

VICKERY MEADOW COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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This study represents a community needs assessment conducted for Trans.lation Vickery Meadow, a community-based organization in a North Dallas community, Vickery Meadow. Vickery Meadow is a community where refugee resettlement agencies place incoming clients, and therefore, there is a focus on immigrants and refugees in this study. Using theoretical conceptions of development, immigration policy, and the refugee resettlement process, this project measured residential perceptions of Vickery Meadow, the operations of Trans.lation Vickery Meadow, and overall community needs. Also included are perceptions of Trans.lation Vickery Meadow members concerning community needs and the operations of Trans.lation. Recommendations are made based upon research and conclusions from fieldwork.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This paper is a culmination of two semesters of data collection, analysis, and synthesis taken from a community needs assessment done for one community based organization in North Dallas, Texas, called Trans.lation Vickery Meadow. The paper begins with an introduction to the field site, Vickery Meadow, and the topics that arose in the initial stages of the study. Following this section is a list of the research questions that informed the trajectory of the study, along with mention of the limitations to the research presented. Then, a review of existing literature that touches on the topics that relate to the findings of the study is presented, and also the methodologies used for this project, followed by results of data analysis are provided. After these the recommendations for stakeholders and conclusions follow.

### 1.1 Site Description

Vickery Meadow is a collection of 15,500 apartments and 2,300 condominiums located at the intersection of two major highways in North Dallas, Texas. Initially developed as a community for single living in the 1970s, Vickery Meadow now houses a diverse population, including families, with a total of 7000 children. The demographics of the neighborhood have changed since its founding. Once single professionals comprised the population, now it's largely families who work for low-income wages. Because of this high concentration of low wage earning families, organizations in public and private sectors band together to assist in improving the lives of Vickery Meadow residents. Today, the neighborhood receives attention for high criminal activity including drug dealing, prostitution, and violent crime. Attempts have been made to develop the



community in order to combat these rising crime rates. Schools, parks, and organizations were developed that made living in the area easier for families with growing children.

The two census tracts in Vickery Meadow (see neighborhood map in Appendix C) were occupied by 6628 people; men comprised 3601 of the 6628, and women represented the rest (3027). Four age groups made up the majority of Vickery Meadow's population: adults aged 25-29 made up 13% of the population, followed by children under five (11%), adults aged 30-34 (10%), and children ages 5-9 (9%). This directly reflects the family composition of the neighborhood. In terms of ethnicity, almost half of residents of Vickery Meadow were identified in the Latino census category. Most Latino residents (42%) were from Mexico. White residents comprised the second most prominent category at 37%, followed by African Americans at 23%, Asian people at 11%, and 2% Native American or Alaskan Native (US Census Data 2010). It's worth noting that the US Census does not discern between Middle Eastern peoples and Eastern Asian peoples. All these ethnicities are measured in one category – Asian. The 2010 Census also does not include categories of immigrants or refugees, which is the target population of this study. Still, the data is presented here to provide a general picture of the neighborhood.

A City of Dallas transit plan from February 2013 showed a significant increase (10%) in the Asian population since the year 2000, a small increase (2%) in the African American population, and a significant decline in the White and Hispanic populations (15% and 13%, respectively). Income in the area is “lower than the city-wide average,” with the median affordable rent measured at \$811 per month after living expenses are

taken out. The report suggested 22% of households within walking distance of the Park Lane train station make under \$15,000 per year, and only about 10% of households are owned by occupants within a half-mile radius (Vickery Meadow Station Area Plan 2013:14). The area attracts families seeking affordable living (Vickery Meadow Station Area Plan 2013:10).

Vickery Meadow is one of the areas in Dallas that refugee resettlement agencies place incoming clients from around the world. The influx of refugees to the area has diversified Vickery Meadow, thus creating tensions between neighbors of differing ethnic backgrounds and simultaneously diffusing anxieties among those of similar ethnic backgrounds. The neighborhood now faces a clash of cultures and ideologies, which complicates existing criminal activity with cultural conflicts (Vickery Meadow Improvement District 2014, Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation 2014).

According to Texas Health and Human Services, about 4,500 refugees come to Texas every year. Those included in the category of refugees are refugees, asylees, entrants and parolees from Cuba and Haiti, special immigrant visa holders from Iraq and Afghanistan, and certified victims of severe forms of trafficking (THHS 2014). In an e-mail with one administrator at the International Rescue Commission (IRC), one of the refugee resettlement agencies in the area, it was determined that in 2013, about 400 people came to Vickery Meadow through IRC. 43% of those people came from Burma, 27% came from Iraq, 22% came from Bhutan or Nepal, 4% from Iran, and 4% from various African countries. This administrator also indicated that it was likely a similar makeup could apply to the other refugee resettlement agencies in the area (personal communication, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

## 1.2 Refugees and Community Development

Three major refugee resettlement agencies carry out their operations in Vickery Meadow: the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Refugee Services of Texas (RST), and Catholic Charities. These three organizations were recruited through Texas Health and Human Services' Office of Immigration and Refugee Affairs. The THHS OIRA was created in 1991 in response to the US Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. The goals of these organizations are to help refugees obtain economic independence as soon as possible after they arrive in the US (Texas Health and Human Services 2014, Office of Refugee Resettlement 2012).

The assistance refugees receive is threefold and temporary. It includes financial assistance through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF) for eight months; medical assistance through Medicaid for up to eight months; and social assistance for a time depending upon which service is provided. For example, citizenship assistance may continue long after other social service assistance (job skills workshops, English language classes, etc) has expired (Texas Health and Human Services 2014). Often the assistance provided by resettlement agencies is not enough to satisfy the overwhelming needs of incoming refugees. Although the agencies do partner with other community- based organizations in the area their mode of operations does not include helping refugees obtain a sense of community, much less a healthy one.

In this work, a sense of community is defined under the terms identified by Cohen (1985): "the members of a group of people [that] have something in common with one another, which... distinguishes them in a significant way from the members of

other putative groups” (12). This study attempts to take that one step further and suggest that a sense of belonging is essential to obtaining economic independence. This is because a sense of belonging is linked to good mental health, which is necessary for getting a job, and navigating unfamiliar territories. Refugee resettlement agencies do provide mentorship, healthcare, shelter, and English language classes for refugees, but other than the commonality refugees may feel toward other refugees, the agencies do not attempt to foster a sense of community. And yet, this “community sense,” broadly speaking is an important goal to aim for because that which distinguishes them from other groups brings them together, and establishes legitimacy for them in the perspective of outside communities.

Since the demographic shift in Vickery Meadow, local community based organizations (CBOs) have flourished. Efforts by public organizations and private nonprofit organizations collaborate to assist residents in obtaining basic and community needs. These include, but are not limited to public safety, environmental needs, educational needs, and basic human needs (food, shelter, clothing, etc). A list of CBOs operating in Vickery Meadow is too long to present here (see Appendix A), but some of the most recognized include the Vickery Meadow Learning Center (VMLC), where English proficiency classes are taught; the Love is Vickery Ministry, which provides families with job skills and youth outreach programs; and Heart House, which provides youth development services. These organizations partner with the Vickery Meadow Improvement District (VMID), affiliated with City of Dallas’ Office of Economic Development (Dallas Economic Development 2014). The mission of the VMID is to provide community development services to Vickery Meadow in hopes of increasing

community infrastructure to combat rising crime rates, and to elevate the reputation of the community as a whole (Vickery Meadow Improvement District 2014). Also operating in Vickery Meadow is the Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation (VMYDF), whose stated mission is to “make Vickery Meadow a great community and to help its children reach their full potential” (Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation 2014).

Another noteworthy organization operating in Vickery Meadow is the Vickery Coalition Action Team (VCAT). Initially, the VCAT started through the efforts of five agencies, and today over 40 cooperate under the same vision to make Vickery Meadow “a model of quality... living characterized by active community services; neighborly resident relationships; a clean safe, visually-appealing environment; and opportunities to develop individual potential and grow in a positive lifestyle of contentment and contribution” (Vickery Meadow 2014). A list of agencies operating in the Coalition can be found in the appendix of this paper (see Appendix B).

### 1.3 The Client: Translation Vickery Meadow: Background

Translation Vickery Meadow (Translation) was developed in 2013 by Houston-based artist, Rick Lowe, director of Houston’s Project Row Houses. Translation Vickery Meadow is also funded by the Dallas Nasher Sculpture Center’s Nasher XChange program. The Nasher XChange was implemented to promote public artworks in Dallas, and to provide ten artists a venue to implement projects that will be displayed for ten years in the Dallas Metropolitan area. Translation Vickery Meadow “seeks to highlight and translate the cultural diversity of Vickery Meadow as an asset” and “provides residents and the broader community the opportunity to envision Vickery Meadow as a

place conducive for cultural exchange and a model for creative and innovative exchanges between folks of varied and dynamic cultural identities” (Translation Vickery Meadow Facebook Page 2013).

Instances of artistic community-based organizations abound in the United States. For example, In 1981, Tim Rollins, a New York-based artist created the Kids of Survival organization in response to a request from a Bronx area principal to assist in the education of learning-disabled or emotionally at-risk students. Not only was he able to do so, but his contribution helped these students transcend their living situations and come together to create something beautiful. The work produced in “jams,” where one student would read from a literary text and others would create visual art based on their own experiences in relation to the work, was displayed in art galleries around the world (Charles and Emma Frye Free Public Art Museum 2014).

Anthropological literature today uses visual aids as a way to provide participants with a creative outlet to express themselves. One example comes from a community of Latino/Latina students who were asked to tell stories about their academic lives in a workshop. The workshop was put on by two Latina educators and anthropologists who conducted a study which was carried out under the premise that “Challenges to deficit based approaches of Latino/a schooling support the development of culturally relevant teaching practices that include the funds of knowledge of Latino/a families,” and argued “that a digital storytelling praxis can be used as a pedagogical tool to research and transform the educational lives of Latino/a students” (Nuñez-Janes and Re Cruz 2013:1). From this study, one can find evidence toward creativity as a method of empowering students, and through creativity, self-actualization is possible.

Trans.lation has a similar approach. By triangulating artist workshops and markets, White Cube exhibition spaces (see below), and involvement from the artist community outside Vickery Meadow, the organization calls attention to the conditions that exist in the neighborhood while simultaneously showing how art can help people transcend these difficulties, hence the aptly-placed period in Trans.lation. These efforts received city-wide attention in the form of publications, and interest shown by the City of Dallas and the Vickery Meadow Improvement District.

To carry out the organization's mission, Trans.lation instituted artist workshops held two to three times a week from January 2013 to January 2014 where residents created their own artwork, which ranged anywhere from paintings to woven textiles, to jewelry. The artists (residents and often refugees) then sold their work in community markets held monthly from October 2013 to April 2014 in the courtyard of one apartment complex in Vickery Meadow. Market events included free food provided by community members, and performances on a stage in a courtyard outside Trans.lation headquarters. Performances were sometimes musical with dancing and singing represented by multiple ethnicities. Other times, slam poetry and storytelling took center stage. Trans.lation promoted events within the community and also outside to the Dallas art community. True to its mission, market events represented a convergence of many ethnicities, classes, and localities.

In addition to the market events, Trans.lation created three exhibition spaces, called White Cubes, featuring artwork from members of the community and members of Trans.lation. The Cubes allowed artists to display their work in a space of about 100 square (ten by ten) feet at a height of about 15 feet. Work remained in the Cubes from

the time a market event started until the commencement of the next event. Initially the Cubes were open to residents, but after vandalism took place in two of the Cubes after the last market in April, metal doors were put on so that no one could enter them until they were opened for market events.

The demographic makeup of Trans.lation's founding members does not necessarily reflect the demographic makeup of Vickery Meadow, but this is due to the fact that membership is always changing. The demanding nature of working in Trans.lation means that volunteers may become more involved or less involved depending on the time of year, their personal lives, and what the work demands. Founding members are comprised of three African American men, two White women and one White man, one Dominican woman, among others. Many of the founding members live in Vickery Meadow, an aspect that is essential to the function of the organization.

Because membership is always changing the demographic of Trans.lation is always shifting, and is not exclusive to one ethnicity or a set of ethnicities. Prior to the formal implementation of Trans.lation events, one of the founding members went to out talk to members of the community and find out where varying populations were situated, and what the main issues in the community were. The goal from that point on was to reach out to anyone in Vickery Meadow who would listen. And of course, since this organization hopes to be a positive influence in the entire community, refugees and immigrants aren't the only ones who are on the receiving end of outreach. One of the essential members of Trans.lation, the plant man, is an African American man who lived in Vickery Meadow prior to the formation of Trans.lation and is today one of the



organization's vendors. In interviews with Trans.lation members, there was always a discussion about pockets of the neighborhood that did not necessarily include refugees and immigrants. Poverty was a huge issue in discussions, and this is evidenced in the demographic examination above. As far as I understood and saw at community market events, Trans.lation involved everyone within reach. Trans.lation attracted anyone who walked by the event location and had interest.

The general makeup of workshop conductors today is one Muslim Iraqi woman, one Nepali woman, one Mexican woman, and Aztec dancers from Mexico. Vendors include these people, and more. During one market, West African women served food, along with an Iraqi woman, a Jamaican woman, and others. During my time there, Bhutanese boys helped paint a mural on the side of the headquarters, and children from all over the neighborhood helped set up for a market by wrapping multicolored fabric around fence posts and hanging signs expressing ideas of unity and love.

