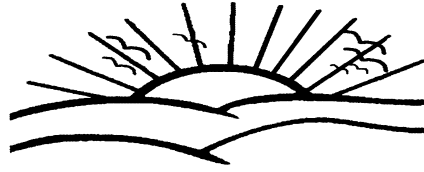


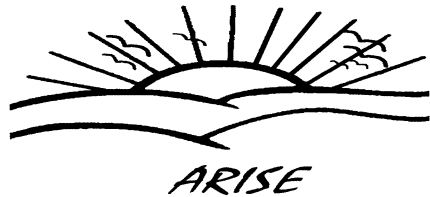
ARISE



Visit us on the web @ www.arisesotex.org
or on Facebook! ~ ARISE (New Era/Nueva Era)
www.facebook.com/pages/Arise-New-Era-Nueva-Era/148053425223818

Summer Program Packet Content

- 1 Letter of Invitation
- 2 Contact Information for ARISE Centers
- 3 Introduction to our Program
- 4 Program Information
- 5 **Frequently Asked Questions**
- 6 What to Bring to ARISE
- 7-8 Weekly Schedule
- 9 Guides and Tips for Children's Activities
- 10-12 Sample Craft and Activities for our Youth
- 13 Our First Task
- 14 Application
- 15 List of Participants
- 16-19 Our Centers



Dear Friends,

ARISE cordially invites you to enjoy this summer with the children and youth of the Rio Grande Valley, Texas. This year will be our 23rd anniversary of this important opportunity for services and cultural exchange. We have enclosed an informational packet to help describe the Summer Volunteer Program – “Un Verano Con ARISE”. Feel free to use the packet of information as needed. (Be sure to provide its contents to your participants before they depart for Texas, as it contains important guidelines and requirements for their participation.)

The 2012 program dates are: June 2 – July 14. This year, our three centers; **ARISE Las Milpas, ARISE South Tower, and ARISE Muñiz**, will be hosting volunteer groups. Please read the information provided to choose a location and date for your experience. The enclosed calendars may help you to plan. Some groups have found that a two week stay provides a fuller and less rushed experience. **Our request is that each group arrive on Saturday and depart the following Saturday.** This will ensure a complete week of activities and time for celebrations at the end of the week. **Note:** For travel plans, Southwest and other airlines fly into Harlingen. Continental and American Airlines fly into McAllen.

We look forward to the creative activities and innovative ideas each group brings to share with the children of our communities. Each group is responsible for planning and providing the materials for a full week of activities for children 3½ – 14 years old. We have enclosed sample crafts and ideas for activities to assist you in coming up with creative ways to engage the children. In addition, groups must have a chaperone/group leader and provide their own transportation to the Valley. ARISE is glad to provide room, board, food, and basic transportation to each group.

As always, feel free to contact us with any concerns or questions before or after you’ve registered. We will send important information and materials for the chaperone/group leader. Meanwhile we hope the enclosed packet will be useful and informative for formation and preparation of your volunteer group. Once again, thank you for your interest in ARISE. We excitedly await your arrival. ☺

Sincerely,

Contact Information

ARISE Support Center

1417 S. Tower Rd.

P.O. Box 778

Alamo, TX 78516

Phone: (956) 783-6959

Fax: (956) 783-0274

E-Mail: arisesotex@arisesotex.org

Contact Person:

Lourdes Flores

*Our central office, the Support Center is best to contact for more information on our three centers, general questions regarding the Summer Program, or to speak to someone in English.

ARISE Las Milpas

125 E. Denny Dr.

Pharr, TX 78577

Phone: (956) 783-9293

Fax: (956) 783-2099

E-Mail: ariselasmilpas@att.net

Contact Persons:

Andrea Olvera, Nasaria García, San
Juanita Martínez

ARISE South Tower

330 W. San Bernardino

Alamo, TX 78516

Phone: (956) 783-8517

Fax: (956) 783-5498

E-Mail: arisesotower@att.net

Contact Persons:

Angelica Nava, Maria Esparza,
Emilia Vega

ARISE Muñiz

3917 Jam Square

Edinburg, TX 78539

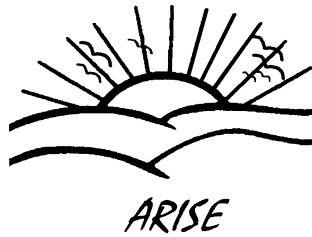
Phone: (956) 782-4041

Fax: (956) 783-6430

E-Mail: arisemuniz@sbcglobal.net

Contact Persons:

Ludivina Escalante, Lourdes Sierra



www.arisesotex.org

Un Verano Con ARISE – ARISE Summer Program

ARISE is a community development program that is run by, for and of the people of each of the three communities it serves. These communities, called "colonias," are economically impoverished, but are working together to improve life for their neighbors and their families.

