



## 2015-16 Program Year Off to a Great Start

This fall, families in our Parent-Child Education Program (PCEP) began their nine-month classes at our new location, the Allen Early Childhood and STEM Center, located in the former Allen Elementary School on Gonzales St. in East Austin.



AVANCE occupies 5,000 sq. ft. of space allowing the program to create four separate children's classes for the first time in the program's history. Parents also have their own spacious classroom.

Thanks to a generous partnership with AISD and the facilitation of Austin Voices for Education, we are able to deliver our parenting education and early childhood development classes for 300 low-income parents and their children under the age of three in a permanent, centralized location.



AVANCE shares the space with several other agencies including Child Inc. Head Start and Early Head Start, Skill Point Alliance, VELA Families, the Literacy Coalition PALs Program, Urban Roots, EcoRise and several AISD departments like the Parent Support Specialists Team. The list is growing.

The potential for collaboration will bring even more depth to the services our families receive. "We look forward to building a center in our community where families can benefit from a variety of programs and services to help them reach their," says Marie Felan, AVANCE-Austin Executive Director.

During this program year, AVANCE has enhanced its evidence-informed PCEP Program. Teachers are piloting new teaching methods in the Early

Childhood Development class, which AVANCE National Headquarters has developed in collaboration with **Texas A&M University**.

In addition, AVANCE is partnered with **Project HOPEs**, a child abuse prevention coalition, and will offer our families a home visitation curriculum Triple P (Positive Parenting Practices) aimed at increasing the knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents to reduce the prevalence of mental health, emotional, and behavioral problems in children.

As we approach the holidays, families continue to gain confidence and valuable parenting skills while their children achieve important social, emotional, cognitive, and physical milestones that will prepare them for years of school success.



For a tour of the new center, please contact Daphne Glasgow at (512) 414-6125.



## MAYOR STEVEN ADLER AND AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL PROCLAIM AVANCE-AUSTIN DAY

It was a heartwarming moment at City Hall on October 15 when Mayor Steven Adler declared October 22, 2015 as AVANCE-Austin Day during the City Council Meeting. Along with AVANCE staff, parents, Board Member Kathy Vale Castillo, and Mayor Pro-tem Kathie Tovo, 5 year old AVANCE graduate Emiliano Perez presented a toy hobby horse to the Mayor. "[The Program] fundamentally changes the trajectory of children's lives," Mayor Adler announced. AVANCE-Austin appreciates the important support of the City of Austin. Check out our Youtube channel @AVANCEAustin to watch the entire proclamation.

# Marie's Corner

## AVANCE-Austin Board of Directors



Winter is in the air...well sort of. It is Texas after all. Like the sometimes warm temperatures in December, our hearts are warm during the holidays. It's a time to reflect, give thanks, and a time when we reap the seeds we have sown all year and share in their abundance with our family and friends.

Winter is my favorite time of the year, but not just because of the holidays filled with sweet family gatherings. Winter is also my favorite time of the year because that is when a new class of AVANCE families are just settling in to their nine month journeys toward brighter futures. Parents in the class have begun to create special bonds with their fellow classmates. The children, now past the initial shock of being separated from mommy or daddy, are playing with new friends, singing fun songs, and learning new things. I can't think of a more special gift than that of friendship, except the gift of a brighter future.

Your generous support is an investment that yields a lifetime of gifts to AVANCE parents and children as well as the community. The seeds we are sowing together now through AVANCE will reap a harvest of healthy, successful children in the future. I wish you a holiday filled with the gifts of family, friendship, and love.



Marie Felan, **Executive Director**

We are honored to welcome the newest Board of Directors to serve AVANCE-Austin beginning January 2016

**Dawn Lewis**, Austin Partners in Education

**Phillip Martin**, Progress Texas

**Cynthia Miller Rindy**, Rindy Miller Media

**Dr. Stacey Shackelford**, Austin Community College

**Blanca Garcia Zamora**, Casa Blanca Realty

AVANCE-Austin bids farewell and extends heartfelt appreciation to **Barbara Rush** and **John Philip Donisi** for their years of dedication, passion, and commitment to the Board. Mil gracias serving hundreds of families each year under your leadership!

