

# 50 *Years of Nurture*



## REFLECTIONS ON RCMA'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY



# We were invited



**RCMA has opened more than 100 child-care centers in the last 50 years. Each one met a need in a low-income Florida farming community. In nearly every case, local leaders sought out RCMA. Here are some highlights.**

## 1965:

On Oct. 1, a Mennonite community in south Dade County files forms to create a nonprofit corporation – Redlands Christian Migrant Association. **RCMA begins operating child-care centers** in the Redlands, South Dade and Krome Avenue labor camps.

## 1968:



RCMA's proposed budget for 1968-1969 is \$22,022. **Wendell N. Rollason becomes executive director and forges partnerships with growers.**

## 1971

**Sesame Street selects the South Dade Center for a pilot training program** in child development.

## 1972:

RCMA hires Barbara Mainster as RCMA's first educational coordinator. Following a fund-raising drive for building materials, **an RCMA infant center in Homestead is built** by Naval reservists.

## 1974:

In Tampa, **Sister Maureen Smith of the local Catholic diocese persuades Hillsborough County to create a child-care center** by renovating the former dressing room of an outdoor theater in Ruskin. Smith then invites RCMA to open its first Tampa-area center there. RCMA accepts.

## 1975:

Father Jeremiah Singleton, a Catholic priest, joins with the Collier County

Housing Authority to urge **RCMA to take over the Farmworker Village A Child Development Center**. **RCMA moves its headquarters** to Immokalee, roughly equidistant between Homestead and Ruskin. It acquires a small wood-frame building by paying \$17,000 in taxes owed by a community group.

## 1976:

Staff members from the state **Department of Children and Families ask RCMA to expand into Arcadia** to provide care to abused and neglected children. RCMA moves into a one-room building owned by the local housing authority.

## 1980:

**A 3-year-old boy suffers severe burns** when a fire starts in the car where his parents left him as they picked strawberries. The tragedy in Dover, east of Tampa, galvanizes farmers and Sister Maureen to create an RCMA center there – and it opens a year later.

## 1981:

**RCMA takes over five centers** – in Apopka, Haines City, East Palatka, Winter Garden and Hastings – as a delegate agency of East Coast Migrant Head Start.

**The Rev. Leroy McGahee invites RCMA to move into Highway Park**, a low-income community surrounded by citrus groves in Lake Placid. McGahee offers a former African-American school building, abandoned as a result of desegregation. RCMA accepts.

## 1982:

**Head Start funds 12 new RCMA child-care centers** for children of migrant farm workers. RCMA promptly doubles to 32 centers from 16.

## 1983:

Partnering with the Manatee County School Board, **RCMA opens a center in Palmetto**.

## 1984:

**Penn State University seeks out RCMA** to help implement a grant to start family child-care homes. Velma Adame, an RCMA mom in Immokalee, is hired to sign up child-care homes by knocking on the doors of houses with playground equipment outside. RCMA continues to operate 26 such homes today.

## 1985:

**RCMA celebrates its 20th anniversary** in an Immokalee park. Gov. Bob Graham attends.

## 1986:

**Gov. Graham appoints Mainster to the State Advisory Council** on Early Childhood Education.

## 1988:

**Mainster becomes RCMA executive director**; Rollason becomes the executive vice president. Owners of B&W Quality Growers invite RCMA to the farming areas inland of Vero Beach. **The B&W group pays for RCMA's first building in Fellsmere**.

## 1989:

**The Glades County School Board asks RCMA to operate a pre-kindergarten program** on school system property.

## 1991:

With new Head Start funding, **RCMA branches into child care for rural families** who don't migrate, filling unmet needs in Hendry, Glades, Hardee, DeSoto and Highlands counties.

ABC News recognizes Rollason as the network's "Person of the Week."  
Mainster testifies before the National Commission on Migrant Education.

## 1992:

RCMA operates its Homestead child-care centers in large tents after Hurricane Andrew damages the buildings.

RCMA opens Children's House Child Development Center west of Vero Beach, in a building donated by citrus grower Richard Graves.

RCMA accepts an invitation by the Belle Glade Housing Authority to open a child-care center in Palm Beach County.

## 1994:

Pasco County builds the Dade City Learning Center, so RCMA can operate a Migrant Head Start center there.

RCMA preschoolers in Homestead teach U.S. Sen. Graham how to fingerprint.

## 1995:

RCMA celebrates its 30th anniversary



and completion of a new state headquarters complex on the

site of a former Baptist Church. Gov. Lawton Chiles attends.

## 1998

Lourdes Villaneuva and Mainster testify before a U.S. Senate subcommittee regarding children in the fields.



## 1999:

DUDA, the agricultural giant, proposes an annual Christmas Card fundraiser featuring the art of RCMA children. DUDA, RCMA and the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association launch a joint effort that continues today.

## 2000:

RCMA launches its annual golf tournament fundraiser, now named the Lipman Golf Classic for Lipman Produce, the lead sponsor.

RCMA opens its first charter schools, in downtown Immokalee and Wimauma, south of Tampa.

## 2002

RCMA opens a child-care center on a tomato farm owned by Six L's – now Lipman Produce.

## 2003:

RCMA receives the coveted "Program of Excellence" Award from the National Head Start Association.

## 2004:

RCMA and the Mexican Consulate in Miami agree to open five "Plazas Comunitarias," adult-education centers for Mexican immigrants.

Southeast of Tampa, RCMA builds a center on a JayMar Farms strawberry field.

## 2005:

The RCMA staff in Immokalee raises more than \$105,000 to help more than 300 families affected by Hurricane Wilma.

## 2008

RCMA dedicates a block-long 1,800-square-foot "Community Mural" of ceramic tile on the walls of the headquarters building.



RCMA's Board creates the RCMA Immigration Assistance Program to provide trustworthy assistance to immigrants if the federal government changes immigration rules.

## 2009

RCMA buys the former Hopewell Elementary School, reviving a community gathering spot for Avon Park's African-Americans. It becomes home to a child-care center and RCMA's Highlands County Regional Office.

## 2010

Thanks to more than \$1 million raised by Vero Beach supporters, RCMA opens a new Children's House in nearby Wabasso.



Joaquin Perez, Human Relations Director at Groveland's Cherry Lake Tree Farms, becomes the first former "RCMA baby" to join RCMA's Board of Directors.

## 2012

Leadership Academy, an RCMA middle school, opens next door to Wimauma Academy south of Tampa.



The White House honors Lourdes Villaneuva, RCMA's Director of Farmworker Advocacy, as a "Head Start Champion of Change."

## 2013

RCMA receives \$500,000 from the estate of Bill and Phoebe Krome, and establishes a college scholarship fund for RCMA children and staff with a farm-working background. Bill Krome was a pioneering avocado grower in Homestead and an early leader on RCMA's board.

The Public Broadcasting affiliate in Fort Myers names Barbara Mainster to the inaugural class of WGPU MAKERS – Women Who Make Southwest Florida.

RCMA is honored at the North American Agricultural Safety Summit in Minneapolis for creating model child care centers in partnership with agriculture.

## 2014

Leadership Florida, a statewide network of young leaders, awards RCMA the annual Leadership