Each summer, ARISE invites outside volunteers to join our organization in providing six weeks of learning and fun for community youth during their summer vacation from school. Each group works, learns, and reflects together, guided and supported by the community residents and staff of ARISE. In addition, ARISE provides cross-cultural, educational experiences for volunteers to meet with community members and better understand the realities of the border.

Outline of Program

- * Each volunteer session lasts one week (Sat - Sat); additional sessions available.
- * Room and board are provided. Volunteers assist with cooking and cleaning.
- * Volunteers plan and carry out summer activities for children ages 3½ -14.
- * Volunteers choose from 3 ARISE sites available (committing to that site for the week). Sites can also be assigned if there is no preference.
- * Limit of 6-8 volunteers + chaperone per site (larger groups will be harder to accommodate).

Important Goals

- ✓ To support a cross-cultural volunteer effort to serve the children of ARISE communities through creative, social, and educational activities.
- ✓ To foster understanding of different cultures and communication between the volunteers and the community.
- ✓ To develop leadership qualities within volunteers and community youth.
- ✓ To learn and enjoy growing together.

Requirements for Participation

- _ Open to new experiences, different cultures, and the joy of working with children.
- _ Committing to planning and providing for a week (or more) of age appropriate activities for the children of the community.
- _ Being ready to meet and include youth volunteers from the community.
- _ Having and adult chaperone/group leader for each group.

Program Information

Responsibilities of Volunteers

- ☆ Prepare week/daily plan of activities.
- ☆ Bring all necessary supplies for activities. schedule.
- ☆ Work every day with the children.
- ☆ Cooperate & include community volunteers.
- ☆ Cook and clean up after breakfast and evening meals.
- ☆ Behave in accordance with highest values.
- ☆ Provide own transportation to South Texas.
- ☆ Bring own personal items and money.
- ☆ Communicate with staff about needs.
- ☆ Be patient with the different pace of life and the difficulty of communication.
- ☆ Share talents and experiences with the people and community. children of this community.
- ☆ Be flexible and prepared for any changes to the schedule.

Responsibilities of ARISE

- ☺ Prepare all information for volunteers.
- ☺ Coordinate summer, weekly, and daily
- ☺ Encourage/register children to attend program.
- ☺ Enlist youth of the community to volunteer.
- ☺ Organize community to provide lunch.
- ☺ Provide comfortable sleeping and living arrangements for group.
- ☺ Welcome and orient new volunteers.
- ☺ Arrange valuable educational experiences.
- ☺ Provide for the needs of each group.
- ☺ Communicate in both English and Spanish.
- ☺ Share talents and experiences of the
- ☺ Unfortunately, ARISE is not able to cover any personal medical expenses.

🕒 Suggested Timeline for Preparation 🕒

- Jan - Mar
 - ◇ Recruit/Register group with chaperone (application Pg.. 9).
 - ◇ Choose ARISE site or sites. Indicate preference(s) on application, (see Part II for description)
 - ◇ Gather group. Share educational/informational materials from orientation packet.
 - ◇ Begin planning and preparation for children's activities (See guides Pg.. 8)
 - ◇ Contact ARISE regarding any questions or concerns.
- Apr - May
 - ◇ Verify participants and send names to ARISE.
 - ◇ Notify ARISE of final travel arrangements (page 10)
 - ◇ Make final preparations for summer program, prepare all materials needed.

🕒 Group Leader and Arrival/Departure →

- ◆ ARISE requests one chaperone/group leader for every 6 volunteers to be in charge of the group. At least one chaperone is mandatory for every group. If you are unable to find additional chaperones, please call ARISE to discuss alternatives.
- ◆ Because of the community oriented nature of the summer program, ARISE is asking each group to arrive on Saturday in order to receive a complete introduction to each center and community.
- ◆ In addition, ARISE recommends departure for the following Saturday, so that the community and volunteers have time to complete the week's activities, say goodbye, and prepare for the next group.

