

UNITED PLANNING



ORGANIZATION

# UPO REPORTER

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## UPO Head Start Grant Reaches \$14.2 Million *More DC Children To Receive Childcare Services*

When studying the United Planning Organization, people are often awestruck by the sheer magnitude and diversity of the many programs provided by UPO, the agency that today bills itself, "*DC Community Action.*" Soon they begin to fully understand the whole UPO story especially when learning that the agency was an early testing ground for many new and innovative activities that would ultimately become standard human service activities targeting many of this nation's groups of individuals and families.

One activity is the unique concept that would ultimately become Head Start, described by experts as the most successful child education program in the world today.

Throughout its 40-year history, UPO has maintained the lead in comprehensive and innovative childcare, charting a record envied by most, not only in the Washington, DC area but nationwide as well. Recently, officials with the United Kingdom's *Sure Start* program visited UPO and one of its Early Childhood Development Centers in order to learn first hand how a successful childcare operation runs.

UPO program years 2002/2003 continue the commitment to childcare as once again the agency received a record grant totaling more than \$14.2 million from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Admin-



City officials, agency directors, and representatives from District of Columbia early childhood network of organizations, meet at UPO.

### ***UPO ECDC # 9 Begins Service***



Participating in ribbon cutting were from left to right, Ms. Mary Gill, associate superintendent for Early Childhood Development, DC Public Schools, Russell D. Simmons, UPO Board President, Mary P. Sinclair, Center Director, ECDC # 9, Mayor Anthony Williams, and James Buford, Acting Director, DC Department of Health.

With a swift motion of the pair of ceremonial sissors, DC Mayor Anthony Williams slit the ribbon signaling the formal opening of the United Planning Organization's newest Early Childhood Development Center, a facility dubbed

ECDC #9 and located in the central part of the city..

Mary P. Sinclair, a highly skilled former DC Public School teacher, heads the center located at 825 North Capitol Street, NE, just

Please see "ECDC # 9" on page 2

Please see "UPO Head Start" on page 2

# UPO Preschool/Day Care Serves Record Numbers

<b>HEAD START DELEGATE AGENCY ALLOCATIONS</b>	
Bright Beginnings .....	\$ 386 Thousand
DC Parks and Recreation .....	962 Thousand
DC Public Schools .....	3.2 Million
Edward C. Mazique .....	1.6 Million
Nations Capital Child & Family ...	2.7 Million
Rosemount Center .....	1.0 Million

Start evolve over the years, rather than simply banting out hard cold facts and figures, Mr. Hughey has an intense concern for the early education of our youngest and keeps children's issues in mind.

Research indicators shows that former Head Start youth are much better prepared once they enter elementary school.

"The UPO Head Start program benefits young children by providing a 'whole child' approach to enhancing comprehensive development which meets the individual needs of each child," says Mr. Hughey, who adds "UPO Head Start is in fact a child and family community-based service with the goal of enhancing the social competence and school readiness of young children within the context of developing and empowering the family," he adds.

istration for Children and Families to serve 2005 children and families. UPO also receives additional childcare grants from the District of Columbia Government's Office of Early Childhood Development.

The record grant amount equates to more children receiving Head Start services. "For the first time in our history, we have now incorporated Early Head Start for ages 0-3 into our

grantee/delegate agency network along with our ongoing Head Start program for ages 3 to 5 years," observes an enthusiastic William D. Hughey, director of UPO's Office of Preschool and Day Care and a veteran of more than 30-years with the agency. A person who has seen Head

## UPO Formally Opens ECDC # 9

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**UPO**  
REPORTER

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President  
**RUSSELL D. SIMMONS**

Executive Director  
**BENJAMIN JENNINGS**

Editor/Writer  
**HARVEY N. JOHNSON III**



Mayor Anthony A. Williams and Mary P. Sinclair pose with ECDC #9 children during Open House.



Center Director Mary P. Sinclair discusses ECDC # 9 Computer lab with DC Mayor Anthony Williams.

blocks from the United States Capitol Building.

