

# FAST *Forward*

Volume 1, Issue 2

Back to School 2006



## FOCUS ON MICHAEL ALANIZ

This month we spotlight another FAST team member, Michael Alaniz. A teacher at Pomona School for seven years, Michael has been with the Newport Mesa Unified School District for 22 years!

When Team Leader, Luciana Puyo, approached Michael to be part of the FAST Program five years ago, he completed the intensive training and shared that he “always said we need parenting resources right here not 10 miles away and here's the perfect program. Many times parents don't know where to turn for interventions and support. The FAST program not only bridges the gap between the school and community, it provides indispensable resources. Even for experienced parents there's always something you can come away with. Our parents sometimes are far away from grandparents, aunts, uncles and extended family who would otherwise give advice and provide parenting tips. I see the FAST program as filling in and going beyond.”

Michael recalls a child who was the perfect student academically and personality wise. Mom said she would cry or become upset in stressful situations. She was a serious child who even took ballet. Our therapist (or counselor) helped mom set up a daily behavioral program that provided immediate feedback for the child. Each week, the therapist would follow-up and modify the intervention as needed. This is just one success story. There are countless more. There is no other program that is as accessible to our parents as FAST is.” It's clear Michael enjoys learning and gets great satisfaction serving others by promoting knowledge. C&SC is fortunate Michael Alaniz part of its successful team!

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

By Joe Rosener

After almost eight years of providing a very innovative program to help the families of children at-risk become successful in school and in adapt to society, we are pleased to be adding to our activities. We are providing a summer program of Families and Schools Together (FAST) for the very first time. For the school year ending June 22nd, we were very proud to participate with the Hope Department of the School District in their development of an Early Learning Center, helping families with children from birth through 5 years of age, at Sonora Elementary School.

To continue these innovative activities we need help from those of you who can either provide time or money in support of our activities. We are looking for people who can serve on our Board by attending approximately eight meetings a year. In addition Board Members are welcome to participate directly in the programs, if they so choose.

Our Executive Director, Charlene Ashendorf, is always pleased to assist you with your volunteer or financial support. If you prefer to donate in a more tangible way C&SC is always seeking art supplies, assistance with meals or prizes to be awarded to our program participants.

## FAST FACTS

**FAST** – Families and Schools Together – is a multi-level approach recognized as one of the leading programs in the nation addressing the factors that put children at risk. Developed at the UCI and the University of Wisconsin, **FAST** has been in nationwide use for fifteen years. **FAST** applies decades of research that have been funded by the National Institute for Mental Health in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, family therapy, family stress, social support and community organizing. **FAST** creates family support for children who are exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems in school, and bridges the gap between parents and the school. **FAST** outcomes are remarkable and lasting for children and their families.

To schedule your FAST program tour call Charlene Ashendorf at 949-270-2932 today!

## THE EARLY LEARNING CENTER

The Early Learning Center (ELC), a joint pilot project of C&SC and the Newport Mesa School District, completed a year of cutting-edge, pre-school education at Sonora Elementary School in June!

Our ELC children were toddlers to kindergarteners. Along with their parents, they engaged in a highly enriched “educational play” environment. Modeling clay, Lego sets, paints and crayons, books and games were all carefully selected to provide intensive stimulation and to teach children fundamental early learning lessons in language, numeracy (counting), colors and shapes. From a child’s point of view, our ELC classroom must have looked like an afternoon at FAO Schwartz!

Most importantly, we trained our parents in the importance of educational playtime with their children. Unless children are exposed to educational play, they will start first grade many “readiness hours” behind their peers – setting the stage for failure.

Parents were also educated about children’s special health and nutrition needs, through sessions with the Nutrition Network – keeping healthy bodies for growing minds.

Other features of the ELC program included a parent survey about early education resources, adoption of a new early learning curriculum for the school district and referrals for children and family services. The pilot project finished with distinction, meeting or exceeding all six of its goals, and has been fully funded for the 2006-2007 school year by a grant from the Children and Families Commission of Orange County. Congratulations to our participating children and families; kudos to our team members; thanks to our funder; and hats off to our partners and team members!

## BOARD MEMBERS

Gary Beverage  
Mart Hubbard  
Nancy Kriz  
Eddie Marquez  
Joe Rosener, Founder

## STAFF

Charlene Ashendorf, Executive Director  
Catherine Spear, Early Learning Center

## SPOTLIGHT ON ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS!

C&SC would like to acknowledge its Advisory Board whose membership lends their names in support of efforts to serve at-risk youth and their families.

Marian Bergeson, California Transportation Commission  
Katrina Foley, Attorney, City Council Member  
Dr. Gwyn P. Parry, Dir. Community Medicine Hoag Hosp.  
John C. Shaw, Owner, The Shaw Group  
Deborah Lowe Vandell, Chair & Professor, UCI

## A SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS

Carol Stone for facilitating the C&SC Strategic Planning Process!

## COMMUNITY & SCHOOL COLLABORATION MISSION

C&SC helps Orange County's under-served, at-risk preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students complete their education, be prepared for the work-place and participate within their communities.

For more info: Visit our website at [www.c-sc.org](http://www.c-sc.org)

## **COMMUNITY & SCHOOL COLLABORATION, INC. PREPARING CHILDREN AT RISK FOR LIFETIME SUCCESS!**

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