



ON THE CALENDAR

04/20/2010

Workshop: Healthy Eating/Nutrition

04/21/2010

Conciendo Unlimited Potential: Program Tour starts at 4:30 in Sandra's classroom.

04/24 /2010

Family Fun Day: UP families and friends meet for a picnic at Reposo Park.

05/12/2010

Workshop: *Mejorando Nuestros Matrimonios/Improving Our Marital Relations.*

05/15/2010

Hike with Harry Zulch: Destination TBA. Get your boots ready!

05/28/2010

End-of-Year Celebration!
Awards and honors for all!

Abriendo Puertas: Parents Opening Doors to a Better Future



Abriendo at work with facilitator Maria Rivera. Parents are sharing how they pass on values to their children through stories and dichos (proverbs).

With support from Thunderbirds Charities, since March, Unlimited Potential has been providing the Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors: Building a Better Future parenting program to families in the South Mountain community.

This new whole-family, 10-week program is designed to enhance the educational outcomes of children vulnerable to academic failure. The program promotes the parenting, leadership, and advocacy skills of parents with young children.

Although Latino parents value education, they often do not know how to support their children in succeeding academically. This program equips them to do just that. The program teaches skills that parents can establish at home to promote their children's development and school readiness.

The program also recognizes that children do better when their parents are ac

tively involved in their children's education and when they can advocate for quality learning environments. Thus parents learn about the importance of attending school functions, meeting teachers, school volunteerism, and advocacy.

Weekly topics include: healthy nutrition, socio-emotional development, positive discipline and communication practices, an introduction to community resources, the importance of civic participation, and public education-related rights and responsibilities.

While parents attend a group session, their children are engaged in the children's component of the program. They are involved in fun activities that promote their social and linguistic development and prepare them to begin school ready to learn.

A common expression in the Latino community is "Lo que bien empieza, bien acaba"/"What begins well, ends well." The Abriendo Puertas Program seeks to ensure that children have the good beginning that will enable them to succeed!

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UNLIMITED POTENTIAL (UP) is a grassroots non-profit agency that provides education and support programs to low-income families in the South Mountain community. We believe that education is a means to empower individuals for their own self-fulfillment and participation in the decision-making of the community. UP has offered community-based education programs since 1985. UP reaches out through classroom instruction, evening workshops, and community involvement.

W I S H L I S T

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Inspired by Cesar Chavez Celebration



On March 24, 2010, participants explored Cesar Chavez’s role in the life of American democracy. We shared the reasons behind the Cesar Chavez holiday and emphasized his passion for nonviolence, justice, and service. Chavez’s life is an example of service and we honored him by recognizing the qualities that we and Cesar Chavez have in common.

Individually, participants listed actions that contribute to public service. Collectively, participants described the results of actions taken in the face of injustice. Participants shared that they felt encouraged and inspired by Chavez. They continue to reiterate the Cesar Chavez quote, “All education should end in public service.” Participants said they feel inspired to act.

New Board Members: Francisco & Rosa



Francisco Avalos and Rosa Molinar joined the UP board last December. **Francisco** is a Community Development Specialist with Desert Schools Federal Credit Union. He was made aware of UP by his supervisor, Oralia Cortez, and “immediately fell in love with UP.” Francisco strongly identifies with UP’s vision of empowerment through education. He has helped organize the program’s Christmas celebration, conducts computer classes and chairs the PR committee.

Rosa, Executive Coordinator of Community Learning at ASU, was moved to join UP based on the newsletter reports of many inspiring activities, including hikes and the Thanksgiving celebration. “UP is doing so much. The level of depression in the disadvantaged populations is big. We don’t even know how much of a difference it makes to people, opening them up to a caring community. When people come talk with us, we can help them plan on how to pursue their personal and educational goals,” she said about her counseling profession. UP is much like Rosa’s work. “Helping moms, kids, teaching computer skills—there aren’t many programs like these.”

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Participant goes into baking business with Rio/Tonto Verde support



Guadalupe working in her kitchen

Judy and Frank Haggard had participated in the Rio Verde/Tonto Verde Christmas Project a couple of times with other agencies. But never had their giving experience been as special as with one of Unlimited Potential's families.

"We were assigned to the Rosario family," recalled Judy. So the Haggards drove to South Phoenix to meet with Guadalupe Rosario, a single mother, with one daughter, Fatima. The young mother was living with her brother's family, including his two children, and her mother.

At their first encounter, the Haggards were to find out, while UP staff (Sandra Amarillas) was interpreting, that Guadalupe had recently lost her job. After being laid off from working in a bakery, Guadalupe wanted to get into business for herself.

"We were so impressed that Guadalupe had decided to start her own business, baking cakes, cookies and desserts, and selling them, that we wanted to help her get the necessary things right away," Judy reported.

