

**2008 Metropolitan Action Commission  
Volunteer/Partnership Honoree Descriptions**  
(Honorees were recognized at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Action Awards  
Recognition on May 20, 2008)

**Outstanding Customers**

**1. Sarah Hardison**

Ms. Hardison is one of our most accomplished senior in the Adult Education Program. She dropped out of school in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade to go to work and raise her family as a single parent. Realizing her dream of graduating from high school remained in her heart, she enrolled in the Metropolitan Action Commission Adult Education Program. Ms. Hardison did not know what to expect and at times questioned her skills to complete the program. Since she has been in our program, she has been an active and unselfish volunteer. Ms. Hardison motivates and tutors others that are new to the program. On April 22, nine months after she began the program, she passed her GED exam which will allow her to participate in the Graduation Ceremony in June. She is known by all of the students and highly respected for her desire to continue her education beyond her GED.

**2. James Green and Jerrod Harvell**

James and Jerrod are cousins and are always seen together encouraging each other and reminding the other of their educational goals. Both Mr. Harvell and Mr. Green reached the 11<sup>th</sup> grade level at a local high school, but decided that conventional education was not working for them. Consequently they both decided to register at the Metro Action's Adult Education Program. Jerrod received his GED last October and James received his GED in February of this year. Both are now students at Tennessee State University. James completed his first semester this month and Jerrod completed his first year at the university. At present James has the highest GED score of 3080 and will be inducted in the program's Honor Society. Both Jerrod and James will participate in the graduation ceremony in June.

**3. The Baynham Family**

The Baynham Family is an incredible family. Sally Baynham, a mother of four children dropped out in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade to raise her children as a single parent. Not a day went by that Mrs. Baynham did not stress the importance of education and self confidence to her children. When her daughters Tiffany and Tasha left school, she encouraged them to get their GED. Their mother's strong emphasis on education led both of them to Nashville State Technical Collage to pursue their associate degrees in Nursing. Mrs. Baynum son Timothy pursued and passed the GED Exam last August. Because of both her daughters and son's scores, they will be inducted into the agency's Honor Society due to their high scores. Timothy will join his sisters at Nashville State Tech in the fall. Travis is the youngest of the Baynham clan and Mrs. Baynham are both currently enrolled in the GED program and they are 20 points from passing the exam. This family has encouraged one another to achieve their educational successes and it is evident that they love and are devoted to one another.

#### **4. Stephanie Phelps**

Ms. Phelps, the mother of a 13 year old son and a 10 year old daughter, began her journey with the GED program by writing an essay titled, "I hope this all works out so my life will be different than it was five to ten years ago." Because of Stephanie's tenacity she passed the GED Test within 2 weeks of enrolling in the program. She immediately enrolled in the agency's college prep program and applied and was accepted at the Tennessee Technology Center at Nashville, where she received the Wilder-Naifeh Scholarship to pursue her certification as a Health Insurance Specialist.

#### **5. Catrice Jackson**

Ms. Jackson, the mother of three children thought it would be tough to receive her GED, but she begun in the ABE program and quickly promoted to the GED Program. Catrice wanted her children to value education, so she served as their role model. Her determination worked. Her daughter graduated from Strafford High School earlier this week and has been accepted to Lane College. Catrice will receive her GED next month during the agency's GED Graduation ceremony and plans to attend the Tennessee Technology Center at Nashville.

#### **6. Louis Trotter**

Louis is an example of a can-do spirit. Louis age 59 moved to Nashville after being evacuated from his home in New Orleans, where he lived for 57 years. He enrolled in the program last October and passed the GED after only being in the program for two months. His daughter has been instrumental in helping him to settle in Nashville. Although He is already a certified Home Inspector in New Orleans, he hopes to obtain his Home Inspector's certification in Tennessee.

#### **7. Loum Odwar**

Loum talked to the instructors about his weakness in certain areas. After the staff got to know him, he talked about his struggles in Uganda and the trials he went through even after he arrived in the United States. He worked the third shift then would come into class. Although he was tired he would still smile as he arrived to class with a determination that he would not let his barriers stop him or slow him down. Loum did pass the GED exam and will be a part of the graduation in June.

