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start HEALTHY

ISSUE 25

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Larry Walker, Founder and CEO
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The Gideon Group of North Texas

ISSUE 25
COVER PRICE \$6.99



Front of Tear Out Card 1



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Back of Tear Out Card 1

This is a \$10 - \$20 monthly Donation to Gideon Group of North Texas to support its' program services including:

1. Housing assistance for those living at Gideon House starting June 2022
2. Rental assistance for those living in transitional homes or rapid Re-housing units we support
3. Rental assistance or those at risk for eviction
4. Workforce development and Job search assistance
5. Tuition fees for Short term certification programs
6. Sponsorship support for local COPE (Cost o' Poverty Experience) events
7. Transportation assistance





startHEALTHY

ISSUE 25

Welcome to Start Healthy magazine.

Start Healthy is a comprehensive guide to a healthier, happier life. This 48-page publication features articles on wholesome recipes, insight on fitness trends, adventurous travel ideas, mental wellness, and targeted facts in oral, heart, and brain health. Engaging articles and invaluable lifestyle advice makes Start Healthy magazine beloved by health and wellness enthusiasts, and those wanting to know more.

This magazine gives me the chance to stay in touch with all of the people I have had the pleasure to work with over the years. If you are interested in receiving your own free subscription of Start Healthy, please email or call me with your name and home address, and I will be sure to add you to my list. It is delivered to your home on a bi-monthly basis with no obligation.

Please feel free to share this issue with your friends, family, and colleagues. I would love to hear what they think of Start Healthy magazine, too.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Larry Walker



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The Gideon Group of North Texas



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Here's why you should purchase food that grows close to home.

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RELIEVE STRESS

written by: *rachel stevens*

with a Sound Bath

A warm soak in the tub can be relaxing, but that isn't the only kind of bath that can relieve stress. Another variety, a sound bath, harnesses the power of sound waves to produce a unique and meditative experience.

How it's practiced

Practitioners of sound baths manipulate sounds from various sources, such as Tibetan singing bowls, crystal singing bowls, gongs, chimes, and bells, to produce gentle sound waves at different pitches. During this process, you may be seated or lying down with your eyes closed.

Why it works

The sounds you hear during a sound bath can result in deeper, slower brain-wave patterns that allow your body to access its natural healing abilities. Today's digital noise of news, social media, and the like can overstimulates your brain

waves, which can evoke your body's stress responses. Sound baths expose you to frequencies that can invoke feelings of calm.

The rising popularity and results

When quarantining was a new concept at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people turned to new hobbies to find relief from the added stress and tension. As it turns out, people of all ages find comfort in sound therapy. The soothing, echoing sounds produced by the instruments are intended to help relieve stress, fatigue, and symptoms of depression.

This simple but beautiful craft is making its way into mainstream holistic treatment services, so consider trying it for the potential benefits to your overall well-being.



*start*HEALTHY



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Vegan Food *with a vision*

interview with: *deborah torres*
written by: *matthew brady*
photography by: *atlas monroe*



Inspired by a family health crisis, Deborah Torres founded her own food company, Atlas Monroe, which creates amazing vegan versions of foods like ribs and chicken. She discusses her mission to both provide healthy food and be a role model for people of color.

Tell us about your background. What was your upbringing like? Who inspired you? When I think about how I grew up, the first thing that comes to mind is that I was Black in a predominately Caucasian suburb, where I was consistently reminded that I was different from my peers. I was very ambitious and extremely hardworking because being successful was the only way that I could overcome my situation.

I skipped first grade, was a student in GATE (Gifted and Talented Education), graduated high school at fifteen, and got my first college degree at seventeen. Both my parents had full-time careers that consumed a large chunk of their

time, so my siblings and I grew up to be very independent and confident, knowing our parents weren't always going to be there emotionally to save the day. Seeing my parents work so hard to provide the best life and future possible for us will always be my biggest inspiration.

What led you down this path? After my father was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, my entire family went on a raw vegan diet for ninety days to help him get healthier and induce a lifestyle change. Although fresh produce in various forms can be refreshing, we experienced hunger pains, cravings, and grumpiness by the end of the first week.

So I started researching plant food textures and flavors, developing recipes, and making flavorful meals like raw vegan tacos, lasagna, nachos, pizza, burgers, and "chicken" nuggets. At the end of the ninety days, he was healthier! This inspired me to create a company founded on providing delicious, better alternatives to traditional meat products.

How did Atlas Monroe take off? I decided I wanted to do some local catering in addition to my full-time job, so I created a website. After seeing our website, someone emailed us about doing a major vegan festival in Chicago.

I convinced my family to drive our truck and trailer from California to Chicago; we ended up getting there just after midnight on the day of the event. It took us all night to set up, and we still weren't ready because we make our food entirely from scratch. My dad, who had grilled ribs at the Gilroy Garlic Festival for years, was set to grill our Applewood-Fired Ribs, which we were debuting. About fifteen minutes into the event, he said, "Look, Deborah!" I went to our booth window and saw that the line was as long as a football field. I couldn't believe it. The event organizers told us later that our fried chicken was the best they'd ever had, vegan or not.



You turned down a \$1 million offer on Shark Tank.

What led to that decision? My *Shark Tank* experience rocked me to the core. Given everything I had stated in my presentation—including unsolicited celebrities and influencers raving about our products, catching the attention of a huge national chain, having zero debt, and making \$250,000 in sales in our first year and a half in business—I was surprised and disappointed that they withdrew their initial offer. If I had accepted the replacement offer of \$1 million for the entire company, I would have lost everything I'd worked so hard for. All in all, the experience made me even hungrier and more determined.

What are your most popular foods? Which are your personal favorites? Are new foods waiting in the wings? We offer over ten different products, including Extra Crispy Chick'n, Applewood-Fired Ribs, Deep Fried n' Stuffed

Turkey, decadent cakes, and lots of signature sauces to pair with our offerings. We have many more delicious creations up our sleeves.

Personally, I love our bacon, Popcorn Chick'n, and Bomb Honee Mustard dipping sauce. A wrap made with those three foods, plus some lettuce and tomato, is one of the best things I've ever eaten.

