
- United Way of Greater Houston

### $250,000 - $999,999
- Anonymous
- City of Houston Texas
- Episcopal Health Foundation
- Governor Fiscal Inv.
- Houston Food Bank
- Houston Methodist
- HUD Treasury
- The Estate of Donna Asbill
- The Estate of Grace Biven
- Treasurer of Harris County Texas

### $100,000 - $249,999
- Aldine ISD
- Americas Foundation
- Anonymous
- Emergency Food and Shelter Program
- Housing and Community Affairs
- Houston / Harris County Winter Storm Relief
- Houston Endowment
- Texas Department of Agriculture
- Texas Health and Human Services Commission
- The Hamill Foundation
- Tomball Hospital Authority / Tomball Regional Health Foundation
- Wal-Mart #1103 Cornerstone

### $50,000 - $99,999
- Anonymous
- Bank of America Foundation
- EFSP National Board
- Healthcare & Nursing Education Foundation
- Linda J & Harlan C Martens Foundation
- The Cullen Trust for Health Care
- W.T. & Louise J Moran Foundation

### $25,000 - $49,999
- Anonymous
- Big Tex Delivery Service
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Bishop Center Storehouse
- Coalition for the Homeless of Houston / Harris County
- Harris County Hospital District Foundation
- Houston Bishop’s Storehouse
- Industrial Measurement & Control Corp.
- Klein ISD
- Kroger #275
- Kroger #364
- Kroger #395
- National Charity League - Cypress Creek Chapter
- PV Fluids Product Inc.

### $10,000 - $24,999
- Spring ISD
- SWN
- Texas Attorney General
- The William J & Dorothy K O’Neill Foundation
- The William Stamps Farish Fund

### “Gentleness, self-sacrifice and generosity are the exclusive possession of no one race or religion.” - Mahatma Gandhi
PARTNERS

The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity Incarnate Word
The John T Shea Foundation / J.P.Morgan Chase
The Waggoners Foundation
Watford Family Foundation
Willowbrook Rotary Foundation

$1,000 - $9,999

AbbVie Inc.
Abby’s Daycare & Learning Center
Albertsons Safeway
Aldi Grocery Store
Allstate Giving Campaign
America’s Best Local Charities
Anonymous
Bernshausen Elementary School

“Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present.” - Albert Camus.

Betsy and Kerry Stuckey State Farm Insurance
BNSF Railway Foundation
Boy Scouts of America Troop 1323
Boy Scouts of America Troop 1655
Boy Scouts of America Troop 1995
Boy Scouts of America Troop 300
Boy Scouts of America Troop 920
BXS Insurance
Citation Oil & Gas
Cost Plus World Market (Willowbrook)
Cub Scout Pack 440
CyberGrants
Doerre Intermediate School
Don Hand Foundation
Drillmax
Exxon Mobil Foundation
First 3 Years
Fisher Ham & Meat Co.
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council
Global Healthcare Product Solutions
HCA Northwest Hospital
Hewlett-Packard
Hildebrandt Intermediate School
Hmh Lifestyles
Houston Astros Foundation
Houston Methodist Willowbrook
Huntwick Forest Civic Association
Independent Bank
Insperity

Journey Charitable Foundation
Junior Guild
KFC Harvest
Klein Funeral Homes and Memorial Parks
Klein ISD Nutrition & Food Service
Kroger Store #376
Larson Manufacturing Company
Legacy League
Loyalty Plumbing LLC
M&D Supply / ACE Hardware
MARTI LLC
Maximus Foundation
McDougle Elementary School
Meals on Wheels of America
National Charity League - Yellow Rose Chapter
Office Systems of Texas
Panera Bread
Phillips 66

