

# WESLEY

Community Center

**EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS**



**SENIOR & SOCIAL SERVICES**



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES AND EACH OTHER**

**2012 ANNUAL REPORT**



Growing healthy families with our community garden and food programs



# OUR PARTNERS CHANGE LIVES

Thank you for joining in partnership with the many new opportunities and collaborations launched in 2012 at Wesley Community Center. The new Kurtz Education and Recreation Center enriched Wesley with flexible space which enhanced many of its services and new programs.

New community partners generated workforce development training and expanded youth participation at Wesley. Literacy Advance of Houston, Inc. and the Mexican Institute provided entry level and intermediate computer classes and the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (A.A.M.A) facilitated G.E.D. classes. Each one of these programs illustrates an opportunity for the working poor of the Northside to improve their situation. The M.D. Anderson Branch of the Y.M.C.A., which also serves our neighborhood, provided an opportunity for our youth to participate in organized sports leagues and Wesley hosted the Boy Scouts of America Troop and Pack 63 (Sam Houston Council) which brought 50+ boys to our facility.

A number of new programs now support our Community Outreach efforts. Wesley responded to the food security issues in the neighborhood in several ways. Food Fairs hosted at the Reba Veal Henderson Food Co-Op bloomed with pallets of fresh food for our Wesley neighbors. In October, our Farmer's Market harvested a healthy shopping experience for young and old alike. Wesley started a Community Garden to grow fruits and vegetables for families, while educating the community on healthy living. As a result, multiple partnership opportunities have flourished with the City of Houston, Exxon, Go Neighborhoods, Northside Management District, and a number of Houston United Methodist Churches.

The Board of Directors has taken the lead with two new "friend-raising" events which included a wine tasting at Vintner's Own and an after-hours social at St. Arnold's Brewery. Wesley's partnership with the United Methodist Church was recharged and reinvigorated with its annual Spirit of Helping luncheon held in October. Bishop Janice Riggle Huie gave the keynote address to a packed Junior League Ballroom and we honored Wesley's community supporter, Mr. Gene Kurtz. Wesley has been actively recruiting new board talent throughout the year and our board numbers grew from 15 to 23 members.

Wesley continues to work with our partner, United Way of Greater Houston, to execute their "Education Initiative" by acting as a host site for various parenting education classes. In addition, our "Hooked on a Book" project continues to afford literacy opportunities for volunteers from the community to provide books and read to Wesley's children. A new 86,000 square-foot Northside Elementary School is poised to open in the fall of 2013, bringing hundreds of new children within a few hundred feet of Wesley Community Center's doorstep. These opportunities for education, partnership, and collaboration open a whole new chapter in the 109-year-old story of the Wesley community.

On behalf of the staff and the Board of Directors of Wesley Community Center, a heartfelt thank you is in order. We commit to our mission to help people help themselves and each other as we continue to identify and support the needs of the Northside neighborhood.



Diana Garbis  
Executive Director



Ron Restrepo  
Board President



Judith McFarland  
Retiring Board  
President

Diana Garbis  
Executive Director

Ron Restrepo  
Board President, elect

Judith McFarland  
Retiring Board President

# WESLEY COMMUNITY CENTER — HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES AND EACH OTHER

Over 109 years ago, the women of First United Methodist Church established Wesley Community Center with the goal of improving the quality of life for young mothers and their children. The Near Northside neighborhood was home to many who died working the railroads, leaving many mothers widowed and challenged to provide for their children. Using the Settlement House model, these women stepped in to provide support and care to the struggling families in the neighborhood. Their work evolved into Wesley Community Center.

Throughout the years, Wesley Community Center's programs and services have responded to the needs within this Near Northside community. Today, Wesley provides a comprehensive array of early childhood education, youth development programming, community outreach, senior and social services programming, and economic development services.



**COMMUNITY NEED:** In Wesley's service area, 4 of every 10 residents live below the poverty line. The child poverty rate is even more troubling, with 41% of children under age 18 living below poverty. (ACS 2007-2011 Census) Among students attending the neighborhood's schools, 92% qualify for free/reduced lunch, a further indication of poverty levels (HISD, 2012).