On their way home, Frank and Judy stopped in at the Great Indoors and started shopping. They bought everything new. Judy said, "We wanted the things to last awhile and not break down."

The Haggards purchased cake decorating equipment, a dependable Kitchen Aid mixer, an assortment of cake pans and a high quality kitchen counter oven and, later, a kitchen mixer from Amazon online.

"When we took the gifts to the family, it was just wonderful," Judy recalled. Ron and Sally Smith, another couple who had also purchased items, helped to drop off the gifts.

"Guadalupe had made two special desserts for us," Judy said. "One was a sort of a cake with fruit flavor in it, and a custard pie, I believe lemon."

"Guadalupe read us a thank you note that she had prepared in English. This was so special for her, she was crying. She really made an effort to thank us, by speaking English so that we could understand."

The Rio Verdeans felt graciously received by the entire family and the children. "In previous Christmas projects with other agencies we didn't learn as much about the goals of the beneficiaries," Judy said, "other than they wanted to get on their feet. With our UP family the reception was very personal and genuine. The UP families have always appreciated our efforts, and we got to know more about their aspirations than we have with other families."

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Veronica Peña recently joined UP as the new Program Coordinator, working closely with Sandra and Tania in designing and implementing programs that empower families, as well as helping Lorraine with grant writing and many other duties. Veronica earned her BS in Sociology and Spanish from Adams State College and her graduate degree from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Veronica has over 30 years of experience. coaching students on all levels. She has worked extensively with populations that include women, college students, and families and children living in high risk environments. She taught human behavior in the social environment and the importance of culturally grounded practice at Arizona State University.




Veronica with Abriendo group

Veronica supervised child development programs, helped underprivileged students plan for successful educational outcomes, and worked extensively with Spanish-speaking communities. Throughout her career, she has continuously advocated for strengthening family values, maintaining cultural traditions, and creating community cohesiveness and involvement.

Veronica Peña

She has been extensively involved with the design and implementation of culturally grounded approaches for women and people of color. Veronica's experiences and expertise will benefit UP participants as she is committed to encouraging and honoring their innate resilience.

As Program Coordinator for UP, she is implementing leadership programs, projects with ASU interns, assisting with the implementation of evidence-based family empowerment seminars, and collaborating with community members to implement culturally relevant substance use prevention. She is excited about the future of Unlimited Potential and is honored that she is involved in creating an environment in which participants step-by-step embark on charting their talents and possibilities.

<p>Desert Schools Federal Credit Union awarded a considerable grant to improve English and Spanish literacy. DSFCU also graciously provided hosting and catering at this year's Christmas celebration.</p> <p><i>Gracias</i></p>	<p>Thanks to Arizona Women's Partnership for their continued support.</p> <p>Thanks to Mountain View Presbyterian Church for their financial support and the heart-felt caroling visit with our UP families.</p>	<p>The Arizona Cardinals have blessed us with their confidence and a generous grant towards UP's adult literacy efforts.</p> <p>The Junior League of Phoenix for supporting our Mother/Fathered Program.</p>	<p>Thank you, Thunderbirds Charities for your fundamental grant towards UP's parenting program, Abriendo Puertas and Adult Leadership Program.</p> <p>Thanks to St. Dominic's Catholic Mission for supporting UP families.</p>
<p>The Schulz Foundation and Joseph and May Winston Foundation keep our programs going with their three-year grant pledges</p>	<p>THANKS TO ALL VOLUNTEERS!</p>  <p>Many volunteers have kept UP's facilities in shape, such as the youth group from Mt. View Church (picture) painting.</p> <p>Special thanks also goes to Henkel of America volunteers for refurbishing the whole center over a work intensive weekend. The Henkel people created an overall good look for classroom and meeting spaces. Thanks also for your generous donation!</p> <p>Mentors, helpers, and interns, you have helped UP grow!</p>		<p>Thank you to Hospice of Arizona for providing the office and classroom furniture. Thanks to all who have provided material donations.</p>
<p>The Arizona Governor's Office for a fundamental 3-year grant towards UP's efforts in drug abuse prevention.</p> <p>Thanks to Soroptimists International of Phoenix for supporting our Adult Literacy program.</p>	<p>The Arizona Republic/12 News Season for Sharing for continuously promoting the success of future generations.</p>	<p>Thank you to all you individual donors. With your person-to-person outreach you have brightened many a day in the lives of deserving people.</p>	<p>The Community Church in Rio Verde and the Verdes Christmas Project for supporting UP's literacy and early childhood programs.</p> <p><i>Thank You!</i></p>
<p>The Dorrance Family Foundation has contributed to the center's mission by supporting UP's leadership.</p>			<p>Thank you to Southern Baptist Temple for your continued commitment to Unlimited Potential and the numerous families we serve.</p>

NOTE: Our new web address is www.UPAZ.org

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