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IMPACT REPORT



713-771-1111
www.pairhouston.org

Welcome

Dear PAIR Family,

This year marked a very special milestone for our organization - we celebrated our 16-year anniversary! I hope that you enjoy reading about all that we have accomplished over the last year with your help and celebrate our Sweet Sixteen.

PAIR was created by a group of Rice University students that saw an urgent need to address the unique needs of refugee students attending Houston Independent School District (HISD) schools. The public school system continues to present many gaps in addressing the unique challenges of the refugee youth population that negatively impact academic success and acculturation, resulting in high dropout rates that contribute to the vicious cycle of poverty the refugee families find themselves in. PAIR serves a vital role in bridging this gap and building a trajectory towards a successful future for our students.

Over the last 16 years, we have successfully developed a continuum of programs that engage refugee youth from middle school to high school graduation and through the first year at a higher education institution, equipping them with the motivation, knowledge and resources to succeed beyond the education system. We are grateful for the support of a network of committed volunteers, partnering organizations and funders. Another exciting milestone this year is the expansion of PAIR's programs to four additional schools - Louie Welch Middle School, Etoile Academy Charter School, Westside High School and Liberty High School, bringing the total of schools served to 9!

As we prepare ourselves for the next year, we are bracing ourselves for an increase in refugee arrivals in Houston, the ever-growing demand for our services from the HISD schools and the impact of the Texas Education Agency takeover on the Houston Independent School District and on our students. Where there are challenges, there are opportunities and we are confident we can overcome them with your support.

Thank you, Houston!



Elena Korbut
Executive Director



This year we celebrate 16 years of service to the Houston refugee community!

Overview

This year at a glance

PAIR serves refugee students attending local middle schools and high schools, as well as first-year refugee students attending higher-education institutions. Our programs and services strive to close the public education system gaps in addressing unique challenges of the refugee student population. PAIR highlights for the needs and challenges refugee students present and fights for educational equity.



350

Students enrolled in our programs



100%

Expressed that PAIR helped them improve academically.



97%

Expressed that they made friends.



24

Countries of origin for PAIR students



17

Different Languages spoken



9

Houston ISD schools served



Afghanistan



Congolese



Tanzania



Cuba



Rwanda



Turkey



Honduras



Syria



Cote D'Ivoire



Eritrea



Algeria



Somalia



Burkina Faso



Palestine



Ukraine



Sudan



Morocco



Venezuela



Nigeria



Ghana



Guatemala



Libya



Zimbabwe

"I like that PAIR is respectful about other cultures and religions and I get to learn about them."

- Mary, Grade 12, Ghana

CONNECT & COLLABORATE



PAIR highlighted by UNHCR

From sharing their stories on a worldwide platform to symbolizing strength and resiliency, PAIR's goal is to ensure that refugee youth are aware of all the possibilities for their future and that there is no limit to what they can achieve. Thanks to our community partners, this year brought new and exciting opportunities.

Four of our high school students had the opportunity to spend the afternoon with UNHCR and high-profile supporter, Liza Koshy. Laughter, dancing, and thought-provoking conversation filled their time as they got to know each other and share their culture and stories!

The Woods Project

Two of our high school students had the chance to experience an all-expenses-paid trip of a lifetime with another wonderful Houston non-profit, The Woods Project! TWP creates wilderness educational and exploration experiences for students from underserved communities.

One student went on a two-week camping and backpacking trip to the Olympic National Forest this summer, while another spent two weeks in Donner Pass, California. PAIR provided scholarships to help these students gather the necessary materials for these genuinely impactful experiences.

Riding for a cause

In October, PAIR joined the Ride with Refugees event to raise awareness about and promote mobility for refugees. Students completed an 8-mile bike ride and volunteered at the water station.

Exploring with Baylor College of Medicine

Our friends at Baylor College of Medicine brought out medical students to our middle and high school campuses to introduce our students to different medical professions! Students learned about different kinds of jobs in the medical field, skillsets and schooling required to pursue those jobs. They also were able to participate in hands-on learning activities such as learning how to take vital signs and use different diagnostic tools.



ART & EXPRESSION



#BigArtBiggerChange

PAIR was highlighted through a Big Art Bigger Change Mural by artist Victor Ash. The mural curated by Street Art for Mankind seeks to amplify social and environmental justice in Houston and beyond.

The importance of art and expression amplifies the mission of our work. As part of the event's opening, we set up a table, greeted folks, and shared information about PAIR's work.

