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Matthew



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Ferguson Road Initiative

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To Our Stakeholders

During 2022 the Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) took time to look inward and to re-evaluate the award-winning work we do. As a backbone participatory organization located in Far East Dallas, we do not provide direct services or programs. We are the critical infrastructure working behind the scenes that identifies community issues, then builds consensus around and helps implement important community projects and programs. In other words, FRI forms and leads project/program coalitions with local stakeholders through a

process of identifying problems, developing solutions, coordinating with decision makers, facilitating meetings, and seeing projects through to the end despite public official turnover. FRI is the indirect impact of community development one can see in Far East Dallas. Our direct impact is advocacy, networking, coordination, and capacity building that makes much of the community development possible in the FRI target area.

Working with Elite Research, a research design, program evaluation, and statistical consulting company, we created two impactful documents: a Logic Model and an Impact Report. Our Logic Model helps us visually understand the resources and inputs required for us to implement our work, the activities and outputs of our work and the desired outcomes, both long-term and short-term.

[Click here to view the 2022 Impact Report](#)

The development of an [Impact Report](#) is allowing us to better analyze and communicate our long-term successes and challenges. Our Impact Report is aiding us in maximizing our reach and making a positive impression to our donors, supporters, and philanthropic foundations.



Greeters check-in members and visitors at the Community Connection Townhall meeting.

“Our community is stronger, our streets are safer, and our future is brighter because of the work of the people at the Ferguson Road Initiative. What they have accomplished stands as a shining example to every neighborhood in Dallas and throughout our state. ”

Mayor Eric Johnson

Ferguson Road Initiative					
					
ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Advocacy (Identification of constituent need, gap analysis, solution support)	# of issues identified based on community engagement # of issues prioritized based on community engagement & capacity to execute # of gap analyses conducted relative to issues # of action/engagement plans aligned to priorities	Increased understanding of local community needs (self-assessment) Increased knowledge on how to address local community needs Increased inclusion of diverse community voices in decision-making	Increased community member's individual self efficacy/agency Increased community self-agency Increased engagement with community advocates and members (civil discourse) More actionable plans or policies that embed public community and local government	Increased size and scope of economic development project coalitions Increased effective use of taxpayer dollars	Increased economic development in the community (Far East Dallas neighbor-hoods)
Leadership (Identification of priorities, engagement plans, following up with public officials, advise city officials, local stakeholders, direct contact for community)	# and type of meetings with local government, public officials, local stakeholders (including follow-up)	Local officials and community partners are more aware and knowledgeable about community need	Greater city/county capacity to review and evaluate community (public) engagement efforts Increased collaborations of community-based partnerships	Increased size and scope of recreation and wellness project coalitions Increased size and scope of public safety project coalitions	Increased quality of life in community (Far East Dallas neighbor-hoods)
Facilitation & Organization (Conducting workshops, convening local townhalls & meetings, task forces, community-based consensus building)	# and type of meetings # and type of events # of type of meeting participants # of people receiving newsletter # of people receiving news magazine # of website hits	Local officials and community partners are more motivated and willing to sponsor the community's identified need(s) Increased motivation of community members to engage in self-agency	Increased funding support from local community businesses Increased funding support from community members (individual philanthropy)	Better local public decisions that lead to a stronger and more viable community	Increased empowerment and social cohesion in the community (Far East Dallas neighbor-hoods)
Networking & Communications (Research & documentation of local engagement efforts; production & dissemination of materials and meeting notes)	# of meeting notes taken and disseminated to meeting participants # of new community partners # of new community collaborations # and % of new funding sources	Increased identification of groups that value the same work Increased knowledge of vital community programs/services	Increased community access/use of community programs and services	Increased participatory and collaborative governance between local officials and community members	

The Ferguson Road Initiative Logic Model.

Strategic Highlights

Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit, grassroots, community-based, umbrella organization. Founded in 1998, the primary operations of FRI at that time were to address the escalating crime and violence that was forcing good families and businesses to flee to safer communities in the city.

From 2000–2011 we received (2) \$1MM federal grants from the Department of Justice to fight crime. At the end of this period, we achieved:

- Reduction of overall crime by 25% and violent crime by 61% in targeted areas
- Unification of neighborhoods, from 5 organizations to 37
- Increased social services to the community
- \$40,000+ in capital improvements to improve the quality of life
- Facilitated more than \$300MM in economic development in the form of affordable, middle and high-income housing and retail

Ferguson Road Initiative’s ability to build partnerships with local, state, and federal government, neighborhood and Crime Watch groups, local businesses, foundations, nonprofits, schools, and faith communities is strengthening our community. The reduction of crime has resulted in great improvements in the economy of the area. However, challenges remain. The area is a USDA certified food desert and other issues remain regarding gaps in services in the areas of medical care and recreation opportunities. FRI is needed to address these gaps in service.

