



PARTNERSHIP

The Agricultural and Labor Program, Inc.
Helping People. Changing Lives.

community ACTION QUARTERLY Newsletter

AMERICA'S POVERTY FIGHTING NETWORK

OCTOBER 2011 • FALL ISSUE

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From the Desk of the Editor

HEAD START

Roadmap to Excellence: The Training and Technical Assistance System



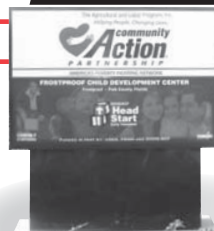
Last January, the Department of Health and Human Services released the Head Start Roadmap to Excellence, an initiative to raise the level of quality in all Head Start programs to ensure that children and families receive the quality services they deserve.

To ensure that local Head Start staff are receiving the training and professional development they need, HHS recently announced the launching of 4 new national training and technical assistance centers dedicated to providing local programs with the latest best practices and evidence based research to support the work they do daily.

The Agricultural and Labor Program, Inc. is reassessing its program management and operational strategies, including staff professional development and qualification assurances, to help ensure that children and families we serve receive the highest quality Head Start experience. ALPI and its Head Start/Early Head Start Program are moving full steam ahead on the Roadmap to Excellence and pledge to do whatever it takes to promote enhanced program quality and integrity. As you will note in this quarterly newsletter, "We are well on our way." I extend a well-deserved Thank You and Welcome Back to all the ALPI Head Start/Early Head Start Program Staff for your hard work and dedication. I am looking forward to another successful program year.

Deloris Johnson

Chief Executive Officer & Editor



ALPI's FROSTPROOF CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

In 2009, the Agricultural and Labor Program, Inc. was awarded an ARRA grant to expand its Early Head Start program by 100

children. As a result of receiving this grant, ALPI's Frostproof Child Development Center was able to perform extensive renovations and expansion. Phase II of the center's facility upgrade was recently completed. The center has grown from fifty-four (54) children to a capacity of ninety-four (94) children (both Head Start and Early Head Start).

This enrollment growth has also resulted in the hiring of 19 new staff, new community partnerships, and more volunteer involvement than ever before.

Frostproof Child Development Center has undergone tremendous upgrades and renovations in order to accommodate its growth and better serve its valued families and children. The center now has an Early Head Start building that was renovated to accommodate five (5) classrooms and has a current capacity of forty (40) children. Three resource rooms have also been added and are available to the parents and children. Both Head Start and Early Head Start have new playgrounds, along with new certified playground equipment. ADA approved ramps for wheelchair accessibility are also available throughout the facility.



The library has been transformed into a new conference room, fully equipped with current

technology. The center now has the ability to host important events such as Parent Committee meetings, Policy Committee meetings and other program appropriate functions. In continuing to keep up with technology and in an effort to increase safety, cameras and intercoms were installed in all 8 buildings. Because of the increase in the flow of traffic and in order to help keep children, parents, and staff safe, an additional parking lot has also been added.

ALPI's Frostproof Child Development Center is excited about all the new changes and growth. Families, children, and staff all look forward to an exciting new school year.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT & FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION

The focus of the Division over the past several months has been on continued quality services to children and their families. As you read the articles, you will note that the emphasis ranges from facility improvements to building community partnerships to enhancing school readiness services to our children, as well as staff development and training activities. Thanks to all the staff for embracing change in a positive manner and making it happen in the "real world."

Elizabeth Young

Deputy Director
Child Development &
Family Services Division



OCTOBER IS

HEAD START AWARENESS MONTH

for more information visit: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>

Camp Ready

at Frostproof Child Development Center



Over the Summer, ALPI's Frostproof Child Development Center partnered with the Learning Resource Center of Polk County to offer a school readiness program for upcoming kindergarten students in the Frostproof area. The program was designed to assist children to enter kindergarten "ready to learn" and to enhance their skills with

also provided parents with opportunities for involvement.

Through the efforts of Bertram Smith (Program Operations Director) and Alisa Thornton (Early Childhood Education Manager) the Learning Resource Center was approached to extend their Lake Wales site to ALPI Frostproof to provide this opportunity

remedial activities to help them transition to kindergarten. This program

for our parents and preschoolers. The summer program was called "Camp Ready." Staff for the program was made up of teachers from the local elementary school in Frostproof. This was an excellent opportunity for the children to interact with teachers they would eventually have in kindergarten. The program concluded with a ceremony which included parent and student participation, as well as a presentation by the children on everything they had learned while at "Camp Ready."

