

Life-Long Bonds of Friendship

by Julie Costakis

Years ago, four women shared their first brown-bag lunch in a small, upper level Heritage gymnasium room, preparing Jog-A-Thon packets. Those same four friends, now in their 50s, recently gathered on a January afternoon, still sharing lunches and their hearts. The story of how their bonds of friendship originated is a testament to the unexpected blessings that occur when parents become involved with PTF (Parent Teacher Fellowship).

PTF is an organization of volunteers dedicated to encouraging Heritage faculty, staff, and families. Servant leaders come together to plan and host events that honor God, create opportunities to meet people, serve others, and have fun. The behind-the-scenes volunteer efforts help make the Heritage experience easy to navigate, friendly, and enriching for all.

Current PTF Chair, Lisa Kelley, believes there are many benefits to becoming involved. “What better way to have an influence on your school than to be part of a parent organization supporting school-wide activities! PTF is also a great way to meet people whether you’re new to HCS, or have long been part of the Heritage family.”

Meeting new people is exactly what happened to the four once-strangers, now celebrating 14 years of close friendship and fond Heritage memories.

At the time, the PTF was looking for new volunteers to take on leadership roles. As He often does, the Lord prompted new parents to step forth. Surrounded by dedicated chairpersons, those four women energized a wave of service endeavors and the effects of those efforts positively impact the Heritage community to this day.

Like many PTF volunteers before and after them, the women gave of their time, talents, and resources to serve those impacting student lives at HCS. In harmony and faith, they along with their vice-chairs and teams of volunteers, revitalized fellowship, fundraising, and outreach opportunities.

The surprise for these HCS parents was how rapidly and profoundly valuable friendships formed. Each witnessed the blessings of fellowship and servanthood ripple throughout the school community and within their own families. This unity strengthened every aspect of their Heritage experience, in particular, the powerful and positive impact of parents and school employees coming together in faith.

“Our deep ties formed during those early years serving in PTF, interacting with the children, families, faculty and staff at our beloved school—bind us even closer today,” says Lisa Hall, former PTF Chair. “In the words of Janaé Swan (another former PTF Chair), ‘We are each other’s mat carriers!’” (Luke 5:18-19)

PTF’s intentional focus on prayer, relationship-strengthening and service is appealing to Heritage parents. Might God be prompting your heart to join in? There are many opportunities to serve in a variety of areas including faculty and staff encouragement, family



From left to right: Teresa Sternasty, Lisa Hall, Marcie Douglass, and Janaé Swan in 2017.



From left to right: Teresa Sternasty, Janaé Swan, Marcie Douglass, and Lisa Hall at Jog-A-Thon in 2006.

fellowship or outreach. Volunteers are always appreciated at events like the New Family Picnic, Dad’s Lunch, Worthy Servant’s Brunch, Dad/Daughter Ball, Roller Skate Party, Jog-A-Thon, Faculty/Staff Brunch, and C2O.

You will be warmly welcomed at the next PTF Breakfast Club, Mom’s in Prayer, or Men’s Prayer & Fellowship. Who knows, in a dozen years or so you may be the one gathering with friends met through PTF, reminiscing about the impact Heritage had upon your families, and the differences you made while serving.