

President's Annual Report  
Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.  
2021-2022

***“Making Music the Altrusa Way”***

The year started with a simple question, “Why you are an Altrusan?” Well, how do you really answer that? At times, it is not as simple as one might think. Being an Altrusan is a commitment of service and care not only to people in our own community but to people around the world. So, in this spirit, Altrusa Richardson embraced the theme “Making Music the Altrusa Way” and composed pieces of service that were played throughout Richardson, North Texas, and across the world, including Haiti, Mexico, and Kenya. As in all great musical compositions, ideas begin with an inspiration and, from there, the musical notes come together to create a beautiful masterpiece. Our service began in much the same way, and Altrusa International of Richardson played the music of service to both our local community and internationally. Our club knows no boundaries - and that is evident in all of our service projects and all that we have done this past year. This year has been very productive for our club starting with the volunteer hours. We have recorded over 11,024 hours of service. And, this was done while still in the throes of the Covid 19 pandemic. As we continued to navigate a very different and strange world, we still found and practiced the constants of service, care, friendship, and kindness. Altrusa International of Richardson can be very proud of all the accomplishments the club and its committees have made for this 2021-2022 year.

In accordance with the goal of service in the Strategic Plan, “to improve the quality of life in our community”, our service committees were outstanding in their endeavors to make the lives of the people we touch so much better.

***Community Outreach Committee***

The Community Outreach Committee chaired by Gloria Sandoval and Deb Bourland has had a very busy year and achieved many accomplishments. Over 120 notebooks were donated to the Counseling Place; 96 backpacks were distributed to Richardson ISD Bash; 75 sets of crayons, 36 packs of Play-Doh, 288 washable markers and 60 glue sticks were donated to Annie's Place and Mommies in need (which is a drop off daycare facility that provides free childcare options to parents receiving treatment at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, Texas). Additionally, 221 new and gently used coats were collected and donated to Network of Community Ministries for their Fall Coat Drive. Moreover, \$138 worth of auction gifts were donated to Apple Tree Senior Living Facility's Fall Live Auction, and we provided all the volunteers to work the auction, which is always a highlight for the clients. Twenty baskets were filled with Christmas goodies for clients at Hope's Doors Women's Shelter. Altrusans assisted with the set-up of Hope's Doors' Toyland and their Clothes Closet. Altrusans Volunteered to bake delicious cakes and donated them to Friend's Place Cake Walk. Pam Johnson and her spouse walked in the Alzheimer's Walk, which took place in November 2021, and the club made a donation of \$100 to the Alzheimer's Association. Jane Tucker made Bunny Wreaths for the Alzheimer's Association's Spring 2022 event “Some Bunny Loves You”. Members purchased the bunny wreaths at our March 2022 meeting and donated the proceeds to Apple Tree Court Senior Living Facility for Easter decorations. In all, \$440 was raised for the Alzheimer's

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Association as well as bringing much joy to the seniors at Apple Tree Assisted Living facility. The Committee purchased \$150 worth of items for the Apple Tree Senior Living Facility's Spring Live Auction and provided four Altrusans who facilitated the event.

The Outreach Committee assembled 500 emergency food kits, which were delivered to Network of Community Ministries. Network then distributed these kits to Richardson ISD teachers who requested food packets to give to students who have not had a nourishing breakfast. These kits included single-serve packaged snack foods that do not need to be cooked and are kid-friendly, including: granola bars, peanut butter crackers, single serve chips/cookies, and fruit snacks. Ending the year, the Committee donated new towels for the residents of Ark House, which provides low cost temporary housing for out of town patients and their families while undergoing extended medical treatment in the Dallas area. The Committee also donated feminine products and underwear to Network of Community Ministries. And finally, the year concluded with a Mother's Day Tea for both Friend's Place Adult Day Services and Network of Community Ministries. A total of 24 Members assisted with the tea event setup, serving, and clean-up for the clients, who always enjoy this event as one of their favorites.

***International Committee***

In keeping with our endeavors to make the world a better place, our club continues to donate monies to TeacHaiti, Helps International, and Mike's Kids, which sponsored by Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries to aid families in the Texas Rio Grande Valley as well as border towns in nearby Mexico. These non-profits welcome Altrusa Richardson's support, which funds their projects such as sending children to school who would not have an opportunity to go otherwise. These funds help support families with basic needs such as farming equipment and even animals that serve to provide much needed milk and wool for clothing, among other important needs.

