

Cincinnati Children's Connects

A Newsletter for our Neighbors in AVONDALE

This is Cincinnati Children's quarterly newsletter to highlight our partnerships, upcoming events, opportunities and ways to get involved.

Issue 16, August 2021

Reds Community Makeover Scores a Homerun for Avondale

More than 300 volunteers braved the summer heat and humidity to improve Avondale as part of the 2021 Community Makeover project.

The Cincinnati Reds, Procter & Gamble, Cincinnati Children's, and the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden partnered together on July 29 for the day-long volunteer project.

A signature element of the 2021 Makeover is the one-acre Urban Learning Garden and outdoor classroom at Rockdale Academy, designed by the Cincinnati Zoo.

"This Urban Learning Garden is the best thing that has happened to this part of Avondale in many, many years. It's a promise, an idea that was actually realized," said Mel Grier, longtime Avondale resident. They said they were going to do this and with the volunteers help from the Zoo, The Reds and Children's Hospital, P&G, it's come to pass. I hope young people take advantage of this incredible opportunity."



Avondale Community Council President Tony Moore, State Senator Cecil Thomas and long time Avondale resident, Mel Grier plant flowers in the Urban Learning Garden at Rockdale Academy.



Rockdale students will experience the scientific areas of agriculture, horticulture, ecology, and biology up-close and hands-on in their own backyard. Additionally, the Cincinnati Zoo will have a full-time employee dedicated to Rockdale.

Among those helping plant flowers in the Urban Learning Garden was Tony Moore, Avondale Community Council President. "It's outstanding. This is what our community needs, this kind of partnership and this kind of participation. I'm happy to be here."

This is the second Community Makeover project in Avondale. In 2013, the Reds, P&G, Zoo and Children's helped with renovations at Gabriel's Place and Hirsch Recreation Center.

Volunteers focused on five other sites in Avondale:

- **South Avondale Elementary School:** New synthetic turf football/soccer field; indoor renovations and outdoor playground enhancements; new books and school supplies for each student.
- **Taft Boys & Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati:** Improved facilities and resources for the after-school program; cleaned, painted and renovated the Teen Center and student program spaces; new washer and dryer for laundry room; new mulch for the playground.
- **Rockdale Recreation Area:** Ballfield renovations; new playground and basketball court; new mural featuring the Tuskegee Airman designed by artist and Cincinnati Children's employee Brent Billingsley.
- **Avondale Recreation Area:** Ballfield renovation; upgraded tennis, pickle ball and basketball court along with other park amenities.
- **Larona Park/Avondale Beautification:** In the process of installing shelter, walking trail and trees.

Meet the Students Behind Magnificent Mural

Cincinnati Children's new Critical Care Building will be known for providing first-rate care to children. Once inside, you will see why it will also be known for its amazing artwork that includes the Fountain of Life Mural located in the front lobby entrance.



Installed but under wraps until mid-August, the mural is a massive two stories high. The piece is intricate and vibrant, multi-colored and like most murals, tells a story. Youth apprentices with the support of ArtWorks helped create the mural.

Four of the six apprentices are from Avondale. All are proud of their work that will be shared with patients and families for years to come. We had the chance to sit down with each of the artists to get their thoughts on the mural that will be a focal point of the new Critical Care Building.



"It was so interesting to be a part of how a mural is made. It was cool to learn the whole process. You can see my face in the image of the girl with blond hair. This project has made me want to continue working in the art field."

Audrey Ballard,
Age 16, North Avondale
School for Creative and Performing Arts



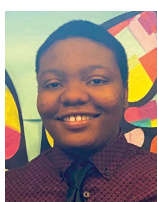
"I feel good inside. My experience working on the mural is one of the best I've ever had. I would do it again. It's a life changer."

D'Airion McCullough
Age 17, Hamilton
Hamilton High School Graduate



"I worked on a very detailed section right above the water. It'll be awesome to go in sometime and see it, and to know that I helped create it."

Deja Pennington
Age 18, Avondale
School for Creative and Performing Arts Graduate



"I felt like an actual artist. My favorite part of the mural is our faces are literally the people featured on the artwork. We made mini portraits of ourselves. Mine is in the middle where I did the work."

Eremiah Grant
Age 17, Avondale
Hughes High School Graduate



"It was really cool to see it all come together and seeing how each piece built on the other was super cool. Just experiencing something with other people who make art and have it live on for generations to come and have them experience the same joy that I experienced working on it."

Samara Bill
Age 17, Carthage
Summit Country Day



"It feels awesome, to be able to be a part of something this big for a good cause. The fact that it's in my community is special because it's something that represents home."

Xavier McDaniel
Age 17, Avondale
Walnut Hills High School

Loads of Love: Wash, Win and Repeat

For these women, new grads of the Loads of Love program, winning is measured in life skills learned. Finances, job readiness, self-care, mental health awareness, even cooking on a budget is all part of the curriculum that teaches sustainable life skills while you wash your clothes.

After the six-week program, participants say they feel accomplished and empowered to make positive changes in their lives.

So inspired by Loads of Love, Keishaira Brown took her interest in the food industry and started a business, KD Sweetz and Eatz. “The confidence they had in me pushed me to have more confidence in myself that I could go on and progress and have a career rather than just a job. Loads of Love is blessing and a lesson,” said Brown. Other participants say they feel as if their world is a bit bigger, their dreams more doable.

They come in to the program focused on free laundry service, they leave focused on making their lives better. The program was started by Kathy Wade, CEO of Learning Through Art, Inc. “We’re meeting people where they are. We keep it simple and meaningful so they can graduate and participate in the Last Load ceremony. They feel ready to manage life’s challenges — including new challenges brought on by the pandemic.”



Wade hosted Loads of Love at the Avondale Towne Center Super Laundry, 3545 Reading Road, with the support of Cincinnati Children’s and the Avondale Partnership and Investment.

f For more information about future events, follow Load of Love, LLC on Facebook.



Save Time and Wait — Schedule an Urgent Care Visit

Need Urgent Care for your child? Cincinnati Children’s offers you the ability to save a spot in line before you leave home, giving you the freedom to save time and wait where it’s more convenient and comfortable for your family. The “Save My Spot” function allows you to save your spot up to 12 hours in advance of your visit.

Visit www.cincinnatichildrens.org/urgent. Scroll to the wait times. Select an Urgent Care location. Click the pink “Save My Spot” button for that location. Fill out the short form, and you’re in line!

Plan to arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled time. We look forward to seeing you when your child needs us.

Almost Open!

We’re getting close to the Critical Care Building’s opening on Nov. 6. If you need services before that date, especially emergency services, please visit the main entrance or the current emergency entrance.



Annual Read on the Green Promotes Literacy in Avondale

Cincinnati Police officer, LaDon Laney and Avondale neighbor, Johnnie Davis seen here reading to children as part of the annual Read on the Green hosted by the Avondale branch library. On Wednesday, August 4th about 50 children participated in the event at the Hirsch Recreation Center. Read on the Green promotes literacy in the Avondale community combining education and entertainment. At the end of the day, children were sent home with a few free books to keep the momentum going.

We want your ideas! Are there stories you would like to see in this newsletter? Please let us know! Call **513-636-9327** or email communityrelations@cchmc.org