Your company has made some significant progress in recent years, such as purchasing a warehouse in San Diego. Would you talk about that? Atlas Monroe was the first and only vegan company to be invited to the National Fried Chicken Festival and was named Best Fried Chicken Dish (even over real chicken) by Time Inc.'s Extra Crispy. The *Shark Tank* episode went viral, and we've been featured on many news sites and in many publications.



We've recently acquired a multimillion-dollar manufacturing facility, and our products are sold and shipped nationwide and are available in some restaurants. Our manufacturing plant has greatly helped us fulfill this demand, and it will continue to aid us as we expand into grocery stores and nationwide food service.

To date, there is no vegan chicken product that matches ours, and we are here to fill the space in disadvantaged communities by being available in all areas—not only in Beverly Hills but also in Watts. Healthier meat alternative products should be available to all.

What are your goals for the company? My short-term goal is growth. My ultimate goal is to take Atlas Monroe public with an IPO so my people reap the benefits of it. There's also a huge gap in the availability of vegan brands

in Black and Brown communities, and Black and Brown brands have few opportunities in the national vegan grocery space. Women founders also receive far less of the venture-capital funding than men do.

So I want to be the change I want to see in the world. It is time for us to thrive and receive equal opportunities and equity to prosper both in the vegan community and in communities of color across the spectrum.

You have accomplished so much on your journey so far. What does Atlas Monroe mean to you and to other potential entrepreneurs?

Atlas Monroe is so much bigger than me. As a Black woman repeatedly being told no and that I'm not good enough, I got to the point where I started doing what Simone Biles and so many other legendary women of color who've achieved the impossible do: readjust the crown they've tried to knock off me and build my own table to rightfully sit at the head of.

You do this by continuing to envision where you want to be and knowing in your heart that, with patience and endurance, you will get there. I plan to create a platform where women of color who have excellent ideas and exceed in execution can flourish, grow, and shine as they deserve to. I want our collective future to have a different story—one of equity, representation, and generational wealth.

For more info, visit atlasmonroe.com



THE BEST SUSTAINABLE *Lawn Alternatives*

For many homeowners, a lush lawn is a source of pride and a sign of dedication. However, caring for your lawn can take a lot of effort and can also negatively impact the environment. If you struggle to maintain your lawn or are looking to change up its appearance, these sustainable lawn alternatives will give your yard a fresh look that is sure to boost your curb appeal.

—
outdoors
—

written by:
nathan smith



The impact of *lawn care*

Everyone agrees that a well-maintained lawn looks terrific. But the Environmental Protection Agency reports these statistics that shed light on the environmental impact of lawn care:

- In the United States, gas-powered lawnmowers may contribute to as much as 5 percent of total air pollution.
- 12 percent of municipal waste comes from yard debris, such as grass clippings and tree branches.
- 30 percent of household water usage goes toward outdoor use, but it can be as high as 60 percent in dry regions.

Lawn *alternatives*

There are a variety of sustainable lawn alternatives to choose from, but selecting plants native to your area can help your yard thrive. Native floras flourish with the soil conditions, rainfall, and climate of your region and can stand up to local pests and diseases without the assistance of damaging pesticides.

Moss

Perfect for shady yards, moss grows well in any kind of soil and requires little to no weeding, fertilizing, or watering. There are various mosses to choose from, so consider mixing a few types for an everchanging carpet of color. While moss isn't as hardy as a turf lawn, it can stand up to moderate foot traffic. If you struggle to keep moss out of your yard, it might be time to embrace it.

Clover

Clover could be the plant for you if you have below-average soil quality, as it's a natural fertilizing agent. Clover takes nitrogen from the air and deposits it into the ground, creating an absorbant fertilizer that will benefit the clover itself and surrounding plants. Additionally, clover requires little to no maintenance, and allowing a clover lawn to bloom can attract pollinators, such as bees and butterflies.

Creeping perennials

Add low-growing creeping perennials, such as creeping thyme and creeping Jenny, for eco-friendly lawn replacements that create a tapestry of color. These plants can provide foliage throughout the year and bloom with fragrance and flowers in the spring and summer months.

Some creeping perennials are perfect for both full-sun and partial-sun areas, so you'll have a chance to pick and choose what works for your yard.

Wildflower meadow

If you're looking to cut regular mowing and watering out of your schedule, consider replacing your lawn with a wildflower meadow. These meadows are easy to grow, require less watering than grass, and provide beautiful scenery during blooming seasons. Best of all, you'll provide food sources for local wildlife. Keep in mind a wildflower meadow isn't suitable for high foot traffic or play areas for children or pets.

Ornamental grasses

You'll find a variety of ornamental grasses in different hues that require no mowing, need little fertilization, and thrive in a variety of soil conditions. They also become drought resistant once established. Some ornamental grasses grow a few feet high while others stay low to the ground. One drawback with ornamental grasses is that they don't allow for much foot traffic, making them an excellent option to pair with other lawn alternatives.

Trees

Replace portions of your existing grass with native trees to reap multiple benefits for your lawn and the ecosystem. Trees can help reduce your carbon footprint, as they absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. They can also help reduce your heating and cooling costs by providing shade in summer and protecting your home from cold winds in winter.

Food gardens

Create space for a garden to benefit the appearance of your yard while improving the culinary experience in your kitchen and lowering your grocery bill at the same time. You can experiment with a variety of produce in either a single large plot or a few smaller beds around your yard.

Functional areas

You can always replace portions of your lawn with areas specifically designed for dining and lounging, which may motivate you to spend more time in your outdoor space with loved ones. Don't forget to add some pathways made of stepping-stones or pavers with ground cover in between each one for a stylish look.

Growing tips

Once you choose a sustainable lawn alternative, you'll want to give your yard the TLC it needs to thrive. Try implementing some of these eco-friendly growing tips into your routine to help your new space succeed:

- Install rain barrels to collect stormwater runoff from your roof and gutters. You can use the fresh water to hydrate your yard and plants and reduce your environmental footprint. Make sure to check your local laws and regulations before installing.
- Start a compost pile to use as fertilizer for your lawn or garden. Your compost bin should contain a mix of green

materials, such as lawn clippings, weeds, and produce scraps, as well as brown materials, such as wood shavings and leaves.

