

CONNECTIONS

Jefferson County Committee For Economic Opportunity Child Development Services Division

Newsletter For and About the JCCEO Head Start-Early Head Start Program and Its Families

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May 2018



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JCCEO

Mission Statement

JCCEO seeks to reduce poverty and help low-income citizens of Jefferson County, Alabama to meet critical needs and become self-sufficient.

**Executive Director
DePriest Waddy**

**Associate Director
Tonya L. Jones**

From the Director

Greetings! The end of the 2017-18 Program year is here! This has been a great year for JCCEO Head Start and Early Head Start. The children and staff have worked extremely hard and it is time for a break!

Let me take this time to thank those people who made this year great! First, to our awesome students—thanks for allowing us to be part of your world and for being a blessing to us. To our outstanding parents - thanks for volunteering, for attending parent meetings, and just being an important part of the education of your child. To our community partners, thanks for always saying 'yes' and making a difference in the lives of our children. Finally, to the staff of JCCEO, thanks for all you do for the children and families we serve! You have done an outstanding job this year! Our CLASS scores were off the chart and it is because we provided the training, but you put in the work! Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

This year brought many changes. Facilities staff persons John Woods and Rusty Holley resigned; we wish them much success in their future endeavors. Charles Vargas, Alencia Mitchell, Renee' Fox and Brenda Singgellos joined the JCCEO administrative team and we are excited to see where we go from here! We are saddened by the fact that teacher Agnes Carr is no longer with us in the physical; however, her spirit lives on in the lives of her children and the staff here at JCCEO Head Start.

We are gearing up for a busy summer! I pray each of you have a restful and safe summer. For those leaving the fold and heading to Kindergarten, we say good luck! To our returning students and families, we can't wait to see you!!

It has been an honor to serve as the director of such an awesome program! As always, thanks for allowing us to give your child the Head Start they so richly deserve!!!



Carmelita Poindexter
Deputy Director
Child Development Svc.



The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Family Engagement

Male Involvement Retreat



We are fast approaching the end of another year, and we will soon face the inevitable good-byes to our Head Start children and families. But before we bring the program year to an end, many activities will happen. I will highlight just a few that are taking place this Spring.

Transitions

Every year transition activities are planned for our Kindergarten-eligible children and families to ensure that opportunities are provided for smooth and

successful placements. Each center has registration activities and sponsors field trips to elementary schools. Many centers also participate in transition events that bring families and school partners together in a variety of ways. We are grateful for principals, counselors, teachers, and other partners who support this process.

Male Involvement Retreat

The CHIEFs (Children's Hopes Inspired by Enthusiastic Fathers) met on April 13 for their annual Male Involvement Retreat. This program continues to be an integral part of the work we do at JCCEO. This year's topics included child support and paternity, men's health, and strengthening

family relationships. Hats off to Ralph Sims, Victor Spencer, Kris Erskin, and the JCCEO team for making this day a blast! Our host at the Festival Center, Earl Williams and his staff laid out the red carpet for the event.

Family Forward Scholarships

We currently have ten parents enrolled in the **Administrative Medical Assistant** program through Jefferson St. Community College. Students are learning to master 350 medical terminology terms. These terms are critical to accurately describe the condition of patients and the treatments they need. Our parents are doing well in the class with an 86% average. They are gaining job-ready skills to ensure clear communication

among health care workers so that patients can get the appropriate treatment.

Eight of our parents are currently enrolled in the **Pharmacy Technician** program through Lawson State Community College. Parents are developing pharmacy and customer service skills to fill job opportunities in this field. They will also complete an externship to get hands-on experience so that they can be successful from day one. Students who complete the program will be given a voucher to cover the expenses of the certification examination.

Enjoy your summer!

*Hollis Johnson, Coordinator
Family Engagement and
Social Services 327-7525*

“Recruitment and Enrollment activities ensure that our centers are at full enrollment with 1,427 Head Start and 248 Early Head Start families. Our partnerships with you and the community are vital for spreading the word and encouraging those who need us to apply.”

Bilingual staffer Antonieta Cristobal leads wellness workshop with Latino families held at Golden Temple Restaurant.



We Appreciate You

The JCCEO Head Start-Early Head Start Program takes this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of our parents for the volunteer work they do, including Tiffany Bennett (Trinitee) at **Cooper Green Center**, who read to the class *The Hungry Caterpillar*, then created a delicious snack to accompany the story. You all get the gold star!

Parent Meetings...

