

# FRIIdays

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FALL 2021



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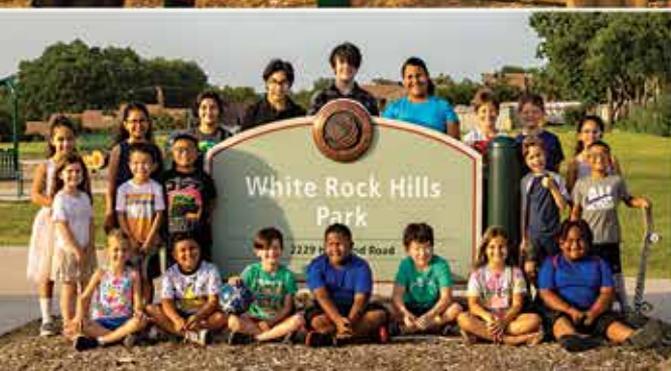
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To place an ad in *FRI*days news magazine, call Maria Valenzuela 214-324-5116 or e-mail [mariavalenzuela@fergusonroad.org](mailto:mariavalenzuela@fergusonroad.org)

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*The mission of FRI is to engage and empower a community of advocates to advance a safe, beautiful, prosperous and proud community in Far East Dallas.*



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**CreekSide/White Rock Hills Park Grand Opening**

Saturday, Nov. 6 | 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. | 2229 Highland Rd.  
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**FRIdays**

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**ON THE COVER**

*Late on a Tuesday evening in the middle of July; parents of Far East Dallas along with their children, met FRI*days leadership and staff at the White Rock Hills Park, then in its final stages of construction. They tested the grand Tower Slide in the golden glow of the evening sun. A fitting image for this issue of FRIdays, which announces the Grand Opening ceremony.

# A Grand Party to Celebrate Nature and a Place to Play



by Vikki J. Martin, Executive Director,

**You are invited to celebrate the grand opening of CreekSide/ White Rock Hills Park on Saturday, November 6, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 2229 Highland Road.**

Come one, come all! Join FRI for family-friendly fun activities at a grand celebration with music, song, and dancing. Food will be provided by McDonald's and vendors in the park. Festivities begin promptly at 10 a.m. with parking at the shopping center across the street. We are celebrating rain or shine.

This grand opening is hosted by FRI in partnership with the City of Dallas. It would be impossible without generous support from the following sponsors:

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**About FRI**

The new White Rock Hills Park exemplifies FRI's advocacy work. For the last two decades, FRI has worked collaboratively with key community stakeholders to transform Highland Road and the rest of the Ferguson Road corridor. In addition to this park, other key accomplishments include:

- Trinity Forest Spine Trail
- Highland Road upgrade
- Highland/Ferguson and Lakeland/Ferguson Intersection Improvements
- White Rock Hills Branch Library – Dallas Public Library

**Projects in planning:**

- White Rock Hills Recreation Center
- Redevelopment of the Claremont Village Shopping Center



*Pictured above; Area children gather for a photo around the White Rock Hills Park sign  
Pictured below; White Rock Hills Park features a grand climbing tower*



**Save the Date!**  
**FRI Community Connection**  
**Town Hall Virtual Meeting**

**Monday, September 20, 2021**  
**7:00p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

Due to the rising cases of COVID-19 as this publication goes to press, our town hall meeting will be held virtually. Hear all about the latest developments regarding the revitalization of Far East Dallas. Meet your friends, neighbors and local public and law enforcement officials. This is your chance to keep in touch, stay informed and provide feedback.

**Access the meeting at: <https://www.fergusonroad.org/fall2021townhall>**

# Support the Ferguson Road Initiative on North Texas Giving Day



by Dan Ortman

I am appealing to you to support the Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) on September 23 between 6 a.m. and midnight, during our annual North Texas Giving Day fundraising event. FRI has worked for more than 22 years to address public safety and improve the quality of life for residents living in Far East Dallas. FRI works closely with residents and key stakeholders such as business owners, communities of faith and local public officials to transform the area into a thriving community. After years of hard work and perseverance, FRI's vision of providing outdoor recreation, education, health facilities, and wellness opportunities organically interspersed with mixed-income housing and retail is becoming a reality. These changes would be impossible without your generous support of FRI during North Texas Giving Day.

## North Texas Giving Day is September 23!

Once again, McDonald's and other FRI supporters have issued a \$17,000 dollar-for-dollar match challenge to the FRI community. Below is a list of these donors.