Ms. Sinclair holds a BA degree from Spellman College and an M.A. in Early Childhood Education from Atlanta University. "My goal is to enhance the child's knowledge by creating a learning rich environment in our center," she says with obvious glee.

Early Childhood Development Center # 9 will provide service to 38 children and offer diverse courses such as Japanese, computer skills, and gymnastics, among others. Experts agree that providing such skills at an early age is always in the best interest of the child and ultimately the family at large.

For more information on programs described in this issue of the

**UPO REPORTER**

or on any other UPO activity, call (202) 238-4600, extension 696, or FAX to (202) 588-0270, or Email to: [upoinfo@erols.com](mailto:upoinfo@erols.com) UPO's web site: [www.upo.org](http://www.upo.org)

# *UPO Sets Building “Grand Opening” for October 19*

Following its recent move into a brand new headquarters building, the United Planning Organization is set to hold a day long Grand Opening event Saturday, October 19, 2002 from 10 AM to 4 PM. at the Rhode Island Avenue Washington, DC site.

“It’s UPO’s way of introducing to the community the new building located in the historic LeDroit Park neighborhood in the heart of the District of Columbia and showing them what we’re all about,” says a UPO official.

The event, slated to bring together the community, DC elected officials, as well as DC and federal officials, will allow citizens to see firsthand the UPO operations center and meet agency personnel who are ready to explain the operation while at the same time providing to neighborhood residents information about the citywide network of human service agencies.

Children’s recreational and educational activities are planned. Meanwhile, plans call for the free distribution of informational materials directly on the UPO property with the residential street serving as an entrepreneurial setting for local licensed vendors.

UPO funded organizations have agreed to participate as well as many former employees who have stated their desire to see UPO’s state of the art facility.

UPO is publicizing the event via several local media outlets including radio, newspaper, magazines and television. UPO’s own television program, “UPO Citywide” is producing a segment accompanying Comcast Cable’s “Local Edition” program which recently spotlighted the upcoming event.



**UPO GRAND OPENING  
Saturday, October 19, 2002**

## *Customer Service Unit Established*

The United Planning Organization has moved to increase its customer service outreach following the recent announcement by Executive Director Benjamin Jennings of an agency Customer Service Unit. In addition, a select group of agency personnel were named to an ad hoc Customer Service Committee geared toward creating a formal agencywide policy.

When complete, the document will reflect

UPO’s formal policy and arm staff with comprehensive guidelines of good customer service as well as identifying various Do’s and Don’ts.

Veteran employee Cynthia Y. Johnson, coordinator of UPO’s Community Resource Program, was appointed Customer Service Manager, charged with further enhancing already excellent UPO customer service as well as getting to the route of problems when and if they arise. Ms. Johnson chairs the newly formed Committee.

“Most agency employees have always been dedicated to providing the highest quality service to customers,” observes Ms. Johnson who adds “we simply need to create a formal policy while keeping in mind the many problem areas that sometimes plague some neighborhood residents.”

Besides Ms. Johnson, other members of the Customer Service Committee are Theresa Howe Jones, Public Policy Analyst, Wayne Thompson, director, Office of Operations, Bernard Miller, deputy Controller, Robert Richardson, director, Office of Human Resources, and Harvey N. Johnson III, director, Public Awareness.



Cynthia Y. Johnson, coordinator of the agency’s Community Resource Program, will oversee UPO Customer Service.

**UPO Online  
www.upo.org**





Mayor Williams, at right and Eugenio Arene, executive director, CLA, listen to presentation given by Maria Gomez, CLA Chairperson and executive director of Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care.

**F**or more than 20-years, the Council of Latino Agencies (CLA) has provided vital assistance to grassroots organizations while advocating for increased support for community-based efforts in order to improve the health, education, housing, employment, and social welfare conditions for Washington-area Latino residents.

CLA was founded in 1977 by a group of organizations along with community activists to serve the District of Columbia's burgeoning Latino community, primarily Central Americans fleeing the ravages of civil war and political repression. Today, the Council acts as an umbrella agency for 36 multi-cultural organizations that form a network of service providers to Latinos. The Council also works in collaboration with dozens of Latino and non-Latino leaders, activists, and organizations throughout the metropolitan Washington, DC area on issues of mutual concern.