→ Transportation →

- If your group is flying, ARISE will make arrangements to pick up group(s) at the airport. ARISE will provide basic transportation during the week for all program activities and necessities.
- Additional recreational trips (if decided upon by your group) will not be sponsored by ARISE. You will be responsible for your own transportation.
- If flying into McAllen or Harlingen, ARISE will provide transportation to and from the airport. If driving, you will be responsible for providing your own transportation during the week (with our assistance).

Q & A ☀ Un Verano Con ARISE ☀ FAQs

Where will I sleep? What will I eat?

ARISE provides room and board while you are here. Each group sleeps in the ARISE center where it volunteers. Accommodations, food, and drink are basic, but comfortable and plentiful. The community prepares the midday meal. Your volunteer group is responsible for preparing its own breakfast and dinner. Cleaning up after each meal and the morning is also the group's responsibility. Remember, that your group is living together as a community for a whole week. Sharing, cooperating, and communicating will be important.

☀ What is the weather like?

Hot, Hot, Hot! Be prepared to bring hats, bandanas, sun block, and light breathable clothing. We do not have air conditioning. Also, it can be very dusty when the wind is blowing. At times, there are many mosquitoes.

What should I bring?

Pack light, but adequately. Remember that our work is outside most of the day. Make sure you pack necessities for the sun & outdoors. Wear sturdy shoes (sneakers, sandals with straps). Flip flops are not recommended.

What will I do all day?

Each day you will be working in two sessions of children's activities and an educational activity mid-day. ARISE hopes to provide you with a good mix of work, enjoyment, rest, and reflection.

Will I have any free time?

Free time is limited mostly to after 7 pm. However, there are several engaging recreational and learning activities planned daily.

\$ How much money should I bring?

Money is not necessary. However, you may like to purchase additional snacks, drinks, or souvenirs not provided by ARISE. It is up to each individual volunteer.

If my group is split between centers, will I see the other volunteers in my group?

ARISE will assist in providing time in the evening for the whole group to eat and reflect together.

Will I meet anyone my age?

Yes, each group will be joined by youth volunteers from the community. They will work side by side with you in the children's program, accompany you on field trips, and share reflection and recreational activities.

☆If you have more questions, please ask your group leader to contact ARISE. We will be excited to answer any questions you may have.

What to Bring to ARISE

ARISE Summer Program/Un Verano con ARISE

Please Bring:

- T-shirts
- Shorts
- Tennis Shoes or Sandals with straps
- Pajamas/Clothes to wear to bed
- Nice Outfit (to wear to church)
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Necessary Medications
- Sun Block and Sunglasses ☀
- Hat ☀
- Watch
- Passport or ID/Driver's License
(necessary for identification purposes)
- Emergency Medical Form/Information

Optional:

- Cell phone
- Spanish Dictionary
- Alarm Clock
- Camera
- Spending Money
- Snacks
- Personal Pillow
- Bug Spray
- Photos (to share)
- Personal Water Bottle

* For daily activities, most volunteers prefer to wear t-shirts and shorts. Do not wear clothes that call attention to your bodies. (Bikinis, swimsuits, short shorts, and low cut tops with string straps are **not** acceptable.)

* ARISE will provide bedding and pillows.

Leave at Home:

- Electronics (other than cell phones)
- Expensive Jewelry

ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOL ALLOWED

ARISE Summer Program

Weekly Schedule

Day	Time	Activity	Important Notes
Saturday		Arrival	
		Welcome and Orientation	Meal provided at arrival
Sunday		Tour & Activities in the community	
Morning		Church service in community or at San Juan Basilica.	Dress appropriately
Afternoon		Orientation to ARISE and time with community youth	
Evening		Prepare for week's activities	Get a good night's rest.
Monday			
Morning	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Summer Program Session	Eat breakfast before session begins. Dress appropriately for the sun and activities with the kids.
	11:30 – 1:00	Lunch provided by the community	
Afternoon	1:00 – 3:00 p.m. 4:00-6:00 p.m.	Educational Experience Summer Program Session	Ages of youth in the afternoon program may vary from 6 to 20 years old
Evening	6:30 – 9:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.	Prepare dinner & reflection time BEDTIME—LIGHTS OUT	At Center
Tuesday			
Morning	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Summer Program Session	
Noon – 2:00 p.m.	12:00 – 2:00 p.m.	Lunch with community family	A family invites you to eat lunch at their home. Bring pictures to show.
Afternoon	2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	Educational Experience/Reflection	
	4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Summer Program Session	
Evening	6:30 – 9:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.	Prepare Dinner & Reflection time BEDTIME---LIGHTS OUT	At Center

