

Harris Construction donates \$100K to local nonprofit

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The Fresno Housing Education Corps has secured a major donor to help fund its self-sufficiency work in low-income neighborhoods.

"Our donors, Richard and Karen Spencer, along with their company, Harris Construction, presented their generous three-year \$100,000 commitment in February of this year," said AJ Johnston, director of the Fresno Housing Education Corps. "We have since received their initial donation and are putting their donation to very good use."

The Fresno Housing Education Corps (FHEC) provides assistance to 50,000 Fresno County residents, including 15,000 families and 24,000 children.

FHEC works to improve academic achievement by partnering with local school districts, community partners throughout Fresno County and the Fresno Housing Authority to create a framework to fill the gaps and extend education beyond the classroom.

Instead of creating the programming, FHEC partners with existing programs and brings them to Fresno Housing Authority sites.

Funding given to FHEC helps train parents to get involved with their children's education, monitors and tracks children's achievements, provides college grants for outstanding student participants and more.

"We are out there with these kids and their families almost every day, from pre-school age and up. We have rooms setup inside their apartment complexes so they have easy access to our help," said Johnston. "We provide free after-school homework help, positive activities to keep the kids involved, and an enriched learning environment, all right there in their own housing developments. We're teaching the parents and youth the value of education. Our goal is to help these kids and their families get an education and rise above the poverty situation they are currently in."

The 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization operates through annual contributions from roughly 30 major funders, but Johnson said the organization is always in need of new commitments and funding.

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