VISION:	Far East Dallas is strong and vital!
MISSION:	Engage and empower a community of advocates to advance a safe, beautiful, prosperous, and proud community in Far East Dallas.
VALUES:	<p>INTEGRITY FRI integrates ethical values into the way we conduct ourselves. This demands absolute honesty and trust with one another.</p> <p>COMMUNITY We believe that one person can make a difference and that together we can improve the quality of life for people in our community.</p> <p>STEWARDSHIP We take good care of the resources entrusted to us and properly utilize and develop the talents of our staff and members.</p> <p>LEADERSHIP We act courageously and take responsibility for our choices and their consequences and persevere through challenges and barriers.</p> <p>RESPECT We honor individuality and demonstrate compassion and respect for ourselves, others, and those with whom we do business.</p>

Since 2011, our community-building model has been transforming the Far East Dallas community. Our advocacy work is building neighborhood amenities, strengthening families, and improving the health, welfare, economy, and overall quality of life in Far East Dallas.

Operational Highlights

FRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Daniel Ortman

President
Forest Hills Neighborhood Association,
Resident

Christopher Jackson

Vice-President
Wynne-Jackson, Principal

Bill Coleman

Secretary & President Emeritus,
Resident

Becky Reed

Treasurer
Lone Star Credit Union,
President

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Daniel Davis Clayton

Public Opinion LLC,
Business Owner

Shawn Lovelady

City Hospital at White Rock,
COO

Sam Downey

Frost Bank, Assistant VP,
Corp. Banking

Matt Nicolette

Resident

Austin Endo

Amazon
Resident

Carmen Parra

CMIT Solutions, President
Resident

Jared Greco

Crowe Consulting
Resident

Christopher Rebuck

Bishop Lynch High School,
President

Art Hall

Lakehill Preparatory,
Head of School

Dr. Eddie Tealer

Dallas College Eastfield,
President

Gary Hasty

Karrington & Co.

Karl Zavitkovsky

Economic Development,
City of Dallas, retired

Operational Highlights



FRI STAFF

Vikki J. Martin

Executive Director
Full-Time

Esther Romero

Membership
Administrator & Special Events Coordinator
Full-Time

JBH Communications

Web Manager
Contract

Susan Hopper

Communications & Marketing Director
Full-Time

Mari Madison

FRIdays News Magazine
Contract

Maria Valenzuela

Office Manager
Part-Time

FRI Service Area



Far East Dallas Neighborhoods

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Alger Park/Ash Creek NA | 14. Crestview Park NA | 27. Hillview Terrace NA |
| 2. Braeburn-Glen | 15. Eastwood Hills NA | 28. Lakeland Hills |
| 3. Briarwood NA | 16. Emerald Isle NA | 29. LightPointe Place HOA |
| 4. Casa Linda Estates NA | 17. Enclave at White Rock HOA | 30. Little Casa View |
| 5. Casa Linda Forest NA | 18. Estates at Forest Hills HOA | 31. Little Forest Hills NA |
| 6. Casa View Heights | 19. Fairway Estates HOA | 32. Skyline Heights |
| 7. Casa View Heights | 20. Forest Creek OA | 33. St. Andrews |
| 8. Casa View Heights | 21. Forest Hills HOA | 34. Stonegate @ Forest Hills |
| 9. Casa View | 22. Forest Meade HOA | 35. Truett |
| 10. Casa View Haven NA | 23. Forest Oaks NA | 36. White Rock Forest NA |
| 11. Casa View Oaks NA | 24. Highland on the Creek | 37. White Rock Village |
| 12. Claremont Addition NA | 25. Highlands Apartments | |
| 13. Club Manor NA | 26. Hillridge | |

Key Program Activities

FRI takes a holistic approach to neighborhood restoration, revitalization, and community development. As a backbone organization, one of FRI's roles is to align our common agenda comprised of our mission and vision statements. The diagram below helps to visualize the work of FRI. On the outside of the circle the seven key program activities describe the focus of our work. In the center of the circle, the roles of a backbone organization identify how FRI accomplishes the outcomes that generates collective impact. Our key program activities guide, support, and promote our partner organizations.