You can find these murals throughout downtown Houston.



Patience Agbabi, posing with PAIR high school students and staff (above) and leading a writing workshop (below).



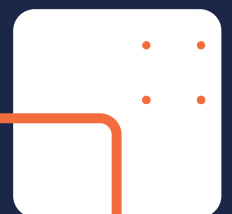
Photo credit: David Brown

Award winning poet visits PAIR

In April, PAIR partnered with University of Houston Department of English and British Poet, Patience Agbabi, in an event that highlighted the power of literature and advocacy.

Sharpstown and Westbury High Schools participated in an insightful writing workshop led by Agbabi. Students from the two schools came together to practice writing about something almost everyone is enthusiastic about - food!

PAIR students learned how to write using the five senses about memories associated with food and culture. Students had the opportunity to hear Patience read her own work and share theirs in front of the class. That Friday, a dozen PAIR students attended Patience's public reading.



GLOBAL LEARNERS PROGRAM



Volunteers and staff working with middle school students during after-school programs.



114

After-school sessions



40

1:1 Mentoring Sessions



161

Students enrolled

Middle school initiative

Global Learners promotes English language acquisition, builds social and emotional skills, and fosters academic success in our partner middle schools in HISD. The program covers diverse topics, including cultural orientation, communication, safety and disaster preparedness, arts, STEM, and many other enriching topics. Mentors meet with students in small groups, providing guidance and leadership in curriculum activities after school. Individual mentoring provides individual homework help to students who need it. Mentors create relationships, build trust, and support students in adjusting to life in Houston.

New partnership with Etoile Academy

PAIR partnered with Etoile Academy in Gulfton to provide daily enrichment and English language learning activities for Etoile's newcomer students during three weeks of summer school. The students completed art and writing projects, practiced teamwork and engineering skills with elaborate LEGO constructions, and learned new vocabulary words.

Exploring outside of the classroom

Field trips allow Learners to see new parts of Houston, get to know their city a little better, and feel more at home culturally. They are also a lot of fun! This year, Learners students visited a fall festival at Rice University, picnicked at Hermann Park, visited the animals at the Houston Zoo, completed a scavenger hunt at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, and mapped DNA at the Health Museum.



GLOBAL LEADERS PROGRAM



150

Students enrolled

Exploring Challenges and Barriers

This year, PAIR focused on revealing significant barriers to education and overall well-being for refugee teens. Transportation emerged as a major hurdle, with unreliable or lacking public transportation causing lateness and unsafe routes for those walking to school. Language barriers also left students feeling unheard by school staff. A notable sentiment echoed by around a dozen students was that PAIR serves as comprehensive support, addressing a spectrum of challenges. Many students expressed a sense of their schools being under-resourced, lacking sufficient academic, post-secondary, and general life assistance.

This insight underscores the interconnected challenges students face, highlighting the need for holistic support systems.

88% of students surveyed said that they relied exclusively on PAIR for homework help.

"PAIR is a place for people from around the world to come together to learn and share their culture."

- Samuel, Grade 10, Rwanda

100% of students surveyed said that PAIR helped improve their English

94% of students surveyed said they felt their grades improved



A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

In partnership with the Psychiatry and Behavioral Science department at Baylor College of Medicine, PAIR High School students participated in a unique project aimed at helping them tell the story of their mental health through photography. Students participated in workshops where they were given disposable cameras to capture images in their everyday lives. They simultaneously engaged in meaningful discussions about managing mental health and taking pride in themselves and their culture. The final workshop resulted in students sharing their developed pictures, what they meant to them, and discussing what they learned from each other during the process. This project was a great bonding experience for the students and volunteers involved.

GLOBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM



Global Scholars Plan Their Future

Global Scholars prepares high school juniors and seniors for college and the workforce. Through 1-1 case management and individual mentoring, aspiring high school graduates plan for their transition into adulthood in the United States.

The unique aspect of this program is the meticulously matched mentor - mentee pairings by PAIR staff, who support them every step of the way. This relationship allows both mentor and mentee to exchange culture, provides refugee youth with personalized academic and post-secondary support, and allows for a social and emotional bond to blossom. Mentors and staff assist students with career exploration, college and scholarship applications, homework, and exploring their new home in Houston.



100% of Scholars students graduated



\$300,000+ in loan-free financial aid and scholarships awarded this year.

