



# Neighborhood News

## July 2005

### Eckerd Family Foundation Funds Youth Technology Program

Building on a very successful program created by the African American Leadership Council, the Eckerd Family Foundation has awarded a three year capacity building and program development grant to the Neighborhood Family Centers Coalition. The grant will provide for the replication of this extensive program in each of the Neighborhood Family Centers. In addition, two other agencies were invited to participate in the project, the Childs Park Youth Development Initiative and the Greater Ridgecrest Area Youth Development Initiative.

Each participating agency will be eligible for new computers and work spaces, based on their capacity. Up to ten computer systems will be provided the first year, with additional equipment available according to pro-

gram outcomes.

The project utilizes a curriculum developed by Bilal Habeeb-ullah now in its fifth year at the African American Leadership Council. Split into three phases, the program takes youth through the entire range of computer literacy. In the First Phase, youth learn computer basics including key boarding and menu navigation. An Intermediate Level focuses on educational programs and other software. The Advanced Level covers MS PowerPoint slide shows, Internet research and enhanced typing skills.



One Half of the Computer Lab at AALC

In Phase Two, youth are introduced to desk top publishing website design and CD creation. Youth also develop skills in basic computer repair and maintenance.

Youth with an interest in expanding their knowledge even further are given the opportunity to become A+ and IC3 certified in Phase Three. While not all youth will reach this level, those who do will have a very high level of employability.

The program uses trained instructors for much of the technical content, but the most exciting element is a youth peer

work with those in the earlier stages. .

In order to capture the elements that will be part of the program's implementation, Eckerd is also funding an evaluation component that will include a narrative of the lessons learned. This historical overview will also be important to others wishing to provide technical resources to youth and communities. Not only will the youth in Pinellas County benefit from this grant, but it is expected that others in Florida and even nationally will have access to both the program and its implementation methodology.

This program has achieved some very exciting outcomes and we are honored to have the opportunity to be involved in a project that will become a model for other communities.

### A Successful Tax Season

The Neighborhood Family Centers have been a significant part



of the Internal Revenue Service's initiative to provide free, community based tax preparation services. The Sanderlin NFC has been a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site for three

years, the Asian NFC for two and this year three other NFC's joined the program. Focusing on basic tax returns and eligibility for the Earned Income Tax and Child Tax Credits, the program seeks to ensure that taxpayers receive the refunds they deserve. This year, the Juvenile Welfare Board funded a position to coordinate the VITA/Wealth Building Project in Pinellas County. As a result, some very

impressive outcomes were achieved. Here are just a few of the statistics from the IRS:

- NFC refunds were 41% higher than the average of all other VITA sites (\$1408 vs. \$1001).
- NFC Earned Income Tax Credits were also 41% higher (\$1669 vs. \$1183)
- NFC's accounted for 19% of the Child Tax Credit dollars claimed.

Published by the:

Neighborhood Family  
Centers Coalition, Inc.  
18860 U.S. Hwy 19 N  
Clearwater, FL 33764  
(727) 531-1980  
[www.nfcccoalition.org](http://www.nfcccoalition.org)

# Three NFC's Expand Their Facilities



## Campbell Park NFC

Taking an abandoned city facility and turning into a vibrant, exciting family center is no easy feat—just ask Lorina Padgett, the Executive Director of the Campbell Park NFC. The task gets even more interesting when the project's funds run out before it's completed!

Utilizing a pool house no longer needed by the City of St. Petersburg and funding pro-

vided through a Community Block Grant, the Campbell Park NFC moved from a small, cramped office into what has become a focal point for community activity.

The new center is named in honor of Mr. Vearle Scott, a community leader and visionary who inspired many folks to become activists. Miss Iveta Berry took up that challenge many years ago, forming the Campbell Park Neighborhood Association, the governing body for the Family Center. Both individuals would be very proud of the outcome their spirit created— in fact, one of the most moving experiences of the project was a prayer circle comprised of community members, dedicating the building in their memory.

A computer lab, large meeting room, class rooms for youth and adults, offices for both the neighborhood association and com-

munity police officer and are all part of the new facility.

With space to accommodate the various programs, the Center is now able to provide the range of services that were difficult to offer in its previous strip mall location. The new facility is alive with the sounds of youth participating in the summer camp program, as well as a number of programs focused on developing both life skills and literacy.

While a great deal of effort was required to complete the project and, like many other non-profit projects, funds ran out for essentials like interior paint and flooring, it took some creative effort on Lorina's part to locate donors for materials and volunteers to apply the finishing touches. A few small items remain, but the Center is now a subject of community pride and is attracting new participants everyday.

## African American Leadership Council/No. Greenwood Family Center

Bilal Habeeb-ullah smiles a lot these days. The realization of a dream, started many years ago, came last fall when the African American Leadership Council (AALC) and the North Greenwood Family Center moved into its new facility. Through a lease arrangement with the City of Clearwater, AALC occupied the Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Center as its new home. From very humble beginnings in a building considerably smaller than their Douglas



Street quarters, AALC has grown into a significant community presence. The commitment of the City of Clearwater is only one example of that growth. Funding from JWB and other sources

support the Youth Leadership Council, the Family Center activities, and a substance abuse intervention program for families. Most recently, a youth technology program piloted by AALC over the last five years has been selected for funding and replication in all of the Neighborhood Family Centers (see page 1). By every measure, AALC has achieved success in addressing the needs of the North Greenwood community!

## Lealman Family Center



Mike Quinlivan has been practicing patience a lot recently. As anyone who has coordinated the construction of a building knows, a generous supply of

patience is a necessity! Currently occupying rented quarters in a neighborhood church, the Lealman Family Center expects to move into its new 4500 sq. ft. facility in August. That is, if all the "ifs" actually happen!