***Choose Kind Libraries***

Internationally, we continue to support our Choose Kind Libraries in Haiti, Kenya, and we are starting a new library in Costa Rica. We also have 2 pending libraries in Tanzania and Germany near Ramstein Air Force Base. Each year, we evaluate the needs of our 24 international libraries that we currently support and replenish the supply of books as needed. These projects help poor countries in the direst need. The Choose Kind Libraries that we establish in developing countries put books into the hands of children so they can learn to read as well as use their imagination to visit places they would otherwise never know about. Our club has established and continues to serve Kindness Libraries in elementary schools locally within Richardson ISD. These elementary schools often serve children who are disadvantaged or who have migrated to the United States from other countries and are learning English. The books are chosen by the school's librarians and often include books that are bilingual. We also have

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established libraries at Parkland Hospital and Annie's Place. Choose Kind Libraries continue to be an important service project that our club supports through grants and generous donations.

**Kindness Committee**

The Kindness Committee, chaired by Sue McElveen, arduously worked throughout the year to implement and complete our Annual Kindness Event held on Saturday April 2, 2022. Altrusa Kindness Action Ninjas came together for a special day of service to help agencies both locally and internationally. Once again, the international project, **Days for Girls**, finished the event with 550 washable and reusable sanitary napkin kits for women and girls living in third world countries. Altrusans also assembled 40 Easter-type baskets filled with small, soft blankets, journals and pen sets, hand cream, Chap sticks, and Easter type candies for **New Friends New Life**, a local organization that helps women who have been rescued from trafficking in the North Texas area. Forty (40) Kits for **women veterans** were also prepared and delivered to the V.A. Hospital in Garland. These kits included body wash, deodorants, razors, toothpaste, and a sports bra. To provide support for **homeless vets**, kits containing items such as band aids, iodine, ibuprofen, and lip balm were put into one-gallon zip lock bags along with a new pair of white socks and a note from either Altrusa Members or children from both Yale and Northlake Elementary Schools in the Richardson ISD. Finally, the Membership Committee made special hand-made note cards to simply say “hello”, and “we miss you” as part of our **Member Outreach** for our Altrusa members who have been absent in recent years. In all, a total of 53 Altrusans (93%) participated in this event. We had three Richardson City Council members attend to see the work done by Altrusa Richardson. Librarians from Yale and Northlake Elementary Richardson ISD schools come by to deliver the cards the students made for the Veterans projects. Vanessa Garnica from New Friends New Life stopped by to pick up the 40 baskets that were assembled for her agency. Thanks to Sue's leadership, this Committee did a superb job preparing and coordinating this powerfully, impactful event. In all, 1,230 lives were touched by our 2022 Kindness Event.

*Ability House*

Ability House Committee chaired by Gayle Ingle, helped celebrate birthdays and holidays for the residents of Ability House, a home for adults with Cerebral Palsy supported by Ability Connection Texas. Altrusa Richardson has served Ability House since 1995, and we continue to serve this very special group to this date. This year, residents celebrated with many different themes, games and gifts. Robert, a big Dallas Cowboy fan, was given a Dallas Cowboy themed birthday party. Shelly's was presented with a Fairy Princess theme for her party. Vera's birthday party was met with a Mr. Ed theme, and Kathleen was given a panda themed celebration. Henry's birthday was Batman themed while Nina's party was a country and western theme, which highlighted her favorite performer, Dolly Parton. The Committee celebrated the Fall with a Fall/Halloween party of “Reverse Trick or Treat”, complete with Halloween cookies and fun and games. During the Christmas season, each resident received a Target gift card and

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the house was decorated inside and out with festive decorations that gave the residents a feeling of the magic of the season. The specialty cakes for the birthday and holiday parties were created by our very own, Rosemary Gouger, who is also an outstanding chef. Total hours of service given by the Ability House Committee was 236.

*Sophomore Sisters*

Sophomore Sisters, one of our newer committees formed a few years back to help new members participate and learn more about our club, contributed with their project benefitting Hope's Door New Beginning Center as our club's Make a Difference Day Project. Hope's Door provides services such as counseling and shelter for women and families experiencing domestic violence. The needs are great for this service and the Sophomore Sisters under the guidance of their chair, Nancy Rohm, definitely came together to meet these needs. The committee ordered 24 sets of towels, washcloths, pillows and pillowcases. Then they assembled the sets with a quote card, heart, pillow, pillow case, towel, and washcloth and delivered them to Hope's Door. In addition, the Sophomore Sisters collected and dropped off clothes and volunteered at Hope's Door by tagging the donated clothing, cleaning the store, and sorting clothing at their Resale Store. The committee logged at 58 volunteer hours.