The Ferguson Road Initiative 's role as a backbone organization.

Program Highlights:

- Advocacy
- Communication
- Connection
- Crime Prevention & Public Safety
- Economic Development
- Financial Literacy
- Leadership

Key Program Activities

ADVOCACY

Goal: Develop partners to deliver programs and services that improve the quality of life in Far East Dallas neighborhoods.

Outcomes

Education Outcomes

- **Reading Partners:** For the fourth consecutive year, FRI helped recruit and mobilize volunteers for the educational nonprofit Reading Partners of Dallas program at Bayles Elementary School. The mission of Reading Partners is to help children become lifelong readers by empowering communities to provide individualized instruction with measurable results. This year FRI volunteers provided Bayles Elementary School with 90 tutoring sessions, serving 7 students with an economic impact of \$2,687.



Ferguson Road Initiative's impact for Reading Partners at Bayles Elementary School.

• **The Artist Outreach:** For the third consecutive year, FRI continued our partnership with The Artist Outreach (TAO), an educational organization whose mission is to change the educational, emotional, and financial futures of the individuals, schools and advocacy centers they serve through creative arts programs. In 2022 TAO served approximately 640 unduplicated students, with teachers and district staff involved at Bayles Elementary School and White Rock Hills Uplift Preparatory. The primary program provided was Rhythmic Vocabulary. This program uses unique, playful, arts-based techniques that support the students' language and math skills while providing teachers unique ways to reach their students. Drumming techniques help support better speech patterns, build fluency and reading skills. Creative songs, poems, dances and storylines reinforce teachers' lesson plans. TAO delivers services in the classroom alongside the teacher, thus building continuity for students and teaching tools for the teacher. The overall value of this program is \$26,000.

• **Read Across America:** FRI helped our business partner, Monster Yogurt, communicate the Read Across America book drive program. Monster Yogurt collected 3,000 books that were provided to Truett Elementary School and other local charities and Free Little Libraries in Far East neighborhoods.



Books collected by Monster Yogurt at Casa Linda Shopping Center for Far East Dallas schools. FRI communicated the Read Across America book drive through our media platforms resulting in the donation of 3,000 books!



The Artist Outreach provides math and reading enhancements by utilizing rhythm and drumming techniques.

• **Book Drive for Kids:** In 2022 FRI launched a new partnership with Book Drive for Kids, a nonprofit dedicated to creating a culture of literacy by providing books for disadvantaged children for independent reading. FRI's role was to identify area funding to support free book fairs in our area Far East Dallas schools. This year FRI helped facilitate fairs at White Rock Hills Uplift Preparatory, Bayles and S.S. Conner Elementary Schools providing 1,730 children free new books at a value of \$5,400. By working in partnership with Book Drive for Kids, our goal is to serve all 9 of our elementary schools in Far East Dallas.



Bayles Elementary School students enjoy reading their new books, provided by Book Drive for Kids, the Ferguson Road Initiative, and various philanthropic partners.

• **Free Little Libraries:** FRI established, in partnership with the Dallas Founder Lions Club, State Representative Jasmine Crockett, and a new nonprofit, It's About the Kids, a Free Little Library at the White Rock Hills Town Home Apartments (7229 Ferguson Road). The partnership included establishing a community library in the leasing office of the property and ensuring books are supplied to all ages.



Dallas Founder Lions Club, St. Rep. Jasmine Crockett, It's About the Kids, Peak Living, and the Ferguson Road Initiative launch the opening of the Free Little Library at White Rock Hills Town Home Apartments.

Key Program Activities

COMMUNICATION

Goal: Communicate vital information regarding strategic progress and access to quality programs and/or services.

Outcomes

The communication services provided by the Ferguson Road Initiative are critical to families made most vulnerable by the COVID-19 crisis. When the 2020 shelter-in-place order was issued in Dallas, we realized our communication platforms would be an essential service needed by our Far East Dallas area emergency service providers. FRI leadership stepped-up and coalesced a meeting with (5) key nonprofit emergency service provider partners:

- Mission East Dallas (Medical, Dental, Behavioral)
- Owenwood Farm & Neighbor Space (Diaper/Food Distribution)
- St. Vincent De Paul (Food, Financial, Mini-Loan, Pharmacy)
- White Rock Center of Hope (Food, Financial, Clothing)
- Wilkinson Center (Food, Financial)

In 2021 the Ferguson Road Initiative partnered with Dallas College/Eastfield to expand on these partnerships by bringing more than 40 nonprofits serving Far East Dallas, Mesquite, Garland, Pleasant Grove, and Balch Springs together for quarterly networking luncheons. The purpose of these quarterly meetings was to introduce agency leaders and programs to one another with the intent of expanding services to families that need help.

