



Redlands Christian Migrant Association - FLORIDA

The Redlands Christian Migrant Association is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization providing child care, Head Start, dropout prevention, health outreach, and advocacy services for low-income rural families, including migrants and seasonal farmworkers. The agency has been in existence for twenty-seven years and a delegate agency for ECMHSP- since 1981, for twelve years. We operate seventeen Migrant Head Start centers in thirteen counties serving nine hundred seventy-two children from late October until early June each year.

The families we serve in Florida work in both citrus (orange, grapefruit), as well as vegetable and other fruit crops. Vegetables include tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash, watercress, cauliflower, corn, carrots, and radishes. Other fruits include strawberries and melons.

As a delegate agency with East Coast, we first faced the challenges of expansion—eleven new centers the first year! In addition, we had to learn how to meet and exceed performance standards while recruiting and training staff from migrant backgrounds. Translation of materials was an enormous task which RCMA shared with East Coast in order to provide meaningful training for both staff and parents.

Successes have been many. With East Coast's help facilities have been developed which are a source of pride for the families, staff and community. Staff has been assisted in earning their CDA credentials. Directors also earned CDA credentials and have developed leadership skills as well.

Future hopes and dreams include assisting all centers to become NAEYC accredited; strengthening parent involvement to carry on onto the public school setting; continuing to build on our leadership training so it can enable center staff to become more involved in decision making; improving and/or expanding facilities to allow us to serve more children who remain on long waiting lists and continuing to strengthen our advocacy efforts for improved health services, housing and education for migrant families and their children.

Working with East Coast has provided our agency with many new opportunities to learn how to do more and improve continually. The energy and dedication offered by the East Coast leadership has been a strong influence in our total agency's development.