



Community "IN" ACTION

Newsletter December 31st, 2008

Deadline is the second Friday of the month; Contacts for articles are: Child Dev. - Farzana Siddiqui, F&CR & Layout - Barb Dame, Morale & Wellness - Phyllis Johnpoll, Development - Lisa Brown, All others - Nancy Peters. Editor: Renée Bruce

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Jerralynn Ness
Executive Director

I hope that all of you walked away from this year's Fall All Staff feeling satisfied that it was a day well spent. Amidst all of the economic gloom, it felt good to be together, learning, laughing and appreciating who we are and what we do. Debbie's resilience and humor was uplifting. Joseph's message, that it is within our reach to achieve good communication and forge strong alliances with others, regardless of how different or similar we may be, was empowering and inspiring. Hopefully everyone walked away with an increased awareness and understanding of issues of diversity.

Many of you raised your hand when I asked if you were concerned about the economy. It's hard not to be as we daily hear the news about job losses and businesses closing down. It's hard not to be when the number of families desperately seeking help from us steadily increases and we find ourselves not able to meet everyone's needs. It is so important that we are able to support one another during these very challenging times. Remember, it's not always what we are able to provide to people, but more importantly, it is how we make them feel when they seek us out for help. So it is essential that we take care of ourselves so that we maintain our own health and perspective.

Our recent "People You Should Know" fundraising breakfast drew the largest

Directors' Corner continued

crowd ever. I am really struck by how much caring and concern is being expressed by our community. More than ever before, I feel like there is a sense that we are all in this together. I want to share with you portions of my breakfast presentation:

".....but one thing we know for sure, very few of us are immune to the impact of this economic downturn. And we all have family, friends and colleagues who are worried about the future. Working mothers and fathers are unsure if wages will cover family expenses in the coming months; senior citizens worry whether fixed incomes can be stretched any further; young families just starting out wonder what opportunities will exist for their children. And for families who have just been getting by, the current economy has been devastating."

"At times like this, we can no longer think of economic insecurity, or struggling to make ends meet, as something that happens to others. We are all in this together."

"Yesterday a group of my staff shared what they were seeing and hearing. As each person took their turn, a vivid portrait of our community's struggles took form. It was hard for most of us to hold back our tears."

"Despite all of the challenges we're experiencing, I do remain optimistic for the future of our local families and communities. My optimism comes from the belief that we know what is required to prevent the hardships of poverty and to create greater economic security for all."

"It is particularly important now to keep in mind that with so many people seeking help for the first time, the majority of these families will regain stability as the economy improves. While it won't

Directors' Corner continued

happen quickly, we can have confidence that if we are able to help families weather these tumultuous times, they will be successful."

Here at Community Action, we are on the front lines with the economic downturn. Our services are critically needed and while we can't meet everyone's needs, our funding is reasonably stable. The good news is that we've received increased funding for our energy and rent assistance programs so we will be able to help many more families. As we celebrate the holidays, we can be grateful for all that we have and all that we are able to give to our community.

Thank you for all that you do. I wish you all a loving, peaceful holiday season.

NEWS OF NOTE



Effective 1/1/09 -
Mileage Reimbursement
changes - see the Fiscal
Section for details.



UPCOMING EVENTS!

New Year's Day (Holiday)	1/01
IS Committee Meeting	1/06
Safety Committee Meeting	1/14
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	1/19
Hillsboro Building Meeting	1/20
Head Start Policy Council	1/20
Board Meeting (rescheduled)	1/22

January 2009
BIRTHDAYS



Amina Abdirahman	1/1
Alisha Stoecklein	1/1
Sally Augustenborg	1/2
Claudia Gutierrez-Garcia	1/4
Martha Knapp	1/4
Susan Bartholmew	1/5
Carol Bump	1/6
Larry Hauth	1/7
Margarett Blaylock	1/8
Michael Connor	1/9
America Morales	1/9
Tera Alcaraz	1/10
Kathleen O' Neill	1/12
Juan Amaya	1/13
Melody Axe	1/16
Barb Dame	1/17
Lucia Guerrero-Perez	1/18
Elizabeth McLeod	1/20
Lela White	1/21
Joan Brown	1/25
Catalina Solis	1/25
Isabel Hernandez	1/27
Jennifer Johnson	1/29
Nicole Rodeman	1/29
Tina Amela	1/31

(If you want your birthday acknowledged, be sure to complete an authorization form – contact HR)

10 Ways to Go Green at Work

Here are a couple of tips from the Sierra Club website about ways to “go green” at work:



Print smarter

The average U.S. office worker goes through 10,000 sheets of copy paper a year.