Day	Time	Activity	Important Notes
Wednesday			
Morning	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Summer Program Session	
A.M. – Mid- Afternoon	11:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Lunch & Educational Trip	
Afternoon	4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Summer Program Session	
Evening	6:30 – 9:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.	Dinner & Reflection Time BEDTIME—LIGHTS OUT	At Center
Thursday			
Morning	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Summer Program Session	
A.M. – Mid- Afternoon	11:30a.m. – 3:30p.m.	Lunch & Educational Trip (optional shopping opportunity)	
Afternoon	4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Summer Program Session	
Evening	7:00 - 9:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.	Dinner & Reflection at ARISE Support Center BEDTIME – Lights Out	Dinner will be provided at Support Center.
Friday			
Morning	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Summer Program Session	
	11:30a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Lunch & Evaluation	
	4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Summer Program Session	
	7:00 p.m.	Farewell Celebration	Dinner will be provided at the fiesta. 😊
Saturday	Departure		

*Schedule subject to change due to weather or circumstances.

**Orientation begins on Saturday of arrival.
Departure is set for the following Saturday.**

Guides and Tips for Children's Activities



These are only suggestions, but please plan age-appropriate activities.

😊 ***Be creative!*** 😊

It will be helpful to divide the whole session into at least two or three sections divided by breaks. Accommodate young children's short attention spans by planning short and varied activities within each section. Remember to incorporate different styles of learning. Children (and adults) can learn by doing, listening, seeing, etc. Organize creative, physical, intellectual, musical, and recreational activities for the children.

- Simplify directions as some children have limited English abilities.
- Language development is important; you can incorporate reading, word games, etc. that are appropriate to the children's levels.
- Physical activities have been a favorite. Plan ahead for best results.
- Have a backup plan in case some activities finish earlier than expected or don't work out as anticipated.
- Be patient and have fun with the youth. Personal attention is important. (Spend individual time with kids that benefit from individualized attention.) Please feel free to break into small groups.
- Don't be afraid to lead each day's activities. You are the leaders for the week.
- Please avoid physically rough games like Red Rover or tackle football. Water games are also discouraged.
- See the following pages for sample craft and activity games to assist you in your planning.

★**NOTE:** ARISE is a community program incorporating people from different customs and religions and works to respect all of them. Please be respectful by keeping activities general, non-sectarian, and all-inclusive.

Sample Crafts for 6-14 year olds

Cascade of Stars (Mobile)

A. Materials Needed:

stars copied onto cardstock	scissors
drinking straws (one per person)	markers
yarn (about 2 ft. per person)	glitter glue
nails (to poke holes in stars)	

B. Preparation: Poke a tiny hole in the center of each star with a nail. (For the 3-5 year olds, cut the stars out in advance.)

C. Procedure: Have the children decorate their stars with markers and glitter glue, then cut the stars out. Cut each straw into 1 1/2" segments (the exact length is not important); you'll need 5 segments of straw per person. Cut a piece of yarn about 2 feet long and tie a thick knot at one end. Thread the smallest star through the other end of the yarn and push it down to the knot. Then thread a segment of drinking straw, and push it down to the small star. Continue threading stars (from smallest to largest) and straw segments. When the last star (the biggest one) has been threaded onto the yarn, tie a large loop at the end. You will hang your mobile from this loop.

Aquarium Paper Plate Diorama Craft

A. Materials Needed:

paper plates (2 per child)	construction paper
scissors	glue
Saran Wrap	thread
markers	

B. Preparation: None needed.

C. Procedures:

Make the Viewing Window: Turn one plate upside down and draw a circle around the base of the plate. Cut around the circle. (You will cut out the entire bottom of the plate, leaving only the edge.) Cover the Viewing Area with plastic: Cut a circle of Saran Wrap slightly larger than the hole in the front plate. Tape the plastic to the *inside* the plate, where the food would normally be.

