



RCMA HOY

R-Day
February 15th
Don't miss it!

We Can Make
A World of
Difference

Helping Our Youth



JANUARY 1995

OUR MISSION: Helping Parents Restart, Giving Kids a Head Start, Helping Staff Develop

FROM THE DESK OF BARBARA

I want to share two stories with you.

Both happened in December. I called a county office in Hillsborough and left a message with a secretary. When she heard my name, she said, "Barbara, don't you remember me? I'm Maria. I used to work for RCMA years ago."

I really didn't remember Maria but when she told me in what program she worked and what she did, I did remember.

She then went on to tell me, "You know, if it weren't for RCMA, I wouldn't have this job with the county. RCMA hired me when no one else would."

"Because I was a former farmworker, even though I had the skills, no one would give me a chance. But RCMA did and I'm convinced having that on my resume is what helped me get this job. I'm forever grateful."

I thanked Maria and felt really good about what she said and what her life has become.

The second experience was in a classroom of four-year olds. A little boy came up to the teacher who was talking to me and said, "Ms. Karrie, Rodney pushed me."

The teacher said quietly, "Go



Photo By GERARD LAMBERT

ANDREW CENTER STAFF: From left to right: Blanca Gorena, Teacher, Melissa Martinez, Teacher Trainee, Maria Mata, Teacher Trainee, Edelmira Valle, Teacher, Mary Tate, Education Coordinator, and Macrina Vega, Center Coordinator in this Florida City center. Among them they have around 25 years experience with RCMA.

tell Rodney what we do with our hands." The child turned, went over to Rodney and said, "Rodney, we keep our hands to ourselves." Then they went about playing.

What that shows is what a fantastic job our staff do with our children. Using words instead of fists to settle problems. What a difference that will make in their future.

I hope these stories help you start your New Year realizing all of us make up RCMA and we are making a real contribution to the future.

DEL ESCRITORIO DE BARBARA

No quiero compartir dos historias con ustedes.

Ambas ocurrieron en diciembre. Llamé a una oficina del condado en Hillsborough y dejé un mensaje con la secretaria. Cuando ella escuchó mi nombre, me dijo, "¿Barbara, no me recuerdas? Yo soy María. Yo trabajé para RCMA hace varios años.

La verdad es que yo realmente no le recordé en ese momento, pero cuando me comentó acerca del programa y de lo que hacía, entonces recordé.

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Luego María procedió a relatarme, "Sabe, si no hubiera sido por RCMA, yo no tuviera el trabajo que tengo actualmente con el condado. RCMA me empleó cuando nadie mas lo hizo.

"Debido a que yo era una trabajadora agrícola, aunque tuviera el entrenamiento, nadie me dió la oportunidad. Pero RCMA lo hizo, y estoy convencida de que el hecho de tener previa experiencia con RCMA es lo que me ayudó para conseguir éste trabajo. Estaré por siempre agradecida."

Le dí gracias a María sintiendome muy bien acerca de lo que ella dijo y de lo que ella ha conseguido en su vida.

La segunda experiencia fue en un salón de niños de cuatro años. Un niño se acercó a la maestra, la cual estaba hablando conmigo, y dijo, "Ms. Karrie, Rodney me empujó."

La maestra le respondió en voz baja, "Vé y dile a Rodney que hacemos con nuestras manos." El niño, volteó y caminó hacia Rodney, y le dijo, "Rodney, mantengamos nuestras manos para nosotros. Luego, continuaron jugando.

Lo que ésto demuestra es el fantástico trabajo que nuestro personal desempeña con nuestros niños. Usando palabras en vez de puños para resolver problemas. Que gran diferencia lo que ésto hará en su futuro.

Espero que éstas historias les ayude a empezar el año nuevo sabiendo que todos formamos RCMA y que estamos contribuyendo al futuro de una manera muy importante.

Traducido por STELLA LAMBERT

APPLAUSE

NORTH REGION

N. Hillsborough/Polk Area

Hats off to Chris Olivares, son of Noemi Olivares, Plant City Migrant Head Start Center Coordinator.

