

Our Lady of Tepeyac Grade School News



SUPPORTING FAMILIES



Food Distribution

After the disappointing way school ended last spring for our students and the impact that these unusual times have had on our families, Tepeyac stepped up to support our families in many ways.

Immediately after the closing of schools, Principal Mrs. Krielaart and Our Lady of Tepeyac High School's Principal, launched grab and go meals. School families had the opportunity to pick up boxed meals that included breakfast and lunch servings three times a week. In the weeks to follow, hot meals were added to the food distribution.

More than 900 hot meals were picked up by grateful Tepeyac school families. They received the hot meals while at the same time a small Tepeyac family owned restaurant received support.

Emergency Scholarship

In addition to the food distribution and as a result of unprecedented times in our schools, an Emergency Fund was established with the help of The Big Shoulders Fund. This was set up to help families with tuition assistance, book and registration fees; all made possible by the generosity of Big Shoulders' donors.

This has been an incredible help for our families, costs can quickly add up, particularly when paychecks have been adversely affected due to job loss or reduction in work hours.

RIBBONS ALL AROUND THE CHURCH



With churches at the forefront of reopening their doors, Tepeyac Grade School jumped into action with the help of Sr. Jessi Beck and her fellow Sisters of the Presentation to beautify Our Lady of Tepeyac Church, replacing plain yellow tape with beautiful green ribbon and bows. Over the Labor Day weekend, Mrs. Krielaart had the pleasure of working with the Presentation Sisters to create a safe space where social distancing can be practiced during mass. Together, they measured, cut, and placed ribbons to mark off pews and ends of rows, so it is easy to see where to sit while maintaining safe, social distancing.

It is our goal to continue offering the Tepeyac parish community the school's support. Tepeyac students and families, like many other members of the community, had not stepped foot inside the parish for many months. But thanks to this act of kindness, our students can attend mass knowing that their school helped to beautify the church during these COVID 19 times.

VOLUNTEER IN ACTION: ACE TEACHER



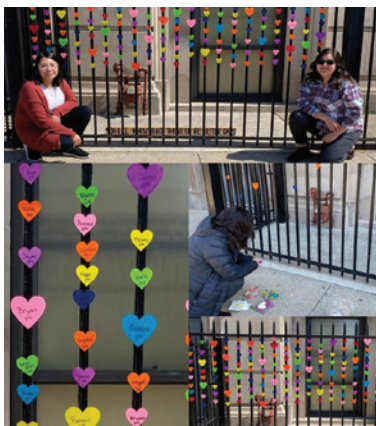
We welcome our new 5th-grade teacher, Ms. Walsh! She comes to Tepeyac from the Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) of Notre Dame University. Ms. Walsh shares a bit of her story.

"I was born and raised in Princeton, New Jersey where I attended Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart from 6th-12th grade. I then attended Boston College for four years and received my Bachelor of Arts in English and Hispanic Studies. I thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from my Catholic education and hope to now give back in any way I can. I am currently in the Alliance For Catholic Education (ACE) program through the University of Notre Dame; after two years as a full-time teacher and full-time student, I will earn my Master of Education.

In my free time, I like to read, listen to music, play guitar, spend time with my friends and family, and watch the newest Netflix series. I am so grateful and excited that ACE placed me at Our Lady of Tepeyac Elementary. I am the 5th-grade homeroom, reading, and religion teacher, as well as the ELA teacher for 5th-8th grades. I am having a lot of fun teaching and getting to know these incredible students, and I look forward to the rest of our year together!"

We look forward to a wonderful year with Ms. Walsh.

TEPEYAC TEACHERS GIVING BACK



Even with Tepeyac students being at home this past summer, our teachers went above and beyond the academics and conducting virtual teaching/learning. Our 8th grade teacher, Mr. Norberto Ramos helped coordinate a memorable 8th grade graduation ceremony in our parking lot. Sr. Jessi Beck helped weekly all summer with food distribution to hundreds of OLT families.