Program Details

CASE MANAGEMENT	MENTORSHIP	COLLEGE READINESS
Set academic and career goals	Explore careers, create resumes, and apply for jobs	Assist in researching and applying for higher education programs
Assist in applications for college and financial aid	Help students increase English language proficiency & confidence	Provide targeted tutoring and homework help
Advocate for students and encourage academic persistence	Provide social and emotional support & cultural orientation	Provide lessons on test prep, academic writing, and selecting a major

36

Scholars enrolled in the program



840 hours of 1:1 mentoring

GLOBAL AMBASSADORS PROGRAM



Program Objectives

Global Ambassadors is PAIR's college persistence program for refugee college students. This program supports refugee students in their first year of college by helping them connect with campus resources, build a supportive community of like-minded scholars, and persist through college to earn a university degree. To achieve this, Global Ambassadors focuses on two main activities:

- (1) Provide individual case management for first-year college students at participating local colleges and universities.
- (2) Conduct monthly cohort meetings with current freshmen and other refugee students on campus.

Workshops

PAIR offered nine workshops to each cohort (2-year and 4-year institutions). They covered crucial topics such as:

- Academic Policies, Syllabus Reading, & Connecting with Professors
- Campus Resources
- An orientation to Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Self-Care and Stress Management
- Time Management
- Studying and Test-Taking Strategies
- Summer Opportunities (applying for jobs, internships, fellowships, volunteering)
- Financial Management (budgeting, savings, credit cards, etc.)



Student Liasons

Student Liaisons are essential to the Global Ambassadors Program. Our Student Liaisons are PAIR alumni who have completed at least two years of college. These students return to offer their wisdom and insight to our first-year college students. They help to coordinate, plan, and deliver workshops and are available for students to reach out to with additional questions and requests for help.



STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Deen Mohammad

From Afghanistan

Q: Can you share some of your background and journey to Houston?

"[When] the Taliban took over Afghanistan...our family was given four hours to pack to leave the country. At 4 a.m., we arrived at the airport to find millions of people also trying to leave. We had to try four times to get inside the airport but finally boarded a military plane filled with 600-700 people. We were then sent to four US military camps before arriving in Houston on November 21st, 2021."

Q: What are some of your hobbies and interests?

"I love to play soccer and have discovered that I love swimming, but I do not know how to swim. I also love to work out at the gym."

Q: How did you learn about PAIR?

"I came to PAIR...in November 2021 with hopes of continuing my study of English as I did in Afghanistan. ...I remained in the PAIR program and was even voted as the PAIR class president in December 2022."

Q: How did PAIR help you?

"I can think of many ways PAIR helped me, but I can sum up my experience like this, 'Whatever I asked of PAIR, they helped. They never said no, they just helped.' For instance, if I needed help with English, they paired me with a college student to help me. Also, I was given a personal mentor through the Scholars program who was great and would make sure to text me to keep our meetings even though she was very busy herself. For instance, once when she had to study for an exam, she put her own work down and helped me with an essay."

Q: What are some of your future plans and goals?

"After graduation, I would like to begin community college and transfer to a university to study Computer Science/IT. "



During his time at PAIR, Deen Mohammad was elected president of the Wisdom High School PAIR class, participated in the Scholars Program and successfully began his college career.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



Volunteers are integral to our mission and students' accomplishments. Our Board of Directors, mentors, and community members enable our programs to be individualized and deeply impactful for each student.

116
Mentors

1378
Mentorship
Hours



Mentor Objectives

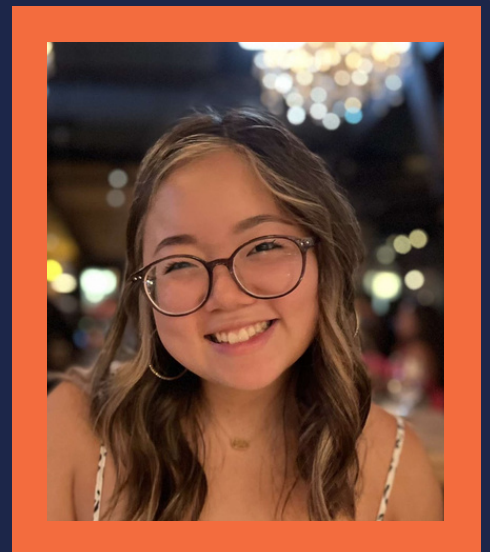
Mentors meet with students daily on 6 of our school campuses, providing fun moments, guidance and academic support. We're grateful to our founding Rice University volunteer chapter and our colleagues at the University of Houston for expanding our reach!