Chris appeared in a photo in the December 20 issue of the Tampa Tribune newspaper with his fourth-grade class. Their project was painting a map of the United States on the basketball court.

Chris was quoted as saying, "Learning about other places helps us to understand the people who live there. Also, if you bought a plane ticket and didn't know where you were going, you would seem pretty silly."

Smart boy!

Ruskin/Wimauma/Palmetto Area

Congratulations to Ana Andrade, Lead Teacher at Wimauma Infant Migrant Head Start, who recently received her G.E.D.

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Juan Calderon, Assistant to the Hillsborough County Dropout Prevention Program Director for the past four years, graduated in December from the University of South Florida. Juan received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminology and Spanish. Juan juggled studying with his full-time work and still finished in five years. That is a tremendous accomplishment!

Juan plans to pursue a career in law enforcement with a great desire to continue helping the local community. Juan is very appreciative of the support RCMA gave him while he was seeing his dreams become reality. Be sure to congratulate Juan if you see him.

SOUTH REGION

Highlands/Hardee Area

Ninfa Gomez, a Teacher at Fred Dennis Child Development Center, gave birth to Diana on December 16. A true holiday blessing.

HAPPENINGS

SOUTH REGION

Immokalee Area

Welcome to the following new staff: Awilda Torres, Teacher Trainee and Marie Gillot, Health Coordinator, both of Farmworker Village A Child Development Center; Ines Brophy, Education Coordinator, and Rosita Soto, Teacher Trainee, of Farmworker Village B and C, and C, respectively; Teacher Trainees Tiffany Koch and Gloria Miguel, and Lucy Rodriguez, Outreach Worker, of Immokalee Child Development Center Pre.

NORTH REGION

Pasco/Lake Area

Welcome to Sonia Gonzalez, the new Outreach

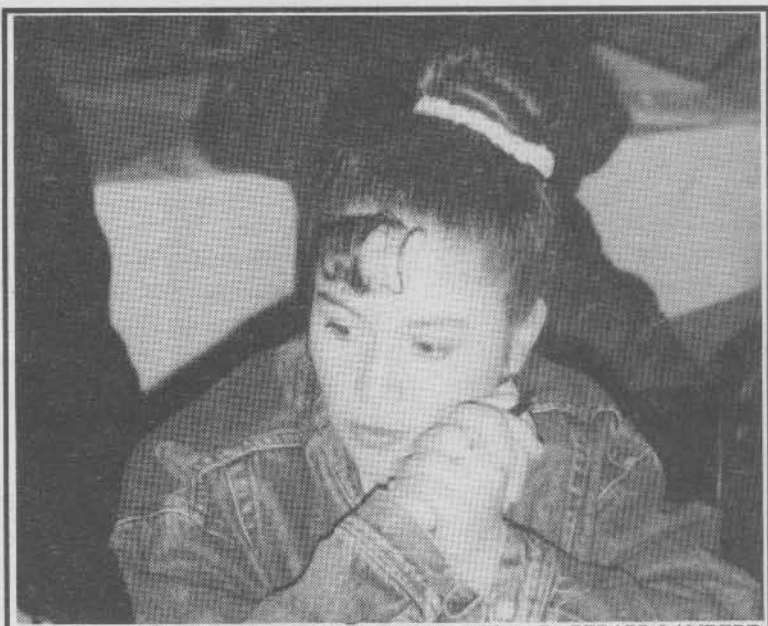


Photo By GERARD LAMBERT

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Congratulations to Susana Zamora, the Acting Center Coordinator of Indian River Early Education Program which opened in January. Susana began with RCMA as a Teacher Trainee in October 1992 and later became a Teacher. We applaud Susana for her proud achievement and wish her good luck in this new challenge.



Photo By GERARD LAMBERT

LEARNING A LOT: Faye Sandoval (left), the Assistant Center Coordinator of Wimauma Infant Migrant Head Start, and Gloria Young, the Assistant Center Coordinator of Migrant Education Center, Ruskin, at the recent North Region Training in North Redington Beach.