Now you will work on the bottom plate: Color the background blue (or glue a circle of blue construction paper to the plate). Either draw or cut out construction paper fish, brightly-colored coral, seahorses, starfish, whales, etc. and glue some to the background. Hang others by a short thread from the top of the plate.

To finish the aquarium: Staple or tape the top plate to the back plate, and write your name on the back of the aquarium.

Tissue Paper Flowers

A. Materials Needed: colored tissue paper, scissors, and pipe cleaners (for stems)

B. Preparation: None

C. Procedures: Cut a few pieces (about 4-6) of tissue paper about 8 x 10 inches (the exact size doesn't matter). Stack the paper in a pile and fold it like an accordion. Tie the center of the folded paper with a green pipe cleaner (or twist tie). Gently pull each piece of paper towards the top center of the flower, separating each sheet of paper from the others (forming the petals of the flower).

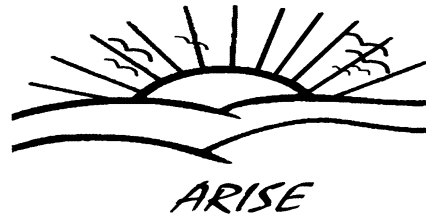
* The children **love** making friendship bracelets with volunteers. ☺

Games

Listed below are some sample games that the children enjoy playing. Please feel free to teach new games or activities and share personal experiences with the children. :)

- Simple card games (i.e. UNO or rummy)
- Puzzles
- BINGO
- **Soccer**
- Four Square
- Tag
- Catch
- Dodgeball
- Hide and Seek
- Traditional Songs and Chants (i.e. Lobo Lobito, El Tiburon)

Un Verano Con ARISE



Our first task in approaching

another people,

another culture,

another religion,

is to take off our shoes,

for the place we are

approaching is Holy.

Else we may find ourselves

treading on another's dream.

More serious still,

We may forget...

that God was there before our arrival.

Application for ARISE Summer Program (Un Verano con ARISE)

Name of Organization: _____
 Group Leader Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Contact Person: _____ Phone (Daytime): _____
 Relation to Group: _____ Phone (Other): _____
 Address: _____ Fax: _____
 _____ E-Mail: _____

Group Leader Names	Relation to Group	Have you participated before?
(1) _____	_____	_____
(2) _____	_____	_____
(3) _____	_____	_____

Number of Participants (in total): _____ Age Range: _____

Preferred Dates (2012)

- (1) June 2 – June 9 (2) June 9 – June 16 (3) June 16 – June 23
- (4) June 23 – June 30 (5) June 30 – July 7 (6) July 7 – July 14

(Note: 1st. date is group's arrival date and last day is departure date.)

ARISE SITES: {1.} Las Milpas {2.} South Tower {3.} Muñiz

Do you plan on flying or driving to the Rio Grande Valley? _____

Has your organization/school participated in this program before? _____ When? _____

What did your students bring back to your school? _____

What do you wish to accomplish this year? _____

I have read and will share with my group the rules, expectations, and responsibilities as explained I the ARISE Summer packet. I understand the commitment we make to the communities of ARISE.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

*** Please fax, mail, or email form as soon as possible to ARISE.**

Our Centers

ARISE Muñiz



ARISE
Las Milpas

ARISE Support Center
ARISE South Tower

ARISE Support Center

The ARISE Support Center has been located in several different places over the years. It was not dependent on geographic location. It has always been more of a concept than anything else and focused on the internal functioning and structures of ARISE. The concept was that as the ARISE model was founded in new colonia communities there would be certain services that each new staff and service center would need to feel supported as it went about forming new staffs, getting to know new communities, identifying assets internal to that community, mobilized those resources, organizing the community and training new staff. The idea was that the Support Center would provide all the support a new staff would need to become another ARISE modeled on the first one. With most of the functions of this Center were passed on to the staff of the new centers as they were ready. This shows ARISE applying internally its guiding principle that states “ARISE does not do for the people what the people can do for themselves.”

