



# Heart & Sole

*small steps nurturing center*

Fall 2004

Volume 4

Number 1

## Step On In!

Believe it or not, it's that Back-To-School time of year again! Fifty-seven children from economically at-risk families are again stepping through the doors of Small Steps Nurturing Center. The mission of Small Steps is being lived out each day as the community of staff, teachers, volunteers, Board members, children and families come together for this single purpose. ***Step on in and see the miracles that are happening every day at Small Steps Nurturing Center!***

### Upcoming Events

**October 18**  
Small Steps Energy Classic  
Champions Golf Club &  
Raveneaux Country Club

**November 18**  
Small Steps  
Thanksgiving Feast

**February 24**  
Third Annual Clays Classic

*The mission of Small Steps Nurturing Center is to provide an exemplary early childhood program to instill and foster the social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth of economically at-risk children and their families.*



### Did you know ...

- ***That Small Steps is now accredited by the NAEYC*** (the National Association for the Education of Young Children), a rigorous accrediting body, thus providing an outside “seal of approval” to the outstanding Small Steps’ program. Only 6% of the pre-schools in the City of Houston have qualified for this accreditation.
- ***That Small Steps is getting results!*** Small Steps kindergartners significantly benefited in terms of readiness for elementary school by staying at Small Steps for an additional year (kindergarten). The kindergarten students increased their scores by an average of 21.7% on the Bracken which measured basic skill attainment for kindergarten and first grade in 2003 and 2004, respectively.
- ***That Small Steps’ graduates are being sought out by magnet programs and gifted and talented programs in the HISD system.***

*Hope for children straight from the heart*

1709 DePelchin, Houston, TX 77007

713-862-1020

[www.ssnc.org](http://www.ssnc.org)

## Welcome Evan Harrel!

We want to introduce you to **Evan Harrel**, our new **Executive Director**. Evan comes to Small Steps with a passion and commitment to children and for seeking justice for those who are underserved in the community.

Evan is a native Texan, having grown up in Kingsville, Texas. He graduated cum laude from Princeton University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and received his Masters in Business Administration, with distinction, from Harvard University. Evan spent 16 years in the investment management business in Houston, with Fayez Sarofim & Co., Van Kampen Funds, and most recently with AIM Management. In 2003, he left his position at AIM as a senior portfolio manager of a multi-billion dollar fund to

pursue his passion of working on issues related to housing and education for those in poverty in Houston. In addition to his many volunteer commitments in these areas, Evan recently served as the interim executive director for Houston Habitat for Humanity, and now serves as Chair of the Houston Habitat Board.

Evan is married to Suzette, who is an active volunteer and Board member at Small Steps. They have two children: Will, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at St. John's School and Patrick, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader at Presbyterian School. The Harrels are members at St. John's Presbyterian Church in Houston. In his spare time, Evan enjoys running, biking, doing crossword puzzles and reading.



# Small Steps CLAYS CLASSIC

—2005—

February 24, 2005!!

To register, contact Gayle Pratt at 713-862-1020

## Welcome Precious Parks!

**Precious Parks** is our new **Assistant Program Director**. Precious graduated from the University of Houston with a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies and a minor in Nonprofit Management. She is currently studying for a Masters in Early Childhood Education and Educational Leadership. Precious previously served as an intern at Small Steps, working alongside staff in classroom and administrative projects.



Precious has been married for six years to her husband Donald. She attends Unity Christian Church where she is the Praise Team Director and oversees the various ministries that participate in the worship service.

Singing is her first love. Precious has exercised this gift all over the country in many different settings. In her spare time, Precious enjoys spending time with her husband and friends, reading, shopping and long walks in the park.



# The Sole Purpose

By Kathie Hartzog, Program Director

It is encouraging to point to test scores that demonstrate objectively that Small Steps is making a difference in the lives of its students.

However, there are children at Small Steps for whom we will not see a dramatic increase in IQ scores, or who will not be sought out by HISD magnet and gifted and talented programs.

These are the tough kids, the challenging kids, the kids that no one else wants. These are the kids who spoil the curve on the test score charts.

These are children whose home lives are so fragile that it doesn't take much to be moved from having a home to being homeless. From having a parent at home to having a parent in jail.

