



RCMA HOY

Redlands Christian Migrant Association

We Can Make
A World of
Difference

Helping Our Youth



August 2002

Issue 112

OUR MISSION: We Open Doors to Opportunities! ;Abrimos puertas a las oportunidades!

Opportunities abound for summer students

**By Josue Rincon, Program Director
Silvia Baltazar, Eisenhower Tutor
Belen Gomez, Center Coordinator**

Immokalee Program

The RCMA School-Age Program in Immokalee provides services for over three hundred needy children throughout the year, but the services don't stop there. The program continues its services throughout the summer. By combining education and recreation, the children continue to learn in a fun-filled environment. Each summer the program serves 50 - 60 children. These children are selected from the four elementary schools in the community. Reading, math and science are but a few of the subjects covered in the RCMA summer program.



Summer time means fun-filled excursions. The RCMA Summer Program gives the children the opportunity to benefit from enjoyable and unforgettable fieldtrips. By making every fieldtrip a learning adventure, the excursions are not only fun but educational as well. RCMA gives the children the opportunity to experience hands-on learning at an early age. How? Career-Development week gives the children such opportunities. These fieldtrips provide the children the opportunity to experience a day in the life of a professional such as teachers, doctors, fire fighters and police officers.



This summer the children have had

the opportunity to befriend children in the Ruskin summer program. Both programs have started a pen pal program, which gives the children the opportunity to make new friends through correspondence. On July 31st, during the program's last fieldtrip, the children had the opportunity to meet their pen-pal face to face as both groups came together to learn and have fun at the Florida Aquarium in Tampa.

Eisenhower and Cypress Creek Programs

Further north in Ruskin students participated in two valuable Community Service Projects. Youth As Resources (YAR) is a group that provides funds for youth-led community service projects. The teens from the RCMA Eisenhower Leadership program decided, under the leadership of



Jaime Juarez, to organize a children's festival for the children at the RCMA Ruskin Infant Center.

The idea to organize a carnival for the RCMA Ruskin Infant Center was born in the mind of an active and outgoing teenager named Jaime Juarez. Jaime shared the idea with his peers and the center coordinator, Tony Valdivinos and the project proceeded full speed ahead. The carnival included a bouncing castle, snow cones, face painting, games, piñatas and a cookout.

The day was partly sunny. The carnival began with a bang and everyone that was involved agreed that it was nothing short of a smashing success. Veronica Dubois, early childhood specialist at Ruskin Infant center stated, "I enjoyed watching the teens help our little ones with the games and handing out prizes and food. I especially en-

FROM THE DESK OF LESLIE



**RCMA is so
proud of
you George!**

Jorge Castro will be a junior this year at Immokalee High School. Everyone outside of his home calls him George and that is what we called him when he began working at the Rollason Center after school as a freshman. His work experience was part of a special program for migrant students. He enjoyed his work at the Rollason Center so much that he returned in his sophomore year.

George stops by to bring us up to speed on exciting things that are happening in his life. We have talked girls, grades, his honor roll status, and future plans. On this particular visit George was very different, instead of a quiet, shy, timid communicator he was filled with confidence. Last time George had stopped by it was to tell us he had been chosen to participate in a special Migrant Leadership Institute at Florida Gulf Coast University.

On his most recent visit that is all we talked about. High achieving migrant students from all over the state converged on the campus of FGCU for the six week Institute. I love hearing the phrase, "high achieving migrant students".

George loved being part of this group, even though it was his first time he had been away from home. He stayed on campus in a dormitory with an R.A. He had to room with someone he didn't know, and much to his surprise, Jesus and George had a lot in common. So much so that on Sunday, their free day, George was invited to Jesus' house in Okeechobee, also a first. Course work consisted of College Success Skills, Critical Thinking, Leadership, Public Speaking/Writing and Pre-Counseling. Classes were followed by study sessions until 8:00 p.m. and he had two hours before curfew to let off some steam playing volleyball.