#### 1.4 Research Aims

The goal of this thesis project is to conduct a community needs assessment, which assists Trans.lation in continuing operations more effectively in Vickery Meadow. This research focuses on four refugees and two immigrants who receive services from Trans.lation Vickery Meadow. Also included in the project are four of Trans.lation's founding members. This project is especially relevant in this stage of Trans.lation's development. Shortly after my entry into Trans.lation as a volunteer, talks with the Nasher commenced to see if further funding provided to Trans.lation was appropriate to the Nasher XChange's goals. Today, Trans.lation has been able to relocate headquarters from two apartments to a retail space at the intersection of five major

roads in Vickery Meadow. This project is expected to assist residents by highlighting the issues that refugees and immigrants face in Vickery Meadow and in their daily lives. With Trans.lation's shift toward negotiations with other nonprofits in the area, residents should see more effective service delivery among all cooperators because services are less likely to be duplicated.

### 1.5 Justification

As mentioned above, the mass influx of refugees to Vickery Meadow in recent years has influenced the influx of community based organizations. Refugees who come to the United States are expected to assimilate into American culture as soon as possible, or within the up to eight month period that refugee resettlement agencies provide services for them (Texas Health and Human Services 2014). This is a daunting task, even for the savviest of the people who arrive to the US to live a safer life. Community based organizations and other nonprofits take it upon themselves to provide stability that refugee resettlement agencies do (who are overrun and inundated with incoming cases) in the form of community awareness and togetherness.

Trans.lation Vickery Meadow would be served by a general understanding of which needs are being met by refugee resettlement agencies, and which are not, despite good intentions. This promotes more effective delivery of services among the community as well as a more stable, sustainable organizational structure. With more knowledge of the state of the community as a whole, Trans.lation can continue as a resource in Vickery Meadow, delivering services that are most appropriate for those it serves. Of course, basic services are delivered by the multitude of nonprofit and governmental agencies in the area, but Trans.lation provides those services that can't

be delivered by those focusing on basic needs. Self-actualization and self-confidence building, which is often missing from refugee resettlement agencies' operations, for example, is just one of the many ways Trans.lation uses art and creativity to uplift the community around it.

## 1.6 Research Questions

What are the needs of the Vickery Meadow refugee community as perceived by both members of Trans.lation Vickery Meadow and also the resident refugees Trans.lation serves? This is the aim of the present work. Because refugee resettlement agencies are overworked, where can Trans.lation Vickery Meadow fill in the gaps? With so many refugees from so many parts of the world living in Vickery Meadow, how can Trans.lation facilitate a broader sense of community among seemingly disparate ethnic groups? The answers to these questions arise in the progress of this study.

Based on previous research and experience in the community, there are a few assumptions that deserve examining. Firstly, it is assumed that most people involved in this study are low-income earners or are struggling financially. Secondly, it is assumed that those interviewed have had contact in the past with Trans.lation Vickery Meadow. Finally, it is assumed that more public spaces and more affordable, accessible transportation are a reported need in this study. At this point, it is necessary to point out that just over the highway from Vickery Meadow, there lies one of Dallas' most affluent neighborhoods, full of public space available to its residents, but seemingly inaccessible to Vickery Meadow residents. How is it that public spaces exist for the affluent, and not for the underprivileged?

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 The Refugee Resettlement Process

The resettlement process follows a general trajectory which starts with entrance into the US Resettlement Program (USRP), which places refugees in a voluntary agency (VOLAG) (in this case, the International Rescue Commission (IRC), Refugee Services of Texas (RST), or Catholic Charities). Following this, an approval is granted, and respective VOLAGs help refugees obtain residence, education, and English proficiency classes in the US as well as temporary cash assistance. Social services are also provided, and advice is given about obtaining jobs and eventually economic independence (Eisenhauer *et al.* 2007:142-143).

The new wave of immigrants as Stepick (2006) deems it involves a mass influx of immigrants who are not like those who came to the United States during earlier waves of immigration. Most obviously, they are not European. “Essential” differences are viewed by American citizens in terms of cultural difference, and in my case, these seeming “essential” differences are overridden by Translation’s efforts toward improving the lives of refugees. According to Stepick, acculturation as viewed by refugee resettlement agencies is inextricably linked with material acquisition (2006:393). This requires refugees to understand an economic system that is likely foreign to them. Furthermore, refugees must contend with American citizens who may not appreciate their presence here. As Emily Eisenhauer *et al.* have shown in their study in two counties in Florida, public opinion about what constitutes a refugee versus an asylum seeker is often skewed, and the rate of appreciation for the current influxes of refugees

among American citizens (measured by Eisenhower in a survey administered to two Florida counties) are low (2007:234-235). But this does not stop the 100,000 plus refugees who settle in industrialized nations yearly (Patil, *et al.* 2010:141). Because acculturation is associated with time, English language proficiency, and health indicators, refugees are in a position of comparison between the culture of their home countries and the one they are charged to assimilate to. As Patil points out, “acculturation has come under scrutiny in the migration health literature as it fails to clearly identify or specify the host culture, it does not take into account for cultural resources, and rarely are the limitations imposed by structural factors distilled” (2010:141). Thus, there is conflict over the process of assimilation, which is influenced by policies concerning immigration. Immigration policies affect not only immigrants, but refugees too.

## 2.2 Immigration Policy Overview

One could begin an examination of the history of immigration with the argument that it is the foundation of America. Indeed, the first peoples to colonize what we now know to be America were immigrants seeking religious freedom from European monarchies. Slaves were unwillingly brought here from Africa by colonists who hoped to expand their home country’s empire. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Irish farmers came to Ellis Island in response to the potato blight that wiped out many of their peasant farms. Today, immigrants are a vital part of the US economy. As Ruth Gomberg-Munoz points out in her article about Mexican laborers in Chicago, “undocumented immigrants make especially desirable service workers... and they comprise over 10 percent of the U.S. work force in low end service industries” (2010:298). The same goes for skilled labor.

East Asian people come to the United States to fill positions in the computer engineering industry (among others), and universities all over the country adapted their policies to allow for easier immigrant student entry into academic institutions (Anderson 2012:77-79).

Lower-skilled labor is looked to as undesirable by many US citizens and without the participation of immigrants in the service and manual labor industries many things in the US would fall by the wayside. Because “[cultivating] a reputation as hard workers” – especially among immigrants who fill low-earning positions – expands the amount of immigrants hired into the service industry and because that reputation strengthens ideas about immigrant workers. When immigrants are seen as reliable, dependable, and willing to work for cheap, the value of labor provided by immigrants is greater because it provides a positive reputation for incoming immigrants (Gomberg-Munoz 2010:298). Without the support of immigrant labor, the US economy would suffer, which is why policies toward immigrants would do well to reflect the labor need. Since there is little understanding about the difference between immigrants and refugees, this applies to both categories.

In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement immigration policies took on more inclusive terminology and implementation. But at the moment these more inclusive policies were implemented, previously established programs that helped some immigrants come to America and obtain jobs faded out (for example, the Bracero Program, which made it easier for Mexican immigrants to obtain jobs). The 1970s brought about more exclusive policies, and “long-established flows” of immigrants who were once considered “legal” became “illegal” (Massey 2012). At the same time, media

outlets and politicians opposed to more inclusive policies used polarizing language that referred to the cataclysmic nature of allowing more Latin American immigrants over the border. They were portrayed as antagonists who prompted “defense” from border patrol agents. This so-called “Latino threat narrative” was adopted by many news outlets, and greatly affected the future of immigration policies to come, much less public opinion on the issue (Massey 2012:5-8). Sadly, adopting this speech and even equating immigrants with terrorists was espoused by many politicians. This idea was reflected in the media. At the same time over 15 restrictive policies were passed in the years between 1965 and 2010. As Massey and Massey (2012) insinuate:

[The] causal chain begins with rising undocumented entries, which generate more apprehensions, which are then transformed into a conservative anti-immigrant reaction through the activities of entrepreneurial politicians, ambitious bureaucrats, and elements of the media, and this reaction, in turn, increases the number of Border Patrol agents and the size of the Border Patrol budget which ultimately produce more linewatch hours, which generates more apprehensions (6).

This “feedback loop,” named by economic researchers, creates an environment where immigrants increasingly enter a system designed to keep them out, exclude them from normal society, and push them back to their home countries where the situation is at times unlivable. The implementation of policies like the US Patriot Act of 2001 spurred even more exclusiveness in the immigration sectors of America. At this time, however, immigration was on the decline, which could be attributed to longstanding restrictive policies (Massey 2012:15).

Akin to the Latino threat narrative is the rising phenomenon called Islamophobia. According to a Gallup Poll conducted from 2007 to 2011, Islamophobia existed well before the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, but increased as a result (Gallup

2014). From the poll, one can see that over half of Americans surveyed (52%) believe that the West does not respect Muslims. When asked “Thinking about tensions between the Muslim and Western worlds – do you think they arise more from differences of religion or differences of culture or from conflicts about political interests?” respondents from the United States and Canada reported that a difference of religion was the culprit (36%). In reference to the same chart, if one were to compare the aggregate responses of United States’ and Canada’s respondents with that of the other countries surveyed (Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, and Middle East and North African Nations (MENA)), the data would show a marked difference with reference to the idea that culture has a hand in these conflicts (Gallup 2014). There is a general consensus in the United States and Canada that Muslim peoples are “different” enough culturally and religiously from Americans for conflicts to arise. This is also confirmed in Gema Martín-Muñoz’s article, “Unconscious Islamophobia,” where she states that the “legitimation of monopolar order accompanied by globalisation” were responsible for the view of Islamic culture among Western nations as inherently different and subsequently inferior (2010:25). Because of this view, direct consequences result for Muslims, including but not limited to lack of access to jobs, discrimination in everyday life, more of a likelihood of being victimized in violent crimes, and lack of access to resources that have the potential to make life easier. All of the Iraqi people I spoke to are practicing Muslims. Many experienced difficulty finding and maintaining jobs, and many were afraid to go out too often for fear of direct persecution. Islamophobia is worth examining in the refugee resettlement process.



Previously, conditions in Central America from the 60s to the 80s – conditions created by liberal reforms in US foreign policy – prompted people to come to America in hopes that the environment would be safer (Escobar 1995:3-21). In response to this increase, Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which allowed many more long-term immigrants and farmers obtain naturalization than previously allowed. A few years after this reform was passed, restrictions to the ease of obtaining citizenship were enacted. Reforms limited immigrant access to jobs, public services, and made it easier for apprehensions and deportations to occur for those without papers. These reforms also made it more difficult for already naturalized citizens to bring in their family members in waiting numbers and in finances as well. Today, the feedback loop continues and often reflects the efforts of interest groups rather than the reality at the border (Facchini *et al.* 2011). Facchini *et al.* examine economic drivers for immigration policy among different political groups. Their hypothesis suggests politicians will support more open policies if a) “it increases his/her constituency’s voters’ well-being,” and b) if there are more skilled laborers than unskilled in his or her district (2011:734).

However, Elizabeth F. Cohen suggests the legal language of US Immigration Policy is still rooted in language instituted at the country’s founding, but that the application of temporal algorithms will determine how original US immigration policies are interpreted in today’s light (2011:577, 580). Ethnocentrism reigns in immigration policy, especially when it comes to family reunification. Hwang and Salazar examined the topic and discovered that although recent US immigration policy reforms seem to include reunification as a fundamental aspect, those policies do not necessarily apply to

everyone and are generally sequestered to the size of a nuclear family, which is not a world-wide standard for family size. And as they point out, “siblings and adult children of permanent residents must wait for their relatives to naturalize before they can become eligible” (2010:100, 102). They discovered that desirability of an immigrant’s presence is measured in three ways by policy makers and shifters: “character of the immigrant’s labor (‘skilled’ as opposed to non-existent or exploited labor), his or her role as a taxpayer who rarely uses public benefits (or only uses them), and membership in a nuclear family” (2010:107). These are values reflected in American culture, and are new to immigrants who have just arrived in the US.

Immigrants, who are often subject to policies designed to control their movements and other people involved in policy creation can combat the implementation of policies that degrade the struggles immigrants go through by networking with one another. This is evident in the present study as well (see results). Through this kind of mitigation, relationships with those who create and implement policies (for example, border patrol agents) is established. By communicating and fostering understanding between immigrants and authorities, and among persons involved in policy making and implementation, more of a human element is apparent to those who police the border. This creates a better environment and influences policy for the better for immigrants and refugees alike (Heyman *et al.* 2009: 29).

Immigration law has been discussed by lawmakers in two ways, according to a study conducted by Susan Coutin in 1996. She posits that the dominant accounts come from enforcement oriented and interest-oriented standpoints (Coutin 1996:11-12). She suggests that those in the enforcement-oriented sphere do not examine the laws that

make people “illegal,” but instead focus on the resources lacking to enforce laws that make people “illegal.” Those of the interest-oriented mindset, she suggests, “argue that criminalizing illicit entry and unauthorized sojourn was never intended to prevent these acts but only to render those who perform them more exploitable than native workers and illegal immigrants” (1996:11,12). In the light of this dichotomy, she proposes a third alternative: “to measure the power of immigration law according to its ability to constitute individuals within immigration categories” (1996:14). It is in this vein that I approach immigration policy in a similar mind set, considering the multiple factors that integrate to create conditions immigrants and refugees are subject to. As mentioned before, immigration policy has blanket application to both immigrants and refugees. The only difference is refugees are not subject to US immigration policy until they enter the confines of the country.

Life in the United States turns out to be more than most refugees bargained for. In his article, “The Structural Negligence of US Refugee Resettlement Policy,” Keles points out that in a survey done by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), researchers came to the conclusion that refugees who went through pre-US-departure orientation were not satisfied with the quality of instruction they received. Namely, over half of those surveyed “emphasized the need for English language classes, the importance of realistic work expectations and the limited nature of financial and social assistance available to refugees after resettlement in the US” (2008:6). All of these issues are noted in the results section of this study. It is clear that although intentions among those working in refugee resettlement agencies may be good, policies are implemented in a fashion that is detrimental to incoming refugees. There need to be more explicit

instructions and advice given to refugees concerning what living in the United States is like. Refugees need a full disclosure (or the fullest possible) of what awaits them on the other side in order to arrive at the point refugee resettlement agencies expect them to: full economic independence, and acculturation into American society. Furthermore, the process of resettlement is traumatizing for refugees who have left their homes due to traumas present there (Gonsalves 1992:383). Because of the inherent nature of disruption present in the process, resettlement agencies would benefit from providing more information for refugees, and easing them into the process rather than metaphorically throwing refugees in the deep end and expecting them to swim.

