

"It Takes a Village to Raise a Child"



You have heard the adage, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Here at Any Baby Can, you, the Austin “village,” play a huge role in our ability to provide support for fragile families. Let me introduce you to a most inspirational member of our village, Dr. Robert Lewis.

For over a decade, Dr. Lewis has taught at St. Stephens Episcopal School, a prestigious private school in the western suburbs of Austin. His commitment to the Austin community isn’t confined to a five day work week, however. On Saturday mornings, while many Austinites enjoy an early jog or a second cup of coffee, Robert meets students from St. Stephens at Any Baby Can. Here, with his guidance, the students volunteer in our “Family Literacy Learning Center.” We are talking thirteen years of Saturday mornings! During any given Saturday, Robert and his students might work with a mother who is learning to read English, develop vocabulary and pre-literacy skills with an energetic toddler, help a child with their math homework, or provide tutoring for a teen father preparing for his GED exam.

We were thrilled recently to nominate Robert as one of KVUE’s “Five Who Care” award winners for outstanding volunteer service to the community. In his normal humble fashion, Robert turned the tables and reflected on why he is committed to this community. He writes, “We continue to bring our students on Saturdays, year after year, because we see the value for them of being able to give back to others in the setting your organization provides. What happens at Any Baby Can on Saturday mornings is something real, fun and worthwhile. Some of our graduates have themselves gone on to establish volunteer tutorial programs.”

Building the skills of our client population, building character in his student volunteers, building a legacy that will ripple through other communities and other generations, and building bridges from the west to the east side of our Austin village, Robert Lewis clearly sees what it takes to raise a child.

In gratitude to all of you who make our village,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ellen".

Ellen Balthazar
Executive Director
Any Baby Can