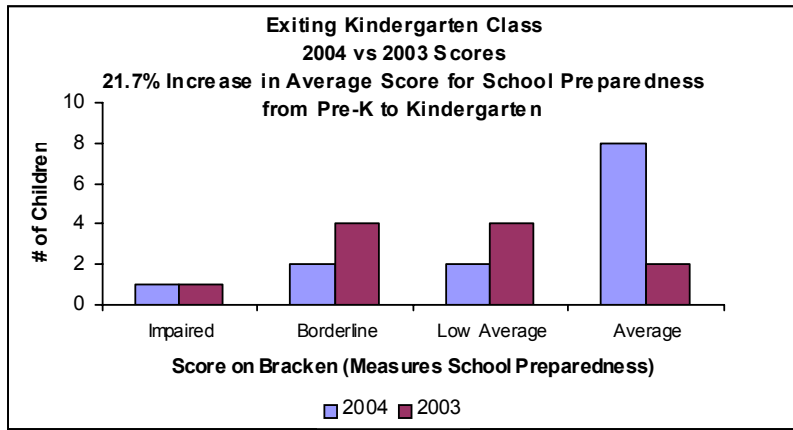
These are the children, along with the "sought after" children and the "high test score" children, for whom we are here to serve.

We love them, we nurture them, we provide them with a place of stability, we feed them, and we pray for them.

We know we are to love them, for this is our calling, our *Sole Purpose*.

## Small Steps Is Getting Results!!

*"Assessments of Small Steps' exiting Kindergarten class this spring revealed that the students' IQ's continue to increase as well as their preparedness to enter elementary school."*



Texas Children's Hospital's Learning Support Center conducted assessments of Small Step kindergartners' cognitive abilities, or "IQ", using the Differential Ability Scale (DAS), and the students' readiness for First Grade using the Bracken Basic Concept Scale. Results of this testing revealed the following:

- Most IQ's are still increasing suggesting that the students are still "catching up" by experiencing a stimulating and nurturing academic environment. TCH commented that these scores should not be "fluid" from one year to the next, and thus, a few point increase can be considered significant.
- Verbal communication ability as measured by the DAS continues to be the area in which Small Steps sees the most improvement in its students. Average verbal scores for the kindergartners increased 8.0% from 2003 to 2004 from 76.69 to 82.77, and average composite (verbal & nonverbal) scores increased 2.6% from 84.54 to 86.77 for the same time period.

### Wish List

- Lunch & Ziploc Bags
- Children's Toothbrushes
- Children's toothpaste
- Boys & Girls underwear size 2-8

- Gently Used Children's clothes size 2T - 7
- Potting soil for Container Garden
- Wheelbarrow
- Guinea Pig Food for 4

- Photo paper for printer
- Polaroid film for Birthdays
- Letter size laminating sheets
- Preschool Books in Spanish
- Watercolors 8 color set
- Bubbles LARGE bottle

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Jackson

# Ninth Annual Small Steps Energy Classic

## October 18, 2004



*Small Steps Energy Classic*

It's not too late to register for the **9<sup>th</sup> Annual Small Steps Energy Classic Golf Tournament** to be held Monday, October 18, 2004 at Champions Golf Club and Raveneaux Country Club!

Of the \$3.4 million the tournament has raised for Small Steps since 1996, 79% has directly benefited the children.

Last year, over 100 corporations, individuals and foundations came together in support of Houston's impoverished inner city children.

### LEADING 2004 ENERGY CLASSIC SPONSORS

*(AS OF PRINTING DATE)*

#### TITLE SPONSOR (\$25,000)

**LOCKTON MARINE & ENERGY**

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### *Did you know ...*

- That Small Steps is a great investment! Considering only direct effects such as lower costs of education and greater tax receipts from higher income taxes, research indicates that there is \$2 societal economic benefit for every \$1 invested in high quality pre-school programs. When you include indirect effects such as the cost of crime, the economic benefit can be as high as \$7 for every \$1 invested.

Barnett, W.S., "Long-term Effects on Cognitive Development and School Success," *Early Care and Education for Children in Poverty: Promises, Programs and Long-Term Results*, W. Steven Barnett and Sarane Spence Boocok, eds. (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), pp.35-37.

- That Small Steps is unique in that it provides a comprehensive program geared to meet the needs of the whole child at no financial cost to the family. All of the program costs are funded by donations from corporations, foundations, churches and individuals.

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