



## “INVEST in YOURSELF”

The Invest in Yourself program is a fresh new approach to helping low-income families achieve financial stability—strengthening families and the communities where they live.

This strategy is an integrated services approach, much more relational than we have done in the past. We are retraining ourselves and refocusing on how we provide services to families in Irving. Invest in Yourself helps Irving Cares and its partner agencies rethink how we serve working families through bundling and sequencing of services and supports that focus in three key areas: 1) financial coaching and education, 2) employment and 3) improved access to benefits. This program includes a resource of partners united around a shared vision of improving the lives of families and betterment of our community.

We have been working on this change of programming for several months. Our “Coaches” have gone through hours of training, working on a model that best fits the needs and goals of our families and our community. Due to low wages, lack of benefits and inconsistent employment, many workers are unable to meet their own basic needs and those of their families through employment alone. Becoming financially secure and building long-term assets requires more than a paycheck—smart budgeting, building strong credit and saving habits are all part of the equation.

The key to Invest in Yourself is that it offers clients a set of focused services in three overlapping areas:

### Employment and career advancement

Assistance with job readiness, job placement, occupational skills training, education & career advancement.

### Income enhancements & work supports

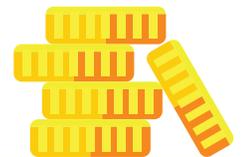
Helping clients gain access to public benefits, tax credits, financial aid & other benefits to improve their financial security.

### Financial and asset building services

Workshops, classes, one-on-one coaching and access to well-priced financial products and services helps clients improve their household finances & build assets.

### This is an exciting time for Irving Cares!

We're working hard to make sure that every family that comes to Irving Cares is given the best opportunity to succeed and become truly self-sufficient. ♥



### INVEST IN YOURSELF SPOTLIGHTS

**Sylvia's Story** Sylvia had been in Brighter Tomorrows shelter with her four children for several months. She was referred to Irving Cares' Invest In Yourself to assist her with several services needed to get her life back in order. During her time in the program, she used the computer lab to update her résumé, received employment referrals and interviewing skills. Sylvia soon found full-time employment as customer service representative, earning enough to support herself and her children. She continues to work with Coach Flores to improve her daily life.

**Joan's Story** Joan recently moved from Illinois to Irving with her 4 children to make a better life. She attended Invest in Yourself, and like many Irving Cares clients, needs numerous forms of assistance as she journeys toward self-sufficiency. Joan created her goals, prioritizing childcare and education in the nursing field. She was provided a week of food and diapers. Next, she received assistance to attend Arlington Career Institute. She completed Irving Cares' online money management program and received two weeks' of childcare vouchers to help her complete her schooling. She received assistance with work clothes, and food for her entire household. She took a job at Wendy's that allowed Coach to help her look for a job that fit into her schedule. She also received rental assistance during the pay gap, and a referral to the Main Place to provide clothing for children. Joan has started working at Silverado Senior Living Center, moved into her own home, purchased a minivan, and will be able to cover her expenses!

**Gwen Gets a Great Job** Gwen, a former Irving Cares client, called Coach Shelton stating she was laid off, possibly because she was 65 years old. Coach Shelton suggested she attend Invest In Yourself orientation, and they agreed to meet weekly to set initial personal, financial and employment goals. Gwen realized, while writing her goals, that she had never really dealt with her parents' deaths. She was alone, without support from her son or husband. During the next coaching session, Gwen discussed how alone she felt and how she regretted not becoming a nurse. She had a good cry, just needing someone to listen. She was able to review and update her résumé. Gwen felt much better and scheduled another appointment. She was offered an accounting job with a salary of \$45,000 before she could attend! Coach continues to call Gwen to check on her every two weeks.

