



JANUARY-MARCH • 2021

VIPS Happenings

- Counting the hours! Tracking your volunteer hours in RAPTOR will allow you to measure your engagement and quantify your impact. All volunteers, once approved, receive an email from donotreply@raptortech.com with instructions about how to create an account.
- HISD Community Partnerships launched an exciting virtual volunteer project in December called “Warm Thoughts and Winter Wishes”. The goal of the project was to engage our community in thanking and recognizing the efforts of our teachers and staff during this difficult year. Volunteers were asked to download a “Warm Thoughts and Winter Wishes” coloring template, decorate it and add an encouraging or inspirational message. We also asked our partners to share this opportunity with their co-workers and families, so that we could collect several thousand messages. We are planning to share the messages with teachers and staff in schools all winter long!
- HISD’s annual Toy Drive goes virtual! Due to the pandemic, Team HISD donated toys through an Amazon wish list, in addition to donating gifts in person. This year’s effort will support the HISD Student Assistance Department which serves the Districts homeless population.

www.HoustonISD.org/VIPS

LOVING HOUSTON responds to the needs of the HISD community



Executive Director Marilyn Lee training school staff and church partners

Church school partnerships are especially important right now amidst the challenges of COVID-19 and racial tensions and injustices. Building a relationship with a local school allows you to build real relationships with the students, parents, and teachers in your neighborhood, which allows you to work alongside each other in love to address these challenges for the well-being of the community. Every church school relationship looks different – it all depends on the opportunities within your local school and the gifts God has given you!

Marilyn Lee
Executive Director,
Loving Houston

An Interview with B.J. Ramon, Loving Houston District Coordinator for HISD

How long has Loving Houston been partnering with HISD?

Loving Houston began partnering with HISD in 2014. Loving Houston saw a need in school communities and desired to commit to serve and help meet the needs of students, parents, teachers and surrounding communities.

What is the mission of Loving Houston?

Loving Houston partners with local churches to impact student achievement and provide support to HISD teachers. The vision of Loving Houston “is to see every school in greater Houston with a committed church partner”. “Loving Houston inspires and equips churches to build long term relationships with local schools so that every child, parent and teacher can experience Jesus’ love in a tangible way”.



Volunteers from Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church at Piney Point Elementary school.



B.J. Ramon (right), Loving Houston District Coordinator for HISD

An Interview with B.J. Ramon, Loving Houston District Coordinator for HISD (continued from page 1)

How many schools currently have church/ school partnerships in HISD?

80

How many schools are seeking to find a church partner as of the 2020-2021 school year?

66 schools in HISD have requested information about a church partner.

What are some of the ways that church school partnerships serve in HISD?

Mentoring, tutoring, office duties, teacher support, student support, providing teacher lounges/renovations, incentives and gift cards, holiday celebrations, luncheons, and back to school events.

What are the churches that have the longest established relationships with HISD schools?

Westbury Baptist Church and Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church

What is most important about the work that you do in HISD?

The most important thing about our work is loving your neighbors and taking time to show that you care for people. We provide a service that is irreplaceable because it meets the social, emotional and academic needs of the entire school community.



Volunteers in ACTION



A volunteer reads "Cat in The Hat" in celebration of Dr. Seuss's birthday.



Unity Church volunteers at Pilgrim Academy for Thanksgiving Luncheon

BECOME A MENTOR



Anyone interested in volunteering for R.O.S.E.S. (Resilient Outstanding Sisters Exemplifying Success), (M.A.S.) Miles Ahead Scholars and (A.T.M) Ascending To Men should follow the steps below:

1. Complete a **ROSES/ATM** online application [Click here](#)
Complete a **MAS** online application [Click here](#)
2. Register to be a Volunteer In Public Schools (VIPS) [Click here](#)
3. Attend a training session

Volunteer SPOTLIGHT

Congratulations to our volunteers who are being spotlighted for the First Quarter of the year. VIPS appreciates our volunteers and would like to recognize their endless contributions of their time and talents on a regular basis in HISD schools.



From left to right: Aadhav JaiMurugesh, Levi Chen, and Kodhai Fujimoto

NUMERLY

Aadhav JaiMurugesh, Levi Chen and Kodhai Fujimoto, juniors at Carnegie Vanguard High School founded Numerly, a nonprofit organization that provides free tutoring to students. The founders saw a need in their surrounding communities and created a way to meet it by utilizing their skills; passion to help; and eagerness to make a difference in student’s lives.



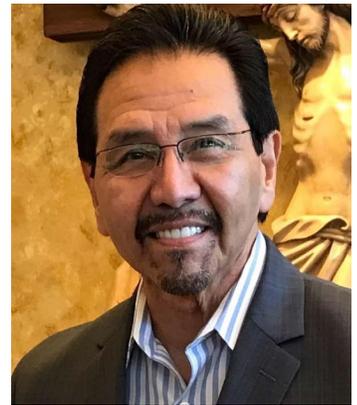
The mission of Numerly is “to extinguish the education and income inequality throughout the United States by offering quality services and courses to everyone regardless of their socio-economic background. We are determined that we, together, can fix the world, one step at a time, because education, by itself, is a powerful tool that can be harvested to yield the most in the world”. Currently, they are partnering with the Houston Independent School District and ProUnitas to provide services to students in the Houston area. They believe that the best way to help students in grades 3 through 8 who are struggling academically, is to provide them with quality education and resources such as free one on one tutoring that will help them succeed in their classes.