*Scholarship Committee*

The Scholarship Committee important aspect of our club. The committee chaired by Brenda Boston, reached out to Richardson ISD Counselors and, with the help of the RISD communication department, applications and information about our scholarships were distributed via the district's various communication means. Seniors graduating in 2022 and living within the boundaries of the City of Richardson and students attending RISD schools were notified of the scholarship availability. Students eligible to apply are on a path to higher education at a college, university, or vocational school. The committee interviewed 12 outstanding candidates and selected 7 recipients. The students came from varied backgrounds and proved that they could be successful even in the light of adversary circumstances. Each scholarship recipient was awarded \$1,000. This year, the new Jo Leeper Scholarship, which was named in memory of our very own outstanding leader and club member many years, was awarded \$3,000 to one exceptional student. The scholarship recipients were then recognized along with their families and guests at our April Monthly Meeting. Additionally, members of the committee attended the recipients' school's awards ceremonies where the Altrusa Scholarship recipients were again recognized. Congratulations to Brenda and her committee for a job well done.

*Grants Committee*

The Grants Committee, chaired by Janet Vance, accomplished so much after the passing of Courtenay Tanner, who originally chaired the committee. With short notice, Janet graciously stepped in to lead the committee. A total of 10 applications were received from organizations around the area that we serve. Committee members then met and selected the grant recipients.

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and decided to fund all of the applicants. Six of the organizations were funded at the total amount of their request. Four organizations were funded at lesser amounts than requested for a total award of \$9,920. Once the grants were approved by the Foundation Board, each organization received a check. Grants awarded for the 2022 year were – Camp John Marc, Camp Summit, Eisemann Education, Hope's Door, Network or Community Ministries, New Friends - New Life, Richardson Adult Literacy Center, Richardson Reads One Book, and the Richardson Symphony. Altrusa Richardson Grants help these organizations fund projects that serve our community. Thank you, Janet, and your committee for your time and diligence in making the decisions regarding allocating funds that serve to enrich our community.

***Communications Committee***

A committee who has been extremely busy keeping us all informed as well as managing all of our technology is the Communications Committee. This committee of 4 Altrusans is responsible for updating web pages, posting events, posting documents, agendas, minutes, and sending club -related emails, and so much more. One of their goals this year was to clean up the database by deleting old outdated files. With new members on the committee and new technology to be learned, they began comprehensive training for all the members of the Communications Team. This committee is so important since they are responsible for posting club committee information, club and board meetings, and service project events. As a result of this dissemination of information, club members are encouraged to participate and attend these events as well as to volunteer. Service events posted during the pandemic helped to promote Altrusa's service during an unprecedented time. Because of these postings, Altrusa Richardson was able to continue to meet community needs. Postings on Facebook, which is shared by our members, spread the news of our continued work. Another important aspect of this team is our newsletter, *Altrusa Tidings*. Articles and photos are submitted by members to publicize projects and events. This hardworking team functions to support any fundraising campaigns that Altrusa undertakes. By using the website, email, and social media, the word gets out to the members as well as the community. Total number of volunteer hours for the Communications Committee is 373, and I can assure you that this total is much more.

***Strategic Planning and Leadership Committee***

The Strategic Planning and Leadership Committee continues to do a tremendous job of creating easy to use spreadsheets that makes reporting our hours and accomplishments more efficient. This committee streamlined the strategic planning process using information provided to them by Committee Chairs. The Plan was updated and then approved by the Administrative Board. Individual Committee Chairs received the blank committee template form to report their volunteer hours and accomplishments. Once the completed reports were received and compiled and processed, the Committee Chairs sent out the Mid-Year and End of Year summary. Volunteer hours totaled 55.

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***Outstanding Woman of Today Committee***

The Outstanding Woman of Today “OWT” (Fundraising) Committee did an exceptional job in bringing back an in-person event that was held at the Richardson Woman’s Club after having to cancel the past OWT luncheon due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This year’s OWT, though scaled down, profited us with over \$30,000 and drew approximately 160 attendees. Most importantly, 17 of Richardson’s first responders were honored as our “Unsung Heroes”. Those honored were from Baylor, Scott & White Hospital, Methodist Richardson, Richardson Police Department, Richardson Fire Department, Network of Community Ministries, and Richardson ISD. Those who attended were very impressed with the venue, and enjoyed a wonderful culinary experience provided by Spice of Life Caterers. We were excited that we experienced a first by selling out of raffle tickets. We had many generous sponsorships of this annual fundraiser, which allows us to fund the many projects that we do over the year to service the needs of our community and beyond.

