



The Storehouse
COMMUNITY CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Storehouse Community Center Youth Leadership Council Sets Records for Service Hours and Number of Clothing Items Collected in Multi-School Coat Drive

Forty area high school students contributed more than 2,161 volunteer hours while leading innovative service projects, including a six-school drive that collected 2,503 coats and winter clothing items.



Members of The Storehouse Community Center's Youth Leadership Council gather during the organization's May 2025 Meet and Greet. Throughout the academic year, council members volunteer across The Storehouse's programs and lead service projects that benefit neighbors in need throughout North Texas.

PLANO, TEXAS - May 28, 2026 – The Storehouse Community Center celebrated a record-breaking year for its Youth Leadership Council (YLC), whose 40 student leaders contributed more than 2,161 volunteer hours and spearheaded a massive six-school clothing drive that collected 2,503 coats and winter clothing items for neighbors in need. The accomplishments were recognized during the organization's year-end celebration honoring extraordinary service, leadership development and collaboration among students representing 16 North Texas high schools.

Founded in 2021, the YLC continues to grow as a leadership pipeline for young nonprofit and community leaders. This year, the council achieved its highest level of service to date, with members averaging 54 volunteer hours each – far surpassing the program's annual 30-hour commitment.

“This year's Youth Leadership Council members demonstrated what is possible when young people are empowered to lead with compassion, creativity and purpose,” said Candace Winslow, CEO of The Storehouse Community Center. “When I see a student in that green YLC shirt, it tells me they already understand that true leadership begins with service. The next nonprofit leader—the next CEO—is sitting in this room, and we are incredibly proud to help shape their journey.”

Throughout the year, YLC members gained hands-on experience learning about each of The Storehouse's core programs, including food assistance, clothing resources, education, social services and workforce partnerships. Students interviewed program directors and worked through real-life case studies focused on problem-solving and community impact.

In addition to volunteering in the food pantry and across various Storehouse programs, students organized and led the “Warm Hearts with Warm Coats” campaign, a six-school clothing drive effort that united Plano West Senior High School, John Paul II High School, Prince of Peace Christian School, Hebron High School, Shepton High School and Frisco Memorial High School under a shared theme and branding initiative featuring hand-painted fireplace collection boxes created by the students. The extraordinary community-wide effort collected 2,503 winter clothing items and coats for neighbors in need, more than quadrupling last year’s YLC collection total of 562 items.

The council also hosted an end-of-year socks and underwear drive, collecting 284 essential items for neighbors in need. Additionally, the YLC students prepared hundreds of protein bites to fuel adult learners in the Academy ESL program, which meets for four hours every Saturday morning across two intensive twelve-week semesters from August to May.



Recipients of the 2025-26 David Huerta Student Volunteer Award pose during the YLC year-end celebration. From left are Alberto Ramos Hinojosa, Javier Alonso and Lucas Gonzales, who were recognized for completing over 100 service hours each.

At the year-end celebration, The Storehouse recognized three recipients of the **David Huerta Student Volunteer Award***, presented annually to students who not only complete the highest number of volunteer hours, but also exemplify The Storehouse’s values of service and leadership:

- **Lucas Gonzales**, John Paul II High School — 185.25 hours
- **Alberto Ramos Hinojosa**, John Paul II High School — 129.75 hours
- **Javier Alonso**, John Paul II High School — 111 hours

This marks the first year that all three award recipients surpassed 100 service hours.

The organization also honored 15 graduating seniors completing their service on the council:

- Asil Miah**, Plano West Senior High School
- Ava Henry**, John Paul II High School
- Brad Bai**, Plano West Senior High School
- Colin Goodlin**, Plano West Senior High School
- Fletcher Stall**, Fairhill School
- Ipsita Devalla**, Plano West Senior High School
- Isaias Gonzalez**, Harmony High School
- Joshua Eappen**, Frisco Memorial High School
- Magere Bodo**, Frisco Memorial High School

Misha Kandukuri, Plano West Senior High School
Saanvi Gundala, Plano West Senior High School
Sanjitha Bandi, Plano West Senior High School
Surabhi Halbe, Plano West Senior High School
Tessa Devasia, John Paul II High School
Tyler Adams, John Paul II High School



(Left) Tessa Devasia, a graduating senior and Class of 2026 valedictorian at John Paul II High School, loads food into a neighbor's car during a food pantry distribution at The Storehouse. Through the Youth Leadership Council, she learned that service transforms not only the person being served, but also the person serving.