## WESLEY'S PROGRAM RESPONSE **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Wesley's Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program strives to enhance cognitive, emotional, and social development targeting pre-school age children from low to moderately low-income households. Specifically, the ECE program offers:

- Access to high quality educational programming;
- Certified teachers implementing best practices;
- A Houston Independent School District-sponsored pre-Kindergarten program which has received the Texas School Ready Certification for the last five years in a row;
- Early identification of learning disabilities; and
- Parent workshops and training in child development education.



### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS

- **164 children** received early childhood education in order to develop Pre-K skills and abilities.
- **158 children** received early childhood social and emotional skills training
- **259 parents** received child development education and training
- **The total number** of unduplicated children and parents served through Early Childhood Education: **487**

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IMPACT

- **92% of Early Childhood Education** children demonstrated improved abilities and knowledge in Pre-K Skills;
- **90% of Early Childhood Education** children met social and emotional developmental milestones appropriate for their age group;
- **93% of parents demonstrated improved knowledge** of child development needs through education and training offerings.

### CLIENT PROFILE: SANDRA AND HER CHILDREN, VANESSA AND ROY

Seven years ago, Sandra approached Wesley Community Center's Early Childhood Education staff in a state of desperation, seeking child care for her infant daughter and her four-year old son. She had to find work in order to meet family needs. Making matters worse, she spoke no English and had to find a provider who could communicate with her. Wesley Early Childhood Education staff assured her that they could assist her in her language. Sandra was able to secure a part-time job, and our staff was able to help her obtain a child care subsidy from Workforce Solutions in order to enroll her young children in the Early Childhood Education Center.

Today, her children, Vanessa and Roy, continue to attend Wesley's out-of-school elementary education program and their mother is very proud that she is able to afford to pay for enrollment on her own. Roy and Vanessa were both selected for the Vanguard/ Magnet Program at Sherman/Crawford Elementary. The Vanguard K-12 program offers a learning curriculum that stimulates students who excel in intellectual abilities and key skills. Both children are fluent in English—and are highly proficient in reading and language arts—despite the fact that their mother communicates solely in Spanish. Vanessa's report card indicates that she is consistently earning top grades in Social Science, Science and Language Arts. "I love art, music and science...I love school." Roy loves learning about science and animals. Sandra beams with pride as she leans in to hug each of them. "I thank Wesley and the Early Childhood Education program for making this possible for my children."



**COMMUNITY NEED:** Children and youth need the dedicated attention of caring adults and the opportunity to experience activities and programming that allows them to build skills and realize key developmental assets—a sense of belonging, accomplishment, and hope for the future—so important for transitioning into healthy adulthood.

## WESLEY'S PROGRAM RESPONSE

# OUT-OF-SCHOOL ELEMENTARY & YOUTH PROGRAM

Wesley's Youth Program offers after school and summer services and activities Monday through Saturday. Children and youth are grouped by age and participate in age-appropriate activities at the Kurtz Education and Recreation Center, opened to the public in January 2012. The program concentrates on three main areas of development:

### ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Activities include homework assistance, literacy exercises, academic tutoring, and computer skills training.

### HEALTHY LIVING/ENRICHMENT

Activities include field trips, arts and crafts, and indoor and outdoor recreation.

### SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Activities include peer group discussions that promote positive decision-making and emotional and social skills development. Participating youth explore timely topics such as recognizing and expressing feelings, effective communication, coping with stress, anger management, and self-control.

### CLIENT PROFILE: CRUZ

As with many of the youth that attend the Out-of-School program at Wesley Community Center, Cruz's family struggles financially as they try to care for four children. Five years ago, Cruz found his way to Wesley. As a soccer fanatic, avid runner, and a good student, he has taken advantage of everything Wesley has to offer. Whether it is using the gym for indoor soccer practice, training for long distance running, or using the computer lab for homework, Wesley has been an integral part of his life.

Cruz really started to blossom last year when he enrolled in Beyond the Finish Line, a program that engages youth in conditioning, training and running on a weekly basis. After four months, Cruz ran his first race and finished 20th. With every race, his skills and abilities improve and his trainer thinks that he might eventually be able to get a college scholarship.

Besides sports, Cruz also credits Wesley with helping him plan for his future. "The staff and mentors at Wesley have taken me to college campuses and showed me what is available out there in the world. They help me with a lot of things, such as how to prevent bullying, helping me with school work, or simply explaining things that I am not able to understand." He adds, "If I was not coming to Wesley, I would be sitting at home eating and doing nothing. They helped me be more caring. They helped me be a better person."