> Make it a habit to print on both sides or use the back side of old documents for faxes, scrap paper, or drafts. Avoid color printing and print in draft mode whenever feasible.

Go paperless when possible

> Make it a habit to think before you print: could this be read or stored online instead? When you receive unwanted catalogs, newsletters, magazines, or junk mail, request to be removed from the mailing list before you recycle the item.

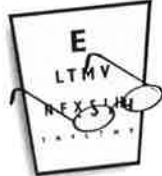
> Make it a policy to post employee manuals and similar materials online, rather than distribute print copies. They're easier to update that way too.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

MORALE & WELLNESS

JANUARY IS

- Eye Health Care Month
- Poverty in America Month
- Blood Donor Month
- Thyroid Disease Awareness Month
- Human Resource Month



Holiday Greetings Made Easy

No matter what holidays you may celebrate, one common feature of each is expressing our affection and appreciation for others, often done in the form of holiday cards. In fact, every year during the holiday season, 3.4 billion letters are mailed.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) found an efficient way to help send those warm holiday wishes with less environmental impact. USPS provides a Cardstore for creating personalized cards that the company will print and mail for you. Read more at: <http://earth911.com/blog/2008/11/24/holiday-greetings-made-easy/>

Here are several ways to avoid pesky colds and viruses

- * Eat delicious and healthy foods that boost your body’s immune system such as fresh fruits and vegetables, edible exotic mushrooms, green tea and garlic.
- * Drink several glasses of water a day
- * Wash your hands frequently
- * Get enough sleep
- * Exercise regularly
- * Keep a lid on stress



JANUARY QUOTE

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow;
 The year is going, let him go;
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.
 ~Lord Tennyson Alfred



CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Literacy

Early childhood professionals have long recognized the importance of language and literacy in preparing children to succeed in school. Early literacy plays a key role in enabling the kind of early learning experiences that research shows are linked with academic achievement, reduced grade retention, higher graduation rates and enhanced productivity in adult life.

Our Head Start classrooms have lending libraries to encourage reading at home. Children have the opportunity to check books out and take them home to read with their families. Books are available for families in both English and Spanish. To encourage reading at home, many teachers invite librarians to parent meetings where instruction is given in how best to read to children, ask open ended questions, and make predictions. Parents are given tools to make the most of their reading time. No matter what the literacy level of the parent, the benefits of sitting down with a child and reading are tremendous and long lasting.

Classroom teachers use a variety of methods to encourage at home reading with bulletin boards tracking the amount of books read and fun activities to promote reading. We appreciate our Head Start teachers who value reading and understand the many benefits their lending libraries have for our families.



CHECKS & BALANCES

Fiscal –

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT TO DECREASE:

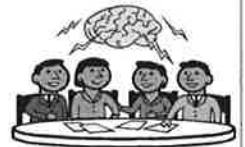


The IRS decreased the mileage rate from .585 cents per mile to .55 cents per mile, effective **January 1, 2009.**

CAO will also decrease mileage reimbursement to .55 cents effective January 1, 2009.

Please keep 2008 and 2009 mileage on different forms so that we're sure to pay you the appropriate rate.

WHAT'S DEVELOPING?



Thanks to Community Action staff who attended, assisted with, and/or made a donation at the **People You Should Know** fundraising breakfast on November 19th. This year's event, attended by 250 guests (we're pretty sure this is a record), has so far raised \$72,000 for Community Action programs and services. The event was sponsored by Kaiser Permanente, which means that 100% of all donations received as a result of the breakfast will go directly to support our work in the community.

Special thanks to Christy Barker and Rachel Tran Jimenez for sharing personal stories and illustrating the need for organizations like Community Action. We also appreciate that Hillsboro Mayor Tom Hughes was on hand to share his thoughts about the value of our work. If you missed this year's People You Should Know breakfast, we hope you will consider participating next year. **(SAVE THE DATE for our annual Celebration of Community Spirit Dinner on April 1, 2009.)**

If you would like to donate to Community Action directly or via United Way, Resource Development would be happy to assist. You can also donate on-line using a credit card. Just click on the appropriate links on the home page at our website. (Look for icons for **Just Give** or **I Give Where I Live.**)

Happy Holidays from Resource Development!