ALPI'S Nurturing Fatherhood PROGRAM

- POLK COUNTY -

The ALPI Nurturing Fatherhood Program in Polk County hosted its Spring Event – "Kidz Cook Off With Nutrition In Mind" at the Frostproof Child Development Center on April 1, 2011. Activities for this event were coordinated by Bertram Smith, Program Operations Director, together with fathers from the program. The event was open to all families and provided a fun filled day aimed at raising awareness towards physical fitness, nutrition, and the importance of family meal times.

Families participated in a "Family 1K Walk" with their children to kick off the event. Following the walk, activities were provided that were not only fun for

the children, but educational as well. This was an excellent opportunity to train our children's primary teachers - their parents. Our Food Services Coordinator, Hilda Walker, was present to train the parents on healthy snacks preparation, nutrition in the classroom, and take home recipes to be enjoyed by the whole family.

More than 15 fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and father figures made this event possible – male involvement and support was indeed strong. Overall the



turnout was impressive, with over 30 participants. The Nurturing Fatherhood Program meetings are held monthly. These meetings follow a curriculum for developing attitudes and skills for male nurturing in the home. The men also share ideas and plan events throughout the school year.



2011 Pre-Service Training: Focusing On Promoting Positive Child Outcomes and School Readiness

The Children and Families Support Services Division put together a well-designed pre-service training experience that communicated service expectations, provided a level of knowledge suitable for further training, and created a strong foundation of knowledge and skills. The training will allow staff to use what they learned to build upon past experience and skills. Participating staff are now able to explore new ideas in order to better provide services to the children and families they serve. ALPI was able to secure the best consultants in the areas of: *Early Childhood Education for Infants, Toddlers and Pre-School age children, Family and Community Partnerships, Transportation Safety, etc.*

A successful pre-service training is



the key to starting the program year off strong. Training topics were selected from the approved 2011-2012 Training and Technical Assistance Plan to maximize the effectiveness and outcomes of the pre-service. Training areas included, but were not limited to the following:

- Early Childhood Development
- Services to Infants and Toddlers
- Family Goal Setting
- Child Care Food Program
- OSHA
- School Readiness
- Transportation Safety
- Program Resources and Outcomes Management Information System/ Record Keeping

Approximately 215 staff participated in the 4-day pre-service training, with each participant attaining at least a minimum of 30 In-Service Training Hours.



St. Lucie County School Board and ALPI Head Start Join Forces ...

Working Together To Enhance SCHOOL READINESS

Early in the spring of the 2011 school year, ALPI Head Start became a part of round table discussions with the St. Lucie County School Board and the world's largest publisher of educational materials, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH). In December the St. Lucie School Board entered into a five-year partnership with HMH in which the school district will spend several million dollars on instructional educational materials.

ALPI Head Start, a strong promoter and provider of Early Childhood Education (serving approximately 691 to 750 pre-school children every year), has entered into partnership with the St. Lucie County School Board to be a part of this one-time opportunity. The main focus of the partnership is to address critical changes needed in teaching, learning, and community engagement in Pre-Kindergarten through High School education. During August 2011 ALPI Head Start entered a partnership in the Age 3 to Grade 3 Initiative. ALPI Head Start has received approximately \$85,000 worth of educational materials for the teaching staff to use in the classrooms. ALPI Staff have been trained on the implementation of the materials, which included the following:

- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Curriculum
- 10 Themes/Books
- Professional Development Resources
- Mentor/Coaching Resources
- Benchmark Assessment





In January 2011 the St. Lucie County School Board approved the Agricultural and Labor Program, Inc. as one of its tenants occupying the 6 Portable Units/10 classroom modular building of the Port St. Lucie Elementary School campus. This new ALPI center location will serve Head Start pre-school children. The project was designed in two Phases. Phase I of the project included getting the 6 Portables ready for the upcoming school year. Phase II will involve renovations in the 10 classrooms modular building.

ALPI Management Staff has been working diligently with school and local officials to ensure that Phase I of this project was completed prior to the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year. The Certificate of Occupancy was issued and the Department of Children and Families was able to conduct inspections. On August 15, 2011 the license was issued. Ninety-one (91) Head Start pre-school children are now enrolled at this new ALPI location and are off to a great start.



