

MAESTRO CARES

F O U N D A T I O N

CHANGING LIVES, BUILDING DREAMS

Update on the Groundbreaking of Small Steps Nurturing Center on Monday, February 12, 2024



Pictured above: Bianca Bucaram, Advisory Board Member, MCF; Tracey Duer, Director of Operations, MCF; Zaidy Cardenas, Executive Director, MCF; Enrique Alonso, Sr. Project Manager, MCF; Jennifer Aguilar, Project Coordinator, MCF; and Laura Felix, Marketing & Communication Manager, MCF.

This week, Maestro Cares Foundation (MCF) staff traveled to Texas to commemorate the groundbreaking ceremony for Small Steps Nurturing Center in Houston on February 12, 2024. During the visit, the MCF staff toured the current facility and construction site, interacted with some of the children, and met parents who were once recipients of Small Steps' services and are now service providers themselves. The parents expressed gratitude for the programs that supported them during their most vulnerable times of need. MCF provided the funding to expand this existing preschool center that has already made a significant impact on the educational landscape. Situated in the Fifth Ward and Gulfton /

Sharpstown communities of Houston, Texas, this center serves as a beacon of hope, offering high-quality education, social and emotional support, a nurturing Christian environment, transportation, and nutritious meals to children ages 2 through 6 living in poverty. Small Steps offers their program at no cost to families. Currently, they help 190 children aged 2 to 6; this expansion will allow for an additional 60 children. The project involves diverse enhancements, including land acquisition, construction of 4 classrooms, 2 therapy rooms, a modern vehicle drop-off and waiting area, and a spacious multi-purpose zone in a rear addition. Additionally, the expansion provides 8 extra parking spaces.

Board of Directors President Emily Sheeran radiated gratitude as she thanked MCF for their support, stating, "Thanks to MCF, we will be able to reach 250 students, which we are very, very excited about. We like to focus on the whole child: the social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual development of every child that walks through the doors, and of their families."

Alberto Garza, CEO of Forney Construction, expressed gratitude, stating, "Thank you for allowing us to be part of this special project. I am honored to be standing here and be part of this expansion; this is the type of client and project that we are built to serve. Forney Construction is not just about construction; it's about how we can impact the community. That's really at our core value: being part of the community and part of these projects. As we break ground on this Small Steps Nurturing Center, we are reminded of the significance of this endeavor. The education and comprehensive support these children receive through the Christian-based programs provided at this growing facility will be immeasurable for generations to come. This expansion shows a commitment and unwavering dedication of the Small Steps organization to build up these children and give them the solid foundation they need to thrive."

In her closing remarks, Anna Schick, Executive Director of Small Steps for 11 years, expressed, "I am most proud of and excited to be a part of the intentionality of the growth at Small Steps."

Notably, this marks MCF's 4th project in the United States and its first in the vibrant city of Houston. This initiative exemplifies the ongoing commitment to fostering accessible and high-quality education for underserved communities, leaving a lasting impact on the lives of young learners and their families.



Groundbreaking Ceremony at Small Steps Nurturing Center, February 12, 2024