Primrose School of Champions
Rapha House Outreach Center City of Refuge Church
Risdak Family Foundation
Schneider Electric Foundation
Schultz Elementary School
Shell Oil Company Foundation
Shepard Acres Home Neighborhood Library
Shirley Acres
Spring High School
Swim Ohana
Team Gillman Subaru North
Texan Mattress
The Andrews Foundation
The Edward & Helen Oppenheimer Foundation
The Lewis and Joan Lowenstein Foundation
The Mehlhop Charitable Fund / Ayco Charitable Foundation
The Rothschild Family Fund in Care of Donors Trust
Twin Eagle Resource Management LLC
Union Pacific Foundation
UTZ Quality Food
Veritex Community Taylor
Weyerhaeuser Company
WG Partners LTD
Woodforest Charitable Foundation
Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Chapter 4520
Zwink Elementary School
$1,000 and above

Anonymous
Aaron Leavitt
Alan Swanton
Alana and Charles Meyer
Alexander Ragucci
Alexandra Dickens
Amanda & Stephen Zak
Amy and Randall Thompson
Angela Svetlik
Annette and Ronald Young
Anup Sagar
Art and Linda Saxby
Bahman and Susan Jahanian
Baines and Anne Manning
Barbara and Mike Danahy
Barbara Brown
Barbara Rogers
Bernadette Brown
Betty and David Dodd
Betty Montague
Beverly Johnson
Bill Carpenter
Bill Mehrens

Darla and Stewart Fox
Darlene De Aragao
Darlis and Tom Fuller
Daryl and Gari Martin
David and Mary Klein
David Ehlers
David Freier
David Jones
David Mallott
Debbie and Stanley Horton
Debbie Haddix
Deborah and Michael Ashcraft
Denise and Buddy Bolt
Denise Watson
Dennise and Keith Edwards
Diana and Joseph Stal
Diane and Larry Lipton
Diane and Raymond Kaskel
Dianne Abrahams
Don Lucas
Donald Haas
Donna Asbill
Donna Banzhaf and James Dall
Doris and Lawrence Fricke
Doug Manchee

Jack Luder
Jack McCrary
Jack Miller
Jackie Riley
Jamal Hazzan
James Hayhurst
Jamie Mohead
Jan and Brigid Spin
Jane Easterwood
Janet and Dan Chenoweth
Janet and Francis Mury
Janet and Roger Flink
Janice Oettemeier
Jeanie and John Stark
Jeannie and Nolan Lehmann
Jeffrey Kornuta
Jeffrey Richter
Jennifer Merkel
Jerry and Norma Holleman
Jerry Edmonds
Jerry Musch
Jo Long
Jocelyn and Eric Nelson
John & Catherine Holecek
John Benvegnu

“Love and kindness are never wasted. They always make a difference. They bless the one who receives them, and they bless you, the giver.”

– Barbara De Angelis
Lauren Temple
Les Cave
Linda and Glen Adams
Linda and Joe Fowler
Linda and Michael O’Dowd
Linda and Tom Sparks
Linda Kay Peterson
Liz and George Hom
Louis and Irma Bujnoch
Louise and Stephen Slater
Lynn and Renee Campbell
Lynne and Dave Anderson
Marcia Anderson
Margaret and Charles Dunagan
Margaret Davis
Margie and Richard Crump
Marilyn and Ronald Campbell
Marilyn Turner
Marjorie Waggoner
Mark Rigo
Marla Cornell
Marsi and Dennis Stavinoha
Melissa Ferguson
Michael and Julie Hancock
Michael Denney
Michael Ebers

Patricia Mayo
Patrick Coyne
Patsy Johnson
Paula & Allen Baker
Pauline Adams
Pauline Denise Fraelic
Peggy and Burt Hamric
Peter Ponzini
Phillip Graiff
Phyllis Madsen
Ralph Graham
Rebecca and James Taylor
Rebecca Prosk
Rene and Danny Rea
Richard Hall
Richard Moynihan
Rick Lester
Rick Straus
Rita Irani
Robert and Donna Pryor
Robert and Sara Awe
Robert Daniels
Robert Fleming
Robert J. and Carolyn Allison
Robert Jackson
Robert Martinez

