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**Friends of Southgate Community Center Looking for**

**Sponsors to Help Reston Families**

***New 501c3 organization supports Southgate Community Center***

***in making a difference in the community***

*Reston, September 2020* – In Reston, one of the wealthiest communities in Northern Virginia with a median income per household of $113k, over 7% of the population still lives below the poverty line. Southgate Community Center (SGCC) is operated by Fairfax County on leased Reston Association land and serves the needs of many of these households. The Center hosts patrons from a wide variety of backgrounds, including many new immigrants to our country with children in school who benefit from federal assistance of free or reduced-price school meals.

Throughout the current pandemic, Southgate Community Center has been providing evening meals for food insecure families to accompany the Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) program of breakfasts and lunches available at nearby Dogwood Elementary School. Many of these households have parents with full time and/or multiple part-time jobs which leads to after school child care needs. During this time of Covid-19, Southgate is currently hosting a School Aged Children’s Center (SACC) program via the County’s Neighborhood Community Services department plus an array of online youth programming created by SGCC management staff, and looks to get back to its previous array of programming with a full complement of SGCC staff when it can do so safely.

Prior to the current pandemic, the Center hosted around 80 elementary school students for after school programming, and approximately 100 summer campers. In the facility, children can access computers to do their homework, find counselors that provide mentorship and support, enjoy sports, and make friends in a safe environment. With a goal of being an inter-generational Community Center, Southgate also provides activities for adults including Zumba, yoga (from Beloved Yoga) and pickleball- at no or low fees for patrons. Although the Center is funded by Fairfax County, some of the program costs and special supplies are not covered – which is why Friends of Southgate Community Center (FoSGCC) was created in 2018.

A 501c3 nonprofit organization, FoSGCC is composed of members from the Southgate Community Center Advisory Council with the goal of raising funds to support the activities of the Center. “Since our inception, we have been able to raise money to purchase items such as enhanced art supplies for summer camps, uniforms for the Center’s youth basketball teams and cheerleading squad, supplies and prizes for the Center’s annual community festivals, and even sweatshirts for the staff,” said Andy Sigle, Former Chair of Southgate Community Center Advisory Council and Founding Chair of FoSGCC. FoSGCC partners with Cornerstones, Reston Association, and Reston Community Center, and is now looking to reach further for sponsors in the business community that want to make a difference and give back. Sponsors can get involved by either donating money or in-kind products or services.

FoSGCC has 15 members of various backgrounds, professions, ages, and ethnicity that reflect the diversity of the community. “The organization brings together a diverse group of wonderfully creative, caring people that just try to make Reston a better place to live, work, and play -- with no other agendas or motives,” states current FoSGCC Chair Jan Bradshaw.

For sponsorship information please contact Gerald S. Padmore at fosgcctreasurer@gmail.com or 571-233-6112.

To learn more about Southgate Community Center and Friends of Southgate Community Center please visit <https://www.southgatecommunitycenter.org>

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