

The McCurdy Ministries Community Center

Message

McCurdy Schools of Northern New Mexico is a registered nonprofit corporation.
The corporation also uses the trade name McCurdy Ministries Community Center.

Vol. 10, #1

McCurdy Ministries Community Center creates hope and empowers the lives of children, youth, adults and families through education, life skills and faith-based programs in Española, NM

Sept. 2021

McCurdy programs return to in-person services



Preschool students eating breakfast in a socially distanced setting.

After 18 months of virtual services provided by our Project Cariño and Pre-K staffs McCurdy Ministries Community Center welcomed our students back to campus for in-person services starting in August. McCurdy has taken precautions to protect the health and safety of our preschool to sixth graders who cannot yet be vaccinated including upgrading the air conditioning system in the Project Cariño building, providing air filters in every program space, setting up temperature check protocols, providing personal protective equipment for staff, requiring masks and keeping student groups small. Our staff requests your prayers that this year will be safe and productive.

On Aug. 17, McCurdy Charter School students returned to their campus. The Project Cariño staff spent several weeks preparing for their return and helping the charter school staff prepare. Our counselors have made plans to help our students cope with the grief and anxiety the last 18 months have brought. Project Cariño also welcomed a Master's of Social Work and a Bachelor's of Social Work intern to campus for this school year.

The McCurdy Schools of Northern New Mexico Pre-K started classes on Sept. 7, with 20 students and a number of special provisions made for student safety including staying in small groups the whole school day, boxes of personal supplies for each student, and separate eating spaces for each group. Preparation for the new school year started in mid-August including parent meetings, home visits and adaptation of the preschool facilities to meet COVID-19 protocols.

Thanks to the generosity of the Texas Methodist Foundation and the Monte Foundation After School Care, which started on Aug. 17 with 33 students, is free for all students this school year. In cooperation with the charter school, this program has been expanded to include extra staff to help students catch up from the educational losses caused by 18 months of virtual learning.

McCurdy also received a Thaxton grant from the New Mexico Annual Conference to fund healthy snacks for the program. In addition to tutoring the program includes recreation, Bible study, crafts, drama and other fun activities for our students.



After School Care students enjoy the playground.

The 2021 McCurdy Giving Tuesday Season runs Nov. 1 to 30

For the ninth year, McCurdy Ministries Community Center (MMCC) will celebrate a **Giving Tuesday Season** starting on Nov. 1 and ending on Nov. 30. Several of our faithful donors have already stepped up to provide over \$30,000 of match so far so that once again your gift will be matched up to \$2,500 as long as the match lasts.

Your support during the **Giving Tuesday Season** is critically important as MMCC works to expand our impact while combating the ways that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected our community. Whether our staff is working virtually, by phone, by email or in person, we are still transforming the lives of McCurdy Charter School and MMCC students and families every day through Project Cariño, McCurdy Schools of Northern New Mexico Pre-K and After School Care. All three programs are currently meeting in person and MMCC has instituted mask wearing, filtration and protective policies to keep our students safe. We are also continuing our virtual mission experience for Sunday School classes, UMW units, VIM Teams, youth groups and supporters who want to learn more about McCurdy and the difference we make from home.

McCurdy has celebrated Giving Tuesday since 2013. Three years ago we expanded the effort from one day to a season to make it easier for our donors to support our ministries. **During our COVID-19 Giving Tuesday Season in May 2020 and our November 2020 Giving Tuesday Season, 261 donors gave \$89,456 which helped keep McCurdy and our ministries strong during a very difficult year!** Rev. Diana Loomis, director of development says, "We have been so blessed



by the prayers and support given by our faithful donors during a time that has been very difficult for us all. We are excited that our preschool, After School Care and Project Cariño programs are back on campus and look forward to the return of Camps Stars and our Volunteer programs in the new year."