Sandy Ward
Sara and Harry Yates
Sara Hamilton
Scott & Stacey Maurice
Scott Chenoweth
Shannan and Davis Rumsey
Shannon Mosher
Sharelyn Current
Sharlet and Dudley Warner
Sharon and Steve Dickerson
Sharon Scaramozza
Stephanie Martens
Steve and Stacey Phillips
Steven Miller
Stewart MacColl
Sue and Stavros Kikis
Susan and David Diehl
Susan and David Grittman
Susan and John Slater
Susan Holley
Susan Ortenstone
Suzie and Kenneth Castlebury
Tamara and Peter Capobianco
Teresa Allen
Theresa and Frederick Tilton

“You can always give something, even if it is only kindness”
– Anne Frank

Michael Watford
Mr. and Mrs. Edward (Nancy) DiPaolo
Mr. and Mrs. Hilliard
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Delaney
Nancy Beyer
Nancy Lou and William Strange
Nancy Tucker
Nathan and Mary Waldman
Nina and Jerrel Belk
Norman Green
Pam and Bob Hughes
Pamela Smallwood
Patricia and Gene Broccard
Patricia and Sam Harless
Patricia and William Edwards
Patricia Gallagher
Robert McLaren
Robert Minck
Robert Quance
Robert Riley
Roberta and Samuel Smiley
Ronald Fariss
Rosie Grenald
Ruby Nance
Ruth Ann and Tom Lattin
Salvatore Cali
Sandra and David Smith
Sandra Ellison
Sandra Harrell
Sandy and Kurt Huneke
Sandy and Russell Andorka

Thomas Heath
Tim Haas
Tom Frye
Tom Steinbacher
Tommy Barras
Tony Lindsay
Vicki Jackman
Vickie DeNeui
Vicky Wysocki
Virginia and James Robertson
Walter and Jo Ann Allen
Walter and Kathy Drover
Wendy and Jim Fryfogle
William and Cheryl Sessions
William Calvert
William Couch
This year NAM served 136,676 Neighbors in Need (based on monthly totals for individuals served).

- Hispanic/Latino: 54%
- African American: 33%
- Caucasian: 10%
- Asian: 2%
- Other: 1%

- Children Under 18 Years Old: 44%
- Unemployed: 33%
- Employed: 14%
- Retired: 9%

- 0-18 Years old: 41%
- Adults (19-59): 45%
- Seniors (60 Plus): 14%

- Below: 74%
- Above: 26%
STATISTICS & DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Support and Revenues

$12,423,765

- Individuals.................................................. 15.28%
- Congregations............................................. 1.34%
- Corporations............................................... 1.81%
- Community & Civic Groups.................... 0.25%
- Foundations............................................... 20.33%
- Fee Income................................................ 1.99%
- Volunteer Hours...................................... 3.85%
- In-Kind Contributions........................... 17.19%
- Government Grants................................. 35.04%
- Sales............................................................. 1.54%
- Miscellaneous Income........................... 0.42%
- NAM Endowment Distribution................ 0.97%

Total Expenses

$11,627,172

- Program Services...................................... 85.30%
- Management and General..................... 8.84%
- Fundraising and Development................. 5.86%

NAM Statement of Activities for the Twelve Months Ended 9/30/21 (unaudited)
I just became a recipient about 2 months ago. I'm not working because I got hurt at my job, and I am glad that they helped me with my food through the Veterans Services. They gave me assistance with my housing also.

Thank you very much, I am very grateful, they have helped me a lot, they help me with diapers, milk for my child, food and the truth is that if they help me a lot, I am very grateful to them. Thank you very much and God bless you and I hope you continue to help us... I come every month, and the truth is that it helps me a lot.

I thank you for helping us in this time that we are in crisis, and I thank you again and God bless you.

I do appreciate all that you all do for us in the community. You have truly been a blessing to all of us through all the years. You have blessed families with apartments, you have taken women out of abusive situations.

Gracias a NAM por darnos esperanza y comida el día de dar gracias, muchas gracias.

Thank you to NAM for giving us hope and food on the day of giving thanks, thank you very much.

La ayuda que le dan a cada familia porque somos muchos los que estamos desempleados y vamos a tener un Día de Acción de Gracias a NAM.

The help they give each family because there are many of us who are unemployed and we are going to have a Thanksgiving Day thanks to NAM.