FRI continued the monthly direct communication we began last year to our area apartments, schools, and faith communities. These communications provide an updated Resource Directory that can be shared with families needing emergency assistance during the Coronavirus pandemic. Not only did FRI provide emergency service information, but we also reached out to our community at large to share how neighbors can help our nonprofits through cash and/or food donations to ensure their operations went uninterrupted and continued to benefit the community.

It was especially important in 2022 that the Ferguson Road Initiative use our robust communication platforms to inform people where they could go within the Far East Dallas community for COVID-19 testing and to safely receive the vaccination to prevent the virus. This was challenging because site locations changed frequently. FRI stepped up to ensure families received timely notification when locations changed.

FRI regularly communicates with 37 neighborhood associations, 50 apartment communities, 30 churches, 45 nonprofits, 17 schools, and 2000 businesses. FRI communications include:

- FRIdays magazine: semi-annual magazine, bulk mailed to 18,000 households, distributed to 50 apartment complex offices
- NewsFlash: digital newsletter emailed to 1,500 residents
- Resource Directory: updated monthly, emailed to 50 apartment offices, 30 faith communities, and 17 schools
- Social Media: postings on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
- Email correspondences: regular communication with members, donors, and volunteers (open rate is between 40–50%)



Example of the cover of a FRIdays magazine mailed to the 75228 and 75218 zip codes twice a year.

These communications have helped to inform our FRI service area members about FRI events, services, network resource providers, and project coalition news and updates. FRI communications have been an integral part of our message to the community about who we are and what we do for the Far East Dallas community.



As a backbone organization, Ferguson Road Initiative communicates to the Far East Dallas community.

Key Program Activities

CONNECTION

Goal: Engage the community advocates in opportunities to connect and improve the community and neighborhoods in Far East Dallas.

Outcomes

The following is a reporting on the various ways FRI helped connect our community by providing support and service to improve Far East Dallas:

- (2,860) hours of community service were donated by 424 volunteers valued at \$90,963!
- Operation Beautification Litter Cleanup Event celebrated our 10th consecutive year of service making our community a more beautiful place to live. This year garnered 200 volunteers representing 14 neighborhoods, 7 schools, 10 businesses/nonprofits, 6 service organizations, and 2 churches. This volunteer service was estimated to be valued at \$21,760. In addition to the community collecting trash, they also donated 151 lbs of food to benefit the White Rock Center of Hope food pantry.



FRI partners with the City of Dallas Code Compliance during annual Operation Beautification Litter Cleanup Events.

- In 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, FRI launched an annual blood drive to ensure North Texas blood supplies remain available, thus ensuring that patients who need surgery, or victims of car accidents or other emergencies will receive the life-saving blood they need. On July 23 FRI, in partnership with Carter BloodCare, collected 24 pints of blood from 25 donors, thus impacting 72 lives.



Hillridge neighborhood resident, Elise Phillips, donates blood.

- In April the Ferguson Road Initiative, led by the Park & Recreation Department, worked with more than 25 volunteers to plant additional trees at Lakeland Hills Park (2600 St. Francis Ave).



A family works together to plant trees at Lakeland Hills Park.

Key Program Activities

CRIME PREVENTION & PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal: Educate and engage community leaders to increase public safety and decrease crime in Far East Dallas.

Outcomes

The Ferguson Road Initiative remains committed to maintaining a safe community. We identify, mobilize, and train community leadership in how to report crime, encourage neighborhood participation, and educate community members on how to work with local law enforcement, city departments, and how to navigate city hall in addressing crime and public safety issues.

We monitor and report on the status of crime and public safety in the community at our semi-annual town hall meetings, CrimeWatch Task Force meetings, and Truett Area CrimeWatch Program meetings. We keep the community informed and post the progress of our efforts via our various communication platforms. Furthermore, we track the progress of the City of Dallas' Traffic Calming Study, currently being conducted by Transportation to study how the Ferguson Road corridor from I-30 to I-635 can be made safer through traffic calming initiatives.