- Use organic mulch like wood chips, leaves, or bark to help regulate soil temperature and retain moisture. As these organic materials break down, they provide nutrients to the soil.

By adding one of these sustainable options to your yard, you can have a new lawn that's much more exciting than watching grass grow.





Blue Mind for a **GREEN PLANET**

interview with: *dr. wallace j. nichols* **written by:** *matthew brady*

If you've ever been mesmerized by the ocean or calmed by a relaxing bath, you may have experienced the state called blue mind.

Dr. Wallace J. Nichols, who coined the term in his bestselling book *Blue Mind*, discusses the phenomenon's impact on people and our planet.

Have you always enjoyed being near water? When I was a kid, I stuttered and was shy. I was also adopted, so I had a lot of questions and confusion about things. As a result, I preferred to be underwater because you can't stutter underwater or be asked questions. That's probably why I became a marine biologist.

How do we know when we're experiencing blue mind? How can it benefit us? It's intuitive, but there's science behind it. I think the best comparison, although imperfect, would be with gravity. You may not know why gravity works, but you intuitively know it does. Likewise, you may know that being by the water makes you feel good without knowing why.

As far as benefits are concerned, blue mind may help you deal with stress, depression, and anxiety, and it can help boost creativity. Hopefully, by experiencing such benefits, we'll appreciate, protect, and restore our lakes, rivers, and oceans. You can put it to amazing use.

Is this a universal human condition? It is. It's found across all cultures, so it's an ancient idea. We may have deviated from it, but we're once again understanding its importance. We should keep this old tool in our well-being toolbox, in addition to therapies and pharmaceuticals, because it works. The clinical research shows that water in its various forms does good things for us.

Can people experience blue mind wherever they live? Yes, and I'm intentionally very ecumenical about it. Personally, I enjoy the ocean the most, but I also like creeks, lakes, rivers, rain, pools, and my bathtub. But even a postcard of a beach or a sound machine in your bedroom may change your neurochemistry to make you feel good.

Is it maximized the more the senses are involved?

That's a good question. I just described a few examples of very mild but effective blue mind. The other extreme, as you described, would be a full sensory-immersion experience, where you taste, smell, feel, and see the water all around you. But between the extremes, there's a wide spectrum of blue mind experiences, from swimming in a pool to taking a shower to walking around a neighborhood creek or pond. Even rain, ice, fog, and snow create blue mind because they're all forms of water.

Does shimmering water amplify blue mind?

I was actually talking to someone about this yesterday. There's a theory that humanity's original and most important shiny object is water, so our attraction to shiny things is tapping into our innate need to be around water.

What's the biggest barrier to experiencing blue mind?

I think it's people stopping themselves. And I say that being very aware of my own privilege—I've never been told that I can't go in the water because of my skin color, heritage, gender, or religion.

That said, if you want to experience blue mind, you will. The barriers are often perceptual. For example, some people fear the water. That can be overcome. But between the wild water, the water in our homes, the urban water and fountains in our cities, and the virtual water we create, anyone can find a source of blue mind.

The key is making this idea common knowledge and practice among eight billion people, which would be good for our health, the health of water, and the health of the planet.

Is blue mind especially helpful for people like veterans or first responders? Blue mind is not a silver bullet or standalone medical solution. However, research



indicates that blue mind can help as a supplement to whatever you're already doing to manage your anxiety, stress, or mild depression. As far as the groups you mentioned, they are running toward problems on our behalf daily. They often need help, and I think blue mind therapies can be extremely helpful. And, in some cases, even lifesaving.

How did your book come about? Years into my career, I started noticing that many other people also seemed to feel better when they were at or in the water. I realized that was significant since the feeling can dictate our recreation, careers, and even where we live, and I wanted to understand it better. I looked everywhere for books on the subject but couldn't find any.

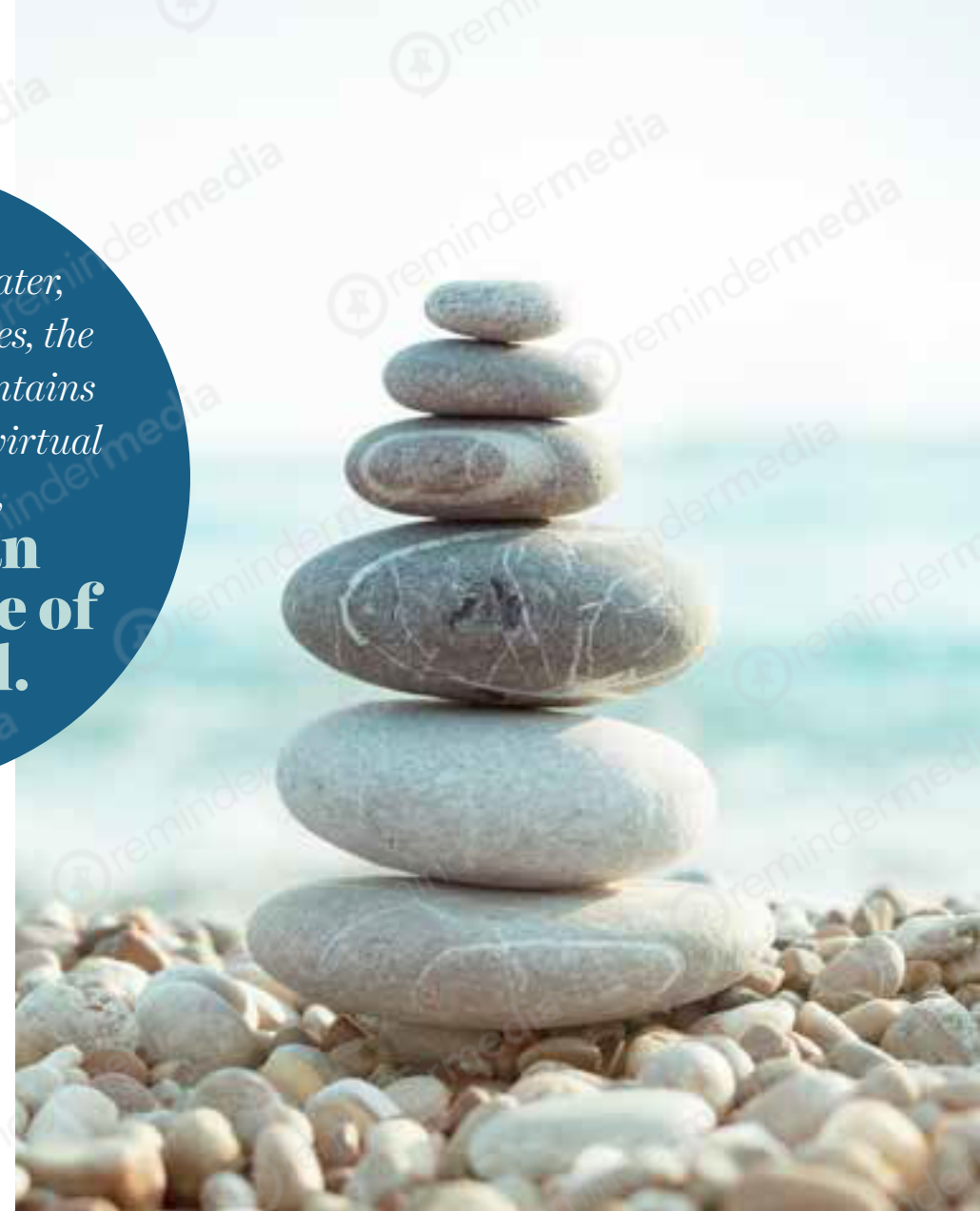
I then tried to get other people to write the book I wanted to read and failed. The final person I pitched it to was Dr. Oliver Sacks, the late neurologist. I'll always remember very clearly what he said: "It's a fine idea. You do it." So I did.