## **Outstanding Volunteers**

### **1. Kathy Miller**

Ms. Miller shows great interest in her grandson's life by volunteering in the classroom to read stories, working one on one with him as well as other children. She always volunteers for our field trips and joins the class for lunch when her schedule allows. During lunch she engages children in conversations about colors and shapes of their vegetables. Ms. Miller has a great love for Head Start because her daughter was enrolled in the Head Start program when she was young. Because her daughter's work schedule

doesn't allow her to come, Ms. Miller committed to filling in on her behalf because she realizes the importance of parental involvement.

## **2. Tequita Liban**

The teachers at Ross Head Start think Ms. Liban is an awesome role model because of her excellent skills with the children. She brings in old magazines and movies that promote early reading skills. She also brings in books about different seasons so that children can learn about the different clothing that is worn each season as well as the shoes that are worn. She helped the children get library cards and she supplied the classroom with a movie to help children with sight words. Ms. Liban is a great mom and always make sure that her child practices what she learns at home.

## **3. Vanessa Vecino-Domench**

Ms. Vanessa helps in the Ross Head Start classroom on a regular basis. She is willing to help the teachers guide the children in setting up for breakfast each morning and lunch in the afternoon. She helps the children clean up after eating and provides assistance to the teachers by making copies for all of the teachers in the building.

## **4. Menine McCullough**

Ms. McCullough has volunteered for every field trip at Ross Head Start. She regularly helps children enjoy the process of learning and is an example of the adage it takes a village to raise a child. She donates her time and resources during special events and always takes the time to celebrate the successes of each child's accomplishments.

## **5. Shavika Williams**

Ms. Williams is very giving of her time in the Head Start classrooms. She brings a high level of creativity to the program which is demonstrated through her exciting story-telling skills. She brings the story to life with her animated approach to reading to the children. She also participates in all of the special celebrations and can be counted on to help during field trips.

## **6. Jessie Lane**

Ms. Lane comes into the classrooms at Berry Head Start with a smile and a warm greeting to the teachers and the children. She knows every child by name because she is a regular volunteer both in the classrooms and on field trips. Ms. Lane always plays and talks with the children as well as help with setting up for meals. She helps the teachers with their bulletin boards, cut out shapes and other teaching materials for the classes.

## **7. Tiffani Martin**

Ms. Martin is the Parent Club President at the McNeilly Center for Children which is one of three Head Start partner sites. She is a devoted mother, volunteer and parent advocate. Ms. Martin has attended every parent meeting this school year and she never hesitates to assist our Parent Involvement Coordinator in recruiting parents for center meetings and planning educational Parent Day Out events. Ms. Martin demonstrates all the characteristics of a good leader and model volunteer.

### **8. Jessica Stephens**

Ms. Stephens has been a committed Head Start Parent and Policy Council representative for the past two years serving as secretary. Ms. Stephens is passionate about the Head Start families at the McNeilly Center as well as the two other partner sites. She assists the agency's Human Resource Department with interviews, served on the Self Assessment Team in addition to her duties as the Policy Council secretary.

### **9. Utika Graham**

Ms. Graham has been a very involved parent at North Head Start. She provides assistance in the classroom and even leads the children in coloring and other activities. She also participates in the field trips as needed. She provides valued support to the teachers and to the center staff.

### **10. Maria Ibarra**

Ms. Ibarra is a very involved parent at Berry Head Start. She assists with art activities, preparing the tables for the children's meal time and with small group activities. She recently labeled all of the shelves and other areas in the classroom with the Spanish translation of the item. She is a friendly person who continues to help the teachers at Berry.

### **11. Tina Taliaferro**

Tina is a very dependable parent and one that the teachers at her child's Head Start center. She can always be called upon to participate in field trips and class activities. Ms Tina always makes herself available for any project or activity that is being held at the center.