**Diana's Story** After leaving an abusive relationship, Diana attended an Invest In Yourself workshop to set goals and find employment. Coach Shelton referred her to Metrocare to help with her overwhelming emotions. During the next visit, Diana revealed her sons had agreed to take care of household expenses until she could get on her feet. Coach discussed setting initial goals and as a homework assignment, asked her to give serious thought to her goals-setting. The following coaching session found Diana with a smile on her face, her written goals in hand, and having applied for several jobs. Needing work clothes, she was referred to The Main Place and was excited to get several new pieces of clothing. Now that Diana is much more emotionally stable, we will move forward in helping her reach all of her goals, one by one. To be continued... ♥



**Irving Cares** It's a hand up  
not a handout™

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## Irving Cares

If you are interested in serving on the board, contact Kyle Taylor at [ktaylor@irvingcares.org](mailto:ktaylor@irvingcares.org) or 972-721-9181 x203 for more details.



## *And what a homecoming it was!*

Our Chair, Betsy Freeman Lowe, put on a spectacular evening September 7 at the Irving Convention Center. Over 300 folks attended this year's event, mixing and mingling with friends, shopping the silent auction that was full of unique items, having Homecoming photos taken or a caricature drawn of themselves. There were even homecoming mums!

Guests were ushered into the dining area under the homecoming archway welcoming them into the ballroom.

The stage was graced with a replica of the Irving School Stadium scoreboard made by The Expo Group. Our guests enjoyed a gourmet meal provided by the Convention Center, best short-ribs in town!! As folks enjoyed their dinner, we introduced our new integrated services program, Invest in Yourself. We had a very successful live auction.



Homecoming Queen and King, Stephanie and Tommy Crowley, who have been great advocates for Irving Cares for many years, were crowned.

This wonderful evening was made possible by our generous sponsors, volunteers and guests. Thanks to Nissan Motor Acceptance Corporation for being our presenting sponsor. Thanks to everyone who attended this year's event and who made this night a special night for Irving Cares — and more importantly — a successful night for the families in Irving we serve. ❤



## *Save the Date!*

Mark your calendar for September 20, 2019, the date for next year's The Great Harvest — you won't want to miss it!



Joyce Ejtminowicz and Mary Shelton are attending Share Tank at The Study USA in Irving. Share Tank is a unique opportunity for businesses to collaborate with and support the vital nonprofit work in the Irving Community. These nonprofit services are critical to the economic development of our City and improving the quality of life in our local community.

While learning about other nonprofits, we also benefit from educational information such as demographics and psychology of the 7 Faces of Giving. ❤️

## OUT AND ABOUT IRVING

Irving Cares is out and about all over town sharing our story and showing support! This includes The Irving School Foundation, Irving Police Athletic League Back Pack Program, reading at schools, Trunk or Treat with kiddos at Irving Music Factory, Oak View Baptist Cars Show, and Irving Cares Outreach at Islamic Center of Irving... just to name a few! Plus, developing new partnerships at Texas Roadhouse, Lunch & Wax, and Texas Air Systems!



Irving Cares was honored to receive the Keep Irving Beautiful 2018 Civic Organization Award.



## North Texas Giving Day

September 20 was North Texas Giving Day, an online giving day benefiting local nonprofits like Irving Cares. This year was a great success for Irving Cares with a final donation of \$15,500 by 79 donors.

All the donation will help those in need of food, financial assistance, education, and employment. Thanks to all who donated! Your generosity will help many in need and enable Irving Cares to continue to give a hand up, not a hand out. ❤️

# Volunteer Opportunities

Contact Joyce at [joycee@irvingcares.org](mailto:joycee@irvingcares.org)

## Food Pantry

In 4-hour morning or afternoon shifts Monday through Fridays, volunteers prepare client food orders, as well as stock and sort groceries.

Food Drive pick-up drivers are also needed through the holiday season.

## Case Management

Volunteers interview clients one-on-one to help them find the services they need. Hours are Monday–Friday in half-day or full-day shifts. Spanish/English translators are always needed. We provide on-the-job training.

## Administrative

Volunteers support our intake staff by performing information and referral services, creating files, answering phones, preparing letters, performing data entry, and other tasks.

## Our Mission: To provide focused assistance for Irving residents in a financial crisis

We need helpers in the food pantry or warehouse, drivers for food donation and retail food pick ups, and volunteers for case management and intake. On-the-job training.

Contact Joyce at  
[joycee@irvingcares.org](mailto:joycee@irvingcares.org)  
or 972-721-9181 x202



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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