CrimeWatch Task Forces

The Ferguson Road Initiative dedicates time and funding to crime prevention and the enhancement of public safety. Crime in target areas of the Far East Dallas community has plummeted since the 2000's. One reason is due to FRI's vigilance in tracking, monitoring, and addressing crime in the community. We do this by creating temporary project coalition CrimeWatch Task Forces to address crime hot spots when they arise. These Task Forces are flexible and are formed on an as needed basis.

FRI currently administrates and manages the Lower Ferguson Road Task Force—assembled in April 2021—to address a spate in crime.

Assembling CrimeWatch Task Forces involves holistically identifying area stakeholder leadership within the community: residents, schools, businesses, apartment owners, developers, and faith communities. These are not typical CrimeWatch meetings! Instead, we dedicate staffing to developing a database, maps, and communication system for the target area. Stakeholders are initially brought together to identify the underlying root causes of the crime and then draft an agenda together for a meeting that assembles city and county departments to begin systematically targeting the root cause of these crime problems.

Our city/community CrimeWatch Task Force meetings includes:

- Law Enforcement (Neighborhood Policing Officers, Drug Enforcement, Marshall's Office, Community Prosecutor)
- Park Ranger Program
- Transportation
- Office of Homeless Solutions
- Code Compliance
- Councilmembers
- Parking Enforcement

The purpose of these meetings are to begin a dialogue of understanding between city officials and the community. This involves training citizens in how to report crime and code violations and how to work with city government. We document the key comments and agreements in these meetings, then put together a Meeting Summary that includes an Action Plan of who does what and by when. This Meeting Summary is distributed after the conclusion of the meeting. We circle back with another meeting quarterly or semi-annually during the year, depending on the need.

These meetings involve reviewing the Action Plan from the last meeting and reporting on the status of the initial problems. These task forces have been very effective in reducing crime because FRI creates a framework for reporting accountability.

Typically, once a task force is assembled, the crime in the area will increase. This is due to community members being trained to report crime when they see it. After a few community meetings, crime tends to decline in the area.

Providing Support for the Truett Area CrimeWatch Program

We continue to provide support for the Truett Area CrimeWatch quarterly information programs. These meetings are not typical CrimeWatch meetings. Although a portion of the meeting is set aside to identify and discuss neighborhood crime issues, these meetings also provide a training component to them. Past programs have included how to react during an active shooter incident, how to use the city of Dallas app to report code issues, how to use the new DORS reporting system launched by DPD, crime prevention for women, etc. FRI provides support to the program through communication and our participation.



Dallas Police Department and the Office of Community Affairs worked with FRI and the White Rock Hill Townhome Apartments to build community with residents through a resource fair.

Key Program Activities

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Advocate for compatible, quality economic development and amenities to revitalize Far East Dallas and facilitate opportunities with partner and investors.

OUTCOMES

With the rebranding of the Ash Creek Greenbelt to CreekSide: Ash Creek Urban Reserve, FRI is creating an outdoor recreation mecca for our residents. The grand opening of the (\$780,000) White Rock Hills Park in 2021 was the beginning of the large-scale amenities FRI identifies and targets as essential for improving the quality of life in Far East Dallas. White Rock Hills Park represents the first phase of the future White Rock Hills Recreation Center.

In addition to the completion of the park, the finalization of the (\$3.5MM) Complete Street project of Highland Road from Ferguson to the Mondello Senior Living apartment has established sidewalks, bike paths, lighting and improved safety for pedestrian and cyclists. Highland Road now connects with the currently under-construction (\$18MM) Trinity Forest Spine Trail (TFST). The construction of the TFST is managed by The LOOP Dallas charged with connecting the city with the citywide trail system. This connection is important to a historically isolated community because it will not only connect the residents with other parts of the city, but also to the Great Trinity Forest.

FRI's leadership, in partnership with The LOOP Dallas, has launch a Friends of CreekSide group. The purpose of this volunteer led organization is to provide additional future amenities to this area, including future improvement to White Rock Hills Park and hosting family-friendly events along the TFST once it is completed.

CreekSide is attracting mixed income housing. Already established workforce, veterans, affordable senior housing, (35) high-income single-family townhomes, and work has begun at 1898 Highland Road on a 23-patio home development called Tenison Hills. FRI efforts are transforming a blighted area that once had an illegal dumpsite, brownfield, (4) burned or crime-magnet apartment properties, and a trailer park in violation of city health and safety codes. FRI supports efforts to encourage middle-income housing because we believe it is what is needed to stabilize the community of Far East Dallas.