Worker/Family Support Assistant at Dover Infant Migrant Head Start.

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Congratulations to the following staff at Mascotte Migrant Head Start for proudly achieving their Child Development Associate Credential: Lisa Bocardo, Maria Cruz, and Maricela Romero. They are role models for others to follow.

N. Hillsborough/Polk Area

Congratulations to Elliot Gonzalez, the new Family Support Specialist at Parkview Village Child Development Center in Haines City.

Ruskin/Wimauma/Palmetto Area

Welcome goes out to Pauline Andrews, the new Health/Disability Coordinator at Wimauma Infant Migrant Head Start.

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Josie Gracia, Education Coordinator, and Veronica Dubois, Outreach Worker, of Ruskin Infant Center are building bridges with the elementary school.

Ruskin Elementary began offering trainings for parents on such topics as behavior management and literacy for children. When Josie and Veronica received a flyer on these trainings, they approached the school about the possibility of RCMA staff providing the same classes in Spanish. They met with the school psychologist and other officials and got the go ahead. The school is providing the space and materials, while RCMA is doing the Spanish instruction.

Great initiative on their part. Fifteen parents attended the first session.

RCMA Offers Tuition Assistance: Staff Seize The Opportunity

RCMA and Western Carolina University offer last year's students the challenge of the college-level Advanced Family Services Program through classes and research with the opportunity to obtain 15 credits.

In addition, new students are attending the Basic Family Services Program and will receive nine college credits upon successful completion of this five-month class and fieldwork.

Applause goes out to all of the following staff who set goals for themselves to continue their education: Angie Herrera, Guadalupe Rubio, Gloria Padilla, Lourdes Villanueva, Teresa Salazar, Rosa Martinez, Juanita Garcia, Noemi Olivares, Maria Dragustinovis, Luz Medina, Evelyn Soto, Rosalinda Arevalo, Teresa Robinson, Veronica Artega, Gloria Johnson, Cristina Rincon, Elva Rodriguez, Irma Chappa, Paula Vela, Lisa Pough, Aurora Maldonado, Noemi Aponte, Rosalyn Chisolm, Lucy Garcia, Lynn Russ, Pete Cade, Maria Avelos, Hilaria Cuevas and Bertha Hooks.

COMING EVENTS

Feb. 15 - R-Day, Statewide.

Feb. 15 & 16 - AC/PC Leadership Retreat, Cedarkirk, Lithia.

Feb. 22 - Migrant Head Start Parent Policy Committee Meeting.

Feb. 28 - Regular Head Start Parent Policy Council Meeting.

STATE OFFICE NEWS

George Zartman, formerly the Senior Fiscal Officer, is leaving after four years of dedicated service to the organization.

George never hesitated to lend a hand to any project when asked. For example, last year when fundraising was going on for the Wendell N. Rollason Scholarship Fund, without hesitating George contacted companies and helped raise a few thousand dollars.

His belief in the RCMA mission was obvious through his actions. And George's future plans include continuing to share the importance of this mission of assisting farmworker families.

George plans to be a fiscal consultant. Further, don't be surprised if you see him moonlighting as a drummer in a contemporary Christian rock band.

George's commitment, his hard work, and sense of humor will be missed. We wish George the best with all his future plans.



Photo By GERARD LAMBERT

LENDING A HAND: George Zartman helping with the cleanup in Homestead following the devastation caused by Hurricane Andrew in August 1992.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Hoy,

I wanted to share with you some of the events in December as they related to R-Day.

Fred Dennis Child Development Center had a parent meeting during which I said, "R-Day is coming." A parent across the circle added "and that means Reading Day!" She then proceeded to give a report on what she knew about R-Day from attending a parent conference in Orlando the previous weekend. A little fire started.

RIF distribution went on at Bowling Green one afternoon. The preschool books were laid out on a table while the kids were on the playground. The kids came back in and descended on the table like honey bees on clover blossoms. They were buzzing and crawling over each other to get just that one special book.