“

Working with PAIR has allowed me to really open my eyes and appreciate a world beyond my own. It is so easy to get caught up and be comfortable in our own distinct lives without ever trying to learn and explore other cultures and ways of living. I have learned so much about the Middle Eastern culture through my students and the culture's similarities and differences with my own culture. PAIR has also boosted my admiration and applause for every single immigrant and/or refugee that has made or is making their way in America. It is so hard and can be very uncomfortable at times; thus, it is important to take the time to appreciate any family member, friend, and even stranger that is an immigrant/refugee and show the utmost respect and embrace to them all.

Lana Kim

Global Learners Volunteer Mentor



MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

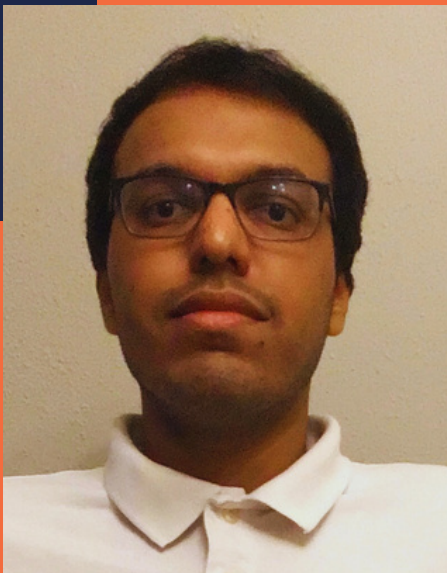
Sanjay Annigeri, Mentor

Q: Can you describe your role as a mentor/volunteer?

"I interacted with the students on many levels, but primarily through helping them integrate into American society, learn about high school and beyond, and lots of homework help. One thing I remember that I tried to communicate to the students was: 'You should not feel left behind compared to your peers.'"

Q: What drew you to volunteering with PAIR?

"I was affected by what I was hearing and seeing in the media about refugee crises. I compared this to what I had seen in India - the everyday challenges that villagers encountered-- and added in the component of being displaced and this caused me to want to find a way to help."



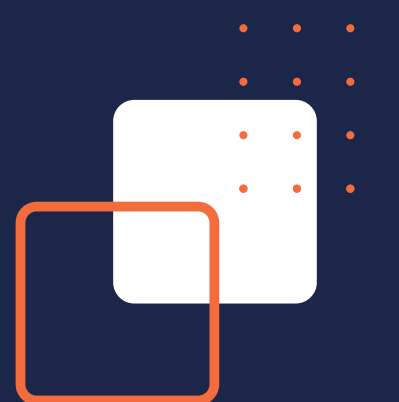
Q: Can you share an experience from PAIR that stands out in your mind?

I remember working with a couple of quiet and reserved students in an activity where the objective was to talk about themselves. Things moved slowly until I opened my computer to Google Maps and found the students' home country and even the street view of their city. This connection opened greater conversation about themselves and their personal story.

Q: Is there anything that you feel you've learned from the kids? If so, what?

I have learned that the students hold different perspectives from mine on a few things, for instance healthcare accessibility. This has helped me to see things differently and hopefully I will be able to apply this to future encounters in my own career.

"Though I saw a greater variety of refugee students, I realized that they were all facing the same challenges of adjusting to their new environment." -Sanjay Annigeri



FINANCIAL REPORT

Revenue

Corporations	\$ 24,221
Government	\$ 104,841
Foundations	\$ 406,416
Individuals	\$ 61,886
Other	\$ 6,958
Grants Rolled Over	\$ 279,361
Total	\$883,683

Expenses

Global Learners	\$ 184,074
Global Leaders	\$ 223,503
Global Scholars	\$ 52,139
Volunteer Program	\$ 2,876
Scholarships	\$ 2,876
Fundraising	\$ 26,356
Mgmt and Gen.	\$ 278,016
Total	\$766,965

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



Funding Partners

Albemarle Foundation
Arab American Education Foundation
Asian American Youth Giving Circle
Benge-Hury Family Foundation
Brown Foundation
Caring Friends
Children's Fund, The
Desai Family Fund
Etoile Academy
Giving Force Foundation
Harris County C.A.S.E. for Kids
Harris County - Community Youth Development
Houston Arts Alliance
Houston Endowment
Harris County Department of Education
Houston Jewish Community Foundation
Lemonade Day
Office of Refugee Resettlement
Powell Foundation, The
The Levant Foundation
Samuels Family Foundation
Springer Family Fund
Select Center for Economic Opportunity
Rice University Center for Civic Leadership
Philanthropy Circle
Rice University, PAIR Volunteer Chapter
United Way of Greater Houston, The
University of Houston, PAIR Volunteer Chapter
Welcome US
Woods Project, The
YMCA of Greater Houston, International Services