The discrepancies involved in the mass-implementation of policies toward refugees and immigrants, prompts the microcosm of community outreach contains agencies to attempt to remediate issues that arise. One way this is carried out is through community development efforts. The following section outlines the way the term “development” connects with this project.

### 2.3 A Culture of Development

The theme of development relates to this project in three ways: 1) the presence of efforts to develop Vickery Meadow on the part of CBOs and public institutions; 2) the push for refugee assimilation into American life on the part of refugee resettlement agencies; and 3) the development of Trans.lation Vickery Meadow as an effective community-based organization. A discussion of these three sub themes follows.

Arturo Escobar reminds us that it is necessary to understand that certain power factors can and do prevent ease of living among oppressed populations (1995). Refugees and immigrants are an oppressed population. When so many people in a

population have to contend with structural oppression doled out by US immigration policies and general public attitudes toward immigrant and refugee presence, it creates an environment where improvement is on the backburner. The focus is just to get by on a day-to-day basis. Living conditions in Vickery Meadow are not superb, as can be seen in crime statistics (see Figure 2), and also in general observation of poverty in the neighborhood. As of today, the Vickery Meadow Improvement District was established to promote neighborhood safety and beautification. Therefore, Vickery Meadow is in transition toward a more “developed” status (Vickery Meadow Improvement District 2014). While the VMID represents positive efforts to make improvements in the neighborhood, the organization will have to be aware that gentrification is a possible outcome of these efforts. The VMID would do well to avoid this process of gentrification, which would push low-income earners out of the neighborhood. Furthermore, it is possible that organizations like these, “can reproduce inequalities by employing a transnational middle class, also constructing buffers or institutional barriers to local participation” (2010:227). The VMID would also do well to include community members in their decision-making as much as possible to avoid this potential situation.

Acculturation of refugees is another process of development taking place in Vickery Meadow. As Swidler discusses in her article, “Culture in Action,” “Coherent ideologies emerge when new ways of organizing action are being developed. Such ideologies... model new ways to organize action and to structure human communities” (1986:280). This phenomenon can be seen both in the macro-scale mass effort to improve Vickery Meadow as a neighborhood, and also on a smaller scale in the efforts of Translation Vickery Meadow. Many different types of organizations and many

different types of people have banded together under the improvement or development ideology. But as Swidler also mentions, coherent ideologies are also “in active competition with other cultural frameworks” (1986:280). Because of the diversity of efforts under this coherent ideology, differences in agendas are sure to arise, and they certainly already have. For instance, “Immigrants... are said to act in culturally determined ways when they preserve traditional habits in new circumstances” (1986:277). Many of the people I spoke with do maintain the culture of their home countries in language, customs, and overall understanding. This is an obstacle to obtaining coherent ideologies, although highly useful in an individual’s sense of belonging.

Community-based organizations, or CBOs, are a vital part of the improvement efforts in Vickery Meadow. As Wong posits, CBOs increase the social capital of those they serve. Social capital, a term coined by Bourdieu (1986), is defined as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition”(2008:248). Translation Vickery Meadow’s workshops are one area where direct transmission of social capital occurred. In the workshops I witnessed, attendees were given materials to create items that could then be sold in a monthly market. This was another way for attendees to obtain social capital by networking with people who live in Vickery Meadow, as well as with those from outside the community. Social capital is directly responsible for increased social mobility, or increased ease of access and movement to and within social institutions (for instance, in the labor market). Interactions like these create more potential for permanent jobs, and overall promote

community well-being. They thwart the normalized encounters that refugees have with bureaucracy in their everyday interactions with governmental agencies.

## 2.4 Space and Place in Anthropology

Because Trans.lation focuses on the transcendent aspects of workshops, markets, and general interactions between community members of and outside of Vickery Meadow, maybe a fragmented view of the world is no long relevant in communities like Vickery Meadow. As Ferguson and Gupta discuss in their article, “Beyond ‘Culture’: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference,” the “distinctiveness of societies, nations, and cultures is based upon a seemingly unproblematic division of space, on the fact that they occupy ‘naturally’ discontinuous spaces” (1992:6). These discontinuous spaces, although they definitely deserve attention, are not the focus of Trans.lation’s operations.

By focusing on the larger whole, rather than on fragments (economic development, beautification, property management, concentrating on food, health, etc), a more informed compassionate community development is allowed to occur. Because of anthropology’s colonial past, and because a fragmented boundary-oriented view of ethnicities has roots in the imperialist application of boundaries to peoples who did not see things the same way, it’s time to get away from divisions on a community level. It’s time to maintain an awareness of cultural, ethnic, national differences (for they do have their purposes), but focus on what commonalities exist between all human beings. Of course, community efforts in this vein may not satisfy every individual on the receiving end of those efforts. But pinpointing commonalities is a huge step toward improving the greater good, and Trans.lation seems to be on this trajectory.

For those who understand displacement (refugees and immigrants, relocated residents, etc), Trans.lation provides a reclaimed space of self-actualization. Furthermore, workshops and markets organized by Trans.lation transcend the boundaries that caused displacement (ethnicity, nation, income status, citizenship), and also the amorphous and tenuous aspects of life in America without guarantee of citizenship. Uncertainty is removed in the workshops and markets, because all can come together to embrace their separateness from the America around them. American citizens who live outside Vickery Meadow can come to see and learn how life as a refugee is not so desolate as it is often portrayed. This, in turn, brings refugees and immigrants who attend Trans.lation events closer to America outside of Vickery Meadow and catalyzes the “assimilation process”

## 2.5 Advocacy Anthropology

My position in this project is one of student, anthropologist, friend, and volunteer. I have a responsibility to the residents I spoke to who became my friends, and also to the client, with whom I have volunteered for several months prior to this project. Because of these multiple responsibilities, I have to take on the role of advocate for the residents I spoke to when it came to my relationship with Trans.lation.

As Merrill Singer states in his article, “Community-centered Praxis,” “peoples and things are increasingly out of place” in today’s world. There is a “chaos of discontinuity” that moved anthropology beyond categorizing cultures toward examining the tensions that arise between different cultures in this global age (1994:337). I had to contend and overcome the tendency in anthropology to avoid praxis – or put simply, combining theory and practice in an interventionist mindset – and become an advocate for my



friends in both the residential and organizational realms (1994:338-339). This aversion arises, Singer says, because “‘Speaking for’ someone presupposes that one knows who he is,” and in this “chaos of discontinuity” there are no cultural essentials or truths (1994:338). By proposing an alternative to previously established discourses that exist among post-modern anthropology, Singer asserts that “this approach maintains that anthropologists have a responsibility to use their skills to provide critical assistance to those struggling to manifest this right” (1994:341). He affirms the best way to carry out community-centered praxis is to do so through community-based organizations, where knowledge about the community is more complete and where community members can have direct say in the development of the organization (1994:340). Thus was my position in Trans.lation Vickery Meadow.

Indeed, anthropologists have skills that are valuable to continuing a “community dialogue” about the development of organizations in the micro and macrocosms of organizations and communities at large (1994:341). In this role, careful regard to my methodological choices was paramount. My interests were often overridden by the needs of my friends and colleagues. For example, the process of building relationships tempered my assumptions about where my research would go. I initially wanted to do an examination of what factors pushed people to come to the US, but had to exercise discretion in this area because pushing too hard in questioning could disturb someone or at worst, break his or her trust in me. By realizing that “[permission] is granted conditionally, revisited, and re-evaluated on a regular basis,” I was able to exercise flexibility in my work that would not have been present without this realization (Manderson and Wilson 1998: 215). In Nancy Sheper-Hughes’ article, “The Primacy of

the Ethical,” I knew I would have to take a stance that was not neutral, and be a “witness” to the lives of my friends. I would have to look past the “idea of an anthropology without borders... [which] ignores the reality of the very real borders that confront and oppress” the people I spoke with (1995:417). By doing so, and “witnessing,” I was able to link “anthropology to moral philosophy,” and understand that morals I carried coming in to the project would have to be reshaped in light of my findings (1995:419). I also asked questions that prompted narrative responses, further exercising my standpoint as a witness and allowing participants to “[provide] a vicarious experience of events too rich and complicated to be neatly summarized or resolved via a single overriding principle or conclusion” (Vanderstaay 2005:376).

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Preliminary Investigation

Before receiving approval for this project from Translation, I conducted participant observation with the organization to help them plan and set up for market events. I also coordinated with others in the organization to conduct a small assessment through one of the exhibition spaces, or White Cubes which was open during and outside of market events. We wanted to gather community perceptions by posting a few questions in the space and allowing residents to record their responses below. After some deliberation, we decided that the questions would be posted in vinyl appliques in the top six or seven feet of the three walls in the cube. In the remaining space below the questions, we used chalkboard paint to provide a canvas where residents could respond. Chalk was placed on the ground in the White Cube. The three questions asked were

- 1) What do you call your community?
- 2) What is your favorite holiday?
- 3) Is it better to get a job or an education? Why?

There was concern that allowing responses in such free form may promote vandalism, and there were instances of vandalism. But most of the responses were relevant to the questions posted. The temporary nature of the chalk allowed there to be multiple response times. The installment was removed upon the advent of the next market event and replaced by another artist's work. Preliminary investigation time totaled approximately 12 hours. The number of hours spent doing preliminary work was about

three hours per week at a total of 48 hours across the span of time I volunteered with Trans.lation. The total time spent doing participant observation outside of preliminary investigation was about 100 hours.

### 3.2 Ethical Clearance

This project received approval from the University of North Texas' Institutional Review Board and also from Trans.lation Vickery Meadow. Consent was gained from residents and organizational members via a script template provided by UNT's IRB. Trans.lation Vickery Meadow staff and volunteers signed consent forms. Residents gave oral consent. I chose oral consent due to residential concern about forms and seeming "contracts." This was judged to be more appropriate for the project population. In the past, residents have been confronted with contractual agreements that put them in compromising situations. For instance, rent agreements were dealt with through contractual agreements, and residents often faced unsuited living situations as a result. When residents approached apartment management about potential repairs or improvements to the living situation, management would point to the contractual agreement as a form of leverage over residential requests for improvement. After I tried one time to use a signed informed consent form, it became clear that oral consent would be best and most ethical in this research situation.

### 3.3 Data Collection

For this project, the bulk of collection methods sought qualitative data, though this was supplemented by some quantitative data as well (see Figs 1 and 2). I mostly recruited residents who had been actively involved in Trans.lation's past events. Then a gatekeeper was identified from the wider Vickery Meadow community and I used

snowball sampling from that point forward. Each participant lived in Vickery Meadow, and two out of seven were not familiar with Trans.lation due to a break in operations that commenced after the April market event. All residents interviewed identify as refugees or immigrants. Organizational members were chosen based on their stay and involvement in Trans.lation operations. Those who were most present during my time volunteering with Trans.lation were those chosen for this project. Recruitment of organizational members also relied heavily on schedule coordination between members and me. All residential interviews were conducted in the homes of residents. Two organizational interviews took place in members' homes, one took place at a member's workplace, and one in a café.

Two separate interviews were administered to organizational members and residents. Both interviews sought open-ended responses and took about an hour. I conducted 11 interviews; four were done with members of Trans.lation and seven were with residents of Vickery Meadow who were actively involved in the organization's operations. The interview for organizational members contained questions that focused on the purpose and effectiveness of Trans.lation events and services. Also on the Trans.lation member interview were questions about perceived needs of residents in Vickery Meadow as well as identifying potential residential community leaders. Interviews for residents started with a question about the participant's home country and immigration process. This provided a context with which to view each resident's needs. Subsequent sections included questions about the current living situation in Vickery Meadow, and the effectiveness of Trans.lation operations. I administered a survey among the seven residents who participated to collect quantitative and demographic

data. The survey included home country, age, number of members in the household, and what family members do for work.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Microsoft Excel was used for coding qualitative data and also for analysis of quantitative data from surveys. Themes that emerged among multiple participants were pulled from the qualitative data. The most important emergent themes were perceived community needs which were specifically targeted in both interviews. The second most important themes that emerged involved difficulty in the immigration process, and receiving assistance from other refugees and immigrants in the area. Another important theme that emerged was the overall structure of Trans.lation.

### 3.5 Research Limitations

Because of time and resources, limitations to the project arose. For instance, the sample size is very small compared to the population of refugees in Vickery Meadow. Also, using translators could have dampened the responses received, because not all words in Spanish and Arabic directly translate into the English language, and interpreters may have had trouble conveying every emotion and word in the translation process. Two of the Iraqi men I spoke to have a good enough understanding of English that I felt comfortable leaving out a translator in the interview. Finally, my presence could have had some effect on the responses of participants. Interestingly, this did not play out in the way I thought it would. I expected that my position as researcher would create a power differential that would make participants uncomfortable and suspicious of my motives. However, my discomfort in this role was merely my own, and the people I spoke with relaxed easily into the rhythm of the interview. Therefore, it is possible that I

succumbed to the Hawthorne effect, or the potential for those involved in a study to improve behavior under the auspices of a study (McCarney *et al.* 2007). The potential for the dilution of responses due to the above is controlled for by the introduction of informed consent, which helped participants understand that the benefits warranted complete responses. Also connections were made through a gatekeeper with a good reputation in the community, and this garnered the trust necessary to carry out this project.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

I spoke with a total of 11 people (all names have been changed to preserve the confidentiality of participants), four of whom are key members of Trans.lation Vickery Meadow and seven residents of Vickery Meadow. All but two of the residents I spoke to were classified as refugees under the UN's definition: "someone who 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country'" (UNHCR 2014). Man, Jose, and woman, Yvonne, who could not be classified as refugees had immigrated to the United States from Mexico. Four of the residents I spoke with were from Iraq ( $n = 4$ ), one was from Bhutan ( $n = 1$ ), and two were from Mexico ( $n = 2$ ). Three residents were women, and four were men (see Figure 1).