Lealman's new facility was made possible by a Community Development Block Grant arranged by the county's Community Development Department. The facility will become a wonderful addition

to the Lealman community, bringing a community asset to a lot that previously housed an abandoned building.

New programs to address the many needs of Lealman residents will now be possible, with a large community room for events and meetings, a library, a computer technology center and space for youth and family activities.

## High Point's Everyday Hero

Andria Logwood was selected by Bay News 9 to be the featured Every Day Hero on June 13, 2005. Andria has been volunteering at the High Point NFC for several years. She works with the younger kids in the after school program and she has worked at many of the HPNFC Community building events. Andria and High Point's youth council participated in developing a grant that resulted in a new pavilion at the youth center.



She also has volunteered with Toys For Tots, works and goes to

high school. About two years ago Andria donated 12" of hair to Locks of Love, an organization that helps cancer patients. At this time she is growing her hair so that she can donate it again! Andria is truly an extraordinary teen and a great example for others. She says she likes giving back to her community because it is a good feeling and she hopes more teens will take the time to volunteer.

## Sanderlin Completes Its Second Abstinence program

Acting as both the host and fiscal agent for the GAPP (Greatness, Attitude, and Potential Program), the Sanderlin Neighborhood Family Center has taken a leadership position in providing abstinence education to local youth.

The 24 week GAPP features hands-on activities ranging from role plays and contest to rap sessions; all designed to enhance the young participants' social and life skills, as well as increase their refusal and survival skills, and leadership capabilities. Parents also attend

workshops to assist them in communicating with their children about the importance of maintaining healthy attitudes about sex and substance use.

The program, under the direction of Andree Sunnerville, seeks to address the disparities in sexual activity in White versus Black youth. For example, Black youth are ten times more likely to become pregnant between the ages of 10 and 14.

In addition to abstinence skills,

the program also provides in home anger management and family counseling by a licensed Social Worker. The Sanderlin Center is very pleased to partner in this important effort.



Youth and families attend the recent GAPP graduation

## An Outstanding Volunteer

Great news from the Governor's office! On January 23<sup>rd</sup> the Foundation Village NFC was notified that their wonderful volunteer, Ben Perez, was the recipient of the Governor's Points of Light Award. He will be honored at a reception at the Governor's mansion in October.

Ben has been providing case management to Hispanic families in the neighborhood. He assists with any and all problems these families may be ex-

periencing from understanding our laws, immigration dilemmas, to locating employment, daycare and housing. You name it and he assists! Ben's dedication and commitment to serve is an inspiration to all who know him.

Foundation Village staff is learning conversational Spanish at the Center two mornings each week. Class participants include front line staff from other agencies as well. Everyone is progressing slowly but surely under the tutelage of la profesora,

Francisca Dawson, with the hope that this new skill will assist staff in reducing communication barriers with the growing Hispanic population. ESOL classes are also offered two evenings each week for our Spanish speaking neighbors.

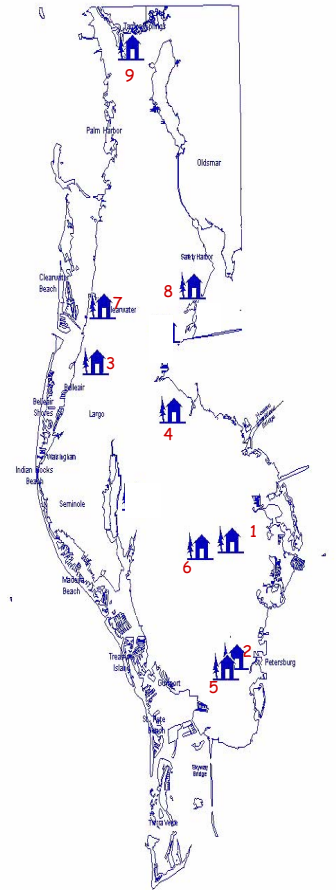


Ben Perez, Points of Light Winner

The Mission of the Neighborhood Family Centers Coalition, Inc. is to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of member Centers by advocating for common concerns, providing mutual support, developing shared resources, and collectively promoting the Neighborhood Family Center concept." In 2004, the Coalition became an Administrative Service Entity, coordinating the distribution of funds provided by the Juvenile Welfare Board, the Centers' primary source of resources for programs and operations.

MEMBER CENTERS:

- Asian NFC (1)      1801 62nd Ave N.      St. Petersburg, FL 33702      (727) 520-9820
- Campbell Park NFC (2)      1201 7th Ave. So.      St. Petersburg, FL 33705      (727) 894-6880
- Foundation Village NFC (3)      918 Woodlawn St.,      Clearwater, FL 33756      (727) 445-9504
- High Point Community FC (4)      P.O. Box 17296      Clearwater, FL 33759      (727) 533-0730
- James B. Sanderlin NFC (5)      2335 22nd Ave. S      St. Petersburg, FL 33712      727) 321-9444
- Lealman NFC (6)      4070 58th Ave. N      St. Petersburg, FL 33714      (727) 528-7891
- North Greenwood NFC (7)      1201 Douglas Ave.      Clearwater, FL 33775      (727) 298-8105
- Safety Harbor NFC (8)      1003 ML King/4th St. N      Safety Harbor, FL 34695      (727) 791-8255
- Union Academy NFC (9)      401 ML King, Jr. Dr.      Tarpon Springs, FL 34689      (727) 934-5881



Neighborhood Family Centers Coalition,  
 Inc  
 18860 U.S. Highway 19 N  
 Clearwater, FL 33764