Individual Donors

Bennett, Sarah
Blackwell, Emily
Brasher, Laura and Mark
Brown, Josie and Taylor
Ching Huang, Mei
Dawson, Jack
De Jesus, Ruth
Dimarhos, Theoharis
Dhillon, Kirandeep
Dheeraj Verma,
Donnelly, Frank, Alexandra, and Laura
Ezuma-Igwe, Chidera
Fieveson, Alan H.
Forswall, Emily and Clayton
George, Joshua
Huang, Leslie
Huang, Meredith, and Cary Kottler
Huang, Lisa
Loasby, Jaime
Lowenstein, Glenn, Lisa
Miller, Jody
Morimoto, Colleen
Philip, Gibu and Jenny
Raffetto, Mary
Shaner, Christine
Speaks, Authea
Stern, Renee and Larry
Triantaphyllis, Christina
Vargas, Melany
Verma, Michele
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Corporate Donors

Amazon Smile
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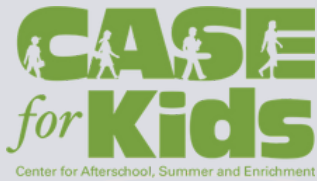
PRINCIPLE DONORS



Gifts of \$2,000 or higher

August 2022 - July 2023

Public Funders



FUNDED IN PART BY
THE CITY OF HOUSTON
THROUGH HOUSTON ARTS ALLIANCE

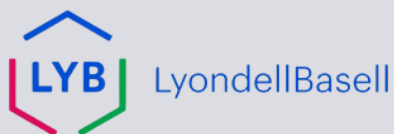


Private Foundations



Springer Family Fund

Corporate Donors



STAFF AND BOARD

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Co-Chair President

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Scholars Program Coordinator

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Program Quality Coordinator

Tawheed Mayar

Learners Program Coordinator

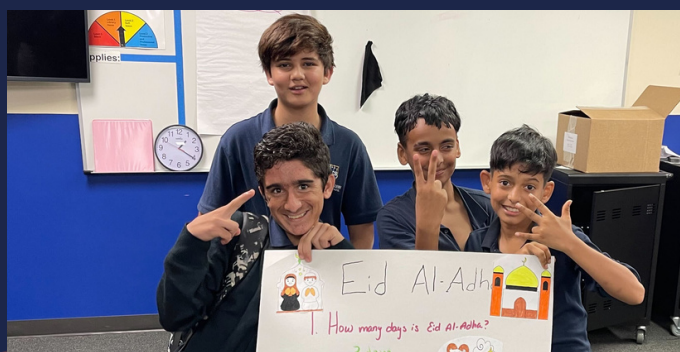


LOOKING FORWARD

Advocacy

As we prepare ourselves for the increase in refugee arrivals in Houston and the imminent growth of the refugee student population attending HISD schools, we are cognizant of a major shift to the way the school district operated - the takeover of the HISD by the Texas Education Agency. We look forward to building bridges with the new administration and becoming thought partners and allies in addressing the unique needs of refugee students.

Next year we will launch two very exciting research initiatives, in partnership with the Education Research Center at the University of Houston and The Bush School of Government and Public Services at the Texas A&M University. Both initiatives will allow us to collect crucial data on the academic and early-career outcomes that will help us continue our fight for educational equity for the refugee population. Stay tuned!



New Community Partners

Over the course of the year, our organization was able to connect with many new community partners to foster and strengthen relationships within our community and continue to build a rich network of support for our students!

