

IMPACT HERO FINALIST



Felicia Flores

Program Manager
Indus Communities | Houston, Texas



Inspiring Hope in Houston

Hard-working. Compassionate. Generous. Driven. When asked to describe Felicia Flores, these were just a few of the words that bubbled to the surface. With a deep history of community service and nonprofit support, her current position with the Indus Cares Foundation has perfectly positioned her to be a catalyst for change and human flourishing.

Although Felicia has only been in her current role since September 2022, her drive and desire to help others has been a constant thread throughout a career spanning various industries. Because whether she was working in the restaurant space, the financial sector, or healthcare, she was spending her free time invested in community support and service – volunteering, fundraising, and performing – to raise money for many different nonprofit organizations.

There's a saying, "Life doesn't come with a manual; it comes with a mother." And because Felicia's mother is at the heart of her Indus Cares success story, it's an adage that seems to hold.

"In May 2022, my mom, Anna Duarte, Corporate Receptionist at Indus Communities, sent an email [about a position] she felt was what I had been searching for – the perfect fit for me," said Felicia. "I finally sent my resume at the end of August 2022 and started with Indus Cares in September 2022. I guess sometimes moms do know best!"

And guess what? Her mom was exactly right; it's been the perfect fit.

A Culture of Caring

Founded in 2013 by the owner of Indus Communities, Ajay Gupta, the Indus Cares Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to supporting advances in medical care, health and wellness education, and literacy for underserved children in the Houston community.

Their work primarily focuses on 38 Indus properties within nine Houston zip codes where many low-income families and refugee status seekers live; their needs are significant. Felicia's role as the Program Manager for Indus Cares is to determine the challenges residents face and then coordinate new and established programs that match Indus' corporate and charitable values.

To date, her efforts have made a tremendous impact. Although she has only been in her position for a short time, she has quickly learned the needs of the multifamily communities Indus serves and works tirelessly to bridge gaps. As a result, the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Indus communities she supports have improved.



Standing in the Gap

Additionally, Felicia takes immense pride in her work. Where others might see problems, Felicia sees people. In many ways, this makes her unique because her daily routines aren't about applying generic programs and patches. Instead, she approaches each community, family, and individual with a singular focus and provides compassionate attention to the unique issues at hand.

Whether she is ordering school supplies for residents' children, working with food banks to provide groceries to those who can't afford a meal, organizing mobile dental clinics, providing English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, or coordinating donation drives, her care and concern for the people she serves is evident to all who know and work with Felicia.

And for those in need, she provides hope, support, and opportunity with open arms, a welcoming smile, and compassionate care. Regardless of the project, Felicia ensures that those she helps leave with dignity, feeling valued and seen.



“With her boundless compassion and tireless efforts, Felicia provides an inspiring example of selfless and generous community service. Her dedication to making the world a better place through volunteering has left an indelible mark on the hearts of many.”

As one person shared, “During lunch, she invited me to color paper bags that would later be filled with lunches for others; it was an eye-opening experience to see her passion for making the world a better place.”

A coworker added: “In a recent meeting, she pushed hard for our corporate office to start accepting donations for many of the items residents often need (i.e., food, clothing, furniture). She inspires not only me but also many others around us on a daily basis.”

A Heart for Service

When it comes to helping people, “No” isn’t a word Felicia often uses. And when she says “Yes,” she is all in — fully committed and fully present. So, the list of volunteer activities and events Felicia has helped organize is not small. While certainly not comprehensive, the list below provides a snapshot of her unwavering commitment to community service:



