



CASA DEL LAGO

2020/
2021



Annual Report



Grit. Perseverance. Long-suffering. Victory!

These words stand out to me from fiscal year 2021, because our students and staff lived out these qualities every single day. Each one of you reading this report will also have your own stories from last year. The constant threat of sickness, the social isolation, the economic hardship, and the disruption of so many of our most basic routines made 2020-21 a difficult year for all of us. And yet, as I read through this report and reflect on the stories behind the numbers, I am inspired and filled with hope.

I remember one of the moms in the English class I taught last year, who turned a small bedroom closet in her apartment into a classroom. Huddled in the closet, she signed on for each class using a small cell phone. She battled through constant interruptions from children at home and a lousy internet connection that kept dropping out so that she could stay in class and learn a little more English and hear the devotions from God's Word. She kept it up from September to March, and when we finally returned to in-person classes in April, she was there! She took her placement exam in May, did well enough to advance to the next level of English class, and is continuing her study of English at Casa this fall. Grit. Perseverance. Long-suffering. Victory!



There is a victory like that behind each of the numbers in this report. Whether it be the youngest children in the Early Childhood Education program, or the 1st-3rd graders in After School Reading, or the adults in our English and computer literacy classes, each of these students and their families persevered through a very difficult year and found a way to advance. These are victories for the students themselves, certainly, but they are more than that. These are victories in the effort to build a richer, more integrated and more inclusive Dallas. Best of all, these victories are part of God's Word going forward, of Christ being proclaimed, and of our Father's Kingdom coming in Dallas. I hope that you will be encouraged as you read, and I thank you for your support of Casa del Lago!

Grace and peace,
Josh Geiger

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joshua L. Geiger'.

Executive Director





ADULT EDUCATION

From the start of class in the fall until the beginning of April 2021, our English as a Second Language classes on Zoom provided important social interaction for isolated students. Then, starting in April of 2021 we were able to have in-person classes again. This provided a great platform for our new Summer reading class that covered the Gospel of John.

- ESL served 110 students.
- 56% of graduating students advanced a level.



ELEMENTARY LITERACY

Having made a big impact during the summer of 2020 through Summer at the Lake, our After School Reading program was also virtual. Parents report that the program helped their children to grow in their reading abilities and also helped with their "self-esteem," "confidence," and "spiritual support."

- We had 57 children in Summer at the Lake 2020.
- 17 children participated in After School Reading.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

We started out the year virtually and eventually moved to in-person classes. It was a challenge to engage pre-kindergartners virtually, but our staff did a great job under difficult circumstances. By the end of the year, the children showed great progress in the areas we track: math, writing and reading, and social and emotional development.

- ECE served 13 children.
- The majority of children were able to write their name, recognize letters, know the numbers 0-9, and turn pages in a book.

COVID RESPONSE

In response to the economic impacts of the COVID pandemic, Casa del Lago found itself engaging the Bachman Lake community in new ways. One of those ways was in regular food distributions throughout the year working with our partners Brighter Bites and Park Cities Presbyterian Church.



Stories From The Field

From Betsy Araujo- Director of Early Childhood Education

- After several months of lockdown due to COVID, Henry came to Casa del Lago for our Early Childhood Education program. Henry was not used to seeing new people or kids, and seeing strangers caused him anxiety. Henry would come to class and go under the tables or hide behind the doors. Our staff began to work hand in hand with Henry's mother, giving her recommendations to work on at home. She followed all the recommendations and was very consistent in her class attendance. One of the recommendations that we gave her was to start routines at home to help Henry anticipate what will happen next, and make transitions easier for him. By the end of the school year, Henry was arriving ready every day, following the routine and doing all the work in class. Henry worked hard, made progress and really enjoyed class!

From Alyssa Brynsvold- Director of Elementary School Literacy

- Jesús asked if his teachers would stay on the call, because his mom had something that she wanted to say to them. She got on and expressed so much gratitude to the teachers, and to all of Casa del Lago. Jesús' teacher at school says that he has improved so much, and is reading really well. He wants to read all the time! He even found RAZ Kids books that he read in After School on his school computer so he could keep reading them at school as well. His mother was so happy and grateful!

From José Santiago Jorge- ESL Student

- I started here in level 2, and I've now finished level 3. This has been really helpful, as I work in a company where everyone speaks English, and I'm the only one who doesn't speak English. This has been helping me a lot, because now I can communicate with them and them with me. It's been magnificent for me! I discovered Casa because I was walking by and I saw the banner. I hope that Casa del Lago continues helping me and the community that needs it.



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

	Revenue and Contributions	Expenses
Operating Fund	\$521,099	\$576,355
Total Fund*	\$606,099	\$576,355

*Includes non-budgeted program funding

The vast majority of the funds raised to support Casa del Lago come from individual supporters.



EQUIPPING
FAMILIES
AND
CHANGING A
COMMUNITY

Thriving in the Midst of Adversity

How can a community thrive in the midst of great challenge? This is a question that many of us had to wrestle with when the Covid pandemic disrupted daily routines and comfortable rhythms of life. Disruptions to school, work, social activities, sports, and spiritual life impacted the Bachman Lake community with particular severity.



I'm proud and thankful to be able to say that the leadership, staff, volunteers and supporters of Casa del Lago rose to the challenge. It was truly a community and team effort: learning moved online despite lack of warning and constrained resources, community partners used Casa as a touch point for aid distribution, and new friends joined the mission of building stronger families through child, teen, and adult education. And although it required creativity and extra effort, Summer Youth Corps still continued, and the After School Program flourished.

Casa del Lago's answer to the challenges presented by the coronavirus began with daily obedience and extra reliance on the grace and mercy of our Heavenly Father. And it continued with countless hours of inspired service and inspiring leadership from our staff and volunteers, making the fall of 2020 and the first half of 2021 not just a year to remember, but a year to thrive.

Thank you for your support-
we hope to see you at Casa soon!!

Eliot Kerlin Jr.

Chairman

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CASA DEL LAGO

The mission of Casa del Lago is to show the love of Jesus Christ to the Bachman Lake community through early childhood education, elementary school literacy, and adult education.



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