**Rosie Mendoza, CPA**, Board Chair  
R. Mendoza & Company, PC

**Elma Cantú Aldrete**, Vice Chair/Treasurer  
St. Edward's University

**Glo Villarreal**, Secretary  
Consultant

**Hon. Valinda Bolton**  
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**Dr. Stacey Shackelford**  
Austin Community College

**Amber Walker**  
Wells Fargo Bank

**Blanca Garcia Zamora**  
Casa Blanca Realty



# The Future is *NOW* AVANCE Annual Luncheon

On October 22, AVANCE-Austin hosted its annual luncheon at the Four Seasons Hotel. Over 270 guests attended and contributed over \$126,000, with the help of a \$40,000 matching donation from Danna and Crutch Crutchfield, Chris Harte, and Deanna and Jeff Serra.



Longtime advocates of dual generation and early intervention, Balie and Beverly Griffith received the inaugural Griffith Family Legacy Award.

For their partnership and advocacy, Austin ISD, Samsung Austin Semiconductor and Joe Pinnelli each received the AVANCE Heroes Award.

*Balie Griffith accepts the inaugural Griffith Family Legacy Award.*

Executive Director, Marie Felan, shared information about the

work of AVANCE and premiered our new video, "The Future is NOW," which can be viewed at [Austin.avance.org](http://Austin.avance.org).



*Crockett High School's Mariachis de Oro serenaded guests*

Special thanks to our major sponsor



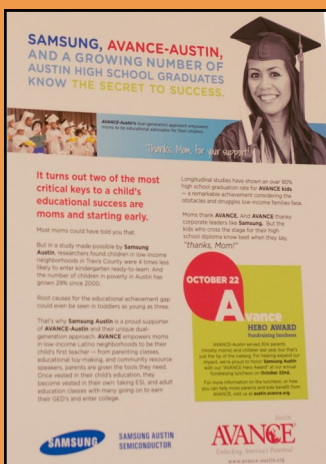
*AVANCE Board and Luncheon honorees. From bottom left: Balie Griffith, Joe Pinnelli, Kathy Vale Castillo, Dulce Ruiz, Catherine Morse, Beverly Griffith, Rosie Mendoza, Dr. Paul Cruz; top row: Barbara Rush, Marie Felan, Elma Cantu-Aldrete, Jo Cassandra Cuevas, Amber Walker, Valinda Bolton, Gloria Villarreal.*



*Mil gracias to Danna and Crutch Crutchfield for their \$25,000 match!*



*(L to R) Hon. Sally Hernandez and Brad Urrutia complete pledge cards.*



*Mil gracias to Samsung Austin Semiconductors for underwriting our Austin Business Journal ad!*

**Additional special thanks to:** Central Health, H-E-B, Superior Health, Wells Fargo, Danna and Crutch Crutchfield, John Donisi and Gina Hinojosa, Janis and Joe Pinnelli, Master of Ceremonies Ron Oliveira, Rindy Miller Media for video production, Kendra Scott for the door prizes, and Crockett High School's Mariachis de Oro.

See more sponsors on page 5

To see more pictures, check out [flickr.com/avanceaustin](http://flickr.com/avanceaustin)

## Volunteer of the Month Kristela Palma

*A Story of Success 15 years later*



*Kristela Palma was a graduate of the AVANCE class of 2000 at three.*

Kristela Palma had just turned three years old when she graduated from AVANCE-Austin 15 years ago with her mother. Her Aunt Nancy Ramirez and cousins also received their AVANCE diplomas in their caps and gowns as they walked across a stage towards a successful future.

Though Kristela was too young to remember much of the details during her time in the toddler classroom, she credits the AVANCE program for her lifelong love of learning, independence, family values, and sense of community service. She is especially inspired by her

aunt and mentor, Nancy, who is now a Parent Educator for AVANCE.

Since September, Kristela has been dedicating her time at AVANCE as a volunteer. She has been a helpful and friendly presence while giving back to young children who are taking their own first steps to success.



*(Left) AVANCE Parenting Educator and former graduate, Nancy Ramirez & Kristela Palma (Right) share a strong bond as aunt and niece.*

At 18 years old, Kristela is a graduate of Manor High School and will be starting college soon.