Our theme for our **Giving Tuesday Season** is **"Give light. Give love. Give life."** Your gift up to \$2,500 for the General Fund will be matched as long as match lasts. Please note the match is only for gifts to the General Fund and cannot be

designated for a program, the capital campaign or the McCurdy Foundation. To receive the match please give in these ways:

1. Mail a gift to MMCC postmarked between Nov. 1 and 30, 2021. The check MUST be marked **Giving Tuesday** to count toward the match.
2. From Nov. 1 through Nov. 30, go to our website at <https://mccurdy.org/give-now/> to make a donation. Mark your donation **Giving Tuesday** to qualify for the match.
3. Only on Nov. 30, 2020, you can go to <https://advance.umcmission.org/p-596-mccurdy-ministries-community-center-formerly-known-as-mccurdy-school.aspx> to give through the United Methodist Advance. These gifts will be matched if match is still available.

Please call Rev. Diana Loomis at 505-753-7221, ext. 352, or email her at dloomis@mccurdy.org if you want to make a matching donation or have any questions about McCurdy's **2021 Giving Tuesday**. This year our goal is to have \$35,000 of match.



Patricia A. Alvarado

Notes from the MMCC executive director

As we return to in-person learning with our NM Pre-K, After School Care, and Project Cariño program, much care has taken place to review, revamp, and institute safety measures for the operations of our programs. Thanks to grants that have been granted from the NM Early Childcare Education and Care Department (ECECD) for our NM Pre-K program and donations from individuals and individual churches for our After School Care and Project Cariño Program, we have been able to purchase personal protective equipment and filtration systems for all programs, upgrade the HVAC system for Project Cariño, provide masks for staff and children, and much needed

individual student supplies and storage bins so that each child has his/her materials to work with to adhere to COVID-19 Safety protocols. Our maintenance department has also received donations of cleaning supplies and gloves for our custodial services provided to the different programs.

Our Maintenance Department with the help of three individual volunteers, Glenn Tombaugh and Larry and Dorothy Swalley, cleaned Pilling Retreat Center in preparation for its re-opening to Volunteers in Mission teams on Aug. 1, 2021. Unfortunately with the rise in COVID-19 Delta variant cases, some teams had to make the decision not to come to campus since they had to fly to travel here. Our Board of Trustees' number one concern was the protection and safety of our students under 12 who cannot yet be vaccinated and the potential of volunteer groups being quarantined and trapped on campus for weeks. Other teams who would be traveling by car decided to wait until another year to return.

Our custodian worked hard to thoroughly clean and ready all program areas for the start of school. During the summer we ran a 6-week NM Pre-K program, Jumpstart, and our custodian provided cleaning and disinfecting of the center to safely run our program. He also worked diligently to clear the grounds of the many weeds and bushes that grow in between his regularly assigned cleaning tasks. Other projects that Maintenance accomplished this

summer were replacing the Project Cariño HVAC system and refurbishing our Pre-K space to safely serve the 20 students that will be with us this year. Many thanks to our Maintenance staff for all the work that has been done to get things ready for our children!

Our IT contractor has been reconfiguring our network and replacing aging and outdated equipment as well as improving our virtual communication means as well as setting up software and hardware to serve our students and staff in a much more efficient and reliable manner.

Two VIM teams, Boston Avenue UMC from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Mountain Side UMC from Cedar Crest, NM, came to campus and accomplished so much in setting up safe spaces for our children. One other person, Jo Sheetz, from Houston, TX, arrived in mid-August and will be here through the end of September to help with After School Care. She also served as dorm host and provided help to the Pre-K staff. Many thanks go out to our donors, prayer partners, and Volunteer in Mission Teams. Many of our VIM Teams who could not take their scheduled trip to NM, were gracious, understanding, AND decided to share materials, supplies, and donations with our programs. Many of these groups decided to donate the funds they raised to travel to NM to support our programs. Some are prayerfully considering donating some of the money raised to help fund the breakfast and lunch program for our NM Pre-K which is projected to cost McCurdy \$15,000 this school year.

