Dear Friends:

Here we are again, after 20 years of ministry, in another Advent season to celebrate Christ and year end! Thank you for entrusting Advance Memphis with a portion of your God given time, talents, and funds.

Advance Memphis is very grateful! Last year I wrote about three goals: integration of Biblical based trauma care, consistent daily outsourcing work for at least 15 employees, and increasing our monthly donors. I am pleased to report that twelve staff completed trauma healing certification, we lengthened our Work Life class two weeks to embed trauma informed care into the curriculum, December 5th all volunteers are invited to a lunch and learn about trauma informed care, and Advance Memphis will host a trauma workshop in January. Outsourcing work in our warehouses has grown to 7 to 10 employees working daily. Our monthly donors increased in 2019 to 44 donors. Please pray for the board and staff as we put more effort and focus on creating and maintaining regular donors.

Our 2020 goals are: increased integration of trauma informed care, warehousing jobs expansion, and increasing our monthly donors to 100 individuals or families through our Good Neighbor Network.

Please keep looking for Good News Friday posts on social media and our quarterly newsletters for progress in these focus areas.

Merry Christmas,

Steve

GIVE ONLINE
**Fulfilling our Mission through Warehousing**

**Relationships.** Webster defines the term as, “the relation of connecting or binding participants.” Advance Memphis leverages relationships from all corners of Memphis for the purpose of empowering economic stability in our South Memphis neighbors. These crucial relationships build dignity in all involved. The unfolding of our second warehouse purchase (960 South Bellevue) quickly reveals the value of relationships. **Relationships add value.**

As Steve connected with a long time donor, he discovered that a warehouse might be available to purchase. We were then connected to a donor that could fully fund the purchase to support our vision of economic stability in South Memphis. The warehouse further allows us to connect staff, neighbors, volunteers, donors, and contractors from across Memphis to renovate, repair and restore the building. **Relationships connect.**

By February, with renovations incomplete and the roof still needing significant repair, we began renting space for storage (which helps pay the utility bills). In September, large kitting projects, employing 5-6 of our graduates working full time, moved to this warehouse. The visible encouragement of trucks delivering goods, people walking to work and the investment in South Memphis catalyze dignity, pride in work and community. **Warehousing** provides intentional, on-the-job training that empowers our neighbors to overcome roadblocks that prevent getting and keeping jobs while adding value in the workplace. Advance Memphis also learns from our graduates, since most have warehouse experience, which allows them to speak into warehouse methods as they take ownership of the work. **Relationships dignify.**

The road to warehousing for Advance Memphis began over ten years ago with the vision for work in the community to alleviate transportation issues. A long time board member suggested considering a foreclosed building in the neighborhood, which led to the purchase of our first warehouse. Our philosophy of warehousing in South Memphis requires business owners to pivot and consider Advance Memphis graduates for labor. The owners of Docazoo, a Memphis start-up company made that pivot. They began a business with the desire to support local work and chose Advance Memphis to meet their warehouse labor needs. Donald Tadia, owner of Docazoo, comments, “Our business was going to be important to them and their attention to detail was important to us.”

If I Had a Hammer, based in Franklin, TN, is another small start-up company that chose to move their product manufacturing and shipping to Advance Memphis. Our relationship with a volunteer, who also owns a plastics company in Collierville, makes this job possible for Advance Memphis to execute, bringing more jobs to the Greater Memphis Area. **Relationships bring hope.**

In 2020, Advance Memphis finds itself at the intersection of extremely low unemployment, slight increase in wages for unskilled and low-skilled labor, and increased production by companies who find this labor difficult to retain. We are developing the skill sets to manage small to medium-size outsourcing projects that larger companies do not necessarily want or cannot find labor. Our training programs, as well as, our temporary staffing and warehousing models seem to be a perfect conduit to keep empowering our South Memphis neighbors to grow their soft job skills and find work immediately. This occurs within the framework of relationships, benefiting everyone. **Relationships empower.**

This year, Steve Nash and Advance Memphis are honored to receive the Thomas W. Briggs Community Service Award from the Briggs Foundation. This award is given to recognize outstanding leadership provided by an individual in an organization whose creativity, effort, commitment, professionalism and exceptional initiative have enabled the organization to excel in its special mission. We appreciate the Briggs Foundation and its partnership with Advance Memphis.
In 1999 when Steve Nash began Advance Memphis, he officed in his car while canvassing the neighborhood building relationships and learning from residents. Twenty years later, 1000s of neighbors empowered, 4 programs addressing economic stability, 20+ employees, 2 warehouses and 1 office; Advance Memphis is humbled by the thousands of you who have prayed, volunteered, served, and given financially to this work. We are honored to know our hard-working neighbors in South Memphis and look forward to many more years.

PLEASE ENJOY THIS VIDEO.
In 2019, our volunteers gave 58% more hours of service than 2018.

These hours shared represent the unique gifting of our committed volunteers who love and serve our South Memphis neighbors.

Fulfilling our goal, we began equipping our volunteers with trauma-informed care practices as they provide encouragement and support to our neighbors.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
- Work Life Ally
- Faith & Finance Ally
- LAUNCH Business Ally
- Meal Provider
- Prayer Partner
- GED Tutor
- Mock Interviewer
- Business Development Team

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2020
- Supply Drive (February 2020)
- 20th Anniversary Block Party (April 18th)
- Art for Jobs (September 24th)
- Advance Memphis Community Feasts
  - Love Feast (February 7th)
  - Employment Feast (May 1st)
  - Fish Fry (August 7th)
  - Thanksgiving Feast (November 25th)

ADVANCE MEMPHIS VOLUNTEERS

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR GRADUATE CYNTHIA

I remember when I was first introduced to Advance Memphis. My cousin told me about it. He said, “Cousin, I’m getting ready to go to my class at Advance Memphis come walk with me down the street.” We lived in Foote Homes apartments. So when we got there, I’m talking as soon as we walked in, I was greeted by the most wonderful people that I have ever seen, everyone was so nice, I felt right at home. So I said to myself, yes I’m signing up. It was the best decision I have ever made in my life, I went faithfully every day, although at the time I stayed sick a lot but I still managed to make my way to Advance Memphis. I went all the way to my graduation, y’all has made my life and I am so grateful for you all. Thanks so much for everything, love you all. One more thing, I think that I will be coming back to continue my GED classes, so I’ll see you when I get there!

Do you have a skill to share with our South Memphis friends?
Please contact Jonathan Adam @ 901-543-8525. We look forward to dreaming with you!

Taking individual subject tests moves our neighbors closer to earning a HSE/GED. Increased job opportunities come with a HSE/GED. Congrats Antonio!

Our LAUNCH grads hit new levels in gross revenue again this year. Jasmine Pryor, “The Tax Lady”, enrolled in LAUNCH in 2018 to grow her tax preparation business. Happily, 2019 is her largest year yet!

Work Life students team building through creating. Shandria guides our neighbors through a lesson on “Putting Best Practices to Work on the Job...”