I'm glad I did because I hear a lot about *Blue Mind* impacting people's lives. For example, I remember one indigenous woman who was in a bad place until she read *Blue Mind*, which inspired her to rekindle a relationship with her river in New Mexico. She came to a book signing to share that story, and we both cried. Trained as a marine biologist, I wasn't emotionally prepared to be the recipient of so many amazing and powerful stories.

You've traveled extensively. How do you feel about the status of the earth's water? Broadly speaking, our value equation is broken. We undervalue our lakes, rivers, oceans, and groundwater. When we undervalue anything or anyone, bad things happen. I've seen it everywhere when it comes to water. It's not only the economic and ecological value but also the vast emotional value—that third "e" is usually left out.



*Between the wild water,
the water in our homes, the
urban water and fountains
in our cities, and the virtual
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**anyone can
find a source of
blue mind.***



Water may be economically valued for the services it provides and ecologically valued because we're taught to do so, but it's almost completely undervalued from an emotional health perspective. I'm optimistic that emphasizing this could go a long way toward fixing the overall problem and compelling decision-makers to protect and restore our bodies of water. It's an emergent story, especially since COVID began, that if we do our part and nature does its thing, these waters can be regenerated.

What can people do in their everyday lives to make this happen? My standard answer is this: wherever you live, you know what you want to do to help nature—just go do it. However, if you pushed me on it, I would say to get into your local body of water. If you realize there's a lot of junk in it, then it might inspire you to clean it up.

In fact, research shows that if you go to a body of water for emotional health benefits and find it cluttered by pollution, those benefits are drastically diminished. The same holds true

for, say, an unkempt front yard or a cluttered house. If you're on the open road with no other cars, it's a better experience than a highway with billboards and traffic.

Earlier, you mentioned common knowledge. Is such awareness a key to humanity achieving blue mind?

I'm driven by this idea of common knowledge and practice. There's a theoretical background to it that's important. When knowledge is private, collaboration is way down. When it's shared, collaboration goes up to 45 percent, and when it

is truly common knowledge, it's closer to an 85 percent collaboration level. So I'm betting on the idea that blue mind becoming common knowledge will be a powerfully transformative concept. I think the world could use more common knowledge we all agree on because there's so much contention over ideas. In contrast, blue mind is something that can bring us all together.

For more info, visit wallacejnichols.org

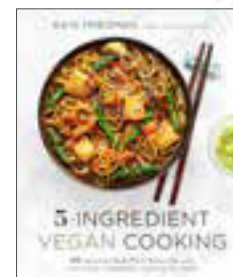
PLANT-BASED

cooking made simple

recipes and photography by: *kate friedman*



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5-Ingredient Vegan Cooking by Kate
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2021. Photo credit: Kate Friedman



These recipes from *5-Ingredient Vegan Cooking* by Kate Friedman show just how simple and delicious vegan cuisine can be.

ONE-POT ASPARAGUS and white bean soup

SERVES 4

measure

- 2 large bunches fresh asparagus, washed and trimmed
- 1 (14-ounce) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 (14-ounce) can full-fat, unsweetened coconut milk
- 1 cup roughly chopped yellow onion
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon roughly chopped garlic (see *Recipe Notes*)
- Fresh ground pepper, to taste
- 1 quart low-sodium vegetable broth

make

1. In a large stockpot fit with a steamer basket, add 1 to 2 inches of water and steam the asparagus for 5 to 7 minutes, until bright green. Rinse with cold water to stop the cooking process. Cut the tops from half of the asparagus and set aside for garnish.
2. Drain and dry the stockpot. Add the olive oil, turn the burner to medium and heat until shimmering. Reduce the heat to medium-low and add the onion and salt. Sauté until golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Increase the heat to medium and add the vegetable broth, cooked asparagus, cannellini beans, coconut milk and nutritional yeast. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 15 minutes, until the beans are soft. Using an immersion blender, blend the soup until smooth and creamy.
4. Stir in the lemon juice and garnish with the asparagus tops and pepper. Serve immediately.