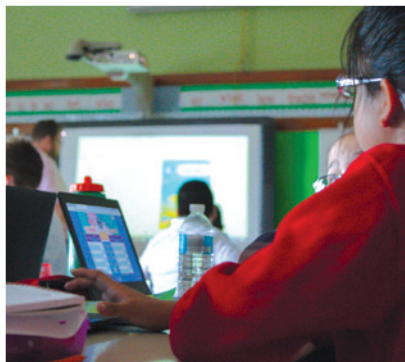
Ms. Betsy Reyes and Ms. Ana Cortes joined the movement Heart Hunters. "People from all over

the country have been placing hearts on their windows along with messages to restore hope in the community during these trying times. So, [we] thought it would be a great idea to be part of this movement.

We created a heart for each student at the school and placed them on the school's gate along with the quote "Oh, I know that there'll be better days" – One Republic. shared Ms. Reyes and Ms. Cortes. This is a great example of how teachers were able to spread positivity and hope amid the pandemic.

Betsy and Ana, both graduates of Our Lady of Tepeyac HS, Knox College and DePaul University respectively, returned to the community to teach, wanting to give back for what they received, both knowing first hand the importance of a Catholic education for first gen students.

CHROMEBOOKS FOR ALL



Our Lady of Tepeyac grade school distributed Chromebooks to all students, using funds from the Cares Act to make sure each student has a device to use either in the classroom or at home, for those remote learners. Technology can go a long way when integrated into the curriculum; those 21st Century Learning Skills are vital for high school success and beyond.

Now, teachers can assign projects, papers, research and assessments using Google Classroom and its complete suite of options. Students can work collaboratively, sharing ideas and peer editing each other's writing. Chromebooks are an excellent tool that augments the great teaching already happening in our classrooms.

SCHOLARSHIPS BRIDGE HOPE FOR TEPEYAC FAMILIES



Our Lady of Tepeyac Grade School is committed to helping each and every family that needs tuition assistance, in the form of a scholarship, so that parents can send their children to a safe, Catholic, academically challenging, strong mission based school. The average Tepeyac family income is \$32,566 for a family of 4; the average rent in the surrounding neighborhoods is \$850 a month, leaving little left to pay for a Catholic school. Many OLT families have multiple children enrolled; discounting the tuition is essential. 93% of the OLT families receive a scholarship.

In these trying times, as more people of color have been adversely affected by COVID 19 and experienced greater job loss or work hours cut, Tepeyac's scholarship program is vital. Foundations, The Big Shoulders Fund, the Sisters of the Resurrection, individual donors and our HOPE Benefit all contribute to the success of the scholarship program. Last year the grade school awarded more than \$300K in scholarships; this year that need is greater. The mission of Tepeyac continues; it is a vital part of Little Village and sends its grads on to strong Catholic high schools or selective enrollment public schools.

SPRING E-LEARNING A SUCCESS



When the State made the announcement that schools would close on March 13th, OLT teachers and students jumped into action to go remote with all of their classes. The teachers and staff rallied around the needs of the students; getting packets ready for the youngest kids, dropping them off at homes if needed, lending out Chromebooks for those families that needed to borrow a device, helping students and parents with connectivity issues, and checking in with each student on a regular basis. Once a week, parents were called to assess how the e-learning was progressing, once in a while finding out that their child was maybe watching a movie versus engaging in class; needless to say the students were back on track rather quickly after those calls home.

Overall, the students did well with e-learning; 90% successfully completed all work; the remaining students were tutored and given more time in June to finish their assignments. Considering the new way of having to do school and the rush to get all the pieces in place, OLT grade school kids stepped up to the challenge and met that challenge head-on, with guidance from teachers and parents. Overall, jumping into March e-learning was good practice for this new school year, and the use of technology.

TEPEYAC IS SO GRATEFUL FOR OUR MANY FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS.

We want to continue to share good news with you. Please help us save trees and update our records by completing and returning the form below. Thank you!

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SAVE THE DATE • 9TH ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT

VIRTUAL HOPE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2020 • 6:30 P.M.

Please visit our website as the details unfold about our **VIRTUAL HOPE** Benefit: tepyacelementary.org

In these difficult times, Tepeyac parents have lost jobs or had hours cut in record numbers. They need your help to afford a safe, Catholic quality education for their children. Please support our students and their families as they only want the best for their children, as all parents do.

For more information, contact:

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HOPE Award recipients Pam Civik and Mary Desmond, long time Volunteer Tutors