### Challenge Match Grant Donors (as of July 5):

- Anonymous
- McDonald's
- Access Self Storage
- John & Dee Bert
- Dan & Linda Ortman
- Gary & Mary Garcia
- Bill & Marilla Coleman
- Kenneth Bernstein & Barbara Clay
- Others

Help FRI meet this challenge by giving to FRI on Thursday, September 23, 6 a.m. to midnight. Your credit or debit card donation will go toward the overall \$34,000 goal.

### Attention Early Birds

You don't have to wait until September 23rd to donate. Go to <https://www.fergusonroad.org/give2021> and give to FRI anytime between September 1-22 where you can also view FRI's updated annual video. Your donation will still count towards the \$34,000 goal.



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*¿Preguntas? Para información general de Dallas College llame a nuestra línea en español al **214-378-1713** o envía un mensaje de texto con el mensaje "**Hola**" al **972-532-6131**.*



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# Go Get Vaccinated

FRI recently received a grant from North Texas CARES to help our Far East Dallas community increase its COVID-19 vaccination rates. The situation here remains dire. As of May, the vaccination rate in the 75228 zip code was only 24.9%. By contrast, in neighboring 75218, the vaccination rate was more than double this – above 50%.

To increase local vaccination rates, FRI is working with local healthcare partners who bring pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinics directly to the communities where folks live. If you would like to schedule a pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinic for your church, apartment community or business, please contact [intern@fergusonroad.org](mailto:intern@fergusonroad.org).

If you know someone who is questioning whether to get the vaccine, here are some helpful strategies to help them decide:

- Provide emotional support. Say “I know there is uncertainty, but this disease is scary. I got the vaccine (or am planning to) and I want it for my family and want you to get it too.”
- Acknowledge uncertain risk and talk about known risks.
- Provide correct information to counter the myths.
- Provide information for information-seekers.
- Partner with communities like FRI. We know our neighbors and what concerns they may have.
- Share your experience. Sharing your story may put someone at ease.
- Tap into people’s desire to protect. Frame getting vaccinated as something to do for the people they love.

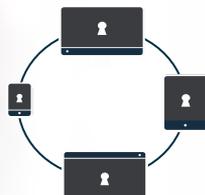
A big shout out of “THANKS!” goes to Catalyst Health Network, for their leadership in delivering the vaccine through these clinics to the most vulnerable in our community. These folks are among our local frontline heroes.

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# Dallas College Makes Education Work



by Megan Dennen

It might have shocked some to see Dallas' seven community colleges combined to form one organization now called Dallas College. For those close to the project, including Monica Lira Bravo, District 4 Trustee for Dallas College, it has been in the works for years and is a much-needed change. Monica and her team noticed some students

were having trouble accumulating enough hours to graduate from a single college because they were taking coursework at multiple colleges based on time, location, or course offering. Students who attend more than one of the local colleges are referred to as "swirl students."

The initiative will help students graduate faster since all of their classes will be under one college no matter at which campus they complete a majority of their classes. June 2021 was the first graduating class to graduate under the new Dallas College name.

From a student's perspective, most will not see or feel a lot of change. The majority of the changes are happening on the operations side to centralize class scheduling, financial assistance, marketing, and the other operations departments.

For our East Dallas community, the most obvious change is Eastfield College is now called Eastfield Campus. Monica stated there is no plan to raise taxes for the new initiative, "We are currently seeing better allocation of time and resources by having all seven college operations under one united group." Dallas College falls under public funding and 4% of taxes collected will still go toward the seven campuses. Eastfield's biggest change is students will have access to more classes and programs. This ties nicely into the Ferguson Road Initiative's goal of creating more accessibility to schooling for East Dallas residents.

Monica also does not foresee any changes in the Dallas County Promise program started three years ago, or in financial aid. The Dallas County Promise is a scholarship to cover graduating seniors' cost of classes (tuition) and pair students with a Success Coach for the next three years to help the student navigate and succeed in their college experience. If your child wants to attend college, please work with their guidance counselor to find the best school and financial aid. Bryan Adams High School is currently enrolled in the program and it is open to all graduating seniors. For more details on program specifics visit [DallasCountyPromise.org](http://DallasCountyPromise.org).

If you graduated and want to attend college, please go online to Dallas College's website, shown below, or stop by their admissions office to receive in-person help. Monica stated, "Dallas College's goal is to help as many people as we can get a college or trade education. Your GPA in high school or how well you placed on tests does not matter. If you do not have legal status we can help too. We are here to help anyone who wants to come back to college to change careers, get a GED, and more."

