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CITY OF BEAVERTON Diversity Award Nomination Form

NOMINATION FORM

NOMINEE'S INFORMATION

Nominee's Name: Community Action
Contact Person if organization/group: Jerralynn Ness, Executive Director
Category of organization/group if applicable (i.e. community group, non-profit, business etc.) Non-Profit Social Services
Daytime phone: 503-693-3251
Evening Phone: 971-563-1854
Address: 1001 SW Baseline street
City/Zip: Hillsboro, Ore 97123

NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

Nominator's Name: Leslea Smith
Daytime phone: 503-648-7163 ex 105
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Address: 230 NE 2nd Ave Suite A
City/Zip: Hillsboro, 97123
Nominator's Signature: Leslea Smith Date: 11/8/07

Please describe the unique nature of the nominee's contribution to the City of Beaverton community. What was accomplished? How was it accomplished? How has it impacted diversity and human rights in the City of Beaverton?

See attached.

**City of Beaverton
Diversity Award Nomination**

During Fall 2006, Community Action launched an Early Head Start Home-Based program in the Beaverton area, enrolling 16 children, ages infant to three years-old. The program supports parents through weekly educational home visits, and by providing two parent/child play-group sessions per month. The play-groups foster parent understanding of child development and promote socialization and literacy. Community Action collaborated with Tualatin Valley Housing Partners, which promotes self-sufficiency by providing affordable housing for low-income people.

Through referrals made by TVHP, Community Action Head start program recruiters identified a need in Beaverton's Somali refugee community. Nine children from Somali families were enrolled in the Beaverton Home-Based program in September 2006. The children reside in two TVHP apartment complexes in close proximity to each other. TVHP offered use of a community room at one of the complexes to facilitate participation in the parent/child playgroups every other week.

The playgroups offer Beaverton Somali families positive exposure to American culture, English language, and American children. Although they do not possess English language reading or writing skills, with help from a translator the Somali families have become very active in their participation in the play-groups. This is an outstanding achievement because in Somali Bantu culture parents are not seen as educators of their own children, toys would not be kept at home, nor is pre-school education part of the social consciousness. Somali parents normally do not play with their children or understand play as the primary way that young children learn. In the Somali Bantu culture, education is not thought to begin until children attend school. Somali parents do not read to their children due to illiteracy even in their Native language. The families come from a tribal culture of farmers, with strong religious (Muslim) and familial ties.

Because of Community Action Head Start's Home-Based program, Beaverton Somali children and their families are more likely to begin learning to read and write, and to become integrated into the social fabric of Beaverton. The Somali parents and their children are learning the value of early childhood education, as well as how to learn and teach through play. The play-groups also provide Somali families opportunities to begin learning and speaking English, further assisting their integration into life at the TVHP apartment complexes, as well as Beaverton's social fabric. Families now meet at the Beaverton Community Center twice each month. They also participate in the Beaverton Public Library's toddler story hour during playgroup time.

I believe that this social integration and literacy advocacy, as well as early childhood education, exemplifies modern pursuit of cultural diversity and advocacy of basic civil and human rights in Beaverton. Head Start and its Home-Based program represents a sustained commitment to cultural diversity in Beaverton. The program continues to demonstrate a visible, tangible and measurable impact on the perception of, attitude toward, and respect for Beaverton Somali refugees. It also represents an outstanding achievement in the pursuit of cultural diversity among Beaverton's low-income families within TVHP apartment complexes.

Community Action Early Head Start program staff have played an essential role in implementing the program: teachers Angelica Molina and Susan Bartholemew, Family Services Coordinator Gail Boyle, and Program Coordinator Kathy Zane.

A Community Partnership with Head Start Benefits the Somali Community

Community Action Head Start launched a brand new Early Head Start Home-Based program in the fall of 2006 by enrolling sixteen children, ages birth to three, from the Beaverton area. The Home-Based program model supports parents through weekly educational home visits and by providing two parent/child playgroups, per month, to encourage an understanding of child development and to promote socialization and literacy skills. Assistance with the recruitment of age and income-eligible children for this program came from Tualatin Valley Housing Partners, an organization that promotes self-sufficiency by providing affordable housing for low-income people.

Through referrals made by TVHP, Community Action Head Start program recruiters identified a need in the Somali refugee community and enrolled nine Somali children in the Home-Based program in September of 2006. Most of these children reside in two of TVHP's subsidized housing apartment complexes located near one another in Beaverton. To provide families with convenient proximity to a Home-Based playgroup site, TVHP generously donated the use of a community room at one of the apartment complexes where parents and children attend the playgroup every other week.

Somali family participation and attendance in the Home-Based program has been a tremendous success. By building respectful relationships through home visits and in playgroups as well as through parent-focused monthly meetings on subjects such as literacy, nutrition awareness and positive guidance, parents and children learn, grow and change together. The collaboration between Community Action Head Start and Tualatin Valley Housing Partners provides important resources to low-income families in Washington County.



Farzana Siddiqui is Community Action's Director of Child Development.
Jerralynn Ness is Community Action's Executive Director.

The name of the program receiving the City of Beaverton Diversity Award is:
Community Action's Early Head Start Home-Based Program.

The Program Area Coordinator is Kathy Zane.

The Home-Based Program teacher is Angelica Molina, her Teacher II assistant is Susan Bartholomew.

Photos included:

Binto (Mom) & Halima (child)

Habiba (Mom) & Khadiya (child)

Sitey-Uren (Mom) & Abdishukri (child)

Questions?

Please contact:

Scott Schlegel

Community Relations Specialist

Community Action Organization

503-693-3254