Ash Creek Urban Reserve Projects

White Rock Hills Park, 2020

Trinity Forest Spine Trail, 2022

Highland Road Construction, 2022

Lakeland/Ferguson Intersection Improvement, 2022

Highland/Ferguson Intersection Improvement, 2024

White Rock Hills Recreation Center, Future
Plans are underway for the
Ash Creek Urban Reserve.



David Weekley's Grove at White Rock Hills offers high-income townhomes within a mixed-income housing neighborhood.

established in underserved areas and are committed to hiring and training locally as well as providing community service to local nonprofits and food pantries. FRI brought areas workforce and food pantry partners together in one meeting to introduce them to the Starbucks Community Store model. Since then, Starbucks has trained and hired 32 residents from the Far East Dallas area and Starbucks employees donate time to nonprofit organizations like the Wilkinson Center.

New Business & Workforce Development

This year the Ferguson Road Initiative worked directly with two new companies establishing businesses in Far East Dallas and working to connect them with our nonprofit workforce training nonprofits.

Starbucks Community Store in the Casa View Shopping Center

When Starbucks contacted Councilmember Paula Blackmon (District 9) to find out how to connect with workforce development and food pantry partners, she immediately introduced them to FRI.

When leadership in Casa View brought an upgraded shopping center, pedestrian connections and improved intersections to the community, it also attracted the Starbucks Corporation to establish a Community Store there. Starbucks Community Stores are typically



Ribbon Cutting at Starbucks Community Store in Casa View Shopping Center in July 2022.

El Rio Grande Latin Market established in the White Rock East community

Councilmember Adam Bazaldua (District 7) introduced the Human Resources team of El Rio Grande Latin Market (ERGLM) to the Ferguson Road Initiative because of our deep connections with area workforce training partners, like Dallas College/Eastfield. ERGLM met with FRI and a partnership meeting was facilitated whereby nonprofits in workforce development were introduced to ERGLM and the employment opportunities offered by the grocery store industry. ERGLM believes in building people and communities. FRI communications sent job recruitment postings throughout the community. This store is a critical part of the community restoration being achieved in the White Rock East area of FRI, as it is currently located in a USDA certified food desert.

Key Program Activities

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Goal: Provide Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) services and financial literacy education to low-income community residents.

Outcomes

FRI leadership was awarded the first IRS funded Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program in Dallas 18 years ago. Although underutilized, the VITA and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) programs are among the U.S. Government's largest, needs-tested, cash benefits anti-poverty programs. Access to VITA sites is critical in helping filers access EITC and reducing reliance on costly (and predatory) tax preparation services, maximizing the financial benefits of the refunds, which for many low-income families may serve as the largest infusion of cash into their household in the year. VITA serves families earning \$57,000 annually or less with free assistance in preparing their own tax returns.

This was the first year since the COVID-19 pandemic that we provided in-person tax services. The pandemic has negatively impacted our program since 2020 because people and volunteers have been reluctant to assemble in public for fear of contracting the virus. At our library locations (Lochwood and Forest Green) we exceeded our goals in partnership with Sharing Life. This year we increased tax preparation services by 34%, from 241 to 364 families. Refunds were increased from \$356,667 in 2021 to \$581,202 in 2022. Library services were provided one night a week.

At the Owenwood Farm & Neighbor Space site, we fell short of our goals in partnering with Foundation Communities. This was due to our long-time site provider partner, First Community Church, unexpectedly selling their property and moving in January, thus making it impossible to use this church location. This forced FRI and Foundation Communities to scramble to identify another partner location at the last minute. It was difficult to find a location in the community willing to donate space on Saturdays. Saturdays are high volume days, as that is the day of the week when most families and individuals who work can find the time to get their taxes done. Because Owenwood Farm & Neighbor Space had limited times and days of the week to provide tax services (they were only open three days of the week with no services on Saturday) our overall outcomes were down this year. Tax preparations decreased by 53%. Refunds decreased from \$1,444,690 to \$814,000.

FRI's extensive communication network was used to help recruit qualified volunteer tax preparers, greeters, and translators. FRI used these same networks to communicate VITA and EITC help to low-income families. Because FRI has earned the trust of our community, we have deep roots in the Far East Dallas area with our constituency groups.



2022 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program – All Sites VITA Highlights

OUR PARTNERS



726

Families
Served



\$67,838

Tax preparation
fees saved



\$1,405,202

Refunds
to the
Community



**Over
16,000
FREE**

Income Tax Returns in
17 years of VITA in East Dallas
and **over \$28,000,000 in refunds!**



180

Hours
Financial
Education

15 minutes
per client

Volunteer Driven!