For more information on Dallas College visit [dallascollege.edu](http://dallascollege.edu). Their website is in English and Spanish.



*Pictured above; Dr. Eddie Tealer, President, Dallas College Eastfield Campus, is pictured with students in a vaulted lobby at the college.*



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## Meet Dr. Eddie Tealer, President of Dallas College at Eastfield



by Vikki J. Martin, Executive Director,

Dr. Eddie Tealer took the reins at the Dallas College at Eastfield Campus three years ago. Dr. Tealer is working to establish strong ties to the communities that surround the college. This work supports Eastfield's mission to transform lives and communities through higher education. By having Eastfield

focused on community engagement through collaboration and communication, Dr. Tealer wants to ensure student access and provide each student with the community support and resources that many students need for academic success.

Growing up in Taylor, Texas outside of Austin, Eddie Tealer's upbringing instilled the values and established the moral compass that guides him today: to serve first. Dr. Tealer recently joined FRI's Board of Directors. "To me, the work that FRI is doing in the community is founded on the same servant lead leadership principles that I live by," said Dr. Tealer.



*Pictured above; Dr. Eddie Tealer*

Eastfield Campus and FRI have partnered to hold quarterly meetings with nonprofit organizations in our community. The purpose of these "convening sessions" is for the nonprofits so they share resources and best practices so they can enhance how they serve Far East Dallas residents. "We look forward to increasing partnerships with our area nonprofits," said Dr. Tealer. Eastfield Campus and FRI also plans to publish a resource directory listing local nonprofit agencies.

Dr. Tealer shared an exciting recent decision from the Texas Higher Education Board in Austin. Dallas College will be the first community college in the state to offer 4-year degrees in Early Childhood Education and Teaching, which will prepare students (including Eastfield Campus students) to teach young children from birth to the third grade. "This will help fill a critical shortage of early childhood teachers in Far East Dallas, especially in lower-income areas," Dr. Tealer said.

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# Bryan Adams High School Rebuilding for the Future



by Paul E. Maynard

## Building Remodel Fits Its Revitalized Academic Mission

When you decide to reshape an iconic institution, it is best to have a good reason. The alma mater of district court judges, pro football and basketball players, political writers

and singers, Bryan Adams High School has always been an icon in Far East Dallas.

Opened in 1957, in the late 1960s and early 1970s Bryan Adams was one of the largest high schools in Texas. Over many years the school graduated upwards of 1,000 students a year. Slowly the intervening years of societal change affected the Far East Dallas school. Declining enrollments and test scores led the district to institute an academic shakeup in 2012. In 2015, the district's school-of-choice program gave Bryan Adams a positive redirection.

The Dallas Bond Program of 2015 allocated nearly \$70 million for renovations to the campus. Among the long-anticipated changes will be

new administration offices, a two-level classroom and a fine arts addition, as well as a new competition gym. Additional upgrades will be an auditorium, library and media center. "The building is catching up with the academic improvements," Dan Micciche, Dallas Independent School District (DISD) Board of Trustees representing District 3, said. "It will be brighter and more spacious. It will look like a new school," he remarked.

In addition to the new facilities, the first improvements since its construction over 60 years ago, the school is now home to several new programs, as well as numerous academic honors. "Through the early childhood development and law enforcement pathways programs, we are truly growing our own community leaders," Mr. Micciche added. Bryan Adams is also blessed with renowned leadership. Principal Ryan Bott was a finalist for DISD's Principal of the Year Award.

As of our publication date, nearly 50% of this project is complete. It is scheduled for completion sometime within the next year.

*Pictured below; Architect's rendering of the redesigned entrance to Bryan Adams High School.*





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# Strong Leadership Backs DISD Student Success



by Dan Micciche, DISD board member  
District 3-Northeast Dallas representative

The principals of two Dallas ISD schools in Far East Dallas have been recognized for their outstanding leadership and are profiled below.

More than 10 percent of Dallas ISD seniors graduate this year with both a high school diploma and an associate degree. As part of a

new partnership with Dallas College, Dallas ISD offers a wide variety of early college programs at all of its high schools. This represents an incredible turnaround since 2009, when only 7 percent of Dallas ISD students earned any kind of secondary credits within six years after graduating high school.