## YOUTH PROGRAM OUTPUTS

- **793 students** received academic assistance
- **192 students** received the Second Step evidence-based curriculum which builds social and emotional skills and prevents violent behavior
- **The total number** of unduplicated out-of-school students and youth served: **793**

## IMPACT

- **53% of youth improved academic performance** by actively engaging in the learning process afforded through programming activities.
- **57% of youth demonstrated social competence** by learning to resolve conflict effectively.



**COMMUNITY NEED:** Individuals, families and children need support and assistance in economically and financially challenging times to keep from slipping into greater poverty, ill health and homelessness.

## WESLEY'S PROGRAM RESPONSE **SENIOR & SOCIAL SERVICES**

The goal of Wesley's Senior and Social Services is to strengthen health, well-being and independence among seniors and assist low and moderate income individuals and families to obtain financial and economic constancy. Working in tandem with Wesley's professional staff, clients define their own goals for financial stability and develop a plan for actualizing them. The programs delivered through Senior and Social Services include the following:

### SENIOR PROGRAMMING

Wesley's Senior Services offers a socially stimulating and physically engaging environment for area seniors. Recreation, field trips, daily hot lunches, social events, arts and crafts activities, special education and health seminars, physical fitness, and general fellowship are shared by this vital segment of the community.

### ADULT AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM

Utilizing a comprehensive case management process, our staff work together with clients to develop client-driven Individual Service Plans (ISP) to maximize family stability. Working with key partners, Wesley Community Center sustains individuals and families in crisis and affords them critical short-term assistance that allows them to work toward greater self-sufficiency.

### REBA VEAL HENDERSON FOOD CO-OP & THE WESLEY FOOD PANTRY

Wesley's Food Co-Op helps families maximize their monthly cash flow by providing food at an affordable price. Participants contribute to the Food Co-Op by volunteering at the facility. In exchange for clients' volunteer work and a \$10 annual fee, participants receive \$60+ worth of groceries for \$30 monthly. A dedicated Senior Food Co-Op Program allows seniors—a group at particular risk for food insecurity—to stretch their fixed Social Security and retirement funds. Seniors receive \$20+ worth of groceries for \$10 monthly. The Food Co-Op also provides free emergency food assistance to individuals and families that are in crisis and cannot afford to buy groceries. Wesley also operates a food pantry in Houston's Fifth Ward neighborhood at Julia C. Hester House.

### FAMILY EMPOWERMENT SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS

- **2,250** individuals received social services that specifically provided housing stabilization assistance.
- **17,478** individuals received food assistance.
- **109** seniors received congregate meals.
- **1,656** individuals received referrals and linkages to pertinent agencies for additional services.
- **The total number** of unduplicated clients served through Senior & Social Services: **25,770**



### CLIENT PROFILE: ISABEL

Through the past 20 years, Isabel Sanchez and her children have had many opportunities to intersect with Wesley Community Center and its programming. Her children attended early childhood education programs and she volunteered at Wesley. Now a retired senior citizen, Isabel provides care to her grandchildren at home, but makes certain that she comes to the painting classes offered to seniors at Wesley Community Center. The painting classes are offered by Tony Paraná through the Brazilian Arts Foundation as part of a long-term partnership enjoyed between the two organizations. "Painting allows me to forget my stresses. I come here and create and escape into these images. Tony is very, very patient and that is so helpful. I focus on creating and it is very relaxing," says Isabel.

**COMMUNITY NEED:** Disadvantaged individuals need a broad range of educational and skill development services, financial supports, assistance with securing employment, and dedicated, ongoing case management in order to overcome the numerous challenges of moving out of financial hardship and poverty.

## WESLEY'S PROGRAM RESPONSE

Wesley Community Center operates a Financial Opportunity Center, the first of its kind to be established in Houston. The FOC focuses on improving the financial bottom line for low to moderately low-income individuals and is particularly dedicated to building educational and skill levels, encouraging sound financial practices, and affording the support needed to reach financial stabilization. Services include:

### CAREER DEVELOPMENT (EARN IT)

Career Development services include assistance with job searches; referrals to employers; job fairs; help with résumé writing; interview practice; coaching on professionalism and workplace behavior; assistance with enrolling in college and technical school, and General Educational Development (GED) programs.