Recipe Notes:

- No steamer basket? No problem! You can steam asparagus in the microwave. To do this, wrap the trimmed asparagus in damp paper towels and microwave on high for 3 minutes. Just be careful removing it from the microwave. The steam will be very hot!
- Two large cloves of garlic are about equal to 1 tablespoon of minced garlic.

SERVES 4

PENNE ALLA VODKA

measure

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic (See Recipe Note)
- 5 ounces tomato paste
- ¼ cup vodka
- 5 ounces full-fat, unsweetened coconut milk
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 1 pound penne pasta
- Fresh basil, torn (optional)

make

1. Add the olive oil to a large, deep-sided skillet. Turn the burner on to medium and heat the oil until shimmering. Add the onion and salt and reduce the heat to medium-low. Sauté the onion until it becomes golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Add the garlic and continue to sauté for 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Add the tomato paste and increase the heat to medium. Sauté the tomato paste until it becomes dark red, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Remove the sauce from the heat and add the vodka, coconut milk and nutritional yeast. Stir until combined and return the pan to the burner. Bring to a simmer and allow the vodka to cook off, about 30 minutes.
4. Cook the pasta in accordance with the package directions. Reserve 1 cup of pasta water. It can be used to thin the vodka sauce if necessary. If the sauce becomes too thick, add the pasta water ¼ cup at a time.
5. Add the cooked pasta directly into the finished sauce and stir to coat. Season with fresh basil, if desired.

Recipe Note:

- Two large cloves of garlic are about equal to 1 tablespoon of minced garlic.





SERVES 2

HERBY CHICKPEA and orzo salad

measure

- 1 (14-ounce) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed (see *Recipe Notes*)
- 1 cup dry orzo pasta
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- ½ red onion, finely chopped
- 1 English cucumber, diced (see *Recipe Notes*)
- ¼ cup fresh basil, washed and torn
- Fresh parsley and/or dill (optional)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Lemon zest, to taste

make

1. In a medium-sized saucepan, add the chickpeas and cover with water. Simmer until the chickpeas are tender, about 25 minutes. Rinse the chickpeas with cold water and refrigerate until ready for use.
2. Cook the orzo pasta according to the package directions. Chill in the refrigerator until ready for use.
3. Prepare the dressing by combining the olive oil and lemon juice.
4. Assemble the salad by combining the orzo pasta, chickpeas, red onion, cucumber and lemon dressing. Top with the basil and any other fresh herbs, if desired. Add the salt, pepper and lemon zest, to taste.

Recipe Notes:

- While you can use chickpeas directly from a can, I like to take the extra step of simmering them first as it makes them more tender.
- If you're food prepping this salad, make the chickpeas and orzo pasta in advance. That way they'll have time to cool before you put it all together.
- This recipe calls for an English cucumber. An English cucumber is a longer, slimmer version of the popular slicing cucumber. It's typically wrapped in plastic which eliminates the need for wax on the skin. The seeds are underdeveloped, making them less bitter than their counterparts. If you can't find an English cucumber, you can substitute a slicing cucumber. I recommend removing the skin before dicing it.

SERVES 2

DELICATA SQUASH FRIES

with lemon-garlic aioli

measure

- 2 delicata squash
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 tablespoon safflower oil
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup vegan mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 small clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest (optional)

make

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. Thoroughly wash each squash and trim the ends. There is no need to peel the squash. Place each squash on a trimmed end and carefully slice in half lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds.
3. Using a sharp knife, slice each half of the squash into thirds (widthwise) and then into thin “fries” about ½ inch thick.
4. Lay the squash fries out on a clean kitchen towel and sprinkle with the salt. Rest for 15 minutes. The squash will shed moisture, helping the fries to become crispy in the oven.
5. Pat the fries dry and toss them in the safflower oil. Lay the fries out evenly on a large baking sheet. Sprinkle with the pepper. Roast the fries on the middle rack, cut side down, for 25 minutes. Flip the fries and cook for 20 more minutes. Carefully watch the fries in the second half of roasting. Turn the baking sheet as necessary to avoid burning.
6. While the fries are roasting, prepare the aioli by combining the mayonnaise, lemon juice and garlic. Garnish with lemon zest, if desired.
7. Serve the squash fries immediately with the lemon-garlic aioli on the side.

Recipe Note:

- Like their Idaho potato counterparts, delicata squash fries don’t reheat well. These are best served right out of the oven. Don’t worry though, you won’t have leftovers.





written by: alexa bricker

THE BENEFITS OF

eating locally

food

Not too long ago, the world was made up of agrarian societies. Most people lived on, or near, a farm. They grew food themselves or purchased it from a neighbor. This resulted in a diet made up exclusively of what could be found or grown in their own backyard, which, in many cases, depended on factors like the time of year and weather conditions.

Fast-forward to today, and the way we acquire and even think about food is vastly different. A mom living in Michigan can buy a banana to put in her child's lunch box, and a couple dining at a restaurant in landlocked Kansas can enjoy a lobster dinner. The foods we eat are no longer dependent on our location or the season. While there are benefits to this expansion of the food market—for example, increased access to fruits and vegetables that are difficult to grow in an urban environment—there are also some negatives.

So it begs this question: How can the average person find a balance between eating a diverse array of fruits, vegetables, grains, and other whole foods without contributing to the cycle of mass food transportation? The answer lies in thinking old school and prioritizing your consumption of locally sourced foods.



Where should I *shop*?

“So much of the confusion in the world of nutrition is linked to how disconnected we are from our food,” says Stephanie Kay, a registered holistic nutritionist and author of *Red’s 5-Ingredient Meals* and *Bistro Box Cookbook*. “Shopping local not only helps you reconnect with your food but also inherently gives you the right nutrients at the right time of year, just because Mother Nature kind of works that way.”

One of the best ways to do this is by shopping at a farmers market, where local vendors sell foods that were likely grown, raised, harvested, or baked nearby. If you don’t have access to a farmers market, many grocers, both national chains and mom-and-pop stores, will often advertise locally grown products and highlight in-season produce via signage and special sales.