Past Programs

Some of the programs of this center over the years are as follows:

- Training of animators for the English Language Development Program
- The creation of new programs such as 'Padres Activos'
- Developing and implementing the ARISE Staff formation program in collaboration with the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC) in San Antonio.
- Creating alliances with strong organizations which would stand with ARISE as it grew up and matured as an organization. Among those are MACC, Intercultural Development and Research Associates (IDRA) of San Antonio, the Sisters of Mercy of the St. Louis Regional Community, The Daughters of Charity, West-Central Region, The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word of Houston.
- Attending to leadership succession by forming a cadre of indigenous leaders who would be ready to be Presidents of the ARISE Centers when the time for that arrived.
- Training and oversight of Bookkeepers.
- Legal paperwork and documents.
- Board Formation
- Fiscal Sustainability

Current Programs

Today, in 2011, almost all of these support functions have been turned over to the staffs of the individual center. The Support center now has its own set of programs.

- Fiscal Sustainability/Grant Writing/Website Construction and Maintenance
- Care of Creation
- Small repairs to substandard homes
- Strengthening the Family Program
- English as a Second Language for Adults
- Financial Management of grant and endowment money, as well as appropriate accountability reviews.
- Service Learning
- Participation in *Voces del Pueblo* Advocacy group.
- Micro Loans
- Space for families to grow vegetables, to raise chickens and goats and benefit from the products.

The Support Center operates with 2 full time staff and 4 part time staff persons. It is finally located in the center of the South Tower colonia community on five acres of land donated by the Sisters of Mercy. They actually donated fifteen acres. Hidalgo County, Precinct 2 together with the local people is developing a community park on the other ten acres.

Center's Special Feature: Care of Creation

A special feature of this Center is its Care of Creation program. This program shows and teaches a number of simple conservation practices such as the use of solar water heaters, various soil enrichment techniques such as composting, mulching, the use of chicken tractors, organic gardening, loofa vines growing up the outer walls of the house and acting as absorbents of some of the intense summer heat, simple water conservation techniques, examples of buildings constructed with alternative building materials, caring for a fruit grove, solar oven, and an adobe earth oven. The product of this program that most benefits the economically poor families who cannot afford electric bills and do not have hot water are the solar water heaters. These water heaters are constructed by the ARISE carpenter in collaboration with the benefiting family and belong to ARISE. In that way they can be rotated onto another family if the initial family does not use them anymore.

A dream for the ARISE Support Center is the success of its Fiscal Sustainability program in setting ARISE on a sound financial foundation that will allow it to stand for years to come. Your tax-deductible donation can be earmarked for this program and will be much appreciated!

ARISE Las Milpas

The ARISE concept of identifying community assets and putting these assets to work in bringing new life to that same community came to light in the Las Milpas area of Pharr in South Texas. This concept was put in motion by Gerrie Naughton, a Sister of Mercy, in 1987. Soon after her initial steps, the birthing process for the ARISE concept was assisted by some young women from the colonia community. The concept that is now ARISE revealed itself step by step as the

people of the community recognized new needs and began to see that there were indeed persons within their own community who had the gifts to assess those needs. The initial need identified by many persons was English as a Second Language (ESL). Soon, Las Milpas women who knew English were taught how to teach the English that they knew to other persons from the neighborhood. Families in the neighborhood who could offer a space (any kind of space) that could be used as a place to meet for the English instruction did so. This plan showed great success and as time went on ESL became the first formal program of ARISE. Soon the people began to talk with each other and realized that they did not have to negate their own cultural practices as soon as they crossed the USA. They wanted Ballet Folklórico for their children. Those classes were provided. As the ARISE children involved themselves in their schools they started asking for Ballet Folklórico there. The schools responded. Today almost every school has Ballet Folklórico for their students.

Soon after, came the Early Childhood program. This program helped children to grow ready to enter the Public school with skills equal to their peers. As other needs were identified there was a response if that was within the capacity of the staff. If the staff did not have the skills to meet a certain need it learned that it could call on another agency with the appropriate skills to help respond to that need. This is how the ARISE Networking program came about. This program was given one staff person to get to know the agencies of the Lower Rio Valley and to invite those agencies into the Las Milpas community to explain those services. This program is **unique** to ARISE Las Milpas. Today that program has grown to become the ARISE Networking and Advocacy program.

By 1994, the ARISE Las Milpas staff had grown to about 14 persons. Programs and activities flourished in the neighborhood. The staff women wanted to bring the ARISE concept to another community so that other women could share the experience they were having. The community chosen was Muñiz.