754



Hours valued at
\$22,583

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)
for families served is

\$28,044

\$197,136

\$14,370

Child Tax
Credit

\$14,411

Education
Credit

\$174,605

Earned
Income
Credit

Additional
Child Tax
Credit

Average
Refund
\$1,959

Community Investment

**THANK YOU,
DONORS,
SPONSORS, AND
VOLUNTEERS!**

Outcomes for 2022 have been combined from our three VITA sites.



VITA serves families who need help with filing income taxes.

Key Program Activities

LEADERSHIP

Goal: Provide visionary leadership to the constituents of Far East Dallas and develop strong community leaders.

Outcomes

FRI remains committed to the idea that one person can make a difference. That's why our organization is always looking for leaders in our community. Whether it is leading a project or attending a meeting, FRI's recruitment and training efforts in leadership are ongoing. Efforts this year were challenging due to the pandemic. FRI's 24 years of proven leadership has earned the trust of the Far East Dallas community.

Redistricting Task Force

FRI took the lead in establishing a task force to address the census Redistricting process that occurs every decade. We had representation at every City Redistricting Commission meeting to ensure our community voice would not be diluted. Although the Ferguson Road Initiative worked to remain in two City Council Districts, the Redistricting Commission approved dividing our community into three districts: 2, 7 and 9. We are working collaboratively with all three council representatives.

Development Watchdog

The Ferguson Road Initiative continues to serve as the Development Watchdog to ensure developers follow community-driven area plans and to protect our neighborhoods from negative development projects.

FRI leadership helped craft a collaborative Good Neighbor Agreement between community leaders representing Truett Area CrimeWatch, Eastwood Hills, Hillview Terrace and LDG Development. This document, although not legally binding, helped build goodwill and dialogue between neighbors and the developer and serves as a template for other potential controversial development agreements in the future.

Intersection Task Force

This year the FRI Intersection Task Force continued to work with Public Works on finalizing intersection improvement plans at Lakeland Drive/Ferguson Road and Highland Road/Ferguson Road. Task Force leadership include representatives from Little Forest Hills, Forest Meade, Lakeland Hills, Claremont, Villas @ Ash Creek and Eastwood Hills.

FRI leadership was demonstrated financially in the following ways:

- More than 20 area business invested \$24,800 in advertising to underwrite the FRIdays magazine.
- FRI continued our commitment to keep our community members safe and informed during the pandemic. We pre-recorded our February semi-annual meeting so residents could access information from the safety of their home. Our September meeting was held in person and had more than 75 people in attendance.
- 203 FRI Community Connection members invested in FRI, thus sustaining operations and programs.
- \$50,201 was contributed by 146 investors during FRI's annual North Texas Giving Day (NTGD) fundraising campaign.
- 49 Founder's Circle Members made a 3-year pledge of support helping to establish an annual budget to support FRI operations.
- FRI received more than \$30,000 in in-kind support in 2022.
- FRI promotes over 200 local businesses in our on-line business directory.

Award Winning

FRI has been the recipient of dozens of federal, state, and local awards over the years. We have been recognized by the IRS, The Real Estate Council, Bank of America, Greater East Dallas Chamber of Commerce, and the Center for Nonprofit Management.

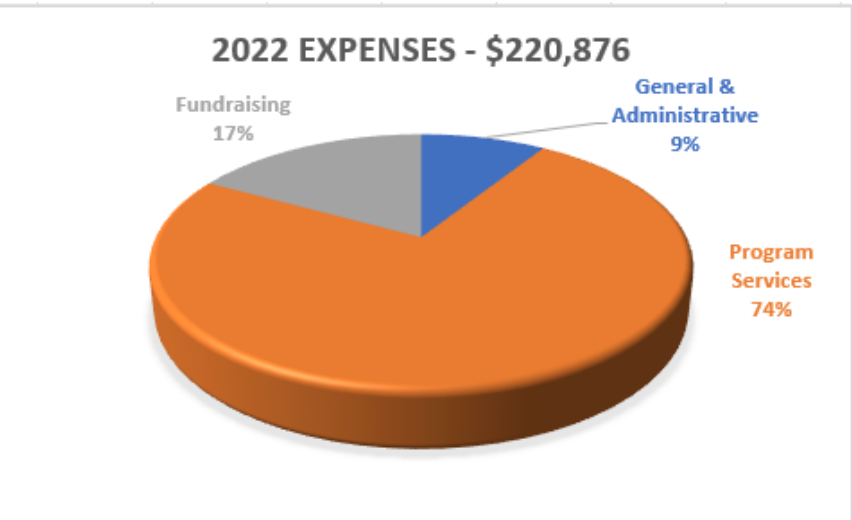


Local realtor, Liz Renfo (left) and East Dallas Networking chair, Chuck Kobdish (right), present Executive Director for FRI, Vikki Martin (center), with a charitable gift.

