



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RSCCD—Community Collaborative Partnership Gets \$3.2M for Early Head Start Program

(Santa Ana)—A community partnership that will focus on providing needed services to low-income infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families in Santa Ana has been awarded \$3.2 million.

The two-year grant to Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) Child Development Services from the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Head Start was made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This Early Head Start (EHS) grant will help expectant mothers access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; and enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children birth to age three.

“Rancho Santiago Community College District is the only community college in California awarded an Early Head Start grant,” said Dee Tucker, executive director of RSCCD Child Development Services. “We have become the second recipient of Early Head Start funds in Orange County.” (Orange County Head Start is the other recipient.)

Through the combined resources of RSCCD and its collaborative partners, 140 children birth to age three and their families will benefit from center-based and home-based services. The community partners include:

- HABLA, an educational outreach program of UCI’s School of Social Sciences funded by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, provides parent coaching and home visits to increase the school readiness of disadvantaged Latino children;
- MOMS of Orange County, a non-profit helping women and their families have healthy babies, offers health care coordination, education and access to community services;
- Help Me Grow Orange County, a CHOC/UCI Neurodevelopmental Program funded

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by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, connects children birth through age five and their families to community-based learning, behavior, and development services through a comprehensive information and referral system.

The RSCCD Early Head Start program will assist the community in three ways:

- First, **34 expectant mothers and their infants** will be served through MOMS of Orange County. Through weekly home visits and assessments, the expectant mothers will have access to nutrition, health, social and emotional support and services. The visits will continue until the child's first birthday.
- Second, **50 infants and toddlers and their families** will receive a full range of literacy development support and services in their homes through HABLA. The EHS partner will visit each child weekly and provide two monthly socialization experiences per child.
- Third, **56 infants and toddlers and their families** will benefit from center-based classroom instruction at the Santa Ana College Child Development Center, as well as home visits; vision, hearing, dental, and medical screening; and referrals through an on-site care coordinator through RSCCD Child Development Services.

"We are very excited about reaching more families and toddlers through this grant," said Tucker. "This makes it possible for us to serve more families with early learning opportunities and to support parents' efforts to do a better job as parents."

According to the State of California Department of Health Services, 11 percent of Santa Ana's population is under the age of three. The 2000 U.S. Census found that 16.1 percent of Santa Ana families were below the poverty level. Prior to this grant, there were only 119 subsidized infant and toddler center-based spaces in the city.

For more information about programs and services of RSCCD Child Development Services, contact (714) 480-7546 or visit www.rsccd.edu/ChildDevelopmentServices.

About the Rancho Santiago Community College District

The mission of the Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) is to respond to the educational needs of an ever-changing community and to provide programs and services that reflect academic excellence. Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College are public community colleges of RSCCD, which serve the residents of Anaheim Hills, East Garden Grove, Irvine, Orange, Santa Ana, Tustin and Villa Park. Both colleges provide education for academic transfer and careers, courses for personal and professional development, customized training for business and industry, and programs to train nurses, firefighters and law enforcement personnel.

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