

GHSA Newsletter

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Head Start Awareness Month at Hancock

Hancock County Commission Chairperson, Helen "Sistie" Hudson, signed a proclamation to declare the month of October as Head Start Awareness month. Sparta Mayor, William Evans, signed the same proclamation at the Early Head Start center as well. The proclamation signing was the Kick-Off of the first Annual Health Fair to provide blood pressure screenings, literature on eating healthy, and college recruitment services to parents. At both Head Start sites the children, staff, and parents participated in a parade that displayed banners promoting breast cancer awareness" and eating healthy. After the parade everyone participated in line dancing activities designed to promote physical fitness. This year's theme was

"ROCKIN OUT To Better Health".



Randolph County has a new Head Start Director

Veronica Riggins has passed the baton to Vanetta Hogans at Randolph County Head Start. We thank Ms. Riggins for taking an active role in the GHSA and welcome Ms. Hogans to the group.

Baldwin County Partners with Local Independent Private Provider – Learning Safari

A local private provider serving higher income families collected pajamas for needy children. They worked as a part of the Georgia Pajama Program and selected the Baldwin County Head Start program to identify

families who could use such resources. Future activities to connect this resource with Head Start families will include the provision of children's books to these families as well.



“To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here.”

125 Years of Sheltering Arms and Still Going Strong

Sheltering Arms celebrated its legacy & its future at an art-filled party on Wednesday, September 18, 2013. The annual Tales & Legends party was held at Spelman College's Cosby Center. Bidding on art created by local artists working with Sheltering Arms children, and special entertainment and interactive fun were included. All ticket proceeds were used for providing child care scholarships for Sheltering Arms families in need.

Sheltering Arms also held its 8th Annual Operation StoryBook Read-A-Thon on September 19 and 20, 2013. Volunteers shared stories and engaged children in Show & Tell activities. Volunteers received t-shirts designed by the children.

RIVHSA Awards & Scholarships

Renee Lyons - Scholarship for Head Start/Early Head Start Staff -Family Resource Agency of North Georgia

Renee has worked for Head Start for over 20 years. She started out as an assistant teacher and through dedication, hard work, and determination is now a Center Manager. Coworkers and friends describe her as a true leader with a pleasing, positive attitude that enjoys her family and job. Renee is currently working on her Master's Degree in ECE from Ashford University with a 3.5 GPA.

Angela Mathis - Teacher of the Year Award -Family Resource Agency of North Georgia

Angela has worked for Head Start for 24 years. She started as an assistant teacher and currently a lead teacher. She earned her CDA then Associate Degree in ECE.

Angela has served on numbers committees, active in her community, and serves as a role model to her students. Coworkers enjoy working with her and utilizes her skills as a Mentor teacher. Friends report that Angela has a calling for teaching and admire her for how she balances her roles at home and work.

Madine H. Cummings - Leadership Award- Central Savannah River Area Economic Opportunity Authority, Inc.

Madine has worked for Head Start for 37 years. She started as a Social Worker, Nutrition Coordinator, and now the Resource/Professional Development Specialist.

Co-workers describe Madine as conscientious, dedicated, energetic, motivated, hard worker, and a team player. She has ensured that the agency met the staff education requirements mandated by the Head Start Act and developed new staff orientation packages and provides intensive staff orientation.

Madine helps out where needed and is not afraid to get involved. Recently one of the centers lost all its Family Service Workers. Madine assumed that role and actively enrolled children for the center, made home visits, and even took children to the doctors - all while keeping abreast with her own job responsibilities.

Success at Concerted Services, Inc.

Meet Michael—A True Head Start Success Story

Once upon a time, Michael was a 3 ½ year old visually-impaired child with virtually no language skills, along with nutritional, growth, social, and motor skill deficiencies. Realizing that Michael's development did not seem normal, his grandmother helped his mother to enroll Michael into Head Start. A month later, his grandmother had full custody of him. Knowing very little about Head Start at the time, grandmother's first thought was to get Michael into a program where he could interact with other children, receive good care, and be provided at least one meal a day. Grandmother quickly discovered that Head Start services are much more comprehensive than she could have ever dreamed. Not only did Michael receive those things she hoped for, but he also received medical and dental support, mental health services, self-help skills, hygiene skills, a full-fledged nutritional program consisting of breakfast, lunch, and snack, speech services, and "individualized" instruction. "Overall, the Head Start program has partnered with me for

Michael's success," she says. "Whether or not we initially agreed, I always knew that everyone within the program wanted Michael to succeed, from the office staff, to the teachers, to the family advocate staff...the entire program."

Besides providing services to Michael, the Head Start program serves the entire family. Through parent training, parent meetings, and serving on the Policy Council, grandmother learned how to speak up and advocate for Michael. "Head Start not only doesn't mind you having input and advocating for your child, they want you to and support you doing so." By providing screenings, testing, and resource information, in addition to connecting her to a host of available services, Head Start bridged the gap so that the grandmother was able to better advocate for Michael. Grandmother also had the opportunity to participate in extensive health training through a grant obtained through a partnership between CSI Head Start and UCLA. In addition, Michael's father received parent training from the Head Start Mental Health Counselor and then gave back to the program through

volunteering.

Although Michael is now in Kindergarten and no longer attends Head Start, his grandmother continues to serve as a volunteer in the Head Start center. Grandmother is so proud that Michael entered Kindergarten reading at a first grade level. She caught him hiding under the covers at bedtime on several occasions, "secretly" studying his sight word flash cards. Not only was Michael ready for school after two years in the Head Start program, but the school was also ready for Michael. "The school already had assessment information on Michael, and his Head Start teacher even attended a meeting at the school with me."

"The Head Start program has been monumental in helping Michael progress. He was not behaviorally, emotionally, socially, or academically ready for school. The individualized instruction he received from the program took him from a virtually blank slate to a fluent reader and a successful Kindergarten student."



"..Michael entered Kindergarten reading at a first grade level."

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The Voice of Head Start in Georgia

We're on the Web!

<http://www.georgiaheadstart.org/>

GHSA's Mission: The mission of the Georgia Head Start Association is to provide education, leadership and advocacy that support Head Start programs' efforts in delivering high quality comprehensive services to Georgia's children, families and communities.

GHSA's Vision: Georgia Head Start Association's vision is to be a positive voice, a powerful advocate and promoter of quality programs for children, families and communities in Georgia as they prepare for life-long success.

Learn more about the

GEORGIA HEAD START ASSOCIATION

<http://www.georgiaheadstart.org/>

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