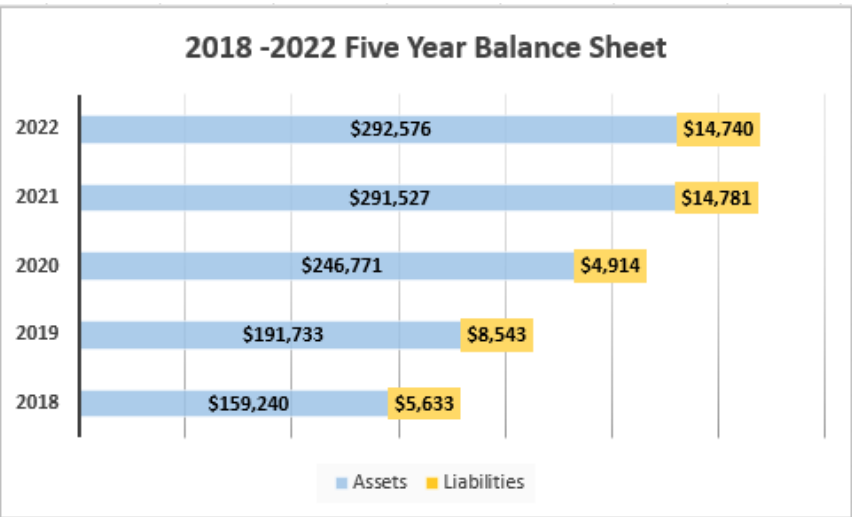
Financial Highlights



76% of FRI’s support comes directly from membership fees and donations made during Year-End contributions and North Texas Giving Day.



FRI serves as a BACKBONE organization that facilitates and administrates partnerships and collaborative ventures to meet our shared community vision of a safe, beautiful, prosperous, and proud community for all.



FRI’s Financial Data is fully audited.

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Bert, John and Dee

Bickford, Hunter

Birabil, Lorraine

Boatman, Ken and Rebecca

Brockhagen, Kristine

Brown, Robert and Martin, Vikki

Cantrell, Ken and Pearce, Teri

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Casa View Shopping Center

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Chuck, Brian

Clancy, Jerry and Sara

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Coldwell, Scott and Deb

Coleman, Bill and Mirella

Comini, Andie

Cook, Sharon

Cox, Joan

Daniel, Theresa

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Davis Clayton, Daniel

Davis, Bob

Downey, Linda

Dryden, Mel and Sara

Dunklau, Brenda

Eaton, Nathan and Linda

Eddings, George and Bertha

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Farrell, David

Fink, Ann

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Galliford, Grant and Jina

Gallo, Carmelita

Garcia, Gary and Mary

Gardner, Tom and Carol

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Gillman, Harriet

Goodwin, Kerry and Rosemary

Guerra, Rudy and Suze

Hamilton, Ruel

Hanagan, Brian

Hargrave, Eugenia

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Hill, William and Sharon

Hillin, Betty

Hodge, Chuck and Darla

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Lazarescou, Laura

Lee, Won and Frankie

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Shaw, Steve and Debbie

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Smith, Joe

Smith, Kerry

Snoyer, Jeff and Lynn

Stanford, John and Bette

Starita, Paulette

Stettler, John and Helen

Stevens, Jim and Cindy

Sullivan, Peggy

Swanson, Harry

Tanner, Desi and Stephanie

Tang, Chih Huan

Tealer, Eddie Dr.

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Van Buskirk, John and Linda

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Jackson, Christopher and Cari
Johnstone, Bob and Isaly, Ellen
Kerr, Neely
Krone, Ryan
Lawler, Gary
Magditch, Doug and Cedotal, Keith
McKean, Shelley
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At the September 2022 Community Connection Townhall meeting, Dan Micciche was presented with the Obelisk Award, FRI's highest and most coveted award for an individual or organization who has committed outstanding service to our agency.