### **12. Essence Otey**

Essence volunteered daily at the Tom Joy Head Start Center for the first three months of the program to help with transitions by the children and teachers. She continues to volunteer for many field trips and is a valued member of the Tom Joy family.

### **13. Shemika Talley**

Ms. Talley is being nominated based on her help in the classroom at Ross Head Start. She helps with everything such as small group activities, serving meals, washing tables, sweeping the floors and reading stories. She is very popular with all of the children and she knows all of their names.

### **14. Erick McFarland**

Mr. McFarland is a very devoted father who always shows interest in his child and what she does at school. He has a willing spirit when it comes to the needs of the classrooms at Ross Head Start. He volunteers in the classrooms as well as participating in most of the field trips. He always encourages the staff to call him anytime that they need his help. He is a great role model to both his daughter and the other children enrolled in the program.

**15. Stephanie Wright-Bailey**

Stephanie takes great pride in the education of her child. She also shows her interest by volunteering on field trips when her work schedule allows. If she can not volunteer she goes the extra mile to recruit other parents, even if it means giving them a ride to the center. Ms Bailey demonstrates her commitment to active parent participation.

**16. Kimberly Hunter**

Kimberly is a very active parent that is always willing to help out. Ms. Hunter volunteers in the classroom regularly, goes on field trips, attends Parent Club meetings and is always available if there is any paperwork that needs to be completed. Ms. Hunter volunteered right up until the time she gave birth on May 9. Ms. Hunter is a familiar face that the staff at Berry Head Start knows well. Accepting the award for her daughter is her mother Ms. ?

**17. Tamara Davis**

Ms. Davis is an active parent at Tom Joy Head Start. She participates in field trips helps with bulletin boards, read to the children and always willing to help those in need of a little encouragement or assistance with completing a task. She is a constant support of the special events of the center and is a valued volunteer of the center because she always asks what can she do to help?

**18. Monique Brown**

Ms. Brown is an active parent at Tom Joy. She participates in field trips and always helps in the classrooms in whatever activity that is going on at the time she enters the room. She always helps during special activities and is welcomed in all of the classroom and serves as the classroom mom of all classes.

**19. Mary Smith**

Ms. Smith is a very attentive grandmother. She volunteers for every field trip and loves spending time with everyone in the classroom. Mary is very dependable, reliable, gracious and respectful of both the children and the staff. She provides constant support of the teaching staff and the families of Head Start.

**20. Stephanie Shelton**

Ms. Shelton is a very concerned parent about her child. She always expresses interest in what is being taught in the classroom as well as supportive of the progress that is being made. Ms. Shelton volunteers in the classroom and on the field trips. Because she is equally involved in the education of her other children, she divides the time between Ross Head Start and the schools that her other children attend.

**21. Washunda Glenn**

Ms. Glenn is being nominated because of her willingness to assist at Tom Joy Head Start wherever she is needed. Ms. Glenn has volunteered many hours in the Family Service Specialists office answering the busy phones as well as greeting visitors and directing them to the appropriate staff. She also volunteers in the classroom and on field trips.

## **22. Ruby Hawkins**

Ms. Hawkins, is a Head Start parent at Tom Joy and a great volunteer. She works at night, but still finds time to attend classroom field trips, because she feels it is important for parents to be involved in their child's education. Sometimes Ms. Hawkins would recruit other volunteers so that the proper adult to child ratio would be covered during field trips.

## **Community Partners**

### **1. Dorothy Doss**

Ms. Doss has a great spirit and continues to be involved in our program by serving on the Head Start Policy Council as a Community Representative. During the past three years, she has been a dependable interviewer during the agency's hiring process. Even on short notice she is always able to accommodate the agency's needs because she understood the importance and the federal requirement that includes Policy Council during interviews for Head Start positions. She has provided valuable assistance to the Human Resource Office and to the Policy Council as its treasurer.

