



# FALL NEWS 2009

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### Agape Development Board of Directors

- Rick Rodekohr *Chairman*
- Leia Carpenter *Treasurer*
- Donna Sims *Secretary*
- Del Blom
- Chip Johnson
- Becky Larkin
- Jason Mercer
- Douglas Roberts
- Donna Sims
- Alan Ytterberg

## What Really Matters?

Have you asked yourself this question lately? Have you evaluated how you spend your time, the most scarce resource of all, in light *what really matters?* We have been asking this question almost daily and evaluating our time use daily since the death of close family member this year.

Death clarifies our priorities unlike anything else. Our relationships more than anything else matter. My relationships with family and friends and my relationship with God become chief concerns. I can't afford to presuppose the strength of those relationships.

So, when my daughter told me that her school was having a

Daddy donut day, I was even more attune than normal. I watched her eyes race around the room deciding what to show me first. I eagerly followed where she led. I let myself get caught up in her world, the Johnny Appleseed project, the full body paper recreation of each student, and the all of the "D" items displayed about. Because of the hope of heaven, I know my relationship with her will have eternal significance. She demands and merits my time.

Living and working in the inner city also crystallizes priorities for me. I see the poor, the widows, and the orphans daily. They are my neighbors. In James 1, God places care for widows and or-



The Craig's

phans alongside moral purity as the twin ingredients in religion He accepts. So, I cannot claim to value a relationship with Christ without serving the least of these. Working and living in the inner city gives me a unique opportunity to love and serve the least of these.

We are grateful for your partnership in this ministry. I pray that we help you ask the question *What really matters?*, and answer it well!

by Kirk Craig

## New Recruits to Gateway House

Chris, Jessica, Kortnie, Ralph, Shakara, Tiffany and Tre have begun the Second Class of Agape's Gateway House. After an initial retreat at Lake

Livingston, this group has spent everyday working on life skills, studying the Bible, serving the neighborhood, or learning personal finance. Each resident



Chris



Jessica

**Career Interests**

- Hair Stylist/Beauty Salon
- Teaching/Coaching
- Social Work
- Business Ownership
- Administrative Assistant
- Nursing

**Workshops Needed**

- Dietary Nutrition
- Exercise Class
- Budgeting & Finance

**2nd Annual Agape Dessert Celebration**

Thursday, November 12th 7:30 p.m.

at St. John the Divine Sumner's Hall

2450 River Oaks Blvd. Houston, TX 77019\*

rsvp@agapedevelopment.org

\*Parking available across at Lamar High School across the street

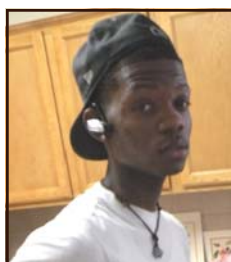
**New Recruits to Gateway Continued**



Trevion

has a unique reason for entering Gateway, but everyone will leave a changed person.

Already, Agape has



Ralph

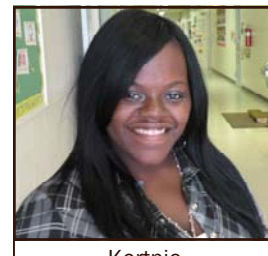


Tiffany

had cooking classes centered around healthy meal preparation.

October will be a month of job readiness and job placement. These young adults will learn the elements of resume writing, good interview skills and professional appearance.

Gateway House prepares 18-25 year olds for a healthy life in 5 areas: physical, eco-



Kortnie

nomics, educational, relational, and spiritual (PEERS). Please pray for the director David Hill and the residents



Shakara

**Agape Member Highlight**

Tina lives a changed life. 1 year ago she was not working and living at home. Tina heard about Agape from a friend, but was not sure she wanted to move into a house with a bunch of strangers. She quickly made friends, especially with her excellent cooking. All the residents made it to dinner on time when Tina prepared dinner.

Today, she is working as the office manager for Yellowstone Academy and living in her own place. We are proud of Tina be-

cause she faced some hard issues last year that could have derailed her progress.