***Finance Committee***

To help keep our budgets in line we rely heavily on the Finance Committee. This committee keeps our books in balance, and I can assure you that it is no easy task. This committee serves to input budget expectations, sends copy to committee chairs for their approval and then reviews with the incoming President and Board. Total hours for the Finance Committee is 37.

***Meeting Coordination Committee***

Meeting Coordination Committee keeps our meetings running smoothly and ensures our meetings are informative and interesting by hosting informative guest speakers from area non-profits. We heard from Natalie Boyd with Mommies in Need about their growing needs. Richardson’s Asst. Library Director, Vreena Patrick, gave members an overview of ways to use the library effectively. We enjoyed lattes made by Alyx Jones and Natasha Weir from Well Grounded Coffee, making members aware of this company’s outreach programs to help women be successful after serving time in prison. Beka Mullins from Violence Against Women spoke to us about community resources that are available to help women who have suffered from domestic abuse. This committee is also responsible for putting together such events as our February birthday party, the April Scholarship Reception, the OWT 2021 reception, and Incoming Board Installation. This committee is essential in keeping our members updated regarding the many services and organizations in our community who serve those in need. Meeting Coordination logged in 323 hours.

***Membership, Recruitment, and Retention***

Membership Recruitment and Retention reported 32 volunteer hours. The committee sent birthday cards, get well cards, and other “thinking of you” cards to members. Even though some

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events had to be cancelled due to Covid and as the pandemic began to slow down Membership, Recruitment and Retention once again began to bring back many of the projects and events that we have enjoyed in the past. One of their projects was a part of KAN weekend where cards were signed and then sent to members just to say “we miss you”. The Committee was able to resume Lunch Bunch, our monthly social, that takes place at area restaurants. Members really enjoyed getting together once again – in person. And Altrusa Richardson was very proud to add, orient, initiate and welcome 4 new Altrusans this year.

***“AWCLS” Book Club***

Richardson has contributed significantly to District Nine's “One Book at a Time” International Project by donating over 600 books to this worthy cause. Literacy has always played an important part in our club. Over the years, books have been donated to area schools as well as to the Richardson Public Library book sale. English as Second Language books were donated in December to Mike's Kids in addition to a number of children's books. We continue to add and support our Choose Kind Libraries which have been met with great success. As part of Retention, the Altrusa Wine & Chocolate Literary Society (a.k.a. “AWCLS” Book Club) enjoyed meeting once again in person to read and discuss selected books. Each book of the month was explored by different members of the club who lead the monthly discussion. We were once again able to participate in our community-wide reading program “Richardson Reads One Book” by reviewing the book as well as acting as ushers at the event.

***Convention and Conference***

In July 2021, Altrusa International held its biannual Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. Several of our members were able to make the trek and brought back pertinent information from Altrusa International to our club. In April 2022, District Nine held our Annual Conference in Georgetown, Texas. Fourteen members from our club attended the “Rise and Shine” themed conference. It was great to be able to meet up with old friends from our club as well as other District Nine clubs. We enjoyed hearing presentations from keynote speaker Kent Julian, who spoke on how events can influence our lives and how we can learn to use those to our advantage. Many Altrusans attended and had a great time just visiting and getting to know each other once more. Special thanks to Kimberly Kierce who prepared and submitted the club's overview of our Communications Committee and we were awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Communications Award category.

***In closing...***

When we look back at all the accomplishments that our club has made over the past year, it is overwhelming how much our club gives to the community and others that we serve. We have weathered a pandemic storm and emerged stronger and more confident in what we do. Altrusa's values of patriotism, efficiency, and service continue to guide us through all of our endeavors. While we all may have different answers to the question, “Why are you an

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Altrusan?”, the answer is... because of the dynamic women who give above and beyond to make our community better all the while developing deep and meaningful relationships with all of those whose lives we touch. The 11,024 plus service hours done by the wonderful women in our club speaks volumes to this.

As in any fine musical composition, our club composed a beautiful masterpiece of music that was heard in the hearts and minds of the people we heartened. It has truly been an amazing year full of accomplishments that we thought would never come to realization, but with this club's tenacity and vision, we were chanced with a myriad of possibilities, and brought our dreams and visions to full fruition. You can feel assured that this club will continue to give support and care while “Making Music the Altrusa Way” both now and in the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Samanthia Slaight

2021-2022 Altrusa Richardson President