ARISE Muñiz

ARISE Muñiz was founded in 1995 by a group of four women who were part of the early years of the ARISE Las Milpas Program. By that year the ARISE Las Milpas staff felt that it was so blessed by what it had found with ARISE that they should try to bring this same blessing to families of some other communities. A Habitat for Humanity project was already working in the Muñiz colonia community. The leaders there already knew of ARISE and wanted to bring it to Muñiz as a compliment to their home building effort there. The money just was not there for ARISE to expand to another community. Soon that situation was remedied when the Daughters of Charity, through the initiative of Sister Marcella, provided a grant to ARISE to bring the ARISE Las Milpas model to another community. Muñiz had already invited ARISE to its community. Now ARISE could respond. The ARISE Las Milpas staff released all the single women on their staff to go and establish another ARISE in Muñiz.

On December 12, 1995 the entire ARISE Las Milpas staff went to Muñiz and visited every home there. This date is considered the founding date for ARISE Muñiz. In a short time the four women assigned there made their contacts. Meetings were held in the homes of the community so the people could really know and understand the philosophy that the people must stand up and begin to care for their own community in their own way. Soon one of the Habitat supply sheds was turned into the ARISE Center. There was neither electricity nor a bathroom there. For such needs the ARISE staff turned to the neighbors who were happy to do what they could.

This is how ARISE Muñiz began. Now it is a separately incorporated entity with its own Board, Staff and President. There is a staff of seven women with volunteer time from ARISE Volunteer Corps and program beneficiaries. the programs include English as a Second Language for Children, Coaching for Driver's License, Family days, Parenting skills, Arts and Crafts classes, Staff Development, an annual Summer Program of six weeks which garners the energy of visiting youth volunteers and that of the colonia youth to carry out a very organized and well planned six weeks of fun and learning for the children and youth of the community.

The particular feature of this Center is the Matachine Dancers. They are a group of persons of all ages who hail from the community and gather regularly in the Fall of each year to be ready for the many invitations to dance that they receive in the month of December. The dance reaches deep into the Mexican culture and brings with it a spiritual awakening and a sense of peace and centeredness. During December of each year the dancers receive invitations to at least 12 neighborhoods or posada events to perform.

ARISE South Tower

Somewhere around 1996 the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word of Houston and the leaders of their Health System visited ARISE Las Milpas. They were very impressed with what they saw. The idea that "ARISE" was the women of the community, doing what they could to bring their own community to a new level of development, was very attractive to them. Soon after that visit they offered the money to bring the ARISE model to yet another community. Already, the ARISE Las Milpas staff had selected the South Tower colonia community as one where they would eventually like to see ARISE at work. Two ARISE Las Milpas women were chosen to go to South Tower in 1997. Their charge was to establish a relationship with the people of that community and to ready the way for another ARISE to grow. They did that. As they visited families of the community they kept their eyes and ears open for women who they might invite as staff. They spotted several that seemed to have the heart that they knew ARISE would need.

The home visits and lots of informal association with the people revealed the needs that the people felt in the community. Many of the needs were similar to those heard in Las Milpas. The Las Milpas programs were already created and written down. South Tower was able to borrow the work done by the Las Milpas staff when it was to time implement a program. The original center for ARISE South Tower was a small Toyota truck. Later a small house in the neighborhood was rented. And in 1999 the ARISE South Tower Center was built. Like the other Centers, it is a small and modest building located right in the neighborhood. It might have seemed that ARISE South Tower would be just like the other two ARISE programs. That was not so. There did seem to be a more blatant element of violence and fear in this community. This became a concern for ARISE South Tower.

In 1995, ARISE led the formation of a grassroots advocacy group named Voces del Pueblo (Voices of the People). This group was dedicated to working together with the Hidalgo County Sherff and his Office, the Hidalgo County Commissioner and his office, the Public School System and various other groups to get better police protection, street lights, and safe recreational space for the people of this South Tower community. By 2006, the Sheriff was sending a mobile police substation into the community on a regular basis. In October of 2007, ARISE and the County Commissioner together with a cadre of politicians, other service agency representatives, and the media gathered to celebrate the achievement of a community park there in the center of the South Tower colonia. The ground was broken at around 11AM that day.

While all of the ARISE Centers hold many beliefs, guiding principles, and underlying understandings in common, each is quite different from the other.



www.arisesotex.org