Oliver Principal Selena Florence spoke to parents at **Festival Center** about Kindergarten. Many thanks also to Floresha Boyd from Regions Bank, who presented a Financial Literacy workshop at the March meeting.



Assistant District Attorney Danny Carr talked to parents at **West Center Street Center** about gun violence.



Moving On UP!

Kiearra Morgan, D'Nario's mother (**Kingston**), graduated from Virginia College's Medical Assistant program.

Kristen Durden, (**Shades Cahaba**), mother of Kennedy, earned a Medical Assistant degree from Virginia College.

LaToya Clements, parent of Madyson (**West Center Street**), graduated from Virginia College this spring with associate degrees in Cosmetology and Health Care Reimbursement.

Cynthia Boyd, mother of Makayla and Micah (**Fairmont**), graduated from Virginia College and passed the certification exam in the Patient Care Technician Assistant program.

Janette Smith, Jayla's mom (**Fairmont**), completed the Certified Nursing Assistant program at South Haven Health and Rehabilitation and is now employed with the nursing home.

If you were not there you missed a good one!

It's not about business all the time. Parent 'meetings' can be a lot of fun, too!



At **Center Point Center**, parents created Felt Boards to help children at home learn their shapes. The boards can also be used to bring stories to life during family reading time. Many thanks to consultant Amy Bradley for leading the activity.

Multicultural Luncheon

JCCEO held a multicultural luncheon and workshop in April for our dedicated Latino parent volunteers and the staff who support them. It was an opportunity for parents to make new friends, bond more closely with family services staff, and learn about healthy alternatives when dining out with their families. The group enjoyed the atmosphere at the

Golden Temple Restaurant, and the unprocessed, meatless food. Bilingual staffer Antonieta Cristobal, who is also a Head Start parent, was the luncheon speaker. She talked about healthy eating and making good choices for meals. Bilingual restaurant staff Mariana (pictured), provided a tour of the health food aisles following the meal. The outing was a part of our Latino Family Wellness initiative.





Festival Around the World

By Ms. Croom and Ms. Jackson
Teaching Staff, Head Start Festival Center

During the Week of the Young Child, children had the opportunity to visit different countries at our site, the **Festival Center**. They learned many different things about the countries, such as the food they eat, the music that is played in that country, the population, the bird, the color of the flag, and many others. Our country was the USA and we dressed in the colors red, white, and blue. *[Staff and parents prepared native foods for the children to sample. Children were able to taste the foods from different countries, including Egypt, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, and the USA.]*



Ms. Walker and Black's class dressed in dashikis to represent the continent of Africa, and enjoyed an African dish and African fruit punch.



Parent Jazmin Canedo (Carlos) decorated Ms. Rozell and Steger's classroom to represent Mexico and brought beef tacos and rice water for sampling, (pictured above with parent Kendra Christian (Kameron)).

Parent volunteer (left) Cherry Woodson (King) and teacher Ms. Nance serving Japanese food samples.



Teacher Carolyn Skanes prepares to serve tasty treats from Jamaica.

Cluster



At **Erwin Center** the Chick-fil-a cow paid a visit to the delight of the children in Ms. Braxton's class. Sheriff Mike Hale visited also and brought along The Deputy Dog.



Week of the Young Child

Wayne Honeycutt, Jr. who owns THE SHOP, and his staff volunteered at **St. Joseph's Center**, providing hair cuts for 15 children. Thanks to everyone, including parent Shakema Harler and volunteer Ms. Perdue, for painting the girls' fingernails.



At **St. Francis Center**, about 25 dads participated in a T-shirts with Dads activity with their children.



Children enjoyed Music Monday with a keyboard in the classroom. Maurice's dad Kitwan McCoy also entertained them on the guitar at **Fairmont Center**.

Mayor of Birmingham Randall Woodfin visited several centers to read and hang out with our children. At **West Center Street Center** he ate breakfast with the children in Ms. Tate, Elston and Smith's class. At **Fairmont Center** he joined in whatever activities children were doing.



Earth Day 2018



Ms. Craig and Bennett's class at **Erwin Center** (left) turned the classroom into a rain forest while learning about the subject. (below) The children planted flowers around



the center in observation of Earth Day at **Fairmont Center**, (pictured) Ms. Camel's class, including grandparent volunteer Sandy Tell (Deona); Mandy Nix, and her child Lysander.



The children in Lenora Burroughs' class at **Arrington Center** got a special treat when Executive Director DePriest Waddy came to watch them do a volcano experiment. Ms. Burroughs' classes always enjoy seeing the earth spew out of the crater.

