

Riverview

INTERNATIONAL CENTER



Sisterhood of nations: Strengthening Bonds

Many of us have known the strength, the empowerment, the collegiality, and the relief that comes from being part of a group that has your back. This past May, two of our amazing employees, Hamida Ouali and Iman Shehabi, each started a group for women in our neighborhood who need this kind of support and community. The groups quickly grew and there are now more than 30 women who attend each week! The women get together to share their experiences, including their journeys learning English, adapting to a new environment and culture, and creating new relationships.

Though their stories and nationalities are different, they have become a true sisterhood.

The women also learn from each other as they tackle the challenges of starting a new life in the United States. For example, applying the skills she learned as a manager at the hospital, Nadine was able to help Samira start a Facebook page to sell her pastries.

The groups have already celebrated birthdays together, shared vacation news, gone to the zoo, walked at Antrim Park, and shared achievements over tea and pastries. In the next room, their children can enjoy an evening of fun activities with a babysitter. Although each woman's story and nationality is different, together they have become a true sisterhood.

Thank you Volunteers!

From Day One, volunteers have given their time to welcome, teach, serve, assist, drive, donate, fix-up, create, play, and more. We now count 150 people in this valuable group! Our volunteers work hard to empower our neighbors and to make Columbus a better place to live. Thank you!



Volunteers who attended the 2023 appreciation dinner at Whetstone Shelter



All enjoyed delicious food made by RIC friend and neighbor, Tania Akter.



Shopping the lovely creations made by the Riverview sewing group.

Volunteers behind the Scenes

We want to extend a special thanks to some of the behind-the-scenes volunteers who help make the RIC run! Kathryn and John Bierley, Nathan Rinnear, and Gabriel Sheeley often make office improvements and perform maintenance tasks to the apartment building -from installing portable AC units to fixing doorknobs and hanging hooks, our staff are always grateful to see their improvements. Gabriel has also spent hours building and maintaining the software that allows us to track our services and keep up with our neighbor's needs. Linda Anschutz writes and sends thank you letters to our donors and Michele McCandless helps write and proofread articles, letters and more. Jen Graven assists us with managing and writing grants, and Cindy Musser is our bookkeeper and tracks many donations. Letha Flynn is a caring in-home ESL teacher and Lara Alsoudani Weeks and her husband, Alfredo, create our printed and online marketing and brand materials. Thank you to all of our incredible volunteers - we appreciate you all so much!

Summer Reading Fun

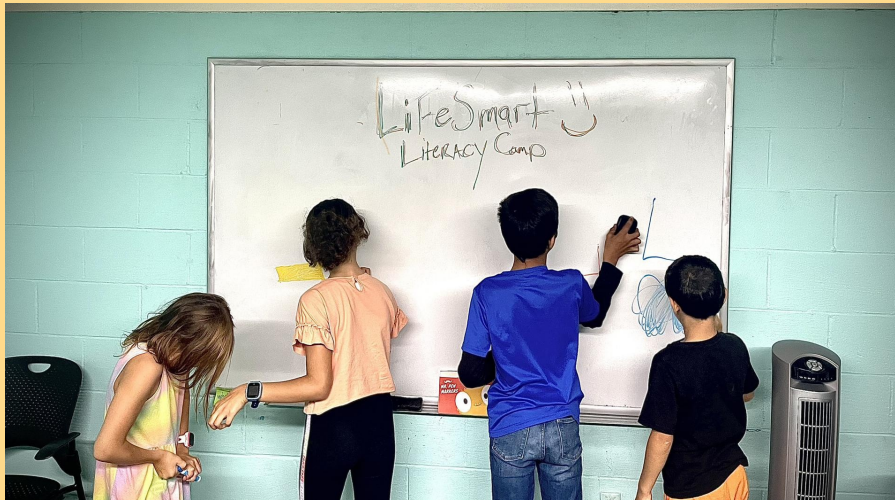
Six weeks of the summer reading program ended with an ice cream party on July 13. 80 children, ages 3-12, read with volunteers for a total of 693 visits! Check out the recap video below:





Summer Literacy Camp

During the last two weeks of July, the RIC hosted summer literacy camps in partnership with [LifeSmart Education](#). Kids from the Riverview neighborhood came to learn, play, and create together. Jawad said, **"I love reading and writing!"** Adam said he enjoyed learning about King Tut and the tombs of ancient Egyptians, and Raihan said the teacher made him **"very happy!"** Thank you, LifeSmart!



Students attending summer literacy camp draw on the classroom whiteboard.



Above: K-2 students from the first week of camp show off their art work.

Right: Reem and Daria present what they have enjoyed learning during the second week of camp.



Partner Spotlight: MYProject USA: ESL



ESL students gather around the teacher, Dianna, to hear about next steps.

The RIC partners with [MYProject USA](#) to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction to our neighbors on Riverview Drive. Dianna, the instructor, teaches an Afghan men's class on Mondays and Tuesdays and an Afghan women's class on Saturdays and Sundays. Fathers in the men's group have also started bringing their older sons to learn English, creating the need for an additional class!

Although the main objective is to learn English, the classes have also become a space for community building; a place for neighbors to learn and grow together. Dianna teaches ESL to kids during the school year, but loves teaching adults. She says, **“My students are absolutely delightful to teach! They are here because they want to be here.”** Riverview neighbors want to move on with their lives and succeed in their new country. Learning English is essential to that success. We are very proud to help our neighbors through this transition, but realize it would not be possible without their hard work and determination to be successful.



Field Trip to John Beltz Retreat Center

The John Beltz Family Fall Event will be held on Saturday, August 5th. Over 40 neighbors and 20 volunteers from the "Love our City" event enjoyed creek walking (and a crawfish), a hayride, bounce house, popcorn, cotton candy, playground equipment, and a potluck dinner.



Neighbors enjoying a hayride at the John Beltz Retreat Center



Afsana showing off a crawfish

WHAT'S NEXT at the RIC?

- CAS Chemistry Festival for Kids, Sunday, September 17, 4-6:00PM
- Annual Community Festival, Sunday, October 1, 2-7:00PM
- Reaching Riverview fundraiser lunch, Wednesday, October 18, 12p-1:00PM, Mozart's Cafe in Clintonville

You're invited to help or attend any of these events! Click below:

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