### FINANCIAL COACHING (GROW IT)

Financial Coaching services include group-based financial education involving topics like budgeting and credit repair; one-on-one financial counseling which focuses on solving specific problems or crises, such as reducing high debt or preventing eviction; and providing access to safe, low-interest loans for college tuition, automobiles, and related needs as an alternative to high-interest payday loans.

### INCOME SUPPORT (KEEP IT)

Income Support services include determining clients' eligibility for public benefits, such as Social Security, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and helping clients apply for these benefits.

## FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITY CENTER (FOC)

### FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITY CENTER BY THE NUMBERS

- **245** individuals received at least one education counseling service
- **225** individuals received at least one financial counseling service
- **166** individuals received at least one income support service
- **The total number** of unduplicated individuals served through the Financial Opportunity Center: **736**

### FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITY CENTER IMPACT

- 70** individuals **placed** into **employment**
- 131** individuals **screened** for **public benefits**
- 104** people **improved** their **net income**
- 87** people **increased** their **net worth**

### CLIENT PROFILE: LATONYA

Almost two years ago, LaTonya, a single mother of five, found herself in dire need, seeking housing assistance from Wesley. She had been laid off her home health worker job of five years. Just prior to the lay-off, she had started school to obtain her Certified Nursing Associates (CNA). One week before her exams, she ran out of funds for everything. Forced to either find funds or give up her dreams, she turned to Wesley for help. Staff provided her with emergency rent assistance to keep her in her home. They also gave her a scholarship to complete her CNA training and take her exam. Efforts by Wesley staff were also able to help her secure Phlebotomy training and obtain her certification. LaTonya now works for Memorial Hermann Hospital where she has been employed for almost two years. With each increase in training, she has improved her ability to increase her income.

"I was a full-time mom and full-time employee working 12-hour shifts, as well as a student. It was not easy. But Wesley believed in me and gave me the opportunity and the support I needed. My plan is to continue saving, complete my Patient Care Technician training and, maybe, even become a Licensed Vocational Nurse. I just can't believe how much things have changed for me in two years. I just start to cry. I thank God for Wesley Community Center and for the United Way THRIVE program. Thank you everyone who believed in me".



LATONYA



# VISIONING FORWARD: PROGRAMMING FOR THE COMMUNITY'S FUTURE



## CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: HOOKED ON A BOOK

Emerging out of a community awareness project to bridge the 30 million word exposure gap between lower and higher socioeconomic children upon entering public school, Wesley is organizing regular, dedicated reading sessions with church, corporate and community volunteers and early childhood education students. Volunteers will also donate books and prepare take-home activities for parents so that they may continue reading with their children.



## OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH PROGRAMMING: ORGANIZED SPORTS LEAGUE

In late 2012, Wesley staff initiated the development of an organized basketball league for middle school students attending the Kurtz Education and Recreation Center. The Wesley team went on to win every game within their YMCA league and gained a sense of accomplishment and possibility for future achievements. Wesley staff will build on this success by adding other team sport activities, including soccer and volleyball. Student participation in the team sports activities will help youth cultivate an understanding of the importance of teamwork, while also learning how to follow through on hard work and discipline. They will also have the opportunity to engage in a variety of physical activities, promoting active lifestyles and helping protect against childhood obesity.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH: GARDEN IN A VILLAGE COMMUNITY GARDEN

Wesley staff started a community garden in late 2012 to involve children and youth in cultivating fruits and vegetables and to teach healthy eating habits. The project involved children in the construction of a garden plot and had them planting and raising food. We are currently expanding the garden space and building an irrigation system. Educational programming will soon commence and allow youth to learn how to tend and cultivate a garden, learn about nutrition, and explore key science, math and ecology concepts through direct engagement in community gardening. Additionally, youth will learn about distributing produce for market,



the means by which produce goes from farm-to-market-to-kitchen, and will be involved in their own distributions of garden-grown produce to individuals and families through Wesley's Food Co-Op.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: FOC/WORKFORCE SUPPORTS SERVICES WITH HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Through the placement of our Education Coach at the Houston Community College Northline campus, Wesley is recruiting and providing students with scholarships to pursue high demand for health care positions including Certified Nursing Associates, Phlebotomy, Electrocardiography (EKG), and Patient Care Technician certifications. The Education Coach resides on the HCC campus three days a week, providing a variety of support services to students. Funding is being sought to provide a Workforce Supports Fund to provide a range of supports—financial, educational, child care—to protect against students being de-railed from their educational pursuits.