Work has progressed on our campus redevelopment plan. The work to plan utilities, infrastructure, building upgrades, and construction to meet the needs of our community is challenging but we are inspired by the ways local, county, state, and federal governments, government agencies and nonprofits are working with McCurdy to make a difference in our community!

I commend the rest of our staff as they work to make our mission a true-to-life commitment for the children, youth, and families in our community. The meetings, planning, leg work, phone calls, and virtual communication that takes place can be overwhelming, but thanks to our collaborative spirit, the work gets done. I am truly grateful to be a part of this team!

As always we request your prayers and support in making our mission, a faith-in-action daily occurrence!!! May God sustain you, bless you and your loved ones! **Patricia A. Alvarado, MMCC Executive Director**

Project Cariño news and updates

Project Cariño staff is excited to begin in-person services after 18 months of virtual services while keeping an eye on the rising number of variant infections across our state and county. Staff is comforted by McCurdy's efforts to keep us all safe.

We also appreciate the Boston Avenue UMC VIM team's work to beautify our landscaping! This project has been taking place long distance for months with assistance of Lawrence Martinez, maintenance director. Boston Avenue and the maintenance staff have created an outside counseling area for us to use with therapeutic support groups for MCS students and families. They have provided a permanent fire pit to use during our grief support group, Celebrate Survival. During this support group, "The Fire of Life and Death" is lit and our students burn letters and pictures they have written and drawn to their deceased mothers, fathers, or siblings. Project Cariño guides them through this experience with the goal of finding closure and peace around these profound losses.

Our counseling staff this year is five strong, with two full-time, licensed mental health professionals including Project Cariño Director, Amanda Trujillo Gonzales, who is a licensed clinical social worker; Bill Clapp, who is a licensed professional clinical counselor; and Juan Sanchez, master social worker, continues as a member of our team for the third year as well, working part-time with us as he works on his Ph.D. This year Project Cariño is working collaboratively with NM Highlands University to give two student interns hands-on experience in the field. Grace Lopez, MSW intern, will engage in clinical practice with a caseload of MCS students

to whom she will provide therapy, under supervision from Bill and Amanda. Samantha Vigil, BSW intern, will join our team as coordinator of the Buddy Program. The Lord willing, our much-loved volunteer, Dorothy Swalley will join us at some point this year to support the Buddies. She is convalescing from recent health issues; we pray she can return to us soon!

Another valued team member was, Maureen Appenfeller, volunteer and dorm host, who helped with the Buddy Program. Sadly, Maureen passed away and as we return to campus, her absence is felt deeply. We know that she continues to support us in spirit. Her picture will go up on the Buddy bulletin board, along side another revered Project Cariño volunteer, David Milhouse, who passed away several years ago. He along with his wife, Martha, worked very hard at coordinating McCurdy's annual Gala that helped fund Project Cariño for many years.

We've been through quite a bit over the past couple of years, as has everyone. We dedicate our year to walking alongside those who would like us to, and vow to do all we can, drawing on our experiences and training, to make this an amazing year! **Amanda Trujillo Gonzales, Project Cariño director**



Front: Amanda Trujillo Gonzales and Samantha Vigil. Back: Grace Lopez and Bill Clapp

New director of development/church relations search begun

With the announcement that Rev. Diana Loomis will be retiring after more than ten years as the McCurdy Ministries Community Center Director of Development/Church Relations on Dec. 31, 2021, McCurdy has begun the search for a new director. Rev. Loomis will be working part-time starting Jan. 1, 2022, as the Director of the Public/Private Partnership. McCurdy is asking your help in getting this job posting to persons whom you believe will be excellent candidates for this position. Please forward this job posting to others.

The Development Director oversees the development and church relations for McCurdy Ministries Community Center (MMCC) in Española, NM, including fundraising, grant writing, donor relations, church relations, and communications. The director reports to the executive director and assists the executive director and board with strategic planning, community relations, and networking.