If you live in a location with limited access to locally sourced goods, you can make less-frequent trips to the closest market

or store that sells locally grown food, stock up, and preserve anything you don’t eat right away. “People are super skeptical about freezing food because there’s this myth that it diminishes the nutritional value, but it actually doesn’t in any aspect; it’s simply a method of preservation,” says Kay. Aside from freezing, other methods of preservation for both fruits and vegetables include pickling, canning, and drying, all of which can help you enjoy your locally grown foods longer. As a bonus, pickling or fermenting foods creates an abundance of probiotics—an added health benefit for your gut!

Also, don’t limit yourself to eating locally only when preparing food for yourself. A huge number of restaurants now source their food from local vendors and farms. Most restaurants will highlight this information on their website and when specific parts of a dish or entire meals on the menu are made with local ingredients, so be on the lookout when dining out too.

What should I *buy*?

When it comes to what you should be buying locally, produce is an obvious place to start. A quick internet search can tell you about your area’s growing season and what is likely to be available near you during certain times of the year. If you live in the Northeast, for example, carrots, cabbage, and broccoli grow abundantly in June through fall. In the Southwest, tomatoes, beans, and peppers are hardy enough to withstand the region’s hot, dry summers.

Try not to overthink it. Your farmers market will likely only carry what is in season, so shop with an open mind. If you always gravitate toward certain fruits and vegetables, ask your local farmer or grocer what they recommend this time of year. And if you’re looking to get creative, try experimenting with new ways of preparing old favorites. “We can get stuck thinking, ‘When I make pasta, it has to have this type of noodle and tomatoes.’ Maybe you can find a way to

incorporate something new, like asparagus, and a couple of months later find a way to incorporate squash or pumpkin. You're still using pasta as your base. Just alter what you're adding to it to include what's in season," Kay suggests.

Although produce is often the easiest local-eating route to take, it doesn't have to be the only one. Educate yourself on what other types of local food businesses are around you. For instance, perhaps there is a cheese shop nearby that sells cheese made from locally sourced milk or a butcher that supplies only locally raised beef or pork. You can commit to shopping locally for the majority of what you eat if you're strategic about it.

Who benefits from eating *locally*?

First and foremost, eating locally benefits you, the consumer, in a handful of ways. Your health benefits because you are fueling your body with fresh, wholesome foods that generally have a higher nutrient content since they are picked and consumed within a short time frame. When you eat what's in season near you, you don't have to worry so much about the quality and integrity of the products you're buying. Eating locally and seasonally also means you're consuming the different nutrients you need at different times of the year. For example, hearty foods like chard and root vegetables grow best in winter and are full of nutrients, such as vitamin D, that your body needs more of when there's less sun. Refreshing, water-dense fruits like watermelon and squash grow well in summer, when you need to replenish your body's water supply more quickly.

In addition to boosting your own health, eating locally boosts the health of your local economy. When you buy goods that need to be shipped from across the country or from overseas, your dollars don't always go back into your community. However, when you shop locally, you're supporting local

farmers and artisans who are your friends and neighbors and are helping to ensure the economy in your area thrives.

Finally, eating and buying locally has a big impact on the health of the environment. The food production industry is a huge contributor to the threat of environmental pollution. Most of the foods we buy have to travel more than 1,000 miles to get to our local grocery stores, and the trucks, planes, and trains they are shipped on don't often run on clean energy. So instead of buying a particular variety of apple that is shipped in from France, look for a variety grown in your area, or, at the very least, in your state. This will help cut wasteful transportation and lower your carbon footprint.

Eating locally may seem daunting if it's not something you're used to. But it doesn't have to be as challenging as it seems. Read labels, make good choices, and ask questions if you're unsure of where your food came from—everyone will benefit, including you.



written by: matthew brady

The *Ultimate* Sport



Sometimes the simplest of sports activities, such as having a baseball catch in the backyard, playing a game of HORSE on the basketball court, or tossing a Frisbee on the beach, can be the most enjoyable.

While the first two examples are associated with long-standing professional sports, the third is tied to an unheralded sport, Ultimate (or Ultimate Frisbee, as it's colloquially known). But that's been changing in recent years—Ultimate has been growing in popularity from the grade-school level to the pro ranks.

With the Ultimate tournament of the 2022 World Games scheduled for mid-July in Birmingham, Alabama, it's an ideal time to take a closer look at this spectacularly simple yet entertaining sport.

The Ultimate History

Ultimate has existed for over fifty years. Created by students at a New Jersey high school in 1968, the first formal high-school Ultimate game was played two years later. The sport spread to the college ranks, and the first intercollegiate game, between Rutgers and Princeton, was held in 1972.

The sport has come a long way since then. In 1975, it went international, and by the early 1980s, it was played competitively across the globe. For over two decades, Ultimate has been part of the World Games, a multisport event for non-Olympic disciplines, and it's under consideration for becoming an Olympic sport starting in 2028.

Today, there is an American Ultimate sports league, the American Ultimate Disc League (AUDL); a national governing

body, USA Ultimate; and an international sports federation, the World Flying Disc Federation (WFDF). It's estimated that there are more than 100,000 Ultimate players in over fifty countries. USA Ultimate alone has more than 63,000 members.

The Ultimate Workout

One of the most appealing aspects of this sport is its accessibility to all communities: all you need is a flying disc to play the game. But it's also a good workout.

Ultimate isn't a sedentary sport, especially on the college and pro levels. It requires stamina and athleticism—in fact, you can burn over five hundred calories an hour playing Ultimate.

Beau Kittredge, the Michael Jordan/Wayne Gretzky of the sport, has reportedly run up to twenty miles over the course of a game. A 2016 study by the American Council on Exercise concluded that Ultimate falls into the category of moderate-to-vigorous activity and provides the same benefits as an interval workout. When you play the game, you'll realize the action is nonstop and your cardio levels will be pushed.

The Ultimate Game

One reason college and pro players get a good workout is the length of the field. An Ultimate field is usually seventy yards by forty yards with a twenty-yard end zone, dimensions that are slightly smaller than an American football field but with larger end zones and a slightly narrower playing area.

The difference is, unlike their football counterparts, players stay on the field for offense and defense, much like soccer players do.