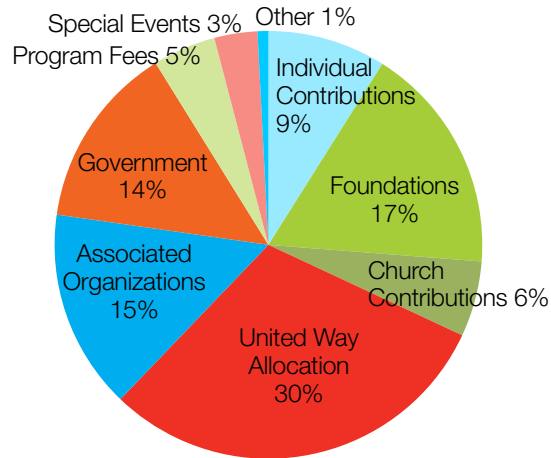
# FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2012

By keeping management expenses low, Wesley continues its commitment to allocate donation dollars to programs and services.

## REVENUE

Individual Contributions	\$223,855
Foundations	\$432,750
Church Contributions	\$143,057
United Way Allocation	\$756,126
Associated Organizations	\$377,679
Government	\$347,720
Program Fees	\$119,361
Special Events	\$81,475
Other	\$20,497
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,502,520</b>

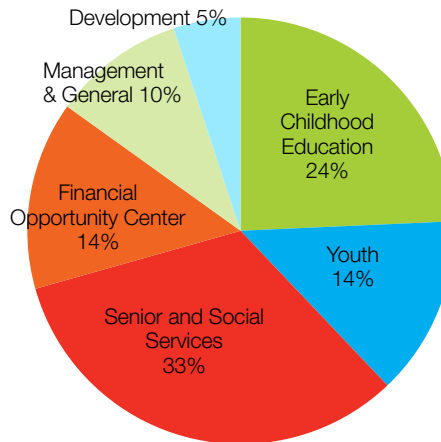
## REVENUE



## EXPENSES

Early Childhood Education	\$529,378
Youth	\$296,642
Senior and Social Services	\$712,677
Financial Opportunity Center	\$311,344
Management & General	\$218,278
Development	\$110,755
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,179,074</b>

## EXPENSES



## ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	191,079
Investments	75,574
Prepaid expenses	2,144
United Way Allocation for next fiscal year	166,603
Pledges receivable	150,000
Accounts receivable, government grants	133,215
Other Accounts receivable	1,864
Land, buildings, equipment	2,478,549
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>3,199,028</b>

## LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	26,192
Payroll and related liabilities	15,151
Line of credit payable	75,000
Bank note payable	228,843
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>345,186</b>





# OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS

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Sandra McBride  
**Teacher**  
Lydia Martinez  
**Teaching Assistant**  
Racquel Ponce  
**Kitchen Staff**  
Helen Sanchez

## 2012 DONORS OVER \$1,000

### CHURCHES/CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

Chapelwood United Methodist Church  
Chapelwood United Methodist Church — UMW  
First United Methodist Church  
First United Methodist Church — Adelphi Class  
Foundry United Methodist Church  
General Board of Global Ministries — New York  
Good Shepherd United Methodist Church — Cypress  
John Wesley United Methodist Church  
Lakewood United Methodist Church  
Lakewood United Methodist Church — UMW  
Memorial Drive United Methodist Church — UMW  
St. Luke's United Methodist Church  
St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
St. Peter's United Methodist Church — Katy  
St. Peter's United Methodist Church — Katy UMW  
St. Stephen's United Methodist Church  
Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church  
Texas Annual Conference — United Methodist Women  
West University United Methodist Church  
Windsor Village United Methodist Church — UMW