MMCC's mission is to "create hope and empower the lives of children, youth, adults, and families through education, life skills, and faith-based programs." Excellent writing and research skills are mandatory and grant writing experience is preferred. Communications skills, sensitivity to the culture of Northern New Mexico, and an appreciation of faith-based nonprofit work are necessary for this position. Familiarity with the United Methodist Church and a bachelor's degree in a related field is required. Spanish language skills are a bonus. Information on McCurdy Ministries Community Center can be found at www.mccurdy.org.

To apply send an application letter, a one-page writing sample, and a resume with three references to eromero@mccurdy.org by Sept. 30, 2021.

After School Care started on Aug. 17

After School Care students have been excited to return to the program after a 18 month hiatus for in-person services on the McCurdy campus due to COVID-19. Our students are happy to be around their friends and teachers again and parents are glad they have a safe and loving environment for their children. As of Sept. 13, 33 students are enrolled in After School Care which is free this school year due to generous grants from the Texas Methodist Foundation and the Monte Foundation. The grant funds have enabled McCurdy to hire additional staff to provide tutoring for all our students and specific student needs are being communicated between McCurdy Charter School teachers and our After School Care staff.

The children are studying how to build "Faith from Jesus Christ." One student said "Jesus is powerful. He keeps me safe. When I get scared, I think of Jesus and ask him for

help to take care of me and he does." Another student asked, "How do I follow Jesus?" Every child had a wonderful idea to share. Currently, our Bible verse is: *"But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you."* Psalm 56:3

We are following safety practices for COVID-19 every day. Staff and students are screened daily before entering the building. Everyone is wearing a mask at all times except during snack time. The children are being spaced per CDC recommendations, room filters have been installed and all necessary Personal Protective Equipment is being provided.

After School Care Welcomes Angel Hanrahan, Monica Smith and long term individual volunteer, Jo Sheetz, who is a retired United Methodist deaconess. I am so pleased to have such wonderful helpers. *Angela Ortiz, After School Care director*

McCurdy needs your help for our preschool and after school care programs

Two weeks before school started this year long after grants had been written to support the NM Pre-K program and After School Care programs, McCurdy Ministries learned that all McCurdy Charter School students had qualified for free or reduced lunch. This is a good thing for families during these hard times because it means parents/guardians will not have to pay for school meals. This has caused a hardship for these McCurdy Ministries Community Center programs because we will receive very minimal USDA reimbursement for the food costs associated with these programs for the 2021–22 school year. Currently, we estimate the deficit for the NM Pre-K program will be \$15,000 and the deficit for After School Care will be \$5,437. If you would like to make a donation to help offset this unexpected expense please mark your check Food Program and mail it to McCurdy Ministries Community Center, 362A S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532.

We miss our volunteers and look forward to seeing you on campus!

The McCurdy campus without our Volunteers in Mission, Individual Volunteers and Local Volunteers has not been the same! With the reopening of our campus we look forward to welcoming our volunteers who have been fully vaccinated back to join our staff in making God's difference on our campus. For more information on how to volunteer go to

<https://mccurdy.org/volunteer-programs/>

on the McCurdy website or call Eufemia Romero at 505-753-7221 or email her at eromero@mccurdy.org.

Virtual Mission program

If you are not yet ready to travel to McCurdy please explore our Virtual Mission program on our website at

<https://mccurdy.org/virtual-missions/>

Our staff can create a one, three or six hour virtual experience to help update your VIM Team, Mission Committee, Sunday School Class, UMW Unit or Circle, youth group, or men's group on all that is happening at McCurdy Ministries Community Center. We have been pleased to have groups from Pennsylvania to Texas to California to participate in this program.

To keep up with our volunteer program subscribe to our Volunteer Newsletter

On the 15th of every month we send out a Volunteer Newsletter edited by VIM Team Leader and Board Member Linda Polson. The newsletter is full of helpful hints for team leaders, updates on McCurdy and even traditional Northern New Mexico recipes. To subscribe to the newsletter send your email to dloomis@mccurdy.org.