The seven-on-seven game begins with the "pull," which is like a football kickoff: one team flings the disc from its own end zone toward the opposing team waiting for it in its end zone. The receiving team then tries to advance the disc to the opponent's end zone.

Ultimate rules are generally simple, but keep in mind that some variations exist. The team on offense can pass the disc among themselves as often as they want, as long as each player follows the rules. Namely, the player holding

the disc can't walk or run with it (but can have a pivot foot as basketball players do) and must pass it to a teammate within ten seconds or it's a turnover called stalling. In addition, a turnover happens if the disc hits the ground, lands out of bounds, or is intercepted. On defense, double-teams and contact with an offensive player are illegal. While defending against an opponent holding the disc, a player counts to ten out loud, known as a stall count, to determine whether a stall infraction happens.

Finally, much like the best pickup games, there are no time limits. Traditionally, halftime occurs once a team reaches a certain score, usually nine, and a team wins once it reaches a score of seventeen.





The Ultimate Difference

Simply put, Ultimate doesn't play by the same rules as most other sports. Squads are mixed-gender, for example. More striking is the fact that sportsmanship—called Spirit of the Game in Ultimate circles—is the core principle of the sport.

This starts even before the game begins, as the teams themselves determine which team gets to pull the disc first, sometimes by even playing rock-paper-scissors.

And then there are the referees ... or lack thereof. That's right—the game is usually played without officials. Instead, an honor code is used; if you commit a foul against another player, you're expected to call it. If you do a stall count too quickly, expect a do-over. If there's a dispute, such as whether the disc hit the ground, another player in the vicinity with a good vantage point can make the decision. Mutual respect and good communication and conflict-resolution skills, are necessary qualities of each player.

Ultimate has come a long way from its humble beginnings to being an international sport featured in the World Games. In an often ultracompetitive, win-at-all-costs culture, it's ultimately a welcome reminder of why we love sports in the first place—for the accessibility, camaraderie, spirit of fair play, and love of the game.

For more info, visit **usultimate.org**



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FALL IN LOVE with Letchworth

written by: alexa bricker

New York State is known for its fair share of beautiful natural spaces, but not many people know that it's home to a jaw-dropping, Grand Canyon-like structure. This incredible gorge was formed over millions of years by the movement of the Genesee River, and, because of the gorge's size, it's often dubbed "the Grand Canyon of the East." You can explore all the grandeur of this canyon within the 14,427 acres of Letchworth State Park, located in the northwest corner of the state, about thirty-five miles south of Rochester.

LEARNING ABOUT LETCHWORTH

If you're looking to learn more about Letchworth's natural history before you set off into the park, there's no better way than by making a stop at the Humphrey Nature Center. The center explores the geology, animals, and plant life within the park. Each exhibit is designed to help visitors better understand what they are looking at when traversing through Letchworth's forests. Families with children will also love participating in the center's variety of youth programs and events, including an interactive lesson about the butterfly's life cycle, which takes place in its outdoor butterfly garden.

For a taste of the cultural and human history of Letchworth, the William Pryor Letchworth Museum, located near the Middle Falls area of the park, is a great place to learn more about the area's earliest inhabitants and its first settlers. The museum is named for the park's founder and modeled after his mission for preserving the



natural lands in the Genesee River Valley. Visitors can get a glimpse of what life was like when the area was relatively untouched and can see an array of archaeological artifacts uncovered there. History buffs will also enjoy a visit to the Parade Grounds, a Civil War-era training camp for soldiers.

THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF LETCHWORTH

Letchworth was established as a state park in 1906, and it welcomes more than 800,000 visitors each year to enjoy its abundance of outdoor and cultural activities. It is often touted as New York's most versatile park, and it's easy to see why. From hiking to white-water rafting to horseback riding and even touring the park in a hot-air balloon, the opportunities for exploration are seemingly endless.

Hitting the trails

Hiking and nature enthusiasts have no shortage of trails to conquer in Letchworth, and each trail offers its own exceptional view of the park. There are twenty-eight trails in total spanning sixty-six miles, and hikes range from easy quarter-mile walks to strenuous twenty-mile loops with steep inclines. The south section of the park offers the best view of the gorge and its three largest waterfalls, Upper, Middle,

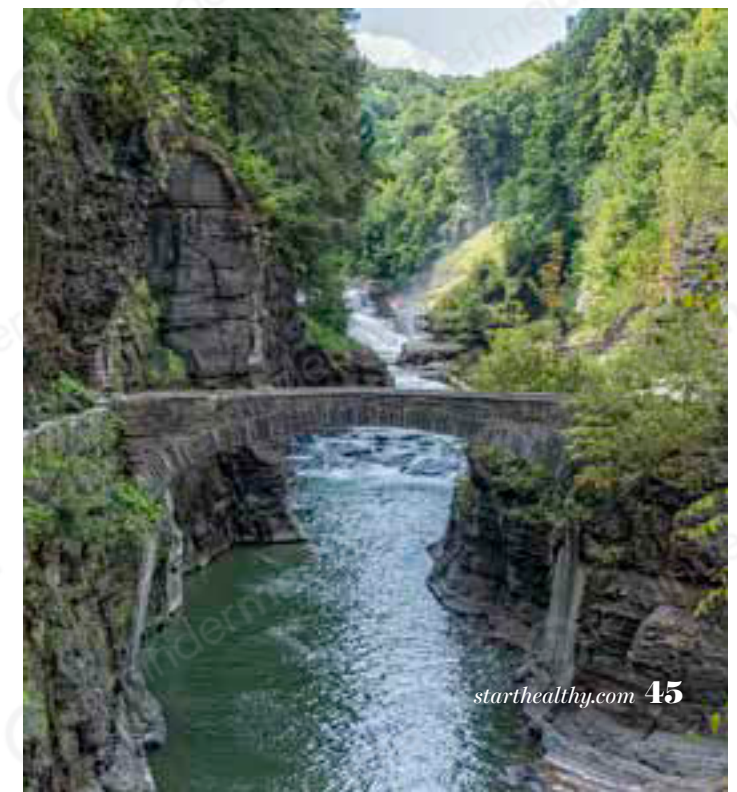
and Lower Falls, which can be accessed from the seven-mile Gorge Trail.