ALL STAFF 12/5/08 featured speakers: Debbie Wooten and Joseph Quinones

HR – from Nicole



The recent All-Staff event was my first opportunity to become one with the BIG community of Community Action and it was a true pleasure for me to get to join you as a fellow employee. The response to Debbie Wooten's presentation has been overwhelmingly positive! Since so many of you noted "how much we need programs like this (humor) here," I decided to do some informal research about humor in the workplace with the hope that we might stay motivated to keep up that momentum that Debbie jumpstarted for us. Here are a couple nuggets to keep in mind:

Humor Facilitates Communication

Humor can provide a non-threatening medium through which we can communicate with others without intensifying the emotional temperature of the relationship. Consider the frazzled HR Director who posts the sign "I have only two speeds, and if this one isn't fast enough then I'm sure you're not going to like my other." ☺

Humor Builds Relationships

A sense of staff cohesion and teamwork can be increased by using good natured humor. Taking the seriousness of work a little more lightly might provide us with the opportunity to become more connected with each other. And at those times, when humor isn't necessarily appropriate, having used humor in the past might bridge a connection between two people that might not have existed previously.

Humor Reduces Stress

Work is often associated with stress, and we know that stress is one of the main causes of illness, absenteeism, employee burn-out, etc. Humor is a great stress reliever because it makes us feel good, and it's very hard to feel good and feel stress simultaneously. At the moment we experience humor, feelings like depression, anger, and anxiety dissolve. When we laugh we feel physically better. After we laugh, we feel lighter and more relaxed. In addition, humor provides a psychological stress reducer as it snaps our thinking to another channel.

Humor Provides Perspective

Another way in which humor oils the gears of the workplace is by providing perspective. Ashleigh Brilliant (known for his one-liners often found on postcards) says, "Distance doesn't really make you any smaller, but it does make you part of a bigger picture."

I hope that each of us will heartfully try to nurture humor and hope in our hearts throughout the next year. It's a major career asset and as we increase our personal humor quotient and spread our humor contagiously to others, we will begin to see the "lite" at the end of the tunnel.

~Happy Holidays! Nicole

FAMILY & COMMUNITY RESOURCES



Free Energy Education workshops are available to clients who meet income guidelines. Attendees must be **pre-qualified** and **pre-registered** in advance.

Clients may sign up for workshops at the time of their Energy Assistance appointment.

Head Start teachers may contact Margaret Rodriguez Springer (503) 693-3269 or via email mspringer@caowash.org to arrange workshops for Head Start parents.

Other Community Action staff interested in finding out more about workshops or ways to get energy-savings information to their clients should contact Margaret.

CURRENT WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Beaverton Library, Beaverton Tuesdays 5:30-7:00 pm	1/13/09 * 2/17/09 * 3/10/09 * 4/14/09 or 5/12/09
Community Action, Hillsboro Tuesdays 5:30-7:00 pm	1/27/09 * 3/24/09 or 5/26/09
Tigard Library, Tigard Wednesdays 1:30-3:00 pm	2/11/09 or 4/15/09
Community Action, Hillsboro 4:30-6:00 pm (In Spanish)	1/14/09 * 3/11/09 or 5/14/09

Resource Directories:

The I&R department is preparing the 2009 Edition of the Washington County Resource Directories, which will be available in mid to late January. There have been numerous changes in the information for the resources in the directory. Check with your Program Assistant for more information on ordering one for you or your program. In the meantime, you can access programs and services by going to our web site:

<http://www.communityaction4u.org/find>

Penny Pincher Energy Tips:

You just know once it starts raining and the temperature drops, it will never be warm (or dry) again. So to stay warm without going broke this winter, consider these cost-saving tips, courtesy of Oregon Oil Heat:

Check your furnace air filter monthly and replace it if it shows any dust or dirt buildup.

Seal your ductwork. A rebate from the Energy Trust of Oregon (www.energytrust.org) and a state income tax credit are available.

Open shades and drapes during the day and close when the sun goes down.

Close kitchen vents, fireplace dampers and closet doors when not in use.

Avoid using space heaters, which can be expensive to operate.