Pre-K news*Pre-K news*Pre-K news*Pre-K news



Were you aware that the number one indicator of whether a child graduates from high school is participation in early childhood education? Preschool is incredibly important for our children!

Jumpstart preschoolers led by the preschool staff join together every day to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge to the New Mexico flag. Sandra Trujillo, site director/head teacher, helps a preschooler show the class that day's month and date.

Greetings to all, I hope this newsletter finds you all in good health!

Our Jumpstart program, for our preschoolers who attended virtual preschool last year, started on June 7, 2021. Ten of our 2020–21 students attended this in-person program from 8 AM to 1 PM Monday through Friday. The children were all happy to see each other in person and the parents were all very happy that the children were able to experience a structured classroom environment before going to kindergarten.

The focus of the Jumpstart Program was literacy as well as giving the children an opportunity to experience a structured classroom setting before kindergarten. This helped them know what to expect when they started kindergarten, as many had not been in a classroom since our last year was conducted in a virtual setting. This program was funded by the NM Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD).

My staff and I took a 2-week break and came right back to prepare for the 2021–22 school year. We have been extremely busy preparing orientation, home/school visits, and making sure everything meets all state, licensing, and health guidelines. Special adjustments have had to be made to keep our youngest students who are unable to be vaccinated safe. Twenty children will be on-site starting Sept 8. Please wish us luck and keep us in your prayers! *Sandra Trujillo, site director/head teacher, McCurdy Schools of Northern New Mexico Pre-K*



Right:
The Boston Avenue
VIM Team
photographed
at the entrance
to Project Cariño.

When is a mission trip not a mission trip? When it's a pilgrimage!

A pilgrimage is a meaningful journey often to a sacred place. Unlike a tourist, a pilgrim is on a sacred journey, undertaken for spiritual purposes which often results in personal transformation, after which the pilgrim returns to their daily life. The spiritual practice of pilgrimage occurs in every major religion, and as Christians we share a heritage of pilgrimage with our Hebrew ancestors, who honored three pilgrimage festivals to say nothing of the great pilgrimage of the Israelites from slavery to the Promised Land. The Wise Men who sought out the babe were on a pilgrimage. Christians have been going on pilgrimages to the sites connected with the birth, life, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus since at least the 4th Century. Pope Benedict XVI describes a Christian Pilgrimage by saying, *"To go on pilgrimage really means to step out of ourselves in order to encounter God."*

Aug. 22, 14 members of Boston Avenue United Methodist Church in Tulsa, OK, began a pilgrimage to McCurdy Ministries Community Center. Some might call it a Volunteers in Mission trip, since the team went to complete landscaping and construction projects for Project Cariño, McCurdy's school based mental health counseling ministry. But the team decided to turn the mission trip into a pilgrimage, *not simply to work, but as a means to encounter God.*

The team chose a scripture verse to guide their time away: *"I know there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live."* Ecclesiastes 3:12. In preparation for the pilgrimage team members read and journaled using a book by Henry Nouwen entitled, *"Life of the Beloved,"* in which the author reminds us that on this journey of life, even when we don't feel it, our most primal identity is being a *"beloved child of God."*

As team members arrived at the McCurdy retreat center, they were greeted with a copy of their chosen scripture in each of their rooms. Every morning they were provided a hard copy as well as an electronic text, with several questions arising from the book they had studied and were asked to ponder these questions as they worked during the day. Each morning the team assembled in the Peace Garden for 10 minutes of Christian meditation and a brief morning devotional. In the evening, time was spent reflecting on the day and sharing thoughts about the questions posed in the morning. Here are quotes from team members reflecting on their experiences:

"Having a question to mull over during the day, kept me focused and experiencing that I am a beloved child of God. This focus helped me recognize the flow of my gifts as they spilled out into the work we were doing."