CLA's mission is to support and promote its members for the betterment of the community and to act as a voice of the Latino community in the District of Columbia. The Council seeks to fulfill its mission through two main program areas. The first is the Policy Research and Advocacy Program, responsible for conducting action research in health, education, housing, social welfare and

cultural preservation, which in turn is used in critical analysis to further the policy agenda of the Council, its constituent members, and the Latino community in Washington. The second is the Membership Services Program, which seeks to build capacity and strengthen the collective impact of the Council's member agencies, in areas such as community leadership, fundraising, coalition building, and advocacy.

Through the Council, member agencies coordinate service delivery, multiply their purchasing and bargaining power, and share information and resources. Using an ongoing consultation process to promote consensus, the Council and its members have successfully become a bridge linking Latinos to the major institutions and stakeholders throughout the metropolitan area, including local and federal government agencies, local and national nonprofits, professional associations, businesses, corporate and philanthropic foundations, and the media.

The Council recently completed an organizational restructuring that included staff changes to meet the growing demand for research, policy analysis and capacity building services. The Council's new Executive Director, Eugenio Arene, brings a vision of fostering Latino leadership, coalition-building skills, and a commitment to applied research.

# Council of La

## Offering Ways to Partner with

Special to UPO REPORTER by Eugenio Arene,  
and Rodrigo Leiva, Member

Director of Research Krishna Roy continues devoting her vast experience in demography to quantitative research and training. Policy and Development Director Elizabeth Shrader draws on fifteen years' experience in organizational management and public health policy research in developing countries. Membership Services Director Rodrigo Leiva applies lessons learned in the private sector to strengthening capacities and identifying needs among member agencies.

The Council has found that the statistical invisibility and lack of accurate information on D.C. Latinos impedes effective decisionmaking and resource allocation for the Latino community and low-income families throughout the Washington metropolitan area. There is a critical need for reliable and valid research on quality of life indicators disaggregated by race/ethnicity that accurately portray the Latino community. Moreover, grass roots organizations and community leaders are eager to integrate such policy-relevant information in their arsenal of advocacy tools to move forward their agenda of social change and equitable economic development for Latinos and other working families. Whether to garner support from city agencies, educate service providers as to Latinos' needs, benchmark improvements in quality of services, provide supportive data for grantwriting and reporting, or inform media outlets and grantmakers on issues of importance to Latinos, applied research remains a cornerstone of effective Latino advocacy.

To address this need, the Council's flagship publication, *The State of Latinos in the District of Columbia*,

# Latino Agencies

## in D.C.'s Hispanic Community

Executive Director of Council of Latino Agencies  
Partnership Services Director, CLA.



DC Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton addresses audience.

was released in September 2002. *The State of D.C. Latinos* combines statistical data, qualitative research findings, and policy analysis to fill information gaps, identify areas for further research, and generate critical, strategic debate on the future of the city's development and Latino inclusion. The full publication runs to over 190 pages, with 146 charts and graphs, 72 "pull-out boxes" to highlight crucial findings, nine photographs representing Latino community life and maps of the District of Columbia by wards and by census tracts.

*The State of D.C. Latinos* presents a detailed demographic profile of the city's fastest growing ethnic group, and the ways in which federal immigration policy has affected them. The report further assesses municipal government responsiveness to Latino needs in health, housing, education, employment, and police-community relations. Each chapter concludes with recommendations to address long-term persistent problems and calls upon D.C. government officials to ensure that all low-income residents, including Latinos, are the primary focus for determining community priorities and building an economically sustainable and culturally diverse future.