Numerly recruits other high school students and trains them to volunteer as online tutors who provide weekly one-hour sessions to students on the weekends. They also offer other courses such as College Admissions and Campaign Awareness Outreach. Their future plans include offering broader tutoring curriculum to include other subjects as they continue to grow the organization.

Kudos to Numerly for meeting the needs of students in HISD schools!!

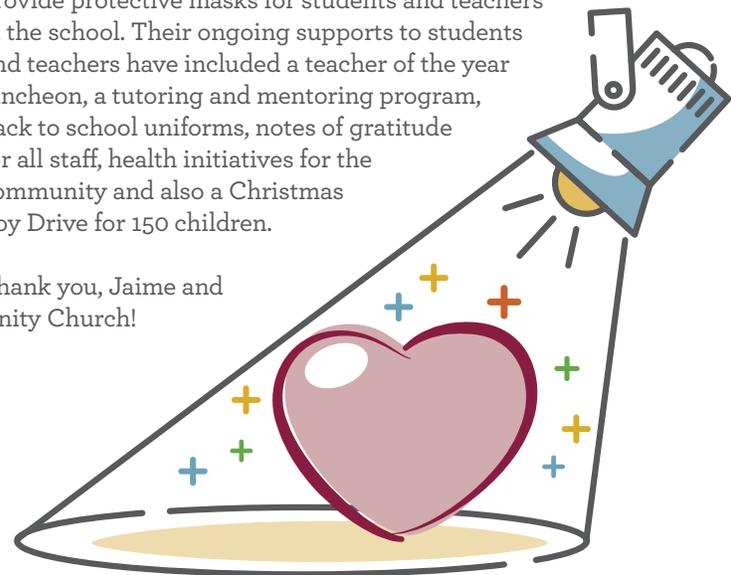
JAIME DE LA ISLA | Pilgrim Academy

Jaime De La Isla has been a proud Pilgrim volunteer for 5 years. He is committed to meeting the needs of the students, teachers and the community at large. Everyone at Pilgrim knows that if you need a proven leader, Jaime is the first person you should reach out to garner support and rally the troops. Jaime was instrumental in launching the partnership with Unity Church called “Unity in the Community” which consists of church members who volunteer to meet the needs of the school and the community at large. that give of their time in the community. The Unity Church members and Mr. De La Isla have made themselves available to meet the needs of the campus. They planned and hosted a “Welcome Back to School” lunch for the support staff at the school. During the pandemic, he has worked diligently with church members to provide protective masks for students and teachers at the school. Their ongoing supports to students and teachers have included a teacher of the year luncheon, a tutoring and mentoring program, back to school uniforms, notes of gratitude for all staff, health initiatives for the community and also a Christmas Toy Drive for 150 children.



Jaime de la Isla, Pilgrim Academy Volunteer

Thank you, Jaime and Unity Church!



VOLUNTEERS make a difference!

Make an Impact and become a virtual volunteer for the Literacy By 3 Initiative in HISD

In support of the Literacy by 3 movement, which is to have all students reading on grade level by the end of third grade, HISD is partnering with the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation and the Children’s Museum of Houston to eradicate illiteracy in Houston. Currently, HISD is seeking to mobilize 900 volunteers to read regularly to students in 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade. There are three literacy programs that are seeking virtual volunteers for the 2020-2021 school year. Read Houston Read seeks to recruit 500 volunteers to read to 1500 first grade students for one hour per week. The Real Men Read program needs to engage 160 men from the community to mentor and read to third grade students for one hour per month at forty-two HISD campuses. Reading Round Up is seeking to recruit 180 volunteers to read aloud virtually to students in grades first through third grade for one hour twice per month at fifteen campuses.

Register to become a virtual volunteer using the following steps:

- STEP 1** Complete the VIPS, Volunteers in Public Schools, Volunteer Orientation Training online in English at <http://houstonisd.org/vipslogin> or in Spanish at <http://www.houstonisd.org/voluntarios>.
- STEP 2** Read the VIPS Volunteer Handbook and Save/Print the Certificate of Completion for future reference.
- STEP 3** Complete the VIPS Volunteer Application, agree to the Annual Background Check, and review the required documents (Code of Ethics, Code of Civility, Confidentiality Statement).
- STEP 4** Wait 3-5 business days for the Background Check to process. Volunteers receive a confirmation of receipt upon submission and an approval or denial reply from donotreply@raptortech.com when completed.
- STEP 5** Optional: Create a personal Raptor Portal Volunteer Account to track volunteer hours.
- STEP 6** Once VIPS APPROVED, register for opportunities to volunteer using the BBHLF’s Connect4Literacy website at <https://www.connect4literacy.org/>. **Note: Volunteers must use the same email address for VIPS and Connect4Literacy to link the required background check to both platforms.**



VIPS Contact Information

Interested in volunteering in HISD?

Register online to become a volunteer at www.HoustonISD.org/VIPLogin

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