We are as strong as our network of support, and we couldn't be more grateful for the new partnerships we built this year:

- Battery Dance
- My Connect Community
- H-E-B
- UNHCR
- Alliantgroup
- Houston Community College (HCC)
- Lemonade Day
- The Woods Project
- ACLU Texas
- Ride with Refugees
- Teen Health Clinic (Baylor College of Medicine)
- Museum of Fine Arts Houston
- HopSkipDrive

PAIR program sites 2023-2024

Middle Schools

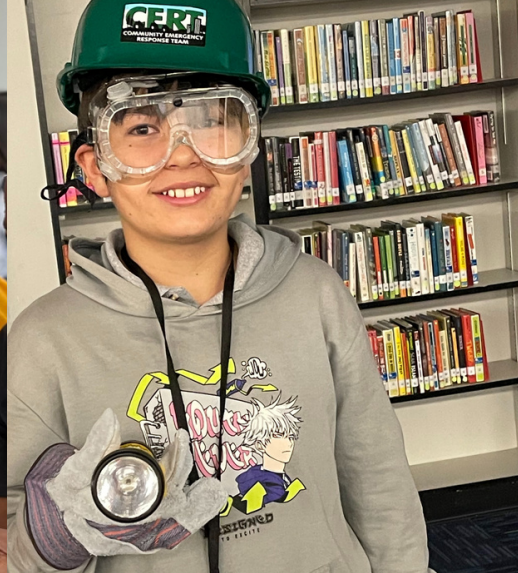
- Etoile Academy Charter School - **new site!**
- Jane Long Middle School
- Las Americas Newcomer School
- Louie Welch Middle School - **new site!**
- Paul Revere Middle School

High School

- Liberty High School - **new site!**
- Sharpstown High School
- Westside High School - **new site!**
- Wisdom High School

Higher Education

- Houston Community College
- The University of Houston

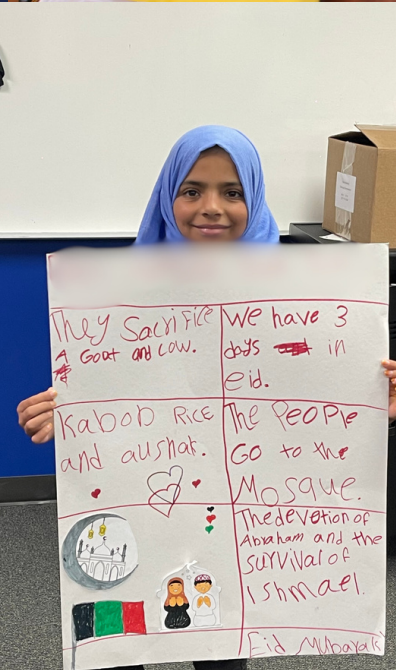
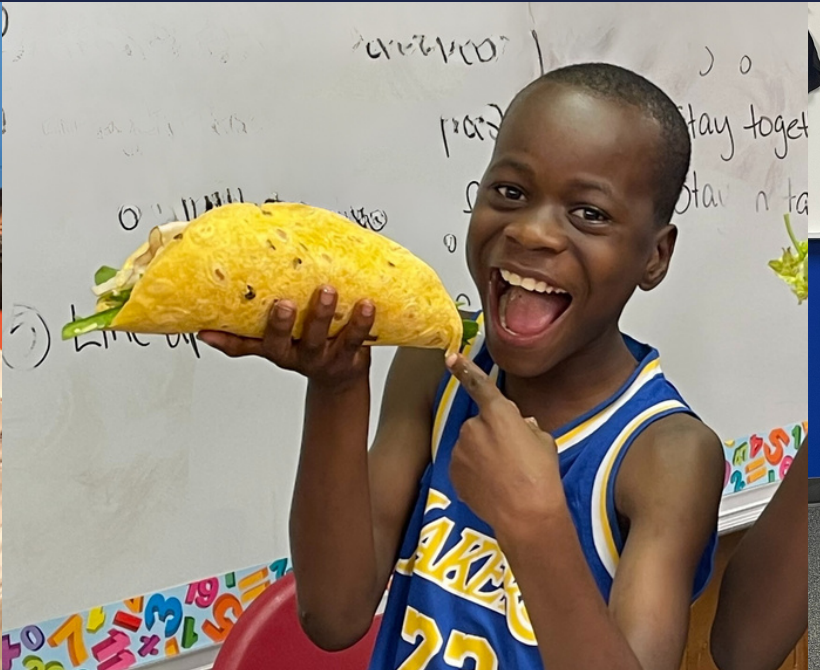


PAIR

We thank you for your continued support in our programs.

United Way

PAIR
3300 Chimney Rock Rd. Suite 104 Houston, Texas 77056
1713-771-1111
www.pairhouston.org



They Sacrifice Goat and cow.	We have 3 days in eid.
Kabob Rice and aushak.	The People Go to the Mosque.
	The devotion of Abraham and the survival of Ishmael.
	Eid Mubarak!