

Arya Samaj of Greater Houston volunteers serve Interfaith Ministries' Meals on Wheels on Thanksgiving Day

By Siddhant Arora (ASGH AYM)

November 29, 2018



"Volunteering is only as successful and cheerful as every person wants it to be."

A chilly, yet cheerful, morning was set on Thanksgiving day, the 22nd of November, as more than 90 of ASGH's AYM (Arya Yuva Mandal) students, alumni, and parents rose bright and early at 6:00 AM and made their way to the First Presbyterian Church of Greater Houston and 50 miles away to the Wayne Johnson Center, La Marque, near Galveston, to help spread the true spirits of Thanksgiving among the 4200 seniors of the greater Houston area.

Each and every year, these members of ASGH volunteer without fail at Interfaith Ministries' Meals on Wheels service, which consists of several steps: setting up the tents to distribute food to volunteers, packaging and combining cold and hot meals and distributing them to drivers, and delivering the food out to the seniors. This year, AYM helped with just the first two, a little different from what they have done in past years. Instead of delivering the hot & cold meals to each senior home, the AYM youth and parents proved a formidable force in setting up the area and making sure everything ran flawlessly. Service began with a Buddhist monk reciting a prayer to hundreds of volunteers. Volunteers tackled managing the parking flow as more and more deliverers arrived and others helped pass out routes and hot and cold meals alike to each of the

drivers as they made their pass through the tents. Throughout the entire four hours, there remained not a single idle hand nor a face without a smile as everyone focused to allow for such a large and successful event to take place. 4400 meals were distributed out in the 2 locations by volunteer drivers that delivered to the needy Seniors to bring them extra holiday cheer along with traditional Thanksgiving meals!



The hours were spent in great fun as everyone talked and interacted with everyone else; there was music playing in the background with popular radio stations providing live coverage as people handed out meals to the drivers. One of the greatest parts of such an event was that everyone was there for one main reason: to help spread the goodwill of everyone's hearts in these holiday hours. It would have not been possible to accomplish this without the help of each and every individual volunteer there.

As the hours came to close, all the AYM youth found themselves working together to clean and pack up the entire lot and return it back to its original place. After gathering

for the annual group photo, they were let off with a thought: "Volunteering is only as successful and cheerful as every person wants it to be." With this in mind, we happily believe that the AYM group will be back next year to help once again for this great cause.