(Right) Youth Leadership Council members Lucas Gonzalez and Nandika Gupta interview Candace Winslow (left), CEO of The Storehouse, during the council's September 2025 meeting. Student-led interviews throughout the year help members gain a deeper understanding of The Storehouse's programs, operations, and leadership.

During the celebration, graduating senior Tessa Devasia, valedictorian of the John Paul II High School Class of 2026, reflected on how her experience with the YLC transformed her understanding of service and leadership.

"Through volunteering at The Storehouse, I've learned that service has a way of changing you," said Devasia. "It taught me that helping others isn't always about doing something big or extraordinary. Sometimes it's just showing up, giving your time and being willing to serve wherever you're needed."

Senior Brad Bai also reflected on his four years of service on the council, the friendships he formed with students who share a passion for helping others, and how the experience transformed his understanding of leadership. "I have learned that leadership means taking the initiative to help others and lift them up, showing up to serve neighbors in need, welcoming someone new and stepping forward to do what is right," said Bai. "The YLC has given me an incredible experience through meeting new people, building lasting friendships and helping me grow into the person I am today."

"These students continually inspire me with their willingness to step forward, solve problems and serve wherever there is a need," said Ben Skye, director of communications and culture and YLC advisor at The Storehouse. "What makes this group so special is not only the incredible amount of service they provide, but the compassion, leadership and teamwork they demonstrate along the way. They are learning that leadership is about showing up for others, working together to meet challenges and making a meaningful impact in their community."



(Left) Youth Leadership Council members Sara Bhola, Claire Pritchett, Tyler Adams, and Bella Smith prepare protein snack bites for adult learners participating in The Storehouse’s English as a Second Language (ESL) program.

(Right) Plano West Senior High School students Surabhi Halbe, Saanvi Gundala, Asil Miah, and Brad Bai pose for a photo after loading winter clothing drive donations into The Storehouse’s Sprinter van. Plano West was one of six schools that participated in the “Warm Hearts with Warm Coats” campaign, which collected 2,503 coats and other winter clothing items for neighbors in need.

The YLC season begins each August with orientation and concludes each spring with the year-end celebration, recognizing students for their service, leadership and dedication to strengthening the community through The Storehouse mission to feed, clothe, and care for neighbors in need.

While the YLC roster is complete for the 2026-27 year, The Storehouse welcomes all high school students to volunteer. Students who have completed 30 lifetime volunteer hours at The Storehouse are eligible to apply for the YLC in April each year. To sign up, visit www.thestorehouseecc.org/volunteer-sign-up. To learn more about the Youth Leadership Council, visit www.thestorehouseecc.org/ylc.

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***DAVID A. HUERTA**, 23, the award’s namesake, began volunteering at The Storehouse at age 14 after he and his family arrived in Plano as immigrants from Venezuela. He volunteered weekly, helped found the YLC, and is a graduate of University of Texas at Dallas with a bachelor’s degree in finance. Huerta is now a financial analyst with Windstar Properties.

The Storehouse Community Center (formerly The Storehouse of Collin County) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the community through food, clothing, resources, education, and employment support. By creating strong partnerships and offering transformational programs, TSCC works to address the root causes of food insecurity and empower neighbors to achieve self-sufficiency. During its previous fiscal year, The Storehouse served 166,124 unduplicated neighbors with the support of more than 2,000 volunteers. Visit www.thestorehouseecc.org. The Storehouse EIN: 27-1883333