



Raveen Arora, sharing his thoughts and values with Great Hearts' third graders.

Arora Shares Values with Great Kids at Great Hearts

by Martie Cencki, Hackberry Creek Resident

Dozens of third graders at Great Hearts Irving Lower School were in for an experience on an all new level February 28 when Hackberry Creek resident, Homeowner Association Alternate Board Director, and 2021 Nobel Peace Prize nominee Mr. Raveen Arora paid them a special visit.

Once the excitement of having a special guest speaker and news cameras present was over, the children listened intently as Arora spoke about his *Think Human* initiative and recalled some of his experiences growing up in India. His youth was vastly different from what most young people encounter today: meeting and working with Mother Teresa, the opportunity to meet and speak with Martin Luther King Jr. during his visit to India in 1959, and a life of poverty and deprivation that most children in the United States today cannot imagine.

“This opportunity to meet and speak with these students was so special,” Arora said. “For one thing, my granddaughter Zyra was among the third graders present, so she was able to hear this directly from me to her generation—what grandparent wouldn’t love that! But equally important was reaching all these children at an age when many of their values are still being shaped.”

Arora talked about giving back in life, encouraging humane and civil conversations, and being a productive member of society. He reached out to them, sharing his thoughts about

learning to listen to others, taking responsibility for one’s actions, and treating everyone with dignity and respect.

“I feel like I really connected with these children,” he said. “In spite of the differences in age, background, and culture, they listened, and I believe they learned. And they were a lot of fun to be with!”

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The staff of Great Hearts Irving Lower School were appreciative too. The Lower School Headmaster, Ms. Marcy Finn, sent out a letter to all parents sharing some of the high points of Arora’s presentation and asking them to follow up with the children to reinforce the ideas that were presented.

“Throughout the month of March, I ask you to take Mr. Arora’s words to heart and work to cultivate a spirit of service in your household,” Finn wrote. “Consider volunteering at a shelter, going to the park and picking up trash before playing, bringing a meal to a friend or neighbor, visiting a retirement home, writing thank you letters

to first responders, or simply serving around the house by helping out with chores—maybe even some extra ones. By spending more time serving others in our homes, our neighborhoods, and at school, we cultivate civility in our relationships and community, and we help our children grow into increasingly great-hearted citizens.”

Many of these students live in Hackberry Creek. Great students, great residents, great hearts!