## Ryan Bott, principal of Bryan Adams High School

Principal Bott led the BA campus to earn seven TEA distinctions his first year on campus and now for a second year in a row. Under Principal Bott's leadership, BA earned the Advancement Via Individual Determination "National Demonstration Site" status, a first for any comprehensive high school in Dallas ISD history. In May 2021, 51 seniors from the BA Class of 2021 earned associates degrees from Dallas College at the same time they graduated from high school as part of BA's P-Tech/Early College pathway for early childhood education. BA opened an additional P-Tech pathway with a focus on law enforcement in 2019-2020. Under Principal Bott's leadership, Dallas is growing its own teachers and law enforcement officials.



*Pictured; Ryan Bott*

Of all of his many accomplishments, however, Principal Bott cites leading the BA campus during the 2020-2021 school year as his most significant. He is proud of the BA teachers, staff, students, and parents for their tenacity during a school year that included the campus facility closing for over a month due to damage from the February 2021 snowstorm. Despite these hardships, Principal Bott has led with courageous leadership, stayed focused on student achievement and as a result BA is among the top schools in many areas, including student achievement, attendance, and college-going metrics. Additionally, he is currently leading construction work on campus.

## Gloria Kennedy, principal of Bayles Elementary School

Principal Kennedy has exemplified the pursuit of excellence and equity, during her 24 years of service in Dallas ISD. Under her leadership, experience, and dedication to the field of education, Bayles has been transformed from a struggling, high priority campus, to a Leader in Me campus with high expectations for all. She is a capable leader that ensures there is a structured instructional program in all grade levels and contents.

With an effective management style, she coaches her administrative team, teachers, and all staff to set clear expectations and support for all

that lead the charge in seeing the vision and mission accomplished at Bayles. It is not just the academic gains; the culture and climate is now one of collaboration, support, and respect among all.

Her experience – teacher, reading specialist, academic coordinator, assistant principal, and principal as well as her advanced training – a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and an M.S. in Engineering – has helped her instill a new pride at Bayles.

Even with this success, she continues to have a growth mindset. She seeks feedback and implements it immediately. She shares the feedback with her team and shares her practices with other principals in the cluster at a



*Pictured; Gloria Kennedy*

moment's notice. She continues to pursue excellence and equity for all scholars in all that she does daily. She is committed to the Dallas ISD with the desire to impact student achievement.

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# Summer Returns to Normal



by Mari L. Madison, Editor, FRIdays

On June 1, the Casa View community speculated on social media if the swimming pool would open for the summer. Three days later a crowd gathered as city leaders cut the ribbon on the Harry Stone Neighborhood Aquatic Center. City of Dallas Parks and Recreation Department and City Council of Dallas, District 9 leadership held the scissors. Speakers Crystal Ross, Calvert Collins-Bratton, Maria Hasbany, Dallas Park Board members; and District 9 Councilwoman Paula Blackmon addressed the crowd. The next day the doors opened for summer fun, and what a summer of fun it has been.

Area children of all ages enjoyed the new Harry Stone facility. The attendance for the season was 8,825. Adults swam laps in a five-lane lap pool, while older kids tried out the climbing wall and went down the flume slide. Mothers watched their toddlers play on the age-appropriate interactive play structure designed just for them. There is even a chair for lowering those with mobility issues into the water. Shade structures and the pavilion kept attentive parents out of the sun, and all used the bathhouses family changing room and lockers.

The concession stand offered snacks and drinks for purchase, to revive tired swimmers after an afternoon of fun. "I've been with my two-year-old granddaughter. The lifeguards are doing a great job, and staff have been polite. I think the two-hour limit is perfect; keeping the pool from being crowded. I easily navigated the online reservation system, and the snack bar is well stocked," said Casa View resident Kathy De Leon.

For over six decades the residences surrounding Harry Stone Park, have spent their summers swimming at the Casa View pool. Through the efforts of the Greater Casa View Alliance, at a City of Dallas bond meeting in the Fall of 2017, the Harry Stone Park swimming-pool upgrade was approved for the Dallas Aquatic Facilities Master Plan.

Today, the results of the City's Neighborhood Aquatic Center plan at Harry Stone Recreation Center is so much more than the former large rectangular pool. Built in the mid 1950's, the original pool still holds fond memories for so many. This summer the surrounding community had new and improved ways to make a summer splash.



*Pictured above; Maria Hasbany Dallas District 9 Park & Recreation Board Representative*



*Pictured above; the Harry Stone Neighborhood Aquatic Center opens.*

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City Hospital at White Rock offers the most comprehensive medical and surgical weight-loss options in Dallas. Through our award-winning My New Beginning program, highly trained surgeons, nurses, dietitians, and wellness professionals help people who are struggling with their weight regain their sense of freedom.



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