



In July, Wanda Ashworth-Valencia will be stepping down as West Homestead Site Director and moving to be closer to her family in South Carolina. Below are some frequently asked questions regarding her transition.

1. Where will you live?

My husband and I have purchased property in a small town called Adams Run, 20 miles south of Charleston. The property is within a few hours of my mother, all my children and my grandchildren. We hope to keep our home here for at least a year so my husband, Tony, who is in Real Estate, can complete some pending commercial real estate deals.

2. What are you most proud of from your time in West Homestead?

I am most proud of our students. It gives me great joy to know that I was able to accomplish what I intended to do-- raise up indigenous leaders to take my place who have a strong love for the Lord and for this community. The nine graduates of our program that are on staff with us at West Homestead are a living reminder of my time here.

3. Is your move related to the TML Merger?

You might remember that I was the one to approach the Pittmans about a potential merger. Prior to 2015, I was juggling too many responsibilities and I knew it could affect the health of the ministry long-term. I am confident the merger was the right decision for this ministry and for me. Without the merger, I wouldn't feel confident to step away to be closer to family.

Because of this partnership, we are serving more children and youth and making a bigger impact! Just as the merger was a strategic decision, so is my decision to transition out of the site director role. I feel God called me to LOVE the generation of children and youth that now serve in leadership positions. Now I have a stirring in my soul to let them lead and SOAR!

4. What else encourages you as you look back over your time in West Homestead?

I am pleased to leave a legacy that continues a spirit of collaboration. So much of our impact in West Homestead happened through partnerships. From the support of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Florida CBF, Helen's Hope Foundation, Ocean Reef Community Foundation, Kiwanis, and partner churches, our ministry made a deep impact in this neighborhood.

That collaborative spirit also allowed me to open our doors to other ministries that blessed the community. During my time here, several organizations shared space in our building, which allowed them to grow. From our longest partner, Open Door Health Center to our current continuing partner, Catalyst Miami's satellite office and including We Count, We Care, and City Life KIX – all of these organizations are still strong community assets. It makes my heart happy to see that spirit of collaboration continue as Wellspring Christian Counseling Center opened a satellite office inside our building this year.

5. Is there any animosity in your leaving?

Jason and Angel have been wonderful partners in ministry. We worked together even before the merger, sharing prayer concerns, encouraging each other, and I have been blessed to work more closely with them the past 2

years. I have learned a great deal from both of them and consider them friends. They have been praying through this decision with me, praying for the highest good for me and the ministry. There is no tension or animosity among us and there was NO PRESSURE from them for me to leave. They both encouraged me to stay, but understood and respected my desire to be closer to my family.