The afterschool program in Bowling Green was just as excited to see the new books. We let them look through the books for an hour before they had to select just one to take home.

A couple of us read books out loud in different corners of the room. One boy fell asleep while listening to a story and he slept in the easy chair for over an hour.

My group of six kept getting more books for me to read. A fourth grader said that he might read to the younger kids in the future. The one boy who is always testing the limits came over and pretended that he wasn't listening even though he was standing still behind the circle.

All day I kept thinking that I should have had a camera, but the best moment was at 6 p.m. that night when I stopped at a convenience store in Bowling Green. Trucks and picking crews flowed through the parking lot. Tired men and women stood in line to pay for gas or purchase a snack.

The lights cast pale yellow circles on the oily concrete. As I started my car to leave, a small girl came running down the sidewalk with a

book tucked under her arm—a RIF book from RCMA, a shiny new book in the hands of a happy girl, a splash of bright color.

The girl, too small to open the door herself, waited for her mother. The mother seemed a bit happier than most, a bit of spring in her step, perhaps because she was catching some of the spirit from her daughter.

There are times when I look at the world and say, "This is good." We are indeed doing things that matter, that influence people's lives.

Signed,

Mike Clark

Family Support Worker, Hardee County

Editor's Note: Reading Day is February 15th. Don't miss it!

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Dear Hoy,

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of the RCMA staff who offered their support, kind words, hugs and prayers during my mother's illness.

I would like to give the Ruskin/Wimauma/Palmetto Area a special thank you. They have been so kind and helpful to me. They have made me feel like family. Gracias.

Signed,

Donna Bardwell

Social Worker

Ruskin/Wimauma/Palmetto Area

Safety News

A special concern for our staff who got hurt on the job in December: Zenaida Quesada, Sylvia Faz, Enedelia Martinez, and Consuelo Vasquez.

All have returned to work. Hurray!

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You play a very important role in keeping our centers as safe as possible. So as we begin a new year, let all of us keep in mind the importance of SAFETY FIRST.

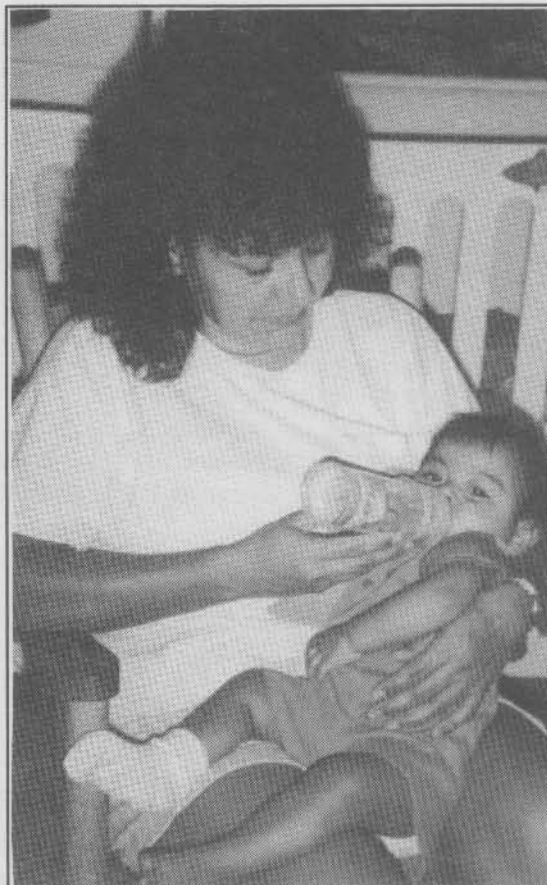


Photo By GERARD LAMBERT

CARING FOR THE FUTURE: Adela Longoria, showing her love for children, is Lead Teacher at Bonita Migrant Head Start. Adela has been nurturing children in RCMA over 10 years.

Editor: Gerard Lambert

Applause and Happenings Contributor: Leslie Moguil

Please send suggestions, comments, and Letters to the Editor to the following address:

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