When asked about her time in Gateway, Tina said, "I learned how to depend on God, and connect directly to him, not just through other Christians. Gateway gave me direction and stability. It was hard to submit to authority, but I came around. Meeting new people and having interesting Bible studies were my favorite parts. Gateway is especially



Tina

good for someone who is stuck because it helps you get unstuck."

Tina still desires to work in fashion but knows the value of a steady job in this economy.

## Mission Year Interns

How did you spend your first year after college? Most of us did not move into a small house in the inner city with 9 other adults. Most of us did not live on \$150/month and ride the bus everyday. Most of us did not

spend all of our free time doing outreach in a low-income neighborhood. But Sean Stewart and Andy Beall are doing exactly that through Mission Year. In addition to their neighborhood outreach, they serve



Andy



Sean

Agape 30 hours per week as part of their commitment. Along with 8 other college graduates, Sean and Andy are living in a 4 bedroom house in Third Ward. These special volunteers

serve Agape through administrative support, leading Backyard Bible Club, doing neighborhood outreach, and more. We thank God for their help and pray for their growth.

## Tale of 2 Numbers

# 50

*The percent dropout rate for HISD in 2006 as calculated by Children at Risk.*

## New Board Member: Chip Johnson

Chip Johnson serves and President and CEO of Carizzo Oil and Gas, which he



Chip Johnson

founded 16 years ago after a 15 tenure are Shell Oil. Chip and Lori, his wife of 25 years, have been members of First Presbyterian Church of Houston since 1988 along with their daughters Elise, Layne, and Julia.

**Q:** How did you discover about Agape?

**Chip:** A friend of mine who serves on Agape's

Board mentioned Agape's mission and I was immediately interested.

**Q:** What excites you most about Agape?

**Chip:** I like the idea of transforming a community, especially Christians working on the spiritual lives but also the economic situation.

**Q:** How do you see your role as a businessman within a ministry?

**Chip:** Agape has creative plans for ministering to its neighbors. Ideas like small business start-ups, real estate management, and

other commercial activities can be leveraged for great ministry results. I'm excited to translate my professional experiences into an inner city ministry setting.

**Q:** How would you recommend business people get involved in ministry?

**Chip:** I think mentoring, and other direct contact is a great way, but that's only part. Men and women in business have connections and experiences invaluable to small and growing ministries.

# 70

*The percent retention rate for Gateway House last year.*



*Agape brings hope and transformation to the Third Ward through economic, emotional and spiritual empowerment.*

*Derives power and direction Jesus Christ.*

*Listens to the community first.*

*Creates opportunity for individuals.*

*Empowers communities for sustainability.*

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Sign up for e-News at  
[www.agapedevelopment.org](http://www.agapedevelopment.org)



Cooking Classes at Gateway

## What Can I Do??

### Donate

God has blessed the work we have been doing, and we are confident He will sustain us.

Below are some of the needs of the ministry.

- Partial payment for new building: \$5000
- 1 month of Gateway House rent: \$2500
- Neighborhood Outreach Event: \$1000
- Apartment deposit for graduates: \$500
- Backyard Bible Club Materials: \$100
- Group Bible Study Meal: \$50

*All donations to Agape are tax deductible through our non-profit status as a 501c3 corporation*

### Pray

Spiritual growth for Gateway Residents

Our financial stability in this economy

Finding a good building for Agape programs

Jobs for our unemployed residents

Back Yard Bible Club safety and learning



### Praise

Nikki is off to a good start at Moody Bible Institute  
Gateway has 7 new residents  
Mission Year Interns' great work

Successful graduation of Gateway 2008-2009!!  
Staff and residents and graduation ceremony

### Volunteer

**Retreat Drivers-Small Group Leaders:** Nov. 6-8 help Agape with its retreat to Carolina Creek Christian Camp in Huntsville.

**Job Shadow/Career Day Host:** talk with a young adult about his field of interest, and show him what you do: Hair Stylist, Clothing Retail, Small Business

**Gateway House:** Mentors, driving, workday projects, community outreach.

**Backyard Bible Club:** Direct games, serve snacks, tutor kids, and play!

For periodic volunteer updates sign up at [www.agapedevelopment.org](http://www.agapedevelopment.org) for our email list.