OCTOBER 2002

## MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF LATINO AGENCIES

For more information on the Council of Latino Agencies or its member organizations, visit the Council's website at [www.consejo.org](http://www.consejo.org)

**Andromeda - Ayuda**

**Barbara Chambers Children's Center**

**Calvary Multicultural Learning Center**

**Carlos Rosario International Career Center**

**Casa del Pueblo**

**Center for the Advancement of Hispanics in Science and Engineering Education**

**Central American Resource Center**

**Centro de Arte - Change, Inc.**

**CitiWide Computer Training Center**

**EOFULA Spanish Senior Center - Educational Video in Spanish**

**Ecumenical Program on Central America**

**The Family Place - GALA Theater**

**Girl Scouts Linguistic Outreach Program**

**Hermanos y Hermanas Mayores - La Clinica del Pueblo**

**Las Americas Avenue Development Corporation**

**Latin American Youth Center**

**Latino Economic Development Corporation**

**Latino Student Fund - Life Skills Center**

**Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care**

**Mary House - Mi Casa, Inc.**

**Mt. Pleasant Higher Achievement Program**

**Multicultural Career Intern Program - Neighbors' Consejo**

**The Rosemount Center - Salomon Zelaya Rehabilitation Center**

**Spanish Catholic Center**

**Spanish Education Development (SED) Center**

**Teatro de la Luna - Whitman Walker Clinic/Latino Services**

## *Washington Senior Wellness Center: A Senior's Sanctuary*

Put together a quint building, diligent staff, and a group of neighborhood senior citizens who want to become and remain as healthy as they can possibly be, you then have the Washington Senior Wellness Center operated by UPO and funded by the District of Columbia Office on Aging.

It's no longer a theory - but a known fact that a combination of exercise and healthy nutrition leads to a longer healthier life. In fact the concept of senior wellness is less costly not only to the taxpayer but to government as well.

With the ever increasing cost of nursing care and with hospital costs rising to new heights, the DC Office on Aging funds several Senior Wellness Centers with the United Planning Organization operating the site in the city's Ward 7.

Headed by Ms. Doris Fields, the Washington Seniors Wellness Center is located at 3001 Alabama Avenue, Southeast, Washington, DC and provides nearly 450 seniors with a variety of health related services designed specifically to keep them healthy.

Exercise is the daily routine at the Center as seniors, armed with their very own pedometers, walk from the Center to various points in the surrounding neighborhood. For some, the walk is something they would rather do without. To others, the walk is a necessity. To all, the walk leads to better health along with a higher self-esteem.

Mrs. Mattie Wilcox perhaps exemplifies the success of the wellness center. At 92 years of age, she is the oldest member of Washington Seniors Wellness Center, and one of the most active. She participates at least twice per week and especially enjoys the walks. Watch out though! She sports a brand new pair of sneakers that she's quite proud of and plans to out walk them all.



Seniors enjoy movie following day of intensive walking, exercising, and seminars. It's one of many activities provided by the Washington Seniors Wellness Center.



Mrs. Mattie Wilcox, at 92, is the oldest member of the Seniors Wellness Center. Here, she's flanked by Fitness Instructor Vanessa Williams-Harvin (at left) and Doris Fields, acting center director.



UPO Washington Elderly Handicapped Transportation Service (WEHTS) vehicle daily transports seniors to and from Wellness Center as well as to other locations around the Washington, DC area.



## *Character Building Theme Benefits UPO Summer Youth Program*

For nearly 18-years, the United Planning Organization has operated Summer Youth Employment type programs in partnership with the DC Department of Employment Service as well as locally-based nonprofit organizations and the business community. These comprehensive partnerships have proved successful each year of operation and the summer of 2002 was no exception.

The program, which ran for six-weeks commencing July 8, enrolled more than 160 DC youth who participated in a wide variety of programmatic activities all geared toward building character. Some young people participated in UPO's year round activity.

The youth, who were tutored, trained, and counseled, worked at various sites throughout the city for up to 60-hours over two weeks, depending on their age. Younger teens worked 40 hours over two weeks.

"This check (\$5.15 per hour) comes in handy especially for the school things I need" said a 17 year old student who has participated in the program for two years. "This is my first real paycheck" noted another young person now entering her sophomore year who said she had at first planned to simply 'hang out' all summer. "But after hearing about the UPO program and how interesting it was, I decided to become a part of it. I'm happy I did" she added.