Our Heritage



Janitor Mr. L. C. talked with children about the famous black leaders displayed on the walls at the center and the roles they played in society during Black History Month at **St. Joseph's Center**.



Joseph's Center.

Multicultural Tricycle Rodeo

St. Joseph's Center kicked off their Cinco de Mayo celebration with trike riding and Macarena!



the cones, while Scout Mr. Will cheers them on.

Thanks to the Greater Alabama Council Boys Scouts volunteers for directing the event. (pictured), Teacher Aide Ms. Pettway gives Rachel a boost, around the cones, while Scout Mr. Will cheers them on.

DIA!!! JCCEO participated in the Children's Book Week kick-off event at the 5 Points West Branch Birmingham Public Library. It was a Dia

Celebration designed to encourage Latino families to read. Activities included bilingual storytelling, songs, dancing, refreshments and a Pinata. Each child was able to select books to take home, thanks to donations from JCCEO and the public library. Many thanks are extended to librarian Lynn Carpenter and her staff for a fun experience for everyone. (Pictured clockwise) Family Services Specialist Sherrell Watkins dances with participants; families select dual language or Spanish books to take home; Librarian Ms. Carpenter and JCCEO bilingual staffer and Head Start parent Ms. Cristobal read a story in English and Spanish; **Lipscomb Center** child Emorie strikes a pose wearing her Pinata hat.



Education Services

Home (Based) Made

Early Head Start participants learned how to make soft baby carriers out of old T-shirts during Socialization meeting. The presenter was Dalia Abrams, Co-director and Educator with BirthWell Partners. Dalia visits JCCEO Early Head Start every year to teach parents preparation for childbirth and connect interested participants with volunteer doulas. For more details about the BirthWell Partners program, visit them on line at www.BirthWellPartners.org

Submitted by Kim Berry, Infant-Toddler Coordinator

(below) New moms Denisha Murrery and Aaliah Sanford show off their baby carrier creations holding their infants. A perfect fit!



On Our Shelf

Many thanks to the Reading is Fundamental Program (RIF) for the donation of books to our children this year; and to our local Kiwanis Club for providing volunteer readers in our classrooms. Here are a few of the books children added to their home libraries.

Preschooler

Feast for Ten

Goodnight Construction Site

Who Sank the Boat

Infant-Toddler

Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes

Gossi

Counting Farm

Submitted by YangJa Burton, Program Assistant



JCCEO Head Start is extending children's learning in the S.T.E.M. subjects with field trips to our Resource Center. Assistant Madlyn Bland uses a literacy-based approach to teach math and science concepts. Above, **Erwin Center** children Brielle, Kentris, and Markell are doing an art activity, making paper bag butterflies.



Teachers Prepare:

During Pre-Service teachers spend time in the Resource Center preparing materials and props for their classrooms such as the paper bag puppets Rick-anne Parker, Anita Sawyer, and JoAnn Stone created.



What is THAT?!!

Field trips like this one the children at **Kingston Center** took to the grocery store are put into the lesson plan to broaden the children's experiences and acquaint them with new foods. Thanks to the staff at Whole Foods Grocery for their hospitality.





April was Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month

(above) Ms. Watts, EHS teacher at **Fairmont Center**, reads the information about Ashton and Angel that she added to the bulletin board. Parents were invited to view their children's work and learn about child abuse and neglect. All JCCEO centers planted a Pinwheel Garden to raise awareness.

Nutrition News

March was National Nutrition Month

See what we did!! Fun activities at **Elyton Center** included M'Kenzie making a carrot garden (below), and learning about kitchen utensils from cook Lanette Ford at **Sher-**



man Heights Center. Check out our other activities including easy recipes, parent education events, classroom tastings and more on the [Connections News Insert Page](#) provided by the Nutrition Services staff.



Better Bodies

*Dr. Crystal Spivey Dr.P.H.,
Health Coordinator 327-7530*

Promoting Awareness of Children's Mental Health Issues

May 10, 2018 was National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. The national goal is to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health and show that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development.

Approximately one out of every five children in America has a diagnosable mental health disorder. Far too many children and adolescents lack access to needed mental health and substance use services. Less than half of children with mental health problems get treatment, services, or support. Only one in five get treatment from a mental health worker with special

training to work with children. Families that are low-income, of color, and have children with other disabilities or health concerns have an especially difficult time getting services that would identify, prevent, and treat mental health problems.