For additional information about volunteering at AVANCE, contact Claire Hazen at (512) 414-6126 or [chazen.aus@avance.org](mailto:chazen.aus@avance.org)

## Day of Beauty and Thanksgiving for AVANCE Parents



In November, over 100 participants in AVANCE's parenting class had their make up, hair, and photos taken during our annual Day of Beauty, an event dedicated to building confidence and self-esteem of the mothers in our program.

Professional hairstylists and makeup artists from Mobile Spa and Mary Kay volunteered to give make-overs.

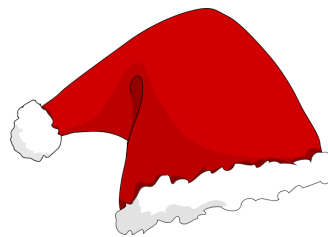


*"I am very grateful for the AVANCE teachers who dedicated their time for making me look and feel beautiful!"*

To celebrate Thanksgiving, HEB donated 5 turkeys and families enjoyed a delicious potluck lunch. All of it would not have

been possible without the help of our wonderful volunteers and staff. Thank you for making this year's Day of Beauty the best one ever!

## Volunteer for the AVANCE-Austin Family Holiday Party



**December 18, 2015  
11:00-2:00  
4900 Gonzales St.  
Austin, TX 78702**

### What is the Holiday Party?

Every year, the families of our program, AVANCE staff and supporters get together to connect over a joyous holiday meal. The party is a way to celebrate together as families with crafts, music and games. Volunteers are a huge part of what makes the event successful, so we invite you to help spread the holiday cheer!

**Interested?  
contact Claire Hazen  
at [chazen.aus@avance.org](mailto:chazen.aus@avance.org) or call  
(512)-414-6126**



## Supporter Spotlight

AVANCE-Austin appreciates gifts from the following supporters who gave \$100 or more from **June 2– Oct 31, 2015** (Any omission is purely accidental. Please give us a call and corrections will be made.)

### Individuals

Emily and Nicholas Albino  
Christee Albino  
Theresa Alvarez  
Coleen Barnett and Daniel Carl  
Rossana Barrios  
Hon. Valinda Bolton and Andy Hathcock  
Suzanne Deal Booth  
Maureen Britton  
Deborah Cartwright  
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Larry Collmann  
Robbie Cooper  
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Dr. Kelly Crook, Del Valle ISD  
Danna and JH "Crutch" Crutchfield  
Jo Cassandra Cuevas  
Valerie and Sam Dunnam  
Amber Elenz  
Elizabeth Faulk  
Marie and Jim Felan  
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Blanca and Alberto Garcia  
Diandra Garibay  
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Terri Sabella  
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Austin Community Foundation  
Central Health  
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Kendra Scott  
The Long Foundation  
MAP Political Communication  
Shield Ayres Foundation  
Topfer Foundation  
Travis County

You can donate online at  
[austin.avance.org](http://austin.avance.org). Thank  
you for your support!



On September 15, Superior HealthPlan posed with AVANCE parents with a check for \$5,000.



Crutch Crutchfield visited in October and delivered a check for the \$25K luncheon match.

## The Future is NOW Luncheon sponsors



Thanks to our special partners

Austin ISD City of Austin Del Valle ISD



## LEGACY GIVING CIRCLE

Becoming a legacy Giving Circle major donor is an investment for the future of hundreds of low-income children under the age of three and their parents. The Legacy Giving Circle provides a sustaining stream of revenue to support our mission and enable the agency to transform, sustain, and scale our programs to address root causes of trans-generational poverty in our communities.

## Giving Levels & Current Members

**Visionaries Circle** A gift of \$25,000 each year for three years is a transformational major gift that will change the trajectory of a child's life.

Danna & J.H. "Crutch" Crutchfield  
Beverly & Balie Griffith  
Stephanie & Steven Griffith

**Catalysts** - a gift of \$10,000 each year for three years will spark impact and social change by investing in the future success of our youngest at-risk children

**Champions for Children** - a gift of \$5,000 each year for three years will champion changes in a family's life that will ensure a positive, healthy, and successful childhood.

**Pathfinders** \$2,500 a year for 3 years

**Building blocks** \$1,200 a year for 3 years

Robbie & Tom Ausley  
Rosie and Richard Mendoza

For more information about becoming a member of our new Legacy Giving Circle, please contact Marie Felan at (512) 841-4686 or [mfelan.aus@avance.org](mailto:mfelan.aus@avance.org)