Youth performed a variety of tasks including computer systems operations, landscaping, clerical, and custodial operations. Other tasks were day care, assisting teachers, office clerks, and senior citizens aides, among others.

According to Mr. Wood, young people participated in several workshops including health matters, conflict resolution, employment skills, life skills, and resume preparation

Please see "Summer Youth..." on page 8.



UPO's Joseph W. Wood distributes backpacks and school supplies to youth on last day of summer activity.



Joseph W. Wood, senior case manager, Passport-To-Work.

When they first meet him, some think his easy going affable personality will equate to a summer of fun and games. They soon learn the truth and quickly begin to understand that he doesn't mince his words and knows all of the tricks.

They seem to like him anyway often approaching him for advice and guidance.

Joseph J. Wood takes it all in stride as he moves to bring order to what could become a chaotic situation especially when 160 eager youth are waiting for work assignments. He commands their attention however, and gets it. Thus, another days worth of guidance is about to come to a close.

Please see "Joe Wood..." on page 8.



Kellie G. Colter, youth program participant.

Look out, DC! The oft maligned young people of the Nation's Capital are in better shape than many realize especially if Kellie G. Colter is any indication. In fact, DC young people are not only intelligent, but have productive lives ahead of them thanks in part to UPO, the organization that over the years has played an important part in their overall development.

But just who is Kellie G. Colter?

"Kellie is one of our best examples of what good nurturing can do," says Joseph J. Wood, senior case manager of the UPO Passport-To-Work In-School Program who has worked directly with Kellie for several years.

Ms. Colter, 17, is a Wilson High School senior who will graduate in

Please see "Kellie Colter..." on page 8.

## ***Joe Wood Helps Guide DC Youth***

Continued from page 7.

“Today’s youth are better prepared than young people in the past” he observes, speaking from obvious first-hand experience. “Young people today want to work, however, they do need discipline,” he adds. Mr. Wood remembers that young people’s attitudes in the past were somewhat better but they were not as prepared as today’s youth, adding that today, young people are much better equipped.

The fact that Joseph J. Wood speaks from experience is by no means a coincidence. He has been with UPO for 37-years initially working with the Neighborhood Youth Corps as a counselor. He remembers fondly that John Thompson, former head basketball coach at Georgetown University was his supervisor.

“I am very proud of these programs,” says Mr. Wood who looks at the many success stories that abound, many attributed directly to him.

## ***Kellie Colter - Another Promising DC Youth***

Continued from page 7

the spring of 2003 and has plans to enroll into the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, perhaps majoring in Criminal Justice.

Confounding stereotypes, she enjoys those classes not normally associated with young people. “Math is my favorite subject along with English,” notes Kellie who gets great grades in those subjects.

“I really enjoy meeting my contemporaries from across DC,” she said, noting the many friendships that have resulted.

She worked at UPO central headquarters for several summers under the Passport to Work Program and learned aspects of payroll and other

managerial tasks interacting directly with UPO experts. “I communicate better with people thanks to UPO” she notes, explaining how the agency required her to interact with staff and other youth in a business like manner.

Ms. Colter especially attributes her success to UPO and Joseph Wood who she says provided program supervision. She also notes that UPO’s Kelvin Delmar encouraged her to “be myself,” while Arthur Gene Gray of the agency’s Controller’s office “taught me to control myself and assisted me through certain events in my life.

## ***DC Youth Program***

Continued from page 7.



Kelvin Delmar, standing at left, and Joseph J. Wood prepare to distribute information to youth participants.

among others. Many youth have gone on to college and/or are in their active careers today once again contributing to the ever increasing numbers of UPO success stories.

Rhonda J. Muse, director of UPO’s In-School youth Programs, observes that the youth programs “allows us to help young people in numerous ways, thanks to a committed and dedicated staff.” Because of the UPO activities, “many youth are excited and optimistic about their future,” she adds. Such proves that programs are needed now more than ever if we are to “make a difference.”