- ★ **Adventist Community Services:** Through this partnership, Felicia has helped make a positive impact by connecting residents to services, such as health fairs, holiday drives, and summer camps.
- ★ **Bilingual Educational Institute ESL Classes:** For many Indus residents, English is not their first language. So, they partner with the Bilingual Educational Institute to provide free ESL classes to residents. Felicia tries to find which properties might benefit the most from these classes and then schedules classes onsite for comfort and ease of access.
- ★ **Houston Integrate Women's Association (HIWA):** Felicia has participated in workshops for Afghan families, empowering them with essential life skills and English language proficiency.
- ★ **Legacy Community Health:** Legacy is a nonprofit, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that caters to a diverse range of patients, many of whom face financial challenges in affording quality healthcare. Felicia has been integral to Legacy's fundraising efforts for many years, specifically supporting HIV/AIDS services.
- ★ **Second Servings:** Working with this Houston nonprofit, Felicia helps set up, train, and distribute pop-up grocery stores to address local food insecurity. She spends countless hours each week making sure these "stores" are designed well and thoroughly organized so those who need to participate can do so with dignity. As she often says, "No one wants to stand in line to get free food."
- ★ **Social Motion Skills Learn 2 Work Program:** Social Motion Skills is a program of The Center for Pursuit that specializes in working with individuals with mild to moderate autism, Asperger's, ADHD, social anxiety, and similar social cognitive and developmental disabilities. The Learn 2 Work initiative provides program participants with valuable work experience.

- ★ **Texas Children's Hospital Mobile Clinics:** Her passion for children's well-being led her to become involved in these mobile clinics, ensuring that children (birth to age 18) in her communities receive essential healthcare services, including free vaccinations.



To say the Houston community has benefitted from Felicia's passion for service would be too simple a statement. Her impact echoes throughout the greater southwest Houston area in myriad ways, both big and small.

One person shared, "Felicia is an example to follow in our community. She will always go above and beyond to help everyone around her, and the great thing is that it all comes from the heart. She has brought many smiles and memories to a lot of our residents."



Be a Difference Maker

While there’s only one Felicia, we all have a part to play in making our communities the best they can be. But, it can be difficult to know how to help or where to start when the needs across many of our communities are so vast. Quite frankly, it’s easy to become paralyzed by problems that appear too large to fix.

However, Felicia shares these words of wisdom and encouragement for those looking to be a difference maker: “It doesn’t matter what you do or how big or small your effort may be; the important thing is just to start.”

In her 20 years of community service, she has come to believe that people — regardless of financial status or ethnicity — all struggle at some point with at least one of these things: healthcare, food insecurities, and education.

“So, every day, be thankful for what you have and go make a difference in someone’s day,” says Felicia. “To the person you help, it will leave a smile on their face, but it will leave a smile in your soul.”

Ajay Gupta’s heart behind the Indus Cares Foundation is this: “When you lift up a community, it raises everyone.” And Felicia Flores is doing just that. She is a difference maker, using her gifts and talents for the greater good to bring hope, support, and opportunity to those in need.



About Felicia:

Family is everything to Felicia, and in addition to her mom, she counts her dad and sisters as some of her biggest cheerleaders. She is a proud Texas Tech University graduate, but as a native Houstonian, she loves her city and holds a genuine passion for the Houston Astros. In fact, she is currently investigating how she can get involved with the Astros’ charitable endeavors.

Fun fact: *This ain’t her first rodeo! Felicia has a long-standing history with Texas rodeo. For over 20 years, she’s participated in the Houston Rodeo Championship Cook-Off with the Holy Cow Cookers professional BBQ competition team — currently, as the team captain — and was also selected to be on the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo’s Speaker’s Committee where she visits schools in low-income areas to share Texas history, rodeo fun facts, agricultural info, and more. She’s also the State Vice President of the Texas Gay Rodeo Association (TGRA), a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to elevating the image of women and men in rodeo; to date, TGRA has donated more than \$2.7million to various Texas charities.*

To learn more about the Indus Cares Foundation, visit induscares.org.

Written by Trisha Sheffield, Grace Hill Content Marketer

Grace Hill’s Impact Hero Awards Program recognizes individuals who go above and beyond to help others and make a difference in their local community. Learn more.