"Our scripture for the week helped me to remain focused on what was really important: God calling us in the midst of our work to 'be happy and do good.'

"Morning meditations in the Peace Garden caused me to approach the day in a totally different way than I would have otherwise, enabling me to be more open to what God was doing through our team rather than focusing on what we could get done."

On Wednesday, the team visited the Santuario de Chimayo, located 15 minutes away from campus. The Santuario is a Catholic Church built in 1816 and is the destination for more pilgrimages than any site in North America. Each year the Santuario receives over 300,000 pilgrims from all over the world. While there the team received Holy Communion.

Like all pilgrimages, the Boston Avenue team stepped out of their normal routine, had time for reflection, opportunities to receive insight, and thus were strengthened in their faith as they sought to *'...be happy and to do good.'* Ed Payton, VIM Team Leader, Boston Avenue UMC

Right:
The grounds
of Project
Cariño which now
includes a bridge,
benches, rock, and
a fire pit. Later a
privacy fence will
be installed.



Calling all McCurdy students and graduates, current and former staff, volunteers, supporters and residents of the Española Valley save the date and join us in 2022 to celebrate

McCurdy Ministries Community Center's

110th anniversary

on Friday, Oct. 21, 2022
and Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022.

On Oct. 21, 1912, Mellie Perkins, McCurdy founder, and Susanita Martinez, teacher, started the only school in the Española Valley just a week after arriving in New Mexico. Mellie Perkins, was a United Brethren deaconess, and McCurdy Ministries Community Center carries on her tradition of service to our Valley.

Friday evening there will be a dinner and gathering for students, graduates, current and former staff, volunteers, supporters and the community.

Saturday morning, we will hold our second

McCurdy Fiesta

including a Marcha, concert, health screening, games, giveaways and ending with a free lunch, birthday cake and fellowship.

Creative ways to support McCurdy through the COVID-19 crisis

McCurdy Ministries Community Center touches the lives of 558 students, adults and families every school day through our McCurdy Schools of Northern NM Pre-K, Project Cariño, After School Care, Camp Stars and our volunteer programs. Currently, the most critically needed donations are to our General Fund. By supporting our General Fund donors support all our programs. Your donations of prayer, time, talent and funds help us save lives, support education and create a safe place for all the persons under our care.

Here are ways you can support our ministry: Donate cash, stocks, land or an appreciated asset. Donate a gift annuity to earn income during your life and bless McCurdy with a donation after your death. Organize a Volunteers in Mission Team from your church. Remember McCurdy Ministries in your will and become a part of the Mellie Perkins Society. Set up an endowed fund in the McCurdy Foundation. Make McCurdy a beneficiary of a life insurance policy. Invite the McCurdy church relations team to your church program, dinner or worship event. Donate to McCurdy through Advance #581479. Pray for McCurdy daily!

For information on making a donation to McCurdy Ministries Community Center please call Diana Loomis at 505-753-7221, ext. 352, write her at 362A S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532 or email her at dloomis@mccurdy.org.

Thank you for your support of McCurdy Charter School by collecting Box Tops for Education. Box Tops has changed the way this program is administered. Box Top collectors will have to download the Box Top app and scan the receipt that shows you purchased a Box Top product. We know this process will be difficult for many so we suggest each church assign one tech savvy person to collect and scan receipts through the Box Top app. We are so grateful for the difference our donors make through Box Tops and hope you will continue to support the charter school by scanning in or mailing your Box Tops for Education to McCurdy Ministries Community Center, 362A S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532.

If you shop at a Smith's Grocery you can sign up to participate in Smith's Inspiring Donations, which will donate 5% of every eligible purchase to McCurdy. The Kroger Co. Family of Stores is committed to bringing hope and help to the local neighborhoods they serve. For more information about the Inspiring Donations program, please inquire at your local Smith's store. Or, if you have a Smith's Rewards Card, please go on-line and link it to MMCC; that will help make the donation process that much easier!