George said the best part of his experience was "experiencing a little about college, making new friends and seeing how the world functions out there." He is currently looking for an evening job. He said this about his job seeking, "I am more confident and prepared I have been out there shaking a lot of hands."

George is definitely headed in the right direction, his parents have always encouraged him to get an education and he has always had the talent to move forward. Now, thanks to his experience he also has the drive. George we know you will make us proud!



DEL ESCRITORIO DE LESLIE

George said the best part of his experience was "experiencing a little about college, making new friends and seeing how the world functions out there."

Jorge Castro entrara a su tercer año en la escuela secundaria Immokalee High. Fuera de su casa le nombran George como lo conocimos nosotros cuando comenzó a trabajar en nuestra oficina. Jorge comenzó a trabajar con nosotros en su primer año en la escuela Immokalee High como parte de un programa especial para jóvenes emigrantes. Le gusto su experiencia de trabajo en la oficina del Centro Rollason que pidió regresar con nosotros por segunda vez el pasado año escolar.

George nos visita para ponernos al tanto de las cosas excitantes que le están ocurriendo. Hablamos de sus amigas, las notas en su reporte escolar, su estado en la lista de honores de la escuela y sus planes para el futuro. En esta visita George se comporto como un joven mas maduro. Ya no era el chico callado, y hasta veces un poco tímido, ahora venia con una confianza en si mismo. La ultima vez que había venido a visitarnos nos dejo saber que el fue elegido para participar en un programa especial para estudiantes emigrantes llamado Migrant Leadership Institute en la Universidad Florida Gulf Coast

En su reciente visita eso fue de lo único que hablamos. Explico que estudiantes emigrantes con altas calificaciones de todo el estado se reunieron en la universidad por seis semanas. Me encanta escuchar la frase "Estudiantes Emigrantes con Alta Calificaciones".

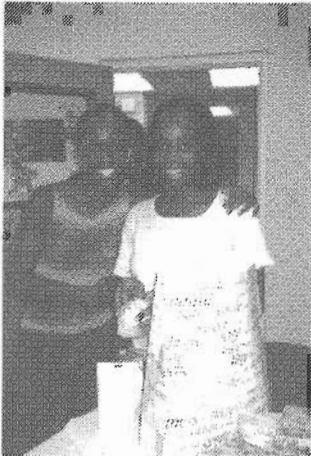
A George le encanto ser parte de este grupo, aunque fue la primera vez que estuvo lejos de su casa. Se hospedo en el dormitorio de la universidad con otro joven de nombre Jesús. El y Jesús no se conocían pero se dieron cuenta que tenían mucho en común. En su día libre, el domingo, George fue a visitar a Jesús a su casa en el pueblo de Okeechobee. El curso en la universidad consiste en enseñar a los estudiantes habilidades para tener éxito en el colegio, Análisis Critico, Liderazgo, Orar y Escribir Públicamente. Después de clase estudiaba hasta las 8pm y luego tenia dos horas libres para jugar volleyball.

George dice que la mejor parte de esta experiencia fue "haber vivido un poco la vida universitaria, conocer nuevos amigos y observar como "es" la vida real. Presentemente, George anda en busca de un trabajo para después de escuela. Dice lo siguiente de su búsqueda "Me siento mas confiado y preparado y he saludado de mano a mucha gente."

George lleva definitivamente un buen rumbo, sus padres siempre lo apoyan para que tenga una buena educación y siempre a tenido el talento para seguir adelante, ahora gracias a su experiencia también tiene las ganas. George sabemos que nos harás orgullosos de ti.

Special day for expectant moms

The RCMA South Highlands Family Resource Center had a special sparkle on this particular day. The room was filled with pink, blue and yellow baby shower decorations, special filled gift bags, presents, healthy refreshments, a beautiful baby shower cake and a host of educational information for a group of expectant moms from the community.



