



RCMA HOY

Redlands Christian Migrant Association

We Can Make
A World of
Difference

Helping Our Youth



July 1999

Issue 75

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

Dreams Come True

By Mike Clark
Staff Writer

Salma Haidermota is the Program Coordinator in Ruskin. For years she has dreamed about having RCMA teachers be able to take college classes in Ruskin. She knew that they were capable of learning much more, and earning their degrees. Each year she thought about it, but this year she made it happen.

Twenty two RCMA employees are currently enrolled, and spending Saturdays in a college class in Ruskin. Hillsborough Community College offers the classes at the RCMA Area Office. They have also offered computer and CDA classes. The TEACH program in partnership with RCMA provide assistance with tuition and books. Denise Turcott, an excellent teacher, keeps the class paced on the students learning. "She really helps us understand the material by the way she goes over the math problems step by step", says Irma Chappa, center coordinator at the Ruskin Migrant Head Start Center.

The staff motivate each other. They like going to school together. They help one another when someone misses a class or is late, however they almost never miss. They have lots of homework, but the staff get help from their children and their co-workers. The teacher is available by phone and e-mail, and arrives an hour before class begins to help.

The commitment and enthusiasm are amazing. Support comes from many sources: the RCMA area team, supervisors, the instructor, family and

A DREAM TEAM: Salma Haidermota, program coordinator, and Myrta Rivera, area coordinator for the Ruskin Area put a dream and the power of motivation together to make college classes a reality for twenty two RCMA staff. Congratulations on a job well done!



co-workers. It also comes from within each person. They learn more than math and English skills; they learn that they are smart and capable.

Gloria Young has been an RCMA teacher for 20 years. She said, "I have never felt so appreciated. I feel like I am somebody. My children and my family are proud of me."

All of us at RCMA are proud of the many staff around the state who have decided to continue their education through TEACH or on their own. Going to school is not easy, but neither is teaching ten kids all day, doing payroll, or cooking fifty lunches. The 22 new college students in Ruskin have shown me that there is power in the group, and also in each individual.

And dreams do come true.



COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT: Irma Chappa, center coordinator, Ruskin MHS has taken lots of big steps in her professional development beginning with her GED, than CDA, and training in between. She decided college would be her next step! Her daughter Melissa, a teacher in Wi- mauma is in her class too, and helps her when she gets stuck.

FROM
THE
DESK
OF
BARBARA



“Our teachers know that love and security are the most important requirements for children”



DEL ESCRITORIO DE
BARBARA

“Nuestras maestras saben que el amor y la seguridad son los requisitos mas importantes para los niños”



Hurricanes & Hoorays

Another “season” has ended and we are in the summer vacation and possible hurricane time. Vacations are important and I hope everyone uses their time off to be good to themselves. Now, about Hurricanes - all we can do is learn from our Andrew experiences and be prepared. Water, batteries, flashlights and so on. Please call and get a copy of the Hurricane preparation memo Gyla sent out last year, if you have any questions.

When I think about hurricanes I always think of our Homestead and Florida City centers and what they looked like then and now! I think about how our staff pulled together and the courage and the determination they showed in the slow process of rebuilding.

Seven years later four of our centers our NAEYC accredited, and the rest are in the process. As a matter of fact, all of you will share in my pleasure when you learn what the NAEYC accreditation team told our staff in the South Dade center last week, “This infant toddler program should be a model for others to come and learn how infant toddler care should be done.”

Our teachers know that love and security are the most important requirements for children. Thank you – all of RCMA staff – for doing the most important work in the world so well – giving children the best beginnings to help them develop to their maximum potential.

Barbara Mainster, Executive Director

Huracanes & Felicitaciones

Legamos al fin de otra temporada y estamos en las vacaciones del verano, y en el tiempo de los huracanes. Las vacaciones son importantes y espero que cada uno de ustedes aproveche su descanso para tratar bien a si mismo. Ahora, hablando de los huracanes – debemos aprender de nuestra experiencia con el Andrew y prepararnos. Agua, baterías, focos y más. Llame a la oficina para pedir una copia del memo que Gyla les envió el año pasado si tiene preguntas sobre las preparaciones.

Cuando pienso en los huracanes, siempre me acuerdo de nuestros centros en Homestead y Florida City. ¡Me acuerdo de como aparecían despues el huracán y como son ahora! Pienso en como nuestros compañeros trabajaron en equipo, tan valientes y resolutos durante la lenta reconstrucción de los centros.

Ya hace siete años que pasó, y hoy cuatro de aquellos centros tienen su acreditación NAEYC. Los demás están en el proceso. De hecho, ustedes compartirán mi gusto cuando saben lo que nos dijo el equipo de NAEYC en el centro South Dade la semana pasada. “Este programa de bebés debe ser un modelo donde otros pueden visitar y aprender como se debe hacer un centro de desarrollo para bebés.”

Nuestras maestras saben que el amor y la seguridad son los requisitos mas importantes para los niños. Gracias a todos los empleados por su esfuerzo sobre saliente en el trabajo mas importante del mundo – el de dar a los niños el mejor comienzo que podemos dar para que ellos pueden desarrollar su potencial máxima.