Early identification of mental health problems needs to be encouraged in pre-school, childcare, K-12 education, health, child welfare, juvenile justice, and substance use settings. We must address the prevalence of child and adolescent mental health problems and reduce the stigma faced by these young people.

Find out how you may become more involved with local organizations by contacting either the Children's Policy Council of Jefferson County (email: www.jeffersoncountychildren.org), or Anne B. LaRussa Foundation of HOPE (email: www.annelarussafoundationofhope.org).

Source: <http://www.apa.org/advocacy/health/children.aspx>

Head Start Tidbits

Options

JCCEO encourages staff and parents to get involved in the communities of the families we serve through a partnership with the Girl Scouts of North Central Alabama. Staff and parents serve as volunteer adult leaders for our Head Start Pre-Daisy Scout participants. Thanks to the 19 volunteers, including parent Olivia Jacobs at **Center Point Center** for a great job this year.

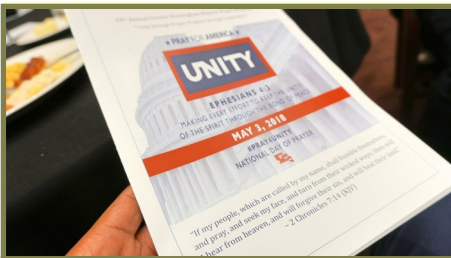


Scout volunteers received certificates of appreciation for their service. (pictured) GSA representative Imma Sanders, JCCEO employees LaKeithia Shade, Cynthia Collins, and Tina Foy.



Mr. Fenderson, his grandmother Ms. McLemore, and daughter Jordyn at graduation ceremony.

Congratulations to JCCEO Head Start parent Joseph Fenderson who is one of the first graduates from INNOVATE BIRMINGHAM (see [Connections](#) news, October 2017 edition) He completed the 21-week training program to become a certified software developer. Mr. Fenderson will now complete a paid internship teaching web design at INNOVATE BIRMINGHAM. He is the father of Taylor, Jordyn, and Troy, who attend our **Cooper Green Center**, and the husband of Head Start Family Services Worker Clatoria Fenderson. JCCEO is a corporate partner with INNOVATE BIRMINGHAM, a workforce development collaboration between UAB, the City of Birmingham, and the corporate community, designed to provide marketable job skills in the technology field to low-income individuals. We are so proud of Mr. Fenderson for taking advantage of the opportunity.



JCCEO was well represented at the recent Mayors' Prayer Breakfast. At his invitation, eleven male staff joined Executive Director Mr. Waddy for the event. They were Gary Miller, Boris Hurst, Tradel Jefferson, Earl Williams, Sweat Harkins, Hollis Johnson, Rusty Holley, Larry Suttles, Charles Vargas, Willie Pace, and Christopher Bell.

Gifts for Easter: Several lucky families received donations of clothes and toys this Spring. (right) Happy Johnathan and mom Raven Collins-Williams at **Kingston Center**;



(below) teacher Patricia Young presents gift to Antonio Hill (Akeyah) at **Fairmont Center**. Thanks to the anonymous donors for your kind generosity.



Counting on YOU, Counting on US

Parents, partners and friends of JCCEO have contributed more than 18,430 volunteer hours to our program so far this program year. Thank you for extending a hand-up to our children and families!



Congratulations to the Head Start Lipscomb Center for earning reaccreditation this Spring.

Programs undergo a rigorous period of evaluation to earn accreditation, and must commit to continuous quality improvement to maintain accreditation over a 5-year period. Sixteen centers served by JCCEO are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Best wishes to our centers at **Cooper Green** and **Elyton** which have taken the first steps and are now in self-study to become accredited. Accreditation is the stamp of approval and watermark of high quality in early childhood education. Visit www.naeyc.org to learn more about best practices for children in childcare. There is even a section just for parents!



Participants at Wylam Adult Day Health Care display no-sew blanket they made with a class from Head Start **St. Joseph's Center**.

Nutrition News

March is National Nutrition Month the Nutrition component led numerous sensory activities with fruits and vegetables along with a song and dance –a-long to incorporate physical activity.



Smoothie Bar the J -Way

The component presented a smoothie bar during breakfast hours for all employees to taste. Each centered around the Banana. Bananas are easy to add to your diet rich in fiber, antioxidants, and several nutrients beneficial for overall health and wellness.



Strawberry banana Smoothie

- 1 frozen banana
- ½ cup of strawberries
- 1 cup unsweetened milk
- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- Honey

Add all ingredients into blender. Blend until smooth

