

Casa de Amigos Center

WHAT IS CASA DE AMIGOS?

Casa de Amigos is a Christian service center whose mission is to reach the forgotten people of Midland with the Christian message, a helping hand and friendly spirit, the Lord being our help. The Casa is not a give-away center or gripe clinic, but rather a cooperative effort where Anglo, Spanish, and Negro Americans work together toward common goals. This ideal cooperation among three ethnic groups has been slow to develop but has met with limited success.

Building and Facilities

The building that serves as headquarters for most activities is a small, concrete tile, two-room structure, located in the Spanish and Negro section of Midland. Most indoor activities are conducted in one room; the other small room is used for storage of supplies. It is inadequate for the effective execution of our program. Currently three churches are lending space for Casa activities during the summer. Funds are needed for expansion into a larger facility. This need must be met by the interested churches in town if our goals are to be realized.

Director and Program

We have employed a full-time director-counsellor since January, 1967, who must be replaced by September 1, 1968. Elizabeth Sanchez came to us through the United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples of Christ), Indianapolis. She has conducted a fine, comprehensive program for children, youth, and adults, using limited space and volunteer help to best advantage. Recently she has expanded our outreach by cooperation with social agencies such as the YNCA, where better physical facilities are available.

The program this past year has included the following main features: three, four, and five-year-old kindergarten (Midland has no public kindergarten), study groups for first through sixth grade children, boys' and girls' activities clubs, homemaking, crafts, ladies sewing classes, children's recreation, literacy classes for adults, and occasional rummage sales. Chapel and religious training are a regular part of the program. In addition Elizabeth does a good deal of field work in the community, searching out needs of families where Casa might be of help.

The proposed "Summer 1968 Program" includes much of the same. The needs are great, and the response is overwhelming. During Easter week, for example, we held a Vacation Bible School in a nearby church building. The average attendance was about 65, packing the small building to capacity. This summer our director will assist in the local Headstart Program. There will be a Vacation Bible School, and there is hope of providing day care for one to three-year-olds who have little or no parental supervision.

Our long-range program is under study by a committee of the Board of Directors. The new director will also have a hand in program formulation. Our aim is to complement rather than duplicate some of the services already provided by the social service agencies in town. More important, we must fill needs that are unique to the Christian mission of proclaiming the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are hopeful of getting better and more consistent volunteer help to aid our director. A committee is now beginning to function in an effort to challenge all the interested churches to furnish help on a regular basis.

Administration and Finances

Although our director exercises a high degree of autonomy in the operation of the program, the major policy, financial, and other decisions of a general nature are made by the Board of Directors. This group consists of representatives from the participating churches of Midland. The Executive Committee disposes of matters within its jurisdiction as dictated in the bylaws.

Currently the director's annual salary is \$3,600.00. As Casa income improves, the Board plans to increase this figure, provided, of course, the new director proves satisfactory in performance.

Director: Desired Qualifications

The Casa de Amigos Board is urgently seeking a new full-time director to replace Miss Sanchez. A brief description of desired qualifications follows:

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1. First must be loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord and Master.
2. Greatest goal must be to reach others for Him (with emphasis on the Casa parish).
3. Program-planning and group activities ability acquired by education and practice, although field experience is not absolutely necessary.
4. Either man or woman.
5. No denominational restrictions, but must be a member in good standing of the Church.
6. Ability to communicate effectively with children, youth, and adults (in Spanish as well as in English, if possible).