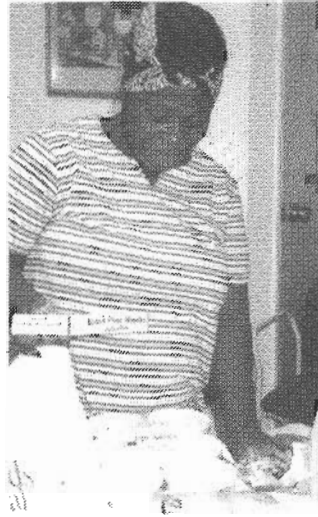
Invitations were made and distributed prior to the event and face to face contact was made to make sure that moms felt welcomed. Millie Martin, Kay Ramos, Yessica Rodriguez, and Norma Ramirez and representatives from the fatherhood program

came together as a team to make it all happen.

The afternoon began with introductions and moved to a baby shower game, which engaged the mom's in what it is like to drink out of a baby bottle. There were a host of door prize drawings in between activities and every mom left with a prize.



The fatherhood mentors staged a memory game with various baby supplies hid under a baby



blanket. Moms had a limited time to view and the idea was to get the longest list of correct items.

Education was interspersed throughout. There was a video and discussion on Shaken Baby Syndrome, Early Brain Development and a Car Seat Safety Demonstration. The best dialogue took place when the special guest, a

pediatric nurse from the local physicians office volunteered to participate in a question and answer session with the mom's. Mom's questions covered the benefits of breast feedings, use of soaps and shampoos, fevers, feeding and nutrition, how to dress your baby, and much more.



There were informational materials for the moms to take home and a bag full of donated items from the community that included formula, diapers, toys, clothing, diaper bags and many other necessities for a mom to be. What was most stirring was to see the group of moms enter in a cautious, quiet way and leave talking with each other smiling and loaded down with gifts.

This group had started down the road with a deep new connection that they discovered in each other that day. One of the mom's commented, I have never had a baby shower planned for me. I had a really good time."

School-Age continued from page 1



joyed watching the two ladies at the snow cone machine. They were so courteous and polite. And, oh my, Tony cooked the best burgers I have had in a few years". Five year old Rubi Rodriguez told the

group to "come back tomorrow and bring the jumping house again". The teen leader, Jaime Juarez said, "we had a great time putting this carnival together and the kids had a great time. The entire event can be summarized by one word spoken by the center coordinator, Tony Valdovinos, "Super-kalafragilstikxpealodotious!"

The students of RCMA's Cypress Creek took on two Community Service Project that would benefit the other end of the age spectrum - local Senior Citizens. The youth decided on two projects. They created personal hygiene baskets for residents of an Adult Day Care and an intergenerational activity which involved hosting a multicultural fair for the seniors.



The projects were lead by youth leader, Jeovana Roque. She and fourteen other students were involved in the projects. Jeovana had to come up with items to put in the baskets

and decided which games and activities to do during the multicultural fair. Doing this required her to develop and work within a budget to purchase all of the items. Jeovana said, "I decided on this project because I wanted the seniors to know a little about what my culture is about and in return I wanted to give the seniors a gift basket that they could use at home."

Noel Sosa, another youth involved with the projects said, "I felt excited when we were at Wal-Mart purchasing

the things for the seniors. I know that they will like the baskets. Belen Gomez, adult project leader had this to say, "I feel so proud of these students for wanting to do this for their community. They showed me how they are leaders in their community. and I know that they will become even greater leaders in our community in the future."



Smith Brown Parent President, Jessie Alford would like to recognize Alisha Ashford, teacher for being an inspiration at the center and in the lives of our children!

CONGRATULATIONS!!!



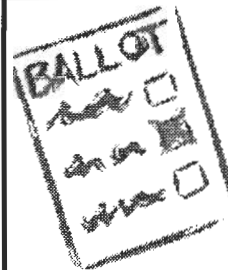
on reaching your goal of home ownership.

Maria "Toni" Garcia, outreach worker at the Rollason CDC and

Arlinthea Evans-Pugh, lead teacher at Lake Placid MHS were filled with gratitude and hope upon moving into their new Habitat homes.

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