

The Lutheran Intercity Network Coalition "Linking people to people, linking people to Christ" since 2011

THE LINC NEWS

January 2013

www.lincsa.org

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LINC San Antonio is proud to partner with organizations who help us bring Christ's love to our neighbors.

Introducing 'Ashlynn's Hope'

THE STORY OF A YOUNG WOMAN'S FAITH IN ACTION

Ashlynn Smith, a sophomore at Lutheran High, has been in and out of hospitals for years. Diagnosed with gastroparesis (stomach paralysis) at age 14, she's now familiar with ERs, ambulances, and myriad medical professionals. She's also learned firsthand how scary chronic illness can be, especially for children.

With the support of her family and her faith, Ashlynn started reaching out to hospitalized kids who need to be brought joy and love in their suffering. Ashlynn creates and delivers "Hope Boxes" full of gifts and activities. "A big part of Ashlynn's Hope is just to let others know that they're not alone," said Smith.

Her faith is a major part of why she does this ministry. "I try to tell everyone that I am praying for them." Last month she delivered 19 Hope Boxes to Children's Hospital. "Delivering the boxes was the most rewarding experience I've ever been through. One mom just started sobbing when I gave her 3-year-old son a box. She'd been so worried and it made her day. Of course then I was about to cry, and for the rest of the time handing out boxes I was holding back tears."

LINC San Antonio was moved by Ashlynn's story and has since partnered with her to help bring Christ's love to families at Children's Hospital. From now until May, LINC will be taking monetary and item donations for Ashlynn's Hope. It is an easy and rewarding way to put LINC's motto into action: "Linking people to people, linking people to Christ."

Items for hope boxes: Coloring books, crayons, toys, games, stuffed animals, play-dough, stickers, etc. Scripture-themed items are ideal. Leave items at a local LCMS church or contact LINC for a pickup.



Ashlynn loves to make personal connections with the recipients of her hope boxes.



She delivered 19 boxes last month and hopes to take more.



Ashlynn's used to hospital routine.

Ashlynn's Hope is spreading the love of Jesus Christ to hospitalized children and their families.



Literacy meets ministry & lives are changed.

LINC & SA READS BRING LITERACY AND LOVE TO THE SOUTH SIDE

It was the Friday before Christmas break, and I walked into the reading lab at Southwest ISD's Hidden Cove Elementary to meet a student for tutoring. He grinned at me, his silver teeth glinting and his pudgy 8-yr-old hand taking mine. He knows me. He knows I come once a week to help him learn to read. But he doesn't know that I drive for almost an hour to get there. And he doesn't know that I'm as concerned about his salvation as I am about his reading skills, if not more so.

"I brought you a present today," I told him, and I showed him the shiny copy of Paul Maier's "The First Christmas" and a second book, an easy-reader Christmas story. "You know about baby Jesus, right?" I asked him. When he answered with, "Uh. No. Who's that?" I did a double-take and my heart began to flutter.

Using our entire thirty-minute session, I answered his questions as we read the true story of the first Christmas. He'd never heard it before. He'd never been to church. He'd never heard of Jesus. Until that day.

Thanks to generous contributions of mission-minded Christians, LINC San Antonio was able to buy Christian Christmas books for every child we work with on the south side of San Antonio.

"He'd never been to church. He'd never heard of Jesus. Until that day."

According to SA Reads, LINC's partner in a literacy outreach ministry, only 46% of third graders are reading at the commended standards. Many of

us know students who struggle with reading. These struggles can severely damage self-esteem and confidence levels, and without intervention, struggling kids are likely to remain functionally illiterate into adulthood.

But we can help. Not only can we help these children overcome their difficulties with reading, we can also share Christ's love with them. LINC's partnership with SA Reads allows us to develop relationships with elementary school children over the course of nearly an entire school year. From those relationships come opportunities for conversations like the one I had in December - the kind that introduce children to the greatest story of all.

If you'd like to be a part of this rewarding and enjoyable ministry effort, contact LINC about joining in the fall of 2013. You can change a life.





LINC volunteers packaged hundreds of bottles of prenatal vitamins donated by Mission Pharmaceuticals for international missions.



Pastor Prieto at a December servant event

MINISTRY UPDATES

5:11 COLLEGE MINISTRY:

LINC partnered with University Lutheran Chapel in Austin, to send students on a weekend retreat this month. We are partnering with CAN-DO in March for a spring break mission trip (slots still open). Our next meet-up is Saturday, Feb. 9, 9:00 a.m. at the Taco Cabana on Stone Oak.

BOTTLES FOR BABIES:

Thanks to partner churches and the Pro-Life Club at Lutheran High School, LINC collected enough bottles to package almost a quarter of a million prenatal vitamins for free distribution to international missions.

HAVEN FOR HOPE, HOMELESS MINISTRY:

LINC volunteers from multiple area churches continue to minister to the homeless at Haven for Hope monthly, on third Thursdays. Join in or begin a similar one on another day of the week.

PORTUGUESE BIBLE STUDY:

Portuguese Bible study group meets at Crown of Life on Wed., Feb. 13, 6:00 p.m.

NURSING HOME CHURCHES:

Crown of Life Lutheran partners with LINC to bring a mini worship service to the Laurels Assisted Living Center on the third Sunday of each month. This easy outreach could be duplicated anywhere in the city.

HISPANIC OUTREACH TRAINING:

Courses have started up again. If you're interested in becoming equipped to reach out to the Hispanic community, contact Pastor Prieto today. Classes meet on Sunday evenings at Christ Our Savior Lutheran.

SERVANT EVENTS:

In December, 15 youth and adults helped clean and organize the home and yard of an older couple. If you'd like more info on servant events for your groups, call us today.

GIFT CARD REQUEST:

If you received gift cards for Christmas that you're unlikely to use, please consider donating them to LINC. Gift cards to restaurants or area retailers can be truly helpful in a variety of ministries. Cards can be mailed to our office (5323 Blanco Rd., SATX 78216).

**LINC'S 2013
Lecture series:
"Equipped for
the Harvest"
begins soon.
Join us for three
FREE seminars:**

February 2*

9:00-4:00

*"Becoming a Contagious
Christian"*

March 30

9:00-12:00

*"Examining Scientific
Arguments for God"*

April 20*

9:00-4:00

*"The Challenge
of Islam"*

***includes lunch
All events at LHS**