ALPI Early Head Start Caregivers Receive Specialized Training

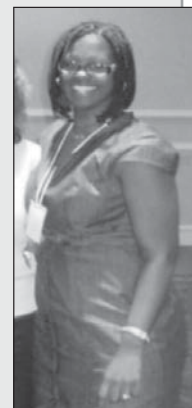
ALPI Early Head Start Caregivers recently participated in Infant/Toddler training conducted by a Certified *Program for Infant/Toddler Care* Consultant.

This type of training is critical because it helps ensure that infants and toddlers get a safe, healthy, emotionally secure and intellectually rich start in life. It also shows infant/toddler care teachers ways of helping infants learn the lessons that every infant comes into the world eager to learn. Infant/toddler care teachers are taught how to design environments that ensure safety, offer infants appropriate developmental challenges, and promote optimum health for children.

This type of specialized staff training is just another way in which ALPI continues to raise the bar of quality services that all our children and families are in need of and deserve.



Early Childhood Development and Education Services Manager becomes a **Fully Certified Trainer** for the **Program for Infant/Toddler Care**



Congratulations to Alisa Thornton

the Early Childhood Development and Education Manager for the Division, on becoming a fully certified trainer for the Program for Infant/Toddler Care. The Early Childhood Development and Education Manager plans to use this acquired knowledge to ensure all Early Head Start caregivers are well-trained and equipped in primary care, small groups, continuity of care, individualized care, culturally responsive care, and the inclusion of children with disabilities or other special needs.

CORRECTION: An article titled "ALPI's Arabell Wiggins Scholarship Fund" printed in the July 2011 Summer Issue of the ALPI Newsletter, erroneously gave the name of Board Member Pat Gamble in the picture caption. The individual in the picture (far right) is past-Board Member Johnnie McNair.

ALPI's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Hosts **2nd Annual In-Service Day Training**

On June 15, 2011 ALPI's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) hosted its *2nd Annual In-Service Day Training* for sub-recipient agencies. Seventeen (17) agencies were in attendance, along with the entire Community Services Department staff. We had a full day agenda, which covered a complete review of the *revised* LIHEAP application, cover sheets and the eligibility process. The 2011-2012 contracts were also distributed.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to two additional LIHEAP sub-recipient agencies, bringing our total to nineteen (19), they are: Port Salerno Church of God, providing LIHEAP services to Martin County (specifically Port Salerno and Jensen Beach residents) and El Bethel Community Development Center, providing LIHEAP services to St. Lucie County (specifically residents in Ft.



Pierce with the following zip codes: 34946, 34947, 34949 and 34950).

ALPI's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program is happy to report that we are now providing energy benefits at **thirty-three (33) sites within eight counties!** ALPI LIHEAP continues to grow and expand its service territory in order to meet the ever-growing needs of our communities.

Head Start and Early Head Start Staff Obtain **National Child Development Associates (CDA) Credential**

COUNCIL
for
**PROFESSIONAL
RECOGNITION**

The National Child Development Associate, better known to many as the CDA, is a nationally recognized credential for excellence in early childhood. Each CDA candidate is observed working with young children and is assessed on their ability

to develop the physical, emotional, and intellectual capabilities of young children. The Council for Professional Recognition in Washington, DC awards credentials to Early Childhood Educators who demonstrate the ability to constructively work with young children in group settings. This credential is a testimony of the staff's demonstrated competence in working with young children and their families.

Twelve (12) Early Head Start Caregivers and eighteen (18) Head Start Teacher Assistants have been awarded a National



Child Development Associate (CDA) credential in recognition of outstanding work with young children. Teaching our nation's youngest children and helping them grow and develop at the most critical period of their lives cannot be underestimated. It takes special knowledge, skill, and expertise to be an effective teacher of young children. It's a great honor to earn a CDA and it shows a commitment to quality Early Childhood Education. The CDA community nationwide is having a positive effect on the quality of early childhood education by helping childcare programs hire qualified and competent professionals who ensure the best care for our nation's youngest.

Congratulations to all the staff for their dedication and hard work in pursuing and obtaining the nation's highest credential.



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Mission Statement

*The mission of The Agricultural and Labor Program, Inc.,
is to propose, implement, and advocate
developmental and human service delivery programs
for the socially and economically disadvantaged;
children and families; and farmworkers.*

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to inspire and inform all employees, volunteers, parents,
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become today. We welcome your suggestions, comments,
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