Residents' Nationalities

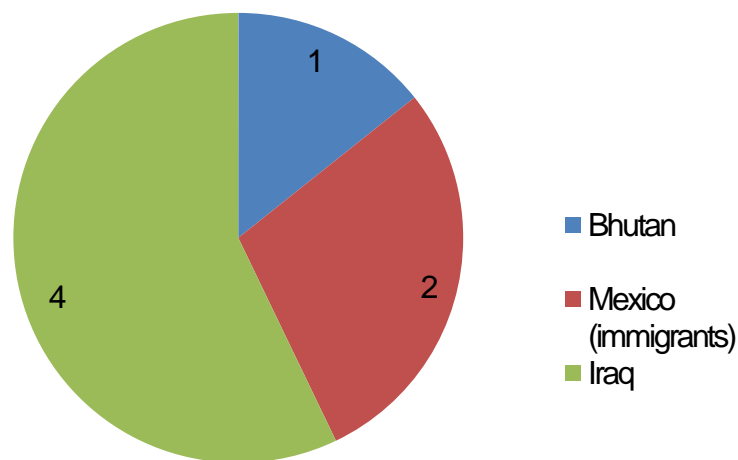


Figure 1: Nationalities of Vickery Meadow residents by number.



The Iraqi men and woman I spoke with were from various areas of Iraq, and came here because of their contribution to the effort to rebuild Iraq after the height of the war in the early 2000s. The men, Abu Salam, Abu Hosay, and Abu Abdullah, all worked in the humanitarian and construction industries that arose because of the structural degradation that resulted from the intense battles of the war. The Iraqi woman I spoke to, Um Abu, is married to a man who worked in the same industry. Because of membership in American and American-allied companies, these people and their families faced intense persecution from those around them that did not appreciate the US's involvement in the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003. If they had stayed, they could have been persecuted by their communities, beaten, or even killed by factions who sought to restore the old power. The Mexican people I spoke to, Jose and Yvonne, came here to find a better life, just like the Iraqi people I spoke to, but I did not get any indication they experienced the direct threat to their lives that the Iraqi people did.

The Bhutanese woman I spoke to, Sonam, had to leave Nepal, where she had emigrated to from Bhutan previously, because of fear of persecution for practicing her religion. Many Bhutanese people had been forcibly relocated to Nepal at the time, and those who were began practicing their own religions again once among those with similar leanings. This upset the Nepalese government, who responded by apprehending, torturing, and even killing the perceived "dissidents." This prompted Sonam and her family to try to come to the United States. Thankfully, they succeeded.

All residents lived in apartment complexes within the confines of Vickery Meadow. The apartments contained one or two bedrooms, and housed from three to six people. The apartments with the most amenities lay along the outskirts of Vickery

Meadow. Abu Salam had the most people living in his household. Residents I spoke with had been in the Vickery Meadow for two months to eight years, and all were between the ages of 33 and 65. Although not every family lived with someone who worked, all those who did work were earning low income working in landscaping (Jose), factories (Um Abu, Abu Salam), and taking on various odd jobs. Of the organizational members I spoke to, all were longtime residents of the DFW Metroplex. Three were women and one was a man.

#### 4.1 Residential Perceptions of Refugee Resettlement Agency Services

Eighty percent of the residents I spoke with who were refugees were not satisfied with the services they received from refugee resettlement agencies. All of those who were receiving services reported problems with their apartments and problems within the apartment complex. Two families had issues with water leaking into their apartments and causing structural damage. One family had their car stolen twice, and another family had issues with someone knocking on their door late at night while they were trying to sleep. All families admitted the area encompassed by Vickery Meadow was not a safe area for families, and crime rates echo this sentiment (see Figure 2). As the chart shows, up to September 2014, there had been 723 reported crimes in Vickery Meadow. The bulk of these reported crimes were theft related. The Dallas Police Department separates crimes into two categories: violent and nonviolent. Violent crimes include murder, aggravated assault, rape, individual robbery (I. Robbery), and business robbery (B. Robbery). Nonviolent crimes include residential burglary (R. Burglary), business burglary (B. Burglary), other theft, theft/shoplift, theft/BMV (burglary motor vehicle), and

UUMV (unauthorized use motor vehicle) (see Figure 2) (Dallas Police Department Crime Reports 2013).

VMID CRIME STATISTICS PART 1 OFFENSES 2014											
MONTH	MURDER	SEXUAL ASSAULT	B. ROBBERY	I. ROBBERY	AG. ASSAULT	B. BURG	R. BURG	BMV	THEFT	UUMV	2014 TOTAL
JANUARY	0	2	1	5	7	1	9	19	41	10	95
FEBRUARY	0	0	0	6	5	0	16	7	29	10	73
MARCH	2	1	0	9	5	0	16	8	27	10	78
APRIL	0	2	0	10	10	3	17	23	41	15	121
MAY	0	1	0	10	11	1	20	3	29	14	89
JUNE	0	0	0	11	9	0	12	9	43	11	95
JULY	0	0	0	10	3	0	21	9	31	9	83
AUGUST	0	0	0	10	5	1	19	14	33	7	89
SEPTEMBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OCTOBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NOVEMBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DECEMBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>723</b>
2013	0	8	8	101	62	27	198	160	320	96	980
Difference	2	-2	-7	-30	-7	-21	-68	-68	-46	-10	-257
% Change	#DIV/0!	-25%	-88%	-30%	-11%	-78%	-34%	-43%	-14%	-10%	-26%

Figure 2: Vickery Meadow improvement district, crime statistics 2014.

Many of the families I spoke with were confused as to why they went from one unsafe area (their home countries) and placed in another unsafe area by refugee resettlement agencies that were supposed to help them get on their feet financially and socially. The goals of these agencies, through Texas Health and Human Services, are to help refugees obtain economic independence and proper assimilation into American life. How can this be when families are scared coming to America, and then scared to leave their homes because of the lack of safety in the areas they live? As one Abu Hosay put it:

So, when you bring us here to unsafe place, this [does] not make sense. Because, for instance, if I stayed in Iraq, I was, you know, working as a manager there and everyone – I [was] getting, you know, 3,500 without any taxes, so I feel, for example, like a good person should choose maybe stay there because staying there, getting money, getting good life, but [it's] unsafe. So, the reason we are coming here, we are looking for safety, right? Safe place. So, putting us... in such

a place, this is unfair and this is not reasonable (personal communication, August 2014).

If refugees stayed in their home countries, they would likely be persecuted, even killed for their position there. For those who came from Iraq, their families faced persecution from their communities after the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003. They did not have jobs after the regime fell, and when American companies and their allies came to Iraq to conduct business there, jobs were available to community members who wanted to help the cause. Many Iraqi refugees who came to this country did so because they assisted American troops in Iraq during the war. This did not bode well with some neighbors who were upset about the fall of the regime and the role the US government and military played in it. Thankfully, the United Nations joined forces with the Government of Iraq and the International Organization for Migration, and teamed up together and worked to find homes for displaced persons in Iraq and also helped find homes for those who faced persecution from those who disagreed with their way of life. All of the Iraqi residents I spoke with came to the refugee resettlement agencies through IOM (International Organization for Migration 2014).

The quality of service was also a point of contention for refugees I spoke with. Abu Hosay has a child with severe medical problems that flared up almost immediately upon entering the United States. When he approached his caseworker to see if the family could be transferred to another state because another family member lived there, they were told they could not be transferred. Not only that, but when he protested indicating that his son's condition made the family's case special, the case manager retorted saying their case was not special and it was just like everyone else's. Regardless of policies implemented by resettlement agencies when it comes to state-to-

state transfers, the issue could have been handled with more couth. No one deserves to feel like those who are supposed to look out for them are not. No one deserves to be told their case is just like everyone else's, and that nothing can be done.

It's possible that instances like these could point to a difference in the cultural models, or the "shared implicit and tacit understandings about how the world works" among each culture (Paolisso 2008:127). Going beyond nationalities, it was evident to me that misunderstandings between clients and their caseworkers occurred because the caseworker felt the need to let clients figure out the situation themselves. This sensibility is exemplified in an instance experienced by Abu Hosay, who needed to get from the hospital to his home to gather some items for his family all in the hospital when his son had to go in immediately upon their arrival to the US. He had been at the hospital with his family for a week since his arrival, and he did not know how to get home. He called his caseworker, and thankfully she was able to send an intern to give him a ride home. When he and the intern arrived at his home, he asked the intern if she could drive him back to the hospital after he showered and gathered the necessary materials and she agreed. However, in the time they were at his home, his caseworker called the intern and told her to let him figure out the public transportation system himself. She was forced by the caseworker, who had significant sway over her job, to come back to the agency instead of assisting Abu Hosay. Thankfully, he found a ride from another Iraqi refugee in the neighborhood. This example shows the differing strategies caseworkers and refugees have in mind when both are navigating the resettlement process. Every refugee I spoke to was able to live in Vickery Meadow more easily because of help from other refugees. The caseworker in this instance (and

others; see below), thought the best way for him to learn about the public transport system was to hop on and figure it out – a tall order for someone who hasn't lived in America for more than a few days (personal communication, August 2014).

Not all residents I spoke with were disgruntled by the quality of the services they received from the refugee resettlement agency they were assigned to. Abu Salam's family was initially placed in an apartment that was in very poor condition. After living in the apartment for some time with electrical problems, bed bugs, and rats the size of rabbits, they spoke with the resettlement agency handling their case. That agency investigated the complaint and because of the investigation does not work with this particular apartment complex anymore. The family was relocated to a much more structurally sound apartment complex.

Finding jobs is the most difficult part of living in Vickery Meadow. Family members who had jobs worked in factories making newspapers or upholstering furniture. They did odd jobs, or landscaping. Some of the people who came here were able to put their children through schools, and some were able to move on to college. Um Abu's family, however, had an issue at her husband's job. He had not been called into work for several weeks with no indication of whether or not he still had a job. Since he assumed he'd been laid off, he was looking for another job. But getting a job as a refugee, especially an Iraqi refugee in America is very difficult. There is a stigma against Middle Easterners here in America, and especially in Texas. Suspicions arise among some employers that potential employees who come from Iraq might be involved in terrorism, or even that business will decline if word gets out that an employee is from the Middle East. From my experience, these suspicions are unfounded. The people who

come here want to work. They want to work hard and provide for their families. They want to make their lives better. Thankfully, there are organizations and services in Vickery Meadow that help alleviate some of this stigma.

Watching interactions between attendees at workshops was an enlightening experience. Although English may not have been the first language spoken, communication flowed quite easily, mostly because the focus was not on speaking. Actions took center stage, and a lack of English proficiency did not deter creative progress. When I first became interested in Trans.lation Vickery Meadow, I was invited to attend a workshop at the old headquarters in an apartment complex. I met with one of the founding members in the nearby parking lot of the Vickery Meadow Learning Center, where many residents of Vickery Meadow went to learn English while their children were in school. After she welcomed me, we entered the workshop where five women, two from Iraq, one from Pakistan, one from Nepal, and one from Eritrea sat around painting on themselves with henna. There was chatter among some of them in Arabic, and some used the workshop as an opportunity to practice English. The most significant feeling I got from the workshop was a sense of togetherness that permeated the space. Despite ethnic differences, these women enjoyed the same activity together and used the space and time to not only practice their skills with henna, but to practice living in America.

#### 4.2 Trans.lation: Building Community

What of the services Trans.lation provides are most effective, and what needs to be changed? 100 percent of residents appreciated the transcendence aspect the most. When I asked what they liked most about the services that Trans.lation provides, was

that it helped gather together all different types of people into one venue to celebrate life, creativity, and global heritage. As one resident, Abu Salam, told me, “they are gathering some people from different countries here in the world. They are bringing people from different countries and... that’s the thing that’s good. And they show their colors, which is nice” (personal communication, July 2014). Residents also enjoyed having access to a space and supplies to with which make items. They enjoyed instructed workshops, and also workshops where they could show up and make whatever they wanted from the available materials. My observations of workshops gave me the sense that women, especially, benefitted from the environment. Iraqi women who were done with responsibilities at home had a safe space to spend time with one another. This was especially so because workshops were run by women, and often women from Iraq, Pakistan, Bhutan, and other places are not accustomed to being in environments that are not stratified by gender.

The residents also suggested some improvements could be made to the services provided, but most of the suggestions involved aspects incorporated in the resource department. One woman needed a red thread, and after some time, the person running the workshop could not find it. In the time that I collected data for this project, Translation was on a hiatus while negotiations for fund allocation were taking place among the Nasher Sculpture Center. This made things very confusing for residents who attended workshops and sold at markets. The income they received from the markets was no longer available to them due to the break in operations, and the space they used to commune with one another and create things was also inaccessible due to conflicts with property owners. These conflicts arose because of property owners’



distaste for market events held in their courtyards, and changes to property that took place because of workshop endeavors. White Cubes that sat on apartment complex property also prompted disdain from property owners. For instance, in setting up for a market event in one White Cube, located on apartment property, a woman approached me and asked, “When are they going to get rid of this? The owner sent me out and wanted me to ask” (personal communication, February 2014). Thankfully, a new space was acquired in August of 2014, and operations should continue.

Organizational members get a lot out of working for Trans.lation, although it does add more to their busy lives. Everyone who works in Trans.lation does so as a volunteer, and therefore work is done in off time from jobs, lives as parents, or volunteering in other capacities in Vickery Meadow. This led to another form of resources spread too thin while Trans.lation was operating in full force. When asked about the effectiveness of events, organizational members admitted planning market events monthly was a crazy, and somewhat disorganized process. Acquiring tables, vendors, food, and supplies to set up the events was often done last minute, although efforts to do so were implemented fully. All organizational members I spoke with, however, did see all the market events as successes, regardless of difficulty in the set-up process.

Other improvements mentioned by members included reaching out to the outside Dallas art community more effectively, engaging the Vickery Meadow community more, and letting residents actively involved in Trans.lation take on more leadership roles. After the hiatus, another imperative consideration took place: improved communication and cooperation with already established community-based organizations and the City

of Dallas. This is absolutely essential to Trans.lation's continued operations, and toward prevention of duplication of services in the neighborhood. This steered Trans.lation away from trying to improve the reputation of the neighborhood as one of its main goals. The Vickery Meadow Improvement District is already directing their operations toward this outcome, therefore it is unnecessary for Trans.lation to expend resources trying to do this as well. Another beneficial transition took place in September, 2014, when the White Rock Local Market in the North Dallas area agreed to take in some of the vendors in their new offshoot of the market held in the parking lot of a business establishment there. This may alleviate some of the pressures present in planning that takes place in preparation for markets. Three out of four organizational members I spoke with thought it would be a good idea to diversify the types of artistic abilities displayed at markets. Although musical acts, food, and dancing were often showcased, members would like to see more variety in the talents available to those who come from outside the community.

#### 4.3 Community Needs

The most pressing needs discussed in interviews in terms of the expectations of refugee resettlement agencies were English language proficiency and higher availability of employment. The Vickery Meadow Learning Center has classes on both of these topics, but the unavailability of sufficient numbers of volunteers to coordinate classes makes it difficult to reach everyone. Also, the VMLC takes time off in the summer to give volunteers a break, and to allow those who need to watch their children who are out of school to do so. All of the residents I spoke to, regardless of their understanding of English, and regardless of how well they seemed to understand English, mentioned

language barriers as a principal issue they faced on a daily basis. One resident even said this was why she did not enjoy life in Vickery Meadow. She felt isolated, unable to really connect with people outside the bounds of her language.

Safety and public space accessibility came in second with reference to the community's needs. Walking around Vickery Meadow, one notices how little space is dedicated to community gathering, and how few sidewalks are present along the streets. That is not to say there are not public and community spaces present. There are, but they are not always accessible by foot, and they are often surrounded by areas where businesses dominate the space. This attracts homeless people who hope to gather some change for a meal, and also those who hope to steal items that could help them get a larger sum of cash. Two residents told me stories that indicated if anyone went out to the store on foot with a fancy phone it would most likely be stolen by someone on the street. And for a Muslim woman especially, it was shocking to encounter a man asking for money. Money is a contentious issue in Islamic culture, and so is women's socializing with strange men. Safety was not only an issue on the busy streets surrounding Vickery Meadow, but also within apartment complexes. Multiple families were hesitant to let their children go out and play in the parking lots outside their apartments for fear that their children would witness drug deals, or get beat up.

For instance, there were some misconceptions among some families I spoke to who were shocked by their neighbors' behaviors. Abu Salam complained that his Mexican neighbors played loud music, drank, and bar b qued too often, and this prompted him to keep his children inside. The neighbors' drinking frightened Abu Salam, most likely because drinking is frowned upon in Iraq, where he was from.

Couple this with his wife's tumultuous experiences walking to and from the grocery store, and the perception of the community is unsafe.

On the other hand, the Paco and Yvonne (who through Trans.lation became very close friends with one Iraqi family) enjoyed a quiet life away from the bustling main streets, but longed for public access. They wanted a library closer to their house accessible by foot. They wanted more parks in the area, outside of school grounds. Public spaces almost always had to be accessed by car. The nearest park is about a mile from the center of the neighborhood, as well as the nearest library.

The availability of food and transportation were issues for residents as well. As mentioned above, it was sometimes difficult to get to a grocery store due to personal safety and the lack of sidewalks, but those that were able to get to stores were not able to acquire the foods they wished. Stepping back a bit, public transportation is available in Vickery Meadow, but really only on two of the main roads there. Furthermore, public transportation is not necessarily affordable to a family with only one member of the household working.

Residents were not helpless in navigating through difficulties. Thankfully, already established refugees in the area often banded together to overcome obstacles. For instance, one man I spoke with had to figure out the public transportation system much sooner than he expected, and he could not have done it without the help of another man who had lived in the neighborhood for quite some time prior. This was often the case with community gatherings as well: refugees would get together with volunteers from Trans.lation and other organizations and carpool together. There would be a monthly trip to Richardson to acquire culturally appropriate foods for the home. People would

travel together to the Vickery Meadow Learning Center for English classes, or to a Translation market. With all of these needs present, the community is not lacking in neighborhood events organized by various volunteers from faith-based organizations and other Dallas institutions.

Refugees and immigrants exhibited different needs. While refugees tended to focus on the services provided for them by resettlement agencies, Yvonne and Paco (both immigrants) asked me to help them connect with organizations that could assist them in obtaining US citizenship. Since their children had become American citizens by default, they wanted citizenship for themselves as well. In the process of leaving the interview with Paco and Yvonne, they mentioned their life in America was hard because they missed their family back in Mexico, but that their children call America home. They felt it was necessary to officially call America home too.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following is a list of the key findings in this project:

- The most pressing needs discussed in interviews in terms of the expectations of refugee resettlement agencies were English language proficiency and higher availability of employment. Safety and public space accessibility came in second. The availability of food and transportation were issues for residents as well.
- Life in Vickery Meadow was improved for refugees and immigrants who received assistance from other refugees. Often this meant building social capital in the form of network and resource expansion, and helping newly immigrated people develop strategies to make life easier. Translation provided an avenue to build social capital.
- There seems to be a conflicting cultural model of proper assimilation between refugees and resettlement agencies.
- Organizational members indicated the biggest need for Translation Vickery Meadow is physical materials for events and workshops, and space to carry out events. Programming and development were also necessary in the further development and sustaining of the organization. This would best be implemented by at most, a board of members, some of whom are paid, and at least by a project manager who receives a salary.
- Organizational members also indicated that the most essential parts of the Translation project are the workshops and markets, although it may not be

necessary or feasible to hold monthly markets. These should be included in the next stage of Trans.lation's development.

## CHAPTER 6

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Interviews with members of Trans.lation and residents yielded results that inform the following recommendations. Since a community-based organization does not have the resources to improve community infrastructure, reputation, or facilities, recommendations of that sort will be left out of this analysis and left to the organizations that already follow that path.

Since there was some overlap between organizational members and residents as to what improvements could be made by Trans.lation, I will reiterate both stances here. Workshops are an integral part of the transcendence aspects of Trans.lation. It is here that community members from around the world can come together to create something, to discover their own self-actualization, and to relate with one another. Workshops provide a space for mutual understanding despite cultural differences. They give residents who may be unemployed and struggling financially, or those who are generally relegated to the home (for example, some Muslim women) something to do during the day when all the necessary tasks at home have been completed. Workshops give those in attendance a sense of working toward something, regardless of whether or not money is made after items have been created. Workshops also tie Trans.lation to the community at large, and without them, it is possible that the strong foothold established by Trans.lation in the first stage of its development may be lost.

Vickery Meadow's demographic makeup could weigh more heavily in the types of workshops provided to residents. Since children 1-9 make up such a large portion of the neighborhood, workshops could be geared specifically toward children, or toward them



and their parents. That is not to say that children are not welcome at workshops or that they are unable to participate due to the skills necessary to do so. Or, since almost half of the population of Vickery Meadow is Latino, more workshops that cater specifically to Latino needs, or Latino people in general would improve Trans.lation's reach. This could be implemented through having more workshops run by residents who are Latino.

Workshops are a great space to learn English safely for many attendees. In order to maximize this benefit, more of a focus on facilitating English learning could occur. However, this process happens naturally, and attempts to force more English language learning could lessen the organic feel of workshops overall.

Trans.lation would benefit greatly from more defined programming that would assist in strengthening the structure of the organization. Since Trans.lation is approaching a new stage of development, it would be beneficial to define practically (as was done in the first stage in the mission statement) what the organization does in the community. This cannot be done without a project manager, who would head a board of members that would plan events, coordinate volunteers, conduct workshops, manage exhibition spaces, and reach out to the Dallas community at-large. Ideally, since this position is demanding for anyone who would take it on, some form of payment would be provided. If resources allowed, it would also be ideal to pay the board, since the first stage of operations showed the demanding nature of the various aspects of the project.

Since obtaining economic independence is the goal of refugee resettlement agencies' assistance, some forum for selling items created in workshops should remain in Trans.lation's agenda. In discussions with organizational members about this, suggestions for developing a web site, or finding a business that would sell the items

created by residents were brought up. However, it is my recommendation based on discussions with organizational members to provide assistance that would show residents how they could accomplish this on their own. As the old proverb goes, "Give a man a fish, and he'll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he'll eat for a lifetime." If a market space to sell art works is not a prerogative for Translation in the future, it would be beneficial to provide workshops, for instance, that could train attendees in marketing, refining, and selling their products. The benefit that residents would receive from potential classes about the above topics would be much greater than if they simply had a space to sell. Since market events took a great amount planning, resources, and energy, it does not seem feasible to continue these types of events in a monthly fashion. However, a biannual market or even an annual market would be a great testing ground for residents to showcase the skills they learned in workshops that helped them refine and market their products.

Also key to the project is maintaining connections with organizations within Vickery Meadow, and also in the Dallas community at-large. It is my understanding that avoiding duplication of services in the community was a key focus of the initial stage of Translation's operations, and that continued negotiations have focused on this as well. In this light, I suggest that more focus is turned to outreach in terms of the larger Dallas community while more focus is turned inward to the Vickery Meadow community as well. The best way to handle this, resources allowing, would be to create a paid position for a member to conduct this community outreach. Translation would benefit most from a combination of key organizational members comprised of those who live in the community and some of live outside. Residents are best situated to carry out project

operations because they know firsthand what individual needs are most pressing. They are closest to understanding what programming Trans.lation could carry out that would benefit their friends and families in Vickery Meadow most.

It is evident that Trans.lation has potential to truly change the community of Vickery Meadow, and the dedication it has garnered among members of the organization and the residents it serves will propel it well into the future. As the focus on cooperating with other neighborhood organizations and the City of Dallas continues, more improvements to the area will uplift residents, and inclusion of residents in the decision-making process in the future will ensure the sustainability of Trans.lation Vickery Meadow.

APPENDIX A

VICKERY MEADOW IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT RESOURCE BOOK

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2014

Directory of Services  
For the  
Families of Vickery Meadow

### About this book...

This book is compiled to assist those working with families in the Vickery Meadow area. All of the listings are located in 75231 or specifically list 75231 as a target audience for services. There are many more services in the wider community that can be accessed by families in the Vickery Meadow area.

If there are corrections, additions, or updates, please email those to Rebecca Range of the Vickery Meadow Improvement District at [ExecutiveAssistant@VickeryMeadow.org](mailto:ExecutiveAssistant@VickeryMeadow.org), or call 214-265-8285.

Information for this book was gathered by members of the Vickery Meadow Community Action Team, the Community Health Services Committee, the Vickery Meadow Improvement District, and the Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation.



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## After School Programs

### After School Program

**Address:** Melody Parc Apartments  
5929 Melody Lane  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-542-1985  
**Hours:** Monday, Tuesday and Friday, 6:00 – 8:00 pm  
**Website:** [commconcern.org](http://commconcern.org)  
**Email:** teddyhernandez@yahoo.com

### AWANA Program

**Address:** Scofield Memorial Church  
7730 Abrams Road  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-415-9196  
**Hours:** Wednesdays, 5:30 - 8:30 pm  
**Program Description:** Kids are picked up at 5:30 and dropped off for Bible Club. Dinner is provided.

### Cool Kids Workshops

**Address:** Dan D. Rogers Elementary      Jack Lowe Elementary  
5314 Abrams Road      7000 Holly Hill  
Dallas, TX 75214      Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 972-794-8800      972-502-1700  
**Hours:** Fall and Spring Workshops  
**Eligibility:** For families of students.  
**Program Description:** Families learn strategies for dealing with problems and emotions. Workshops include a lesson, video, roll play and dinner.

### Heart House After School Program

**Address:** Wildflower      Wildflower      Stratford Hill  
8515 Park, #303/305      6031 Pineland Dr. #1307      6731 Larmanda  
Dallas, TX 75231      Dallas, TX 75231      Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-750-7637  
**Hours:** Monday – Friday (on DISD school days), 3:30 – 6:00, pm  
(Summer, Monday – Thursday)  
**Eligibility:** Children must live in the apartment complex of the program and be in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Parents must complete an enrollment application.  
**Website:** [www.hearthousedallas.org](http://www.hearthousedallas.org)  
**Email:** kwhite@hearthousedallas.org  
**Program Description:** Free after-school program dedicated to provide a safe haven and academic support to at-risk children, while encouraging them to become good citizens. Children come to Heart House directly after school. They are fed a

nutritious meal, get help with homework and do a specialized curriculum. All students are supervised by caring staff and volunteers.

**L.L. Hotchkiss Elementary School**

**Address:** 6929 Town North Dr.  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-749-7000

**Hours:** 3:00 - 6:00 pm

**Eligibility:** Students of the school

**Program Description:** After school tutoring, homework support, art, outside activities. Dallas Parks and Recreation provide after school care until 6:00 pm for single, working parents with students 1st-5th grade.

**Kid's Club**

**Address:** Ivanhoe Apartments – Community Room  
8900 Park Lane  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Hours:** Tuesday (during school year), 6:15 – 7:30 pm

**Eligibility:** All students are welcome, volunteers must be background checked by Northwest Bible.

**Program Description:** Bible club for elementary age students living in Ivanhoe and surrounding apartments focused on Christ centered lessons, activities and community.

**Kids Hope USA Mentoring**

**Address:** Dan D. Rogers Elementary  
5314 Abrams Road  
Dallas, TX 75214

**Phone:** 972-794-8800

**Hours:** Vary

**Eligibility:** Mentors must be members of PCBC, students must attend Dan D. Rogers.

**Program Description:** One mentor meets with one student, one hour per week. Manuel's Coat Drive (November – December) benefits children in the Vickery area. Back to School Blast (August) provides backpacks filled with school supplies and are distributed at Fair Oaks Park.

**Kids - U**

**Address:** Foxmoor Apartments  
10843 N. Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-682-5455

**Program Description:** After school tutoring

**McShan Elementary School**

**Address:** 8307 Meadow Road  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 972-502-3800  
**Eligibility:** Student of the school  
**Program Description:** After school tutoring and other enrichment activities.

**Park Cities Baptist Church**

**Address:** Jack Lowe Elementary School  
7000 Holly Hill  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 972-502-1700  
**Hours:** Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 3:00 - 6:00 pm  
**Eligibility:** Must be a student at Jack Lowe  
**Program Description:** Homework, enrichment activities.

**Refugee Resources Inc. – Reading Circle**

**Address:** Sunchase Square Apartments  
7317 Holly Hill Drive  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-691-1482  
**Hours:** Saturday 10:30 am – 12:00 pm  
**Program Description:** A weekly reading circle to practice and improve English reading and speaking skills.

**Scofield Memorial Church**

**Address:** Metro at Midtown Apartments  
5811 Pineland, #1141  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-415-9196  
**Hours:** Tuesday, 4:00 – 6:00 pm  
**Program Description:** Play, help with homework and provide clothes and school supplies.

**Skillman Southwestern Branch Library**

**Address:** 5707 Skillman Street  
Dallas, TX 75206  
**Phone:** 214-670-6078  
**Email:** skillmansouthwester@dallaslibrary.org  
**Hours:** Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:30 pm  
**Program Description:** After school program

**Jill Stone Elementary School**

**Address:** 6606 Ridgecrest  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 972-502-7900  
**Hours:** Tutoring: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 3:00 – 3:55 pm  
Fun Saturdays by Temple Emanu-El, Dates and Times vary  
**Eligibility:** Students of Jill Stone Elementary

**Sam Tasby Middle School**

**Address:** 7001 Fair Oaks  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 972-502-1900  
**Website:** [www.dallasisd.org/tasby](http://www.dallasisd.org/tasby)  
**Email:** vlara@dallasisd.org  
**Eligibility:** Student of the school  
**Program Description:** Some tutoring Saturday, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Teens In Action**

<b>Address:</b>	The Biltmore Apartments 6251 Melody Lane #1109 Dallas, TX 75231 Program Day: Tuesday	Hyde Park 6262 Melody Lane Dallas, TX 75231 Program Day: Friday
	Ivanhoe Apartments 8900 Park Lane Dallas, TX 75231 Program Day: Wednesday	Pebble Apartments 8710 Park Lane Dallas, TX 75231 Program Day: Tuesday
<b>Hours:</b>	Monday – Friday, 4:00 - 6:00 pm	
<b>Ages:</b>	13-18	
<b>Program Description:</b>	Recreation and Academic enrichment/ free after school program	

**Vickery Meadow Ministry**

**Address:** Town Center Apartments  
8620 Park Lane  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-893-1639  
**Hours:** Monday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.  
**Eligibility:** Teen girls  
**Program Description:** Biblically based lessons on healthy living

**Vickery Meadow Summer Reading Leadership Academy**

**Address:** To be Announced

**Phone:** To be Announced

**Hours:** Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm (July 15th – August 7th)

**Eligibility:** Students must be referred by their McShan teacher and principal to attend.

**Program Description:** Four week reading academy for 180 second through sixth graders needing special attention in English phonics, reading and writing skills.

**Youth Believing in Change**

**Address:** Stults Road Community Church  
8574 Stults Road  
Dallas, TX 75243

**Phone:** 214-692-9242

**Fax:** 214-553-0848

**Hours:** Monday-Friday, 11:00 am – 7:00 pm during the school year.  
(Children's programs begin at 3:00 pm)

**Website:** [www.ybcdallas.org](http://www.ybcdallas.org)

**E-mail:** [ybc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ybc@sbcglobal.net)

**Program Description:** Giving children the spiritual and educational foundation they need to succeed.

**Summer Programs:** 7:30 am – 3:00 pm

## Child Care

### **City of Dallas Child Care Services**

**Phone:** 214-670-8258

**Description:** To assist the “working poor” with the cost of child care of a maximum of one (1) year.

### **Eastridge Academy LLC**

**Address:** 6310 Eastridge Dr.  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-368-7903

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 6:30 am - 6:00 pm

**Program Description:** Childcare for infants, toddlers, pre-kindergarten, and school age. (6 weeks to 12 yrs.)

### **Fair Oaks Day School**

**Address:** 7825 Fair Oaks Ave.  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-340-1121

**Fax:** 214-340-8306

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 6:30 am – 6:30 pm

**Email:** [info@fairoaksdayschool.com](mailto:info@fairoaksdayschool.com)

**Website:** [www.fairoaksdayschool.com](http://www.fairoaksdayschool.com)

**Program Description:** Traditional and Montessori methods of education for children 6 weeks – 6 years.

### **Jeanette's Little Haven Christian Academy**

**Address:** 7110 Holly Hill Dr.  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-363-2944

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 6:00 am - 12:00 am; Saturday, 6:00 am – 6:00 pm

**Criteria:** \$30.00 Non-Refundable enrollment fee

**Program Description:** Childcare for infants, toddlers, pre-kindergarten, and after school.



## Churches/Faith Communities

### **Christian Science Reading Room**

**Address:** 6464 E. Northwest Hwy, #343  
Dallas, TX 75214  
**Phone:** 469-232-9777  
**Email:** [7thchurchrr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:7thchurchrr@sbcglobal.net)

### **Episcopal Church of the Ascension**

**Address:** 8787 Greenville Ave  
Dallas, TX 75243  
**Phone:** 214-340-4196  
**Web:** [www.ascensiondallas.org](http://www.ascensiondallas.org)

### **Fellowship Bible Church Dallas**

**Address:** 9330 North Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-739-3881  
**Website:** [www.fellowshipdallas.org](http://www.fellowshipdallas.org)

### **Forest Meadow Baptist Church**

**Address:** 9150 Church Road  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-341-9555  
**Website:** [www.fmbsdallas.org](http://www.fmbsdallas.org)

### **Iglesia de Oasis de Esperanza (Oasis of Hope Church)**

**Address:** 7152 Fair Oaks  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-796-2627  
**Hours:** Wednesday, 7:30 – 9:30 pm; Friday, 7:30 – 9:00 pm  
Saturday, 9:00 am – 12:00 am; Sunday 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

### **Islamic Community Center of North Texas**

**Address:** 5767 Phoenix  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-336-7910  
**Hours:** Friday, 11:30 am – 2:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

**North Park Presbyterian Church**

Address: 9555 N. Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231  
Phone: 214-363-5457  
Website: [www.northparkpresbyterian.org](http://www.northparkpresbyterian.org)

**Park Cities Baptist Church**

Address: 3933 Northwest Parkway  
Dallas, TX 75225  
Phone: 214-860-1500  
Email: [pcbc.org](mailto:pcbc.org)

**POBLO-TX**

Address: 7611 Park lane  
Dallas, TX 75225  
Phone: 214-368-1371  
Email: [office@poblotexas.org](mailto:office@poblotexas.org)  
Web: [www.poblotexas.org](http://www.poblotexas.org)

**Preston Hollow Presbyterian**

Address: 9800 Preston Rd.  
Dallas, TX 75230  
Phone: 214-368-6348  
Email: [phpc.org](mailto:phpc.org)

**St. Mary, the Holy Theotokos Orthodox Catholic Mission**

Address: 6780 Abrams Rd, Ste 103-224  
Dallas, TX 75231  
Phone: 214-373-8770

**Scofield Memorial Church**

Address: 7730 Abrams Road  
Dallas, TX 75231  
Phone: 214-349-6043

**Seventh Church of Christ, Science**

Address: 6414 Abrams  
Dallas, TX 75231  
Phone: 214-348-2090

**Shoreline Dallas**

**Address:** 6800 Town North Drive  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-348-3078  
**Website:** [shorelinedallas.com](http://shorelinedallas.com)

**Temple Emanu-El**

**Address:** 8500 Hillcrest  
Dallas, TX 75225  
**Phone:** 214-706-000  
**Website:** [tedallas.org](http://tedallas.org)

**Vickery Baptist Church**

**Address:** 5814 Ridgecrest  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-361-1639

**World Impact**

**Address:** 2017 S. Ervay  
Dallas, TX 75215  
**Phone:** 214-426-0044  
**Program Description:** Provide support services for families in the Vickery area.

## Employment

### **Catholic Charities**

**Address:** 9850 Walnut Hill Lane. #228  
Dallas, TX 75238

**Phone:** 214-555-9909

**Website:** [www.catholiccharitiesdallas.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesdallas.org)

**Program Description:** Case management, education services, ESL, Citizenship, job skills, food pantry, and refugee youth tutoring.

### **Catholic Charities**

**Address:** 9451 LBJ Freeway, Suite 100  
Dallas, TX 75243

**Phone:** 214-553-9909, ext. 135

Strud Ali, Job Counselor, Job Placement Service/Refugee & Empowerment Services

### **Jewish Family Services**

**Address:** 5402 Arapaho  
Dallas, TX 75248

**Phone:** 972-437-9950

**Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 8:30 am – 8:00 pm  
Thursday 8:30 am – 6:00 pm; Friday 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

**Program:** Job skills and job bank. Please call for current schedule.

### **International Rescue Committee (IRC)**

**Address:** 6500 Greenville Ave, suite 500  
Dallas, TX 75206

**Phone:** 214-461-9781

**Website:** [www.theIRC.org/where/united\\_states\\_dallas\\_tx/](http://www.theIRC.org/where/united_states_dallas_tx/)

**Program Description:** Case management, employment services, immigration services, cash assistance and other support services for refugees and asylees.

### **North Dallas Shared Ministries**

**Address:** 2875 Merrell  
Dallas, TX 75229

**Phone:** 972-620-8696

**Website:** [www.ndsm.org](http://www.ndsm.org)

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 9:30 am - 3:00 pm  
First and Third Mondays, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm  
Saturday, 9:00 am - 11:30 am

**Program Description:** Employment assistance, ESL classes, food and clothing assistance, medical services.

**Texas Workforce Commission**

**Address:** 5955 Alpha Rd, Ste 200  
Dallas, TX 75240

**Phone:** 972-388-5600

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

**Web:** [www.twc.state.tx.us](http://www.twc.state.tx.us)

## English As a Second Language (ESL)

### **Catholic Charities**

**Address:** 9451 LBJ Freeway, Suite 100  
Dallas, TX 75243

**Phone:** 214-555-9909

**Website:** [www.catholiccharitiesdallas.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesdallas.org)

**Program Description:** ESL classes and citizenship classes. RCA (Refugee Cash Assistance)

### **Vickery Meadow Learning Center**

**Address:** 6329 Ridgecrest  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-265-5057

**Hours:** Monday – Thursday  
Morning, 9:00 -11:00am; Afternoon, 12:30-2:30 pm;  
Evening (7:00 – 8:45 pm)

**Website:** [www.vmlc.org](http://www.vmlc.org)

**Email:** info@vmlc.org

**Criteria:** Must be 18 years of age or older and live in the 75231 zip code.

**Program Description:** Provide multiple levels of English literacy classes and enrichment opportunities like computer labs, GED tutoring and citizenship classes. Fall and spring semesters. Early childhood program for children of adult students.

## Family Services

### **Alcoholics Anonymous – Clean Air Group**

**Address:** 9850 N. Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-750-5722

### **Attorney General of Texas, Child Support**

**Address:** 10260 N. Central Expressway, Ste 210  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-696-6044

**Description:** Collects and disburses support funds and assists custodial parents or guardians in enforcing collection of child support orders, and establishing paternity.

### **Cocaine Anonymous - Primary Purpose Group**

**Address:** Vickery Baptist Church  
5814 Ridgecrest Drive  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-212-8502

**Program Description:** Cocaine Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. To show other addicts how we have recovered is the main purpose of this group. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine or other mind-altering substances.

### **Dallas Pregnancy Resource Center**

**Address:** 6500 Greenville Ave, Suite 450  
Dallas, TX 75206

**Phone:** 214-369-6281

**Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9:30 am – 5:30 pm  
Tuesday, 9:30 am – 8:00 pm; Closed Friday

**Program Description:** All services are free to women in unplanned pregnancies. Pregnancy testing, medical consultation, clothes, diapers, formula, education, and referrals.

### **Fair Oaks Youth and Family Center**

**Address:** Conrad High School  
7502 Fair Oaks  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-502-4140 for Mental Health  
972-266-0200 for Physical Health

**Hours:** Mental Health: Monday – Wednesday, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm  
Thursday, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm; Friday by appointment only.

Physical Health: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

**Program Description:** Services and program provided include family therapy, family planning, mental health, social work and physical health care.

**Family Compass**

**Address:** 4210 Junius St  
Dallas, TX 75246

**Phone:** 214-370-9810

**Web:** [www.family-compass.org](http://www.family-compass.org)

**Program Description:** Home mentoring and community education to recent child maltreatment.

**Family Outreach Center- East Dallas**

**Address:** 9100 Diceman  
Dallas, TX 75218

**Phone:** 214-321-6292

**Website:** [familyoutreach-northtexas.org](http://familyoutreach-northtexas.org)

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm  
Evenings and weekends available

**Program Description:** Outreach services to families of children ages 0-12 include home visits with case management, parenting education, and school based empowerment program. Information and referrals for child abuse prevention.

**Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse**

**Address:** 1349 Empire Central, Suite 800  
Dallas, TX 75247

**Phone:** 214-522-8600

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

**Program Description:** HIV testing and outreach. Case management, substance abuse prevention and intervention, and public resource center. Outreach program hours are flexible.

**Injury Prevention Center**

**Address:** 5000 Harry Hines  
Dallas, TX 75235

**Phone:** 214-590-4455

**Program Description:** Collaborative work with communities and institutions to provide prevention interventions that reduce the number of people being injured by motor vehicles, violence, falls, and fires.



**Lifenet Community Behavioral Healthcare**

**Address:** 9708 Skillman St.  
Dallas, TX 75243

**Phone:** 214-221-5433

**Program Description:** Lifenet through a partnership with the Dallas Housing Authority and The Bridge, places homeless men and women into permanent supportive housing. This includes on-site case management, managing mental illness symptoms and acquiring necessary resources to promote self-sufficiency.

**New Beginning Center**

**Address:** Vickery Meadow Learning Center  
6329 Ridgecrest  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-276-0057

**Hours:** Friday, 9 am to 5 pm

**Website:** [www.newbeginningcenter.org](http://www.newbeginningcenter.org)

**Program Description:** Groups for women who are living with violence in the home.

**U.S. Social Security Administration**

**Address:** 10824 N. Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 800-772-1213

**Website:** [www.ssa.gov/dallas/state\\_tx.html](http://www.ssa.gov/dallas/state_tx.html)

**Program Description:** Social Security employees assist with request for Social Security for aged and disabled, Medicare cards, and filing for Supplemental Security Income. Supplemental Security Income is based on financial need.

**Vickery Family Health Center – Parkland Health & Hospital System**

**Address:** 8224 Park Lane, Suite 130  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-266-0651

**Website:** [www.parklandhospital.com](http://www.parklandhospital.com)

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.

Acute, Well and Sick visit care: Sunday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Acute and Sick visit care: Monday – Thursday, 5:30 – 9:30 pm

**Program Description:** Clinic provides primary health care for all ages, including treatment of acute and chronic problems, health maintenance exams, geriatric assessments, psychosocial services; nutritional counseling; health education and referrals for specialty care. Laboratory services are also available. The Vickery Health Center also offers prenatal care through the (WISH) Women's & Infants Specialty Health clinic and has extended hours for those services. Fees are based on ability to pay. The Vickery Health Center also provides community based health education, health screenings, services and relations to its community

partners within the Vickery Meadows Improvement District and throughout Dallas County. Contact Ronald Session at 214-266-0651 for questions or requests.

**Women's Group**

**Address:** Melody Parc Apartments  
5929 Melody Lane  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-542-1985

**Hours:** Wednesday, 10:00 am

**Website:** [commconcern.org](http://commconcern.org)

**Email:** teddyhernandez@yahoo.com

**Eligibility:** All Women of the Vickery area are welcome.

**Program Description:** A variety of topics are addressed including cooking, health issues, crafts, fitness...

## **Food, Clothing, Financial Assistance**

### **Catholic Charities**

**Address:** 9850 Walnut Hill Lane. #228  
Dallas, TX 75238

**Phone:** 214-553-9909

**Program:** Food pantry for 75231

### **City Square – Food on the Move**

**Address:** 409 N. Haskell  
Dallas, TX 75246

**Phone:** 214-828-1085

**Website:** <http://citysq.org/foodonthemove>

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

**Eligibility:** Children ages 1 – 18 who are from low income families and live in low income areas.

**Program Description:** Provides free meals to children who live in low income areas who have limited access to food.

### **Elaine Kadane Food Pantry**

**Address:** Episcopal Church of the Ascension  
8787 Greenville Ave.  
Dallas, TX 75243

**Phone:** 214-340-4196

**Hours:** First and Third Tuesday, 9:30 - 11:30 am

**Program Description:** Provides bags of goods to needy families.

### **Fellowship Bible Church of Dallas**

**Address:** 9330 N. Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-739-3881

**Hours:** Tuesday – Friday, 9:00 am - 11:00 am

**Program Description:** Food pantry for 75230 and 75231 zip codes.

### **Iglesias de Oasis de Esperanza**

**Address:** 7152 Fair Oaks  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Program Description:** Food, clothing, and furniture sometimes available.

**International Rescue Committee**

**Address:** 6500 Greenville Ave, Suite 500  
Dallas, TX 75206

**Phone:** 214-461-9781

**Hours:** Tuesday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

**Program Description:** A North Texas Food Bank representative will be at the IRC office every Tuesday to assist people with Food Stamp applications. The primary goal is completing Food Stamp applications, but the representative can also assist with applications for Medicaid/TANF.

**Jewish Family Services**

**Address:** 5402 Arapaho  
Dallas, TX 75248

**Phone:** 972-437-9950

**Hours:** Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

**Program Description:** Food pantry by appointment

**Kids Cafe**

**Address:** Stults Road Community Church  
8574 Stults Road  
Dallas, TX 75243

**Phone:** 214-692-9242

**Hours:** Monday - Thursday, 3:00 – 6:00 pm

**Website:** [www.ybc-live.org](http://www.ybc-live.org)

**E-mail:** [ybc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ybc@sbcglobal.net)

**Program Description:** Hot, healthy, nutritional meals served Monday thru Thursday.

**North Dallas Shared Ministries**

**Address:** 2875 Merrell  
Dallas, TX 75229

**Phone:** 972-620-8696

**Website:** [www.ndsm.org](http://www.ndsm.org)

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 9:30 am - 3:00 pm

First and Third Monday, 6:00 -7:30 pm

Saturday, 9:00 - 11:30 am

**Program Description:** Emergency aid center-food and financial assistance for rent, utilities, glasses, prescriptions, ID's and driver's license, bus tokens and gas vouchers, school supplies. Employment assistance, ESL classes. Friday food baskets for the elderly (60+). Referrals to community resources. Medical clinic. Clothes closet and thrift store.

**North Park Ministries**

**Address:** Northpark Presbyterian  
9555 N. Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-363-5457

**Website:** [www.northparkpresbyterian.org](http://www.northparkpresbyterian.org)

**Program Description:** Participation in the Vickery Meadow Learning Center, Healing Hands, Vickery Meadow Academy, Cold Cash for Coats, EQUIP program which assists families with children on the verge of eviction and the Reading Angels at Jill Stone Elementary.

**Vickery Meadow Food Pantry and Clothes Closet**

**Address:** 8448 Walnut Hill, Suite 200  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Hours:** Wednesday, 1:00 – 4:00 pm  
Thursday and Saturday, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Program Description:** Provide food once a month per family. Provide clothes every three months (4 times a year) per family.

**Criteria:** Must provide proof (lease, etc.) of residence in the 75231 zip code. Only those living in the 75231 zip code are eligible for services.

**WIC-Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants, and Children**

**Address:** 6012 Abrams Rd.  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-670-7200

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm; 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday, 7:00 am - 3:30 pm;  
Closed the Monday after 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday

**Program Description:** Provides nutritious food, nutrition education, and counseling for mothers of children under age 5. Eligibility based on income and nutritional need.

**YW Financial Empowerment**

**Address:** 4144 North Central Expressway, Suite 580  
Dallas, TX 75204

**Program Location:** Family Financial Center (Mountain View College) and various locations in Dallas County (see website calendar for more details at

<http://www.ywcadallas.org/calendar/>)

**Phone:** 214-584-2344

**Hours:** Monday – Saturday, Day and Evening

**Enrollment Information & Criteria:** Workshops and one-on-one financial coaching available in English and Spanish. To register, call 214-584-2335 or email [fe@ywcadallas.org](mailto:fe@ywcadallas.org).

**Website:** [www.ywcadallas.org](http://www.ywcadallas.org)

**Email:** [scoleman@ywcadallas.org](mailto:scoleman@ywcadallas.org)

**Program Description:** Learn how to set and reach financial goals in this 12-hour workshop series. These classes will help you develop spending plans so you can keep track of your money; and they will help you understand how to:

- Use credit wisely
- Invest for the future
- Manage a bank account
- Increase your savings
- Reduce your debt

We start with the basics and then build upon them over a series of weeks, so you can apply the skills as you learn them. You will also get one-on-one financial coaching while you are enrolled in the Workshop Series.

## Library

### **Skillman Southwestern Branch Library**

**Address:** 5707 Skillman Street  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-670-6078

**Website:** [dallaslibrary.org](http://dallaslibrary.org)

**Email:** [deborah.rubin@dallaslibrary.org](mailto:deborah.rubin@dallaslibrary.org)

**Hours:** Tuesday and Wednesday, 12:00 – 8:00 pm  
Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm  
Thursday, 10:30 am – Story time

**Program Description:** Full-scale library with books and computers for free use. Adult, children, and teens programs available. Informational and entertainment materials, PC access, monthly book club for adults, reference and referral services.

## Medical and Dental Services

### **Alcoholics Anonymous**

**Address:** 9850 N. Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-750-5722

### **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP, Medicaid)**

**Address:** P.O. Box 14200  
Midland, TX 79711-4200  
**Phone:** 1-800-647-6558  
**Website:** [www.chipmedicaid.org](http://www.chipmedicaid.org)  
**Hours:** 8:00 am - 8:00 pm

**Program Description:** Children's Health Insurance for qualified families. CHIP offers affordable health insurance coverage for children from birth through age 18. Children must be a US citizen or legal permanent resident to apply. Families may also call 211 for information on getting health care services for children. Texas residents who are pregnant, uninsured and not eligible for Medicaid may qualify for CHIP Prenatal benefits. Coverage starts before the child is born and continues after the child's birth. Total Prenatal coverage is 12 continuous months from the date the unborn child is enrolled.

### **Cocaine Anonymous - Primary Purpose Group**

**Address:** Vickery Baptist Church  
5814 Ridgecrest Drive  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-212-8502

**Program Description:** Cocaine Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. To show other addicts how we have recovered is the main purpose of this group. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine or other mind-altering substances.

### **Community Dental Care**

**Address:** 8224 Park Lane, Suite 125  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-987-1131  
**Hours:** 8:00 am – 4:30 am  
**Website:** [www.communitydentalcare.org](http://www.communitydentalcare.org)

**Program Description:** Dental care for low-income children ages 0-18. English and Spanish languages are available.



**Dallas County HHS – Walk-in Immunization Clinic**

Ridgewood United Methodist Church

Address: 6445 E Lovers Ln  
Dallas, TX 75214

Phone: 214-819-1903

Hours: 3rd Friday, 12:00 – 3:30 PM

**Program Description:** Servicing children 18 years and younger. Cost: \$10 first visit, \$5 subsequent visits. No “Texas Vaccine for Children eligible” child will be denied services. For more information, call 214-819-2163.

**Dallas County Refugee Outreach Program**

Address: 7415 Holly Hill #3116  
Dallas, TX 75231

Phone: 214-750-8448  
214-266-1127

Hours: Tuesday, 9 am – 3 pm

**Program Description:** Refugee health screenings are offered for new arrivals. Sick visits are available for refugees up to six months. Green card immunizations are also offered.

**Fair Oaks Youth & Family Center**

Address: Conrad High School  
7502 Fair Oaks Avenue, Box 151  
Dallas, TX 75231

Phone: 972-502-4140

Fax: 214-553-8028

Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 8 am - 6pm

**Program Description:** Provides free or low cost physical and mental health care for DISD students and their families.

**Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse**

Address: 1349 Empire Central Dr., Suite 800  
Dallas, TX 75247

Phone: 214-522-8600

Fax: 214-251-7253

Hours: Monday

Tuesday and Thursday, 6:00 - 9:00 pm

**Eligibility:** Low income families that are uninsured.

**Program Description:** Medical and dental clinic that provides primary and specialty care to those that live at 200% poverty and are uninsured.

**North Dallas Shared Ministries**

**Address:** 2875 Merrell  
Dallas, TX 75229

**Phone:** 214-358-8700

**Website:** [www.ndsm.org](http://www.ndsm.org)

**Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday, 5:30 pm

**Program Description:** Free medical clinic for adults and children. Immunizations and treatment of minor illness, well clinic baby/child checkups, dermatology, and women's pelvic screening. Dental clinic - adult extractions and gum disease, first and third Friday at 8:00 am.

**Planned Parenthood of North Texas**

**Address:** 7424 Greenville, Suite 206  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-363-2004

**Website:** [www.ppnt.org](http://www.ppnt.org)

**Program Description:** Family planning, well woman gynecological, vasectomy, options counseling, pregnancy testing, pregnancy terminations, and community education.

**Safe Kids Dallas Area Coalition**

**Address:** 1935 Medical District  
Dallas, Texas 75235

**Phone:** 214-456-5134

**Program Description:** A community coalition dedicated to the prevention of unintentional injuries and death among children under 14 years of age. In Vickery Meadow they assist with child passenger safety, pedestrian safety, and water safety education and resources. Phone line for child safety seat information: 214-456-2059

**Texas Health at Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas**

**Address:** 8200 Walnut Hill Lane  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-345-6789

**Website:** [www.texashealth.org](http://www.texashealth.org)

**Program Description:** General and specialty medical care for acute, chronic, and emergency patients.

**Pediatric Health Center**

The Pediatric Health Center is dedicated to providing care to well and sick children from birth to age 12. The Center accepts patients covered by Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Medicaid and CHIP cards should be presented at the time of each appointment. Babies born at any hospital or facility are welcome and can receive care. The center is located at 8440 Walnut Hill Lane, Suite 540 on the Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas campus. For more information, call 214-345-4204.

**Women's Health Centers**

Medicaid recipients can access maternity and women's health services at the Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas Women's Health Centers. These facilities offer a wide range of health services, including prenatal, postpartum and gynecological care. Services are provided by board-certified OB/GYNs and certified nurse practitioners. Women's Health Center patients deliver their babies at Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas. The centers employ bilingual staff members and offer assistance in obtaining Medicaid benefits. 8210 Walnut Hill Lane, Suite 705 (on the Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas campus) For more information, call 214-345-7000.

The Community Outreach Dept. provides immunizations for children ages 0-18, and education on hand washing to prevent staph infections.

**Vickery Family Health Center-Parkland Health and Hospital System**

**Address:** 8224 Park Lane, Suite 130  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-266-0651

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Acute/Well/Sick visit care: Sunday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Acute/Sick visit care: Monday – Thursday, 5:30 – 9:30 pm

**Program Description:** Clinic provides primary health care for all ages, including treatment of acute and chronic problems, health maintenance exams, geriatric assessments, psychosocial services; nutritional counseling; health education and referrals for specialty care. Laboratory services are also available. This center also offers prenatal care through the (WISH) Women's & Infants Specialty Health clinic and has extended hours for those services. Fees are based on ability to pay. The Vickery Health Center also provides community based health education, health screenings, services and relations to its community partners within the Vickery Meadows Improvement District and throughout Dallas County. Contact Ronald Session at 214-266-0651 for questions or requests.

## Recreation and Arts

### **Dallas Children's Theater**

**Address:** Rosewood Center for Family Arts  
5938 Skillman  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-978-0110

**Website:** [www.dct.org](http://www.dct.org)

**Program Description:** Plays are performed throughout the year. Classes on theater arts are also available.

### **Dallas Tennis Association- Slam Jammers**

**Address:** Princeton Court Apartments  
6121 Melody Lane  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 817-247-9977

**Website:** [dta.org](http://dta.org)

**Hours:** Saturday, 12:00 – 2:00 pm or 2:00 – 4:00 pm

**Program Description:** Children ages 5-18 are provided free tennis lessons by certified instructors. Complete the program and earn a tennis racquet.

### **Fair Oaks Park**

**Address:** 7501 Merriman Parkway  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-670-1495

**Program Description:** Large park with ball fields, children's play grounds, and trails.

### **Fair Oaks Tennis Center**

**Address:** 7501 Merriman Parkway  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-670-1495

**Program Description:** City of Dallas owned tennis courts. Call for a reservation.

### **Sokol Zizka**

**Address:** 7448 Greenville Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-368-5608

**Program Description:** Physical training in gymnastics and other athletics. Cultural awareness and family activities.

**Translation Vickery Meadow**

**Address:** 6327 Ridgecrest Rd., #1162  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-883-5434

**Hours:** Tuesday and Wednesday, 11:30 am – 2:30 pm  
Friday, 4:30 – 6:30 pm; Saturday, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

**Website:** [Facebook.com/translationvickerymeadow](https://www.facebook.com/translationvickerymeadow)

**Email:** translationteamvm@gmail.com

**Program Description:** Free creative workshops, including jewelry making, painting, sewing, printmaking, etc. Events, Markets and White Cube Galleries (check our Facebook page for dates and details.)

## Refugee Services

### **American Islamic Center**

**Address:** Arriving Refugee Reception Center  
5765 Phoenix Dr., Unit B  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 469-855-4767

**Hours:** Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Friday prayer services in Unit C/Community room, 1:30 pm  
Descubriendo El Islam en Espanol, Saturday, 7:00 pm

**Program Description:** Discover Islam Classes for ages 4-14

### **Catholic Charities of Dallas Refugee and Empowerment Services**

**Address:** 9461 LBJ Freeway, Suite 100  
Dallas, TX 75243

**Phone:** 214-553-9909

**Website:** [www.catholiccharitiesdallas.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesdallas.org)

**Program Description:** Case management, education services, ESL, Citizenship, job skills, food pantry, and refugee youth tutoring.

### **DISD Refugee School Impact Grant**

**Address:** 2909 Buckner Blvd.  
Dallas, TX 75228

**Phone:** 972-502-4140

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

**Eligibility:** Refugee students K-12, being identified as a refugee (visa form I-94), enrolled in DISD, who have been in the US less than three years, and their family is eligible for services.

**Program Description:** Translation, interpretation, tutoring, summer enrichment program, school orientation for parents, sensitivity training for DISD staff.

### **International Rescue Committee (IRC)**

**Address:** 6500 Greenville Ave. Suite 500  
Dallas, TX 75094

**Phone:** 214-461-9781

**Hours:** Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

**Website:** [www.Rescue.org/Dallas](http://www.Rescue.org/Dallas)

**Email:** [Debi.Wheeler@Rescue.org](mailto:Debi.Wheeler@Rescue.org)

**Program Description:** Case management, employment services, immigration services, cash assistance and other support services for refugees and asylees; including a family mentor/English tutor to practice conversational English and help them complete basic tasks such as reading bills and filling out paperwork.

**Vickery Meadow Ministry**

**Address:** P.O. Box 671127  
Dallas, TX 75367

**Phone:** 214-507-8828

**Program Description:** Provide support services to refugee families in Vickery Meadow area.

## Schools

### **Art Institute of Dallas**

**Address:** Two North Park East  
8080 Park Lane, #100  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 214-692-8080

**Website:** [www.artinstitutes.edu/dallas](http://www.artinstitutes.edu/dallas)

**Program Description:** Courses offered in culinary arts, animation, fashion, interior and graphic design, multimedia and web design, restaurant catering and management and video production.

### **Emmett J. Conrad High School**

**Address:** 7502 Fair Oaks Ave  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-502-2300

**Students:** 1300

### **L.L. Hotchkiss Elementary School**

**Address:** 6929 Town North Dr.  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-749-7000

**Students:** 1050

### **Jack Lowe Sr. Elementary School**

**Address:** 7000 Holly Hill  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-502-1700

**Students:** 700

### **Lee McShan Elementary School**

**Address:** 8307 Meadow Road  
Dallas, TX 75231

**Phone:** 972-502-3800

**Average Attendance:** 700

### **Dan D. Rogers Elementary School**

**Address:** 5314 Abrams Road  
Dallas, TX 75214

**Phone:** 972-794-8800

**Students:** 550



**Scofield Christian School**

**Address:** 7730 Abrams Rd  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-349-6843

**Jill Stone Elementary School**

**Address:** 6606 Ridgecrest  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 972-502-7900  
**Students:** 325

**Sam Tasby Middle School**

**Address:** 7001 Fair Oaks  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 972-502-1900  
**Students:** 875

**Texas Woman's University**

**Address:** 8194 Walnut Hill Lane  
Dallas, TX 75231  
**Phone:** 214-689-6500  
**Website:** [www.twu.edu](http://www.twu.edu)

**Program Description:** Educational experiences in health care administration, nursing, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

## Vickery Community Resources

### **Vickery Meadow Improvement District**

**Address:** 6251 Melody Lane  
Dallas, Texas 75231

**Phone:** 214-265-8285

**Program Description:** This office provides oversight of the safety, property standards, community health, and community service activities of the community. Committees include Safety, Property Standards, Vickery Together Crime Watch, Vickery Community Action Team, VMID Board, and Community Health Services.

### **Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation**

**Address:** 4809 Cole, #375  
Dallas, TX 75205

**Phone:** 214-443-7985

**Website:** [www.vmydf.com](http://www.vmydf.com)

**Program Description:** Working to provide opportunities for children and youth in Vickery Meadow to reach their greatest potential. Programs include Eagle scholars, Bookapoolooza, moms' groups, and scholarships.

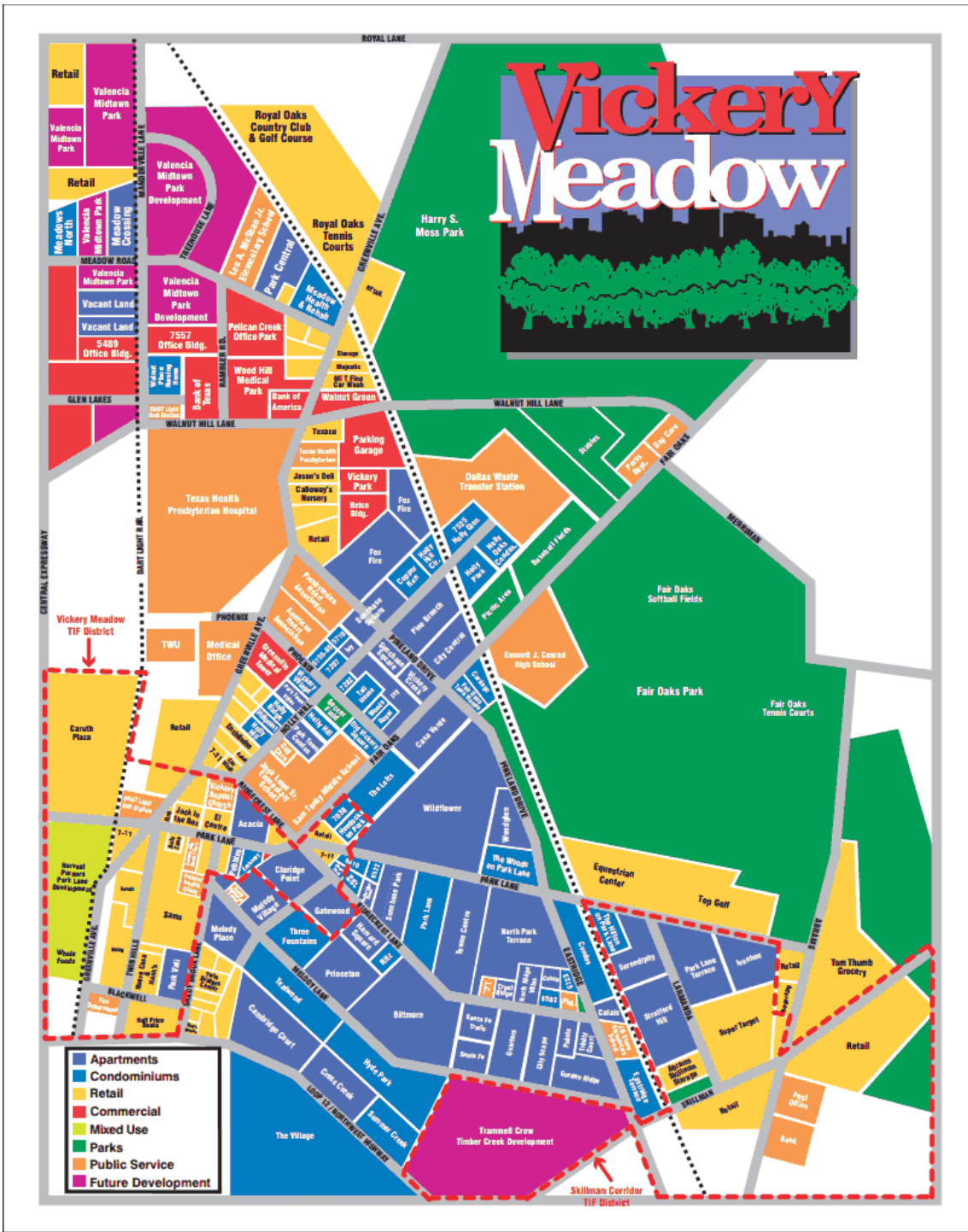
APPENDIX B  
VICKERY COALITION ACTION TEAM MEMBERS

## **VCAT Membership**

Arriving Refugee Reception Center - member since 2005  
AVANCE - member since 2008  
Catholic Charities of Dallas - member since 2004  
City of Dallas Crisis Intervention - member since 2001  
Classic Regency Hyatt - member since 2008  
Communities in School - member since 2006  
Community Council of Greater Dallas - member since 2008  
Community Dental Care - member since 2006  
Community Supervision & Corrections - member since 1998  
Dallas Children's Theater - member since 2003  
Dallas Public Library - Skillman SW Branch - member since 2000  
Dan D. Rodgers Elementary - member since 1993  
DISD Refugee Support Services - member since 2007  
Emmett J. Conrad High - member since 2006  
Fair Oaks Youth & Family Center - member since 2006  
Heart House - member since 2000  
Iglesia Cristiana Oasis de Esperanza - member since 2004  
Injury Prevention Center - member since 2006  
International Rescue Committee - member since 2002  
Jack Lowe Sr. Elementary - member since 2006  
Jill Stone Elementary at Vickery Meadow - member since 1999  
Lee A. McShan Jr. Elementary - member since 2005  
L.L. Hotchkiss Elementary School - member since 1993  
National Council of Jewish Women - member since 1993  
North Park Presbyterian Church - member since 1993  
Northway Christian Church - member since 2004  
Parkland Health & Hospital System-COPC - member since 1996  
Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas - member since 1993  
Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church - member since 2005  
Sam Tasby Middle School - member since 2006  
SMU's Catholic Ministries - member since 2006  
Temple Emanu-El - member since 1993  
Texas Woman's University School of Occupational Therapy - member since 1993  
Vickery Family Wellness Center - member since 2000  
Vickery Meadow Learning Center - member since 1997  
Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation - member since 2007

Credit: Vickery Meadow Improvement District 2014

APPENDIX C  
VICKERY MEADOW NEIGHBORHOOD MAP



Credit: Vickery Meadow Improvement District (2014)

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