

**Responding to the Tempest by Doing the Kindness Thing
Network Community of Ministries Service Project**

Nomination for Mamie L. Bass Service Award

June 30, 2020

Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.

P.O. Box 832102

Richardson, TX 75083-2102



District Nine

2019-2020



**MAMIE L. BASS SERVICE AWARD
ENTRY FORM**

District: Nine

Name of Altrusa Club: Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.
Address: P.O. Box 832102
City: Richardson **State/Province:** Texas
Country: USA **Zip/Postal Code:** 75083-2102
Contact Person: Bobbi Klein
Telephone: 972-907-1048 **Email:** raklein77@yahoo.com
Date: June 30, 2020
Club Membership: 86 members (83 renewals + 3 New) & 1 Emeritus

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Project Title: Responding to the Tempest by Doing Kindness Thing

Award Synopsis:

The 2019 tornadoes that damaged the North Texas area brought devastation to the City of Richardson, Texas. With longtime partner Network of Community Ministries designated by the City of Richardson as the Coordinator for Disaster Relief, Altrusa Richardson proudly and proactively made a difference in the lives of many families and children in need.

Selection of the Project

In the initial darkness of the night at 8:58 P.M., on Sunday, October 20, 2019, an EF2 strength tornado began in north Dallas County. The initial path of destruction included a severely damaged strip mall, then a multi-story apartment complex and a commercial building had their roofs ripped. Numerous homes, along with churches and gas stations also sustained heavy damage. Increasing to EF3 strength, the tornado moved northeast heavily damaging schools and residential neighborhoods, downing numerous trees, and causing moderate to significant damage to many houses. The tornado then moved into southwestern Richardson, Texas, the home of Altrusa International of Richardson, TX, Inc.

Two hundred and twelve homes were damaged (seven homes were rendered uninhabitable), a school, and nine apartment complexes also suffered mild to heavy damage, including a complete apartment complex that displaced one hundred ninety-six families. Several businesses – including a car dealership, a Home Depot, three office low-rise buildings and the Texas Instruments campus – suffered damage. In total, the tornado was on the ground for approximately sixteen miles and remained on the ground for thirty-two minutes. The tornado caused about \$1.55 billion in damage, making it the costliest tornado event in Texas history.

Several hundred people in the Richardson Independent School District were left without shelter, having had their homes destroyed. The City of Richardson designated Altrusa Richardson's longtime partner, **NETWORK of Community Ministries**, as the Coordinator for Disaster Relief.

NETWORK of Community Ministries ("NETWORK") is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with its main purpose to assist families in need in residing in the limits of the

Richardson Independent School District, which includes the City of Richardson, Dallas and Garland. Founded in 1985, NETWORK began when several churches and community organizations, including Altrusa Richardson, formed an alliance to assist families in need, thus the name “**NETWORK**” of Community Ministries. NETWORK is a non-denominational, community-based organization serving nearly 9,000 individuals annually, providing over 47,000 units of service. NETWORK relies on its supporters, volunteers, and donations to meet the needs of its clients.

NETWORK immediately called on its resources, donations, and volunteers to help make their response to this disaster possible. Its volunteers worked tirelessly serving the City of Richardson and its surrounding communities. Stepping up to the challenge, they helped over 350 families, mostly apartment dwellers, rebuild their lives and start anew.

Altrusa Richardson has maintained a longtime relationship with NETWORK. One of the founding organizations, Altrusa Richardson has had several members serve on the Board of Directors and currently has ten members, who are regular weekly volunteers.

Development and Implementation

In immediate response to the community call for action the day following the tornado, Altrusa Richardson President, Bobbi Klein, reached out to the City Emergency Management Department to see how we could help. It was suggested that we purchase lunches for some of the Emergency Response Teams. The Altrusa Board immediately granted \$1,000 from its Community Initiative Funds to purchase meals for the workers; and aid NETWORK for disaster relief. Additionally, our president requested a \$1,000 grant from the Altrusa International Foundation Disaster Relief Fund be sent to NETWORK as the Designated Coordinator Disaster Relief agency for the area.

Altrusa spent \$600 to provide lunch for two days, for sixty-five individuals working tirelessly at the Response Center at City Hall and the Service Center at Huffines Park. The remaining \$400 was given to Network for disaster relief. Several committees of Altrusa Richardson united to donate items from various projects for NETWORK to provide aid to all the families looking for relief. Eight Altrusa Richardson members volunteered 45 hours at NETWORK in the special Storm Emergency Food Pantry and the Clothes Closet set up immediately after the storm, to help provide for the families in need after this major disaster that devastated our community.

The Sophomore Sisters Committee (second year members), collected and donated 1,488 pairs of socks and underwear for young children from its Make a Difference Day “Seats & Feets” project. The Committee along with help from 80% of the membership gathered on October 26, 2019, make individual packages, of two pairs of underwear and two pairs of socks, given to NETWORK to help their clients coming for relief. Approximately 230 volunteer hours were contributed to this project.

The Community Outreach Committee decided that instead of the usual toy drive for NETWORK’s Santa’s Toyland, shoes were a greater need. A “Sole to Soul Shoe Drive” provided fifty-two pairs of children’s shoes, plus monetary donations from 65% of our members, were given to NETWORK for desperately needed shoes. Also, the Community Outreach Committee’s annual coat drive brought in seventy-one children’s coats and jackets donated by members to the NETWORK Clothes Closet. A joint food drive of the Community Outreach and Kindness Committees of Altrusa Richardson brought in 875.7 pounds of food with 83% of the membership participating. The need for so many things was much greater this year after the October tornado. Volunteer hours for these projects totaled 186.

Evaluation of the project

Though we will never be able to know exactly how many people were helped through our donations, we estimate that several hundred have benefitted from our various donations of money, food, clothes, shoes and over 500 volunteer hours

Cindy Shafer, CEO of NETWORK of Community Ministries, stated that with the donations from their supporters such as Altrusa, they were able to help 350 families, by distributing household goods, food, clothing, and other necessities. Altrusa Richardson received a letter from Ms. Shafer stating her “gratitude for all the volunteers who gave of their time, donated money, clothing, food, and other items to help our neighbors impacted by the October storms.”.

We know that we were a positive force in response to the October tempest by “doing the kindness thing”.