Going up

Another incredible way to see Letchworth is from the air, and two organizations offer hot-air balloon rides above the park, Balloons Over Letchworth and Genesee Falls Balloon. These hot-air balloon tours put riders directly over the gorge and falls for a spectacular bird's-eye view you can't get anywhere else in the park, so make sure you have your camera ready.

Rafts away!

For thrill seekers, the falls fed by the Genesee River make for the perfect environment for white-water rafting. In summer, the river tends to be lower and calmer than in winter months, so outfitters offer visitors the choice to kayak or raft for a smoother ride. Adventure Calls Outfitters is one such company visitors can enter the river through, and, in addition to its guided rafting and kayaking tours, it also hosts tours accompanied by an experienced naturalist who will point out wildlife and other highlights of the park that may be hard to spot with an untrained eye.



Wondrous wildlife

Speaking of natural beauty, Letchworth is home to a diverse array of animals and plant life that makes it a great destination for bird-watchers, botanical enthusiasts, and others who simply want to immerse themselves in the wild side of the park. While hiking, keep an eye (and ear) out for bald eagles, great blue herons, turkeys, black squirrels, and even the occasional black bear. The park's many wetland areas are also home to a variety of mammals and amphibians, including beavers and salamanders.

Extend your stay

Those looking for a longer stay should consider pitching a tent or renting a cabin within Letchworth's many campsites. There are several cabins available near the park's Lower

Falls area, putting visitors just a short distance from a variety of trail entrances and a spectacular view of the falls. The Highbanks Tent and Trailer Camping area can also accommodate overnight guests and is conveniently located between Letchworth's Perry and Mount Morris entrances.

You may have thought that a trip out West was the only way to see spectacular panoramas like those of the Grand Canyon. However, Letchworth State Park proves that there are plenty of incredible natural wonders in unexpected places. This hidden gem in New York State is one place you'll surely want to discover.

For more info, visit
parks.ny.gov/parks/letchworth



written by: rachel stevens

PACKING LIGHT IN 4 EASY STEPS

Are you prone to overpacking for travel? Read the tips below on how to pack light. By doing so, you can save money when flying, avoid the hassle of lugging around a stuffed suitcase, and create more room in your car.

1. MAKE YOUR PACKING LIST

Many people tackle their trip preparation by making a list, but you might be building your list incorrectly. You should review your itinerary before you begin packing so that your items are tailored to what you actually need versus what you think you might need. Ask someone else to review your list and suggest what can be cut. Another set of eyes can be helpful.

2. CHOOSE VERSATILE ITEMS

Overpacking is often the result of not choosing items carefully enough. Most items you pack should serve multiple purposes or be used for more than one day. For example, when you're packing shoes for a beach trip, pick one pair of closed-toe shoes and one pair of sandals.

3. ORGANIZE BY INVESTING IN GOOD LUGGAGE

High-quality luggage and luggage organizers are essential to packing efficiently. When you can see all your items neatly packaged in one place, you're more likely to feel as though you've packed enough. Consider purchasing a suitcase that meets the requirements for an airplane carry-on. Using a smaller bag forces you to prioritize what you pack.

4. WEIGH AND REVISE

Once you've gathered your belongings and packed them neatly, carry your suitcase or bag up and down a flight of stairs. If you're struggling, it's time to rethink what you've packed. You can also consider buying a personal luggage scale to ensure your luggage doesn't exceed the maximum weight for a carry-on.

Pack light to spend less money and energy on your luggage and more time having fun!

Accomplishments of the Gideon Group Easter 2021 - Present

We are proud of the work that has been done in collaboration with other organizations to elevate the conditions of many underserved in our community. Our warehouse team delivered over \$50,000 in items to some of our great community partners who we support, including:

Garland Independent School District Student Services • Caldwell Elementary • Lyles Middle School
Operation Community Cares • A Doves Transitional House • Free Man House • Blessed House • Silver Linings • GLOWS

CALDWELL ELEMENTARY END OF SCHOOL DISTRIBUTION Number of families served 250

Gideon Group partnered with the dedicated Teachers and Staff of Caldwell Elementary School in Garland, TX, and provided gifts to students and their families. Thank you to the Teachers and Staff at Caldwell Elementary Schools for partnering with Gideon Group to create a amazing event.

Wednesday June 3, 2021



COPE EVENT Number of Families Served 81

1 in 5 children in America live at or below the poverty line. These numbers should disturb us, yet statistics can have a numbing affect. The Cost of Poverty Experience (COPE) is a 2.5 hour immersive experience that offers you an opportunity to gain a glimpse into the lives of families in our communities who face poverty every day.

Saturday November 6, 2021



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The
Gideon
Group
of North Texas

Front of Tear Out Card 2



MOTIVATION
IS THE DESIRE TO DO THINGS.

It's that intangible force that drives you to wake up before dawn to pound the pavement instead of lounging around the house all day. It's what you need in order to set and achieve your goals.

Tear out this motivational quote, and place it somewhere as a daily reminder to keep pushing forward toward what you want to accomplish in life.



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The Gideon Group of North Texas



The Gideon Group
of North Texas



REALTOR
YOUR OPPORTUNITY

Back of Tear Out Card 2



If you can't fly, *then run.*
If you can't run, *then walk.*
If you can't walk, *then crawl.*

But whatever you do,
**YOU HAVE TO KEEP
MOVING FORWARD.**

—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Larry Walker

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Family Success Stories

Meet Mike, Courtney and kids who recently were able to move into their new apartment with the help of Transcend's rapid re-housing assistance program (Transcend Director; Haphen, second from the right) and additional support from the Gideon Group of North Texas (Founder; Larry Walker on far right). A relationship that has spanned over 12 years between Gideon Group founder Rev. Larry Walker and this family has given considerable and consistent hope for this couple and their children. A mental health diagnosis has not been a destroyer of the bright future that lies ahead with the support of people who will walk along side them for the long haul.

Congratulations family!



Larry Walker, Founder and CEO

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