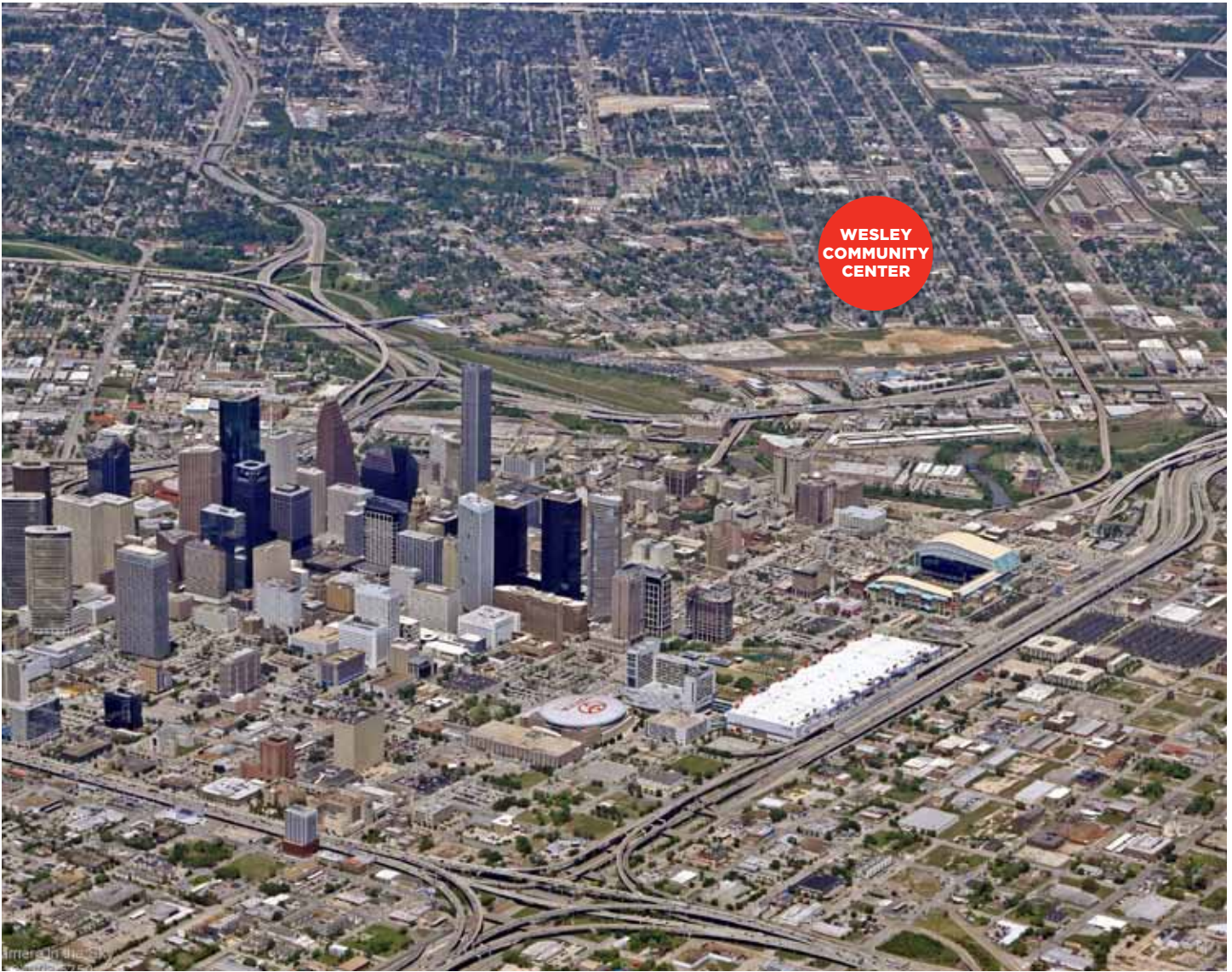
### CORPORATIONS/BUSINESSE/ FOUNDATIONS/PARTNERS

Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries  
Bank of America Foundation  
Capital One Services  
CenterPoint Energy  
Houston Electric City of Houston  
Doyle, Restrepo, Harvin, & Robbins, LLP  
ExxonMobil Corporation  
Heartspring Methodist Foundation  
Houston Foam Plastics  
Houston Endowment, Inc.  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation  
Neighborhood Centers Inc.  
Noble Energy, Inc.  
Scurlock Foundation  
Shell Oil Company Foundation  
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The Brown Foundation, Inc.  
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The Powell Foundation  
United Way of Tri-State  
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Wesley Community Center, located in the shadow of downtown in the Northside Village, serves the neighborhood and over 110 other zip codes.



A United Way  
Affiliated Agency



A National Mission Institute of  
The United Methodist Church