Barbara Mainster, Directora Ejecutiva

Portrait of a Teacher



Maria Masias came to the United States with her family when she was ten years old. They started out with nothing, working in the fields. She remembers Mr. Rollason bringing clothes and shoes for all of her brothers and sisters.

Maria's life changed when she took a job at the RCMA Center and spent her first season working with children.

That was over 20 years ago. Maria is now a preschool teacher at the NAEYC accredited, RCMA Redlands Child Development Center in Homestead. Maria used what RCMA had to offer her; getting out of the fields, learning English, and getting an education. In return she has educated a whole generation of farmworker children to be ready to succeed in public school. She, and many others like her continue to be positive role models for the migrant, rural poor children and their families, whom they touch each and every day.



LEADERSHIP IN ACTION:

Velma Adame, Food Program Supervisor, helps to support nutrition staff and center coordinators in record keeping, food production, sanitation, and menu development. Thanks to the combination of positive leadership, commitment, and teamwork RCMA was rewarded with a very positive audit!

RCMA Food Program receives high marks in recent statewide audit

On June 30, the Department of Health staff completed their very lengthy and thorough audit of the RCMA food program. These are just a few of the positive findings:

- ◆ 679 applications were checked and there were no errors found.
- ◆ Thirteen centers were visited and the records on meals were checked with only \$13 disallowed due to not listing juice.
- ◆ Mr. Passante, our contract manager expressed strongly how pleased he was with the quality and uniformity of the volume of paperwork kept by all our cooks at the centers.
- ◆ All of the reviewers had positive comments on the cleanliness of our kitchens, how well equipped they were and how well fed the children were.

Our food program supervisor, Velma Adame, credits our cooks, center coordinators and area coordinators with a job well done!

Early Childhood Specialist finds bigger challenge

The past six months have been quite a challenge for Joanevia "Navie" Eason, early childhood specialist at South Highlands CDC in Lake Placid.

On January 15th, after performing a simple peer monitoring at the Krome Child Development Center in La Belle, Joanevia gave birth unexpectedly to a baby girl, who weighed only one pound 11 ounces. The baby was due on May 10th, and was born almost four months premature, with many complications. This began the challenge that Navie is still attempting to master today.

Some people may not see this as a challenge, but working fulltime, attending college 9-12 hours per week, and having the responsibilities of being a wife and mother of an eight year old, and an extremely underweight baby in crisis, proved to be just that.

After taking just one week for maternity leave, Joanevia summoned her strength, and proceeded to accomplish her responsibilities as an ECS, keep up in her college courses, and continue to manage her household while visiting her hospitalized newborn, D'Anjil, who now lived two hours away in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.


Joanevia, her husband of eleven years, Henry, and her daughter, Quenithia began to find spiritual comfort combined with the support of RCMA staff, volunteers of the Ronald McDonald House in Orlando, the NICU staff at the hospital, and from friends and family who were aware of their unique situation.

While visiting her daughter, Joanevia often found herself offering support to other families who were also trying to cope with the challenges which come with the birth of a premature child. On several occasions, she has been asked to speak to others whose situation is similar to her own. Regardless of her personal situation, Joanevia always found time to offer support to those around her who

needed someone to listen, a shoulder to cry on, or just some guidance and support to reassure them that everything would be okay.

Recently Joanevia was honored with the presentation of a letter from the President of the college she attends, announcing that she had been placed on the "President's Honor List" in recognition of her scholastic achievement. Joanevia is also pleased to announce that D'Anjil now weighs over eight pounds. After successfully recovering from nine surgeries D'Anjil has come home. Mom is making up for all their lost time by taking a leave of absence to spend quality time with her new daughter and loving family.

Through it all, Joanevia kept her chin up, and her future plans include a commitment to the Ronald McDonald House to spend one weekend every three months helping others to cope. Joanevia realizes that this is not the ending of a story, but the beginning for D'Anjil and her family in meeting the challenges of life together.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
 ☆  **APPLAUSE** ☆
 ☆ Congratulations to ☆
 ☆ Edna Carter and Sheila ☆
 ☆ Robinson, center coordi- ☆
 ☆ nators at Avon Park ☆
 ☆ Head Start and Smith Brown CDC. ☆
 ☆ Both women persevered, and ☆
 ☆ with the help of their "its never too ☆
 ☆ late attitude", received their High ☆
 ☆ School Diplomas! They are both ☆
 ☆ thinking about their next profes- ☆
 ☆ sional development step. Perhaps a ☆
 ☆ TEACH A.S. Degree Scholarship ☆
 ☆ application may be part of their fu- ☆
 ☆ ture professional development path. ☆
 ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Editor: Leslie Moguil
 Staff Writer: Mike Clark
 Technical Support: Teresa Tremelling
 Please send suggestions, comments, and Letters to the Editor to the following address:
 RCMA HOY Editor,
 Redlands Christian Migrant Association
 402 West Main Street, Immokalee, FL 34142

Any time, any day, any problem When you need someone to talk to, EAR is there. 1-800-328-1952



DRINK-UP
 To stay hydrated healthy adults should get 6-8 glasses of water daily.