### **2. Closer to Home**

Michelle Carlton and Steve Koenig are representing the Closer to Home Foundation. Last year a two-alarm fire at Parkwood Apartment, left 3 Head Start families homeless and without clothing. Also during this time another Head Start family's home was burglarized which resulted in the theft of all of the children's clothing and furnishing. The Closer to Home Foundation supplied Wal-Mart Gift Cards totaling \$300 to each family enabling them to replace some of the items that were lost in the fire or stolen which enabled these families to start again in their new apartments. The agency received a letter from one of the recipients which stated that her "heart was filled with so much love knowing that some cares." The foundation also helped a family this year that became homeless after a series of crisis which resulted in the mother losing her vehicle and the clothing that was stored inside of the vehicle. The Wal-Mart card enabled her to cloth her seven children as well as replace her work clothes.

### **3. Women Investing in Good Success or WING.**

Ruth Mitchell is here today representing Women Investing in Good Success or WING. This organization, which has been in existence for 5 years, sponsored a classroom at Ross Head Start by helping with special celebrations and volunteering in the classrooms. The women are always calm and reassuring to the children and a great help in the classroom.

### **4. Mary Cowans-Sanders**

Ms. Sanders is a part of the Metro Nashville Public Schools Early Childhood Special Education Department and serves as the liaison between Head Start and Metro

Schools. She was nominated for her dedication and loyalty to the children from the Head Start program that receive services through their program. She also provides exemplary services to their families as they work to develop an education plan that fit the needs of their child. Ms Sanders asked specifically to work with Head Start directly because of her desire to serve them. She provides monthly reports and timely observations and meetings and is very supportive of the Head Start program.

#### **5. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority-Nashville Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter.**

The ladies of the Nashville Alumnae Chapter selected Dudley Head Start as the site of their Sisterhood Month in March. They volunteered in the classrooms and assisted teachers with preparation for the next day. They also played games with the children, read stories and provided one on one attention to the children that needed extra snuggle time. They also bundled up on cold days and when outside to play on the playground. Their group exhibited much care and concern for the children we serve.

#### **6. School Aid USA**

School Aid USA has been a constant source of support for the entire Head Start program. As in years past, the organization provided clothing for children enrolled in the program. This year, the group extended its assistance to nearly all seven of the Head Start program. School Aid can also be counted on when families experience unexpected crisis. They have provided emergency clothing and shoes for many families throughout the year. Marion Bohan and some of the members of School Aid are hear today to represent the hundreds of businesses, private and public donors that enable them to help many families in their time of need.

#### **7. Clementine King**

Ms. King, owner of Tina's Salon has been a faithful sponsor of Dudley Head Start for 8 years. She has served the children in the North, South and East Nashville areas. Located in Green Hills, she encouraged other businesses surrounding her location to join her in making sure that the children of Dudley Head Start had a Merry Christmas. She is not satisfied until she has added her own personal touch to each gift bag that is given to the children. You can hear the eagerness and excitement in her voice when she calls to make sure that everything is progressing on schedule.

#### **8. Aida Hugues**

Aida is the manager of the local Spanish Newspaper, El Crucero de Tennessee. She is known throughout the community for her assistance with helping Spanish-Speaking families with locating housing, work, school, health services and other programs. This past Christmas, she collected more than 1,000 toys for Spanish-Speaking children. She received the toys both through donations and purchasing items.

#### **9. The Outreach & Promotions Unit of Vanderbilt Medical Center**

Karen Kaiser and Mary Kate Mouser received a grant to host child safety seats to ensure that they were installed properly in an effort to increase the proper use of the seats. The organization selected the Head Start program as check points beginning nearly a year ago. Families that had inappropriate seats or no seats at all were given

the appropriate seat based on the height and weight of the child. Nearly 400 families were able to participate in the program.

#### **10. Mike Allen**

Mike Allen, a part of the Metro Finance Team, has provided years of tremendous support and effort in assisting the agency with its purchasing needs. Last summer, due to a partnership change, in addition to the agency's role as a contractor for the Summer Food Service Program, the agency also became the actual provider of free breakfast and lunch meals for sites that served low-income children during the summer months. The agency literally had weeks to pull together the logistics of a program that served nearly 6,000 meals per day. Mike assisted the agency in procuring refrigerated food trucks which were needed to transport the food to 110 sites throughout Nashville. Mike stayed with the project until all parts were running smoothly.

#### **11. WSMV Channel 4 News**

Lisa Spencer, Meteorologist at Channel 4 represents a huge effort that began when the summer temperatures started reaching record highs. The Summer Cooling Program, which began in May started seeing a steep increase as the temperatures crept closer to 100-degrees. The station partnered with Sprintz Home Furniture in a plea to the public for donations of money and new air conditioning units for families that are eligible through the agency's program. 750 air conditioners were provided to families throughout Davidson County. Channel 4 provided continuous coverage and a 4 week campaign encouraging Nashville and the neighboring counties to support the program. Channel 4 partnered with Sprintz Furniture, not only to collect the units but also to deliver them to the agency for distribution.

#### **12. Barger Foods**

Roy Barger and the staff at Barger Foods Wholesale learned of our new role as the Summer Food Service program provider for the program and came to our aid immediately. He offered his 18-wheeled refrigerated trailer for storage of the meals throughout the entire program, saving the agency \$5,000. By providing the additional truck for storage, this enabled the agency to maintain production without delays. Mr. Barger understood our mission of serving children in Davidson County with nutritious meals that they would enjoy. His willingness to provide the truck during his peak production season was a demonstration of his kind and totally unselfish commitment to the children in the Nashville area especially since his company is located in Rutherford County.

#### **13. Institutional Wholesale Company**

Johnny Brown was very instrumental in obtaining a 56 foot refrigerated trailer for perishable foods and holding the lunches once they were prepared. He also worked diligently to ensure that all staples and non-staple items were available for the Summer Food Program. Keeping the budget restraints and our level of expectation for quality meals in mind, Johnny jumped right in and exceeded our expectation of service and prompt deliveries. By providing his trailer, it was a savings of \$10,800 to the program. He also took care of the required maintenance of the trailer while it was in our use.

#### **14. Jones Paideia Elementary Magnet School Agents of Change**

Connie Sharp and Meredith Gould are representing the students of Jones that are a part of the student-led group, Agents of Change. The Agents of Change are charged with staying aware of the agencies in the city that provide services that change that lives of residents in the city. After a requested presentation on the Summer Cooling program, the children decided to donate \$500 to the program to purchase additional air conditioning units for the families that are served by the program.

#### **15. Willie and Chico McQueen**

Willie and Chico are brothers that have volunteered for the Summer Cooling program for several years. Last year during the hottest part of the Summer, Chico and Willie helped to unload over 100 air conditioners that were delivered to the agency from donations received throughout the city. Their tireless effort allowed us to continue to distribute the units without interruption to the program.

#### **16. Melinda Gilbert**

Melinda provided assistance to the agency during a very stressful time. When the agency decided to become the actual provider of the Summer Lunch Program, they needed to hire staff within a matter of weeks. Ms. Gilbert assisted the agency by provided the required Defensive Driving training for 24 Summer Food Service Program staff within a few days. She supported our mission and her dedication allowed us to begin the program on time and enabled us to deliver free meals to over 100 sites throughout Nashville to programs that serve children that live in low-income areas.

#### **17. The Metro Executive Secretaries Association**

The Metro Executive Secretaries Association donated \$660.00 toward the fan and air conditioner program, which will help the agency purchase units for families the qualify for the Summer Cooling Program. Last year when the temperatures reached record highs, donations from the community provided needed support which enabled the agency to provide a unit for everyone that qualified for the program.

#### **18. Sprintz Home Furniture**

In partnership with WSMV-Channel 4 News, Sprintz Furniture conducted a Heat Wave Campaign to solicit donations of Air Conditioning units for the agency's Summer Cooling Program. Donors were encouraged to drop off the units at any Sprintz Furniture store. Through this campaign 750 units were donated to the program, which provides free units to senior citizens, disabled residents, people with medical conditions that are exacerbated by extreme heat and families with small children.

#### **Recipients of the Executive Director's Action Awards for Exemplary Service:**

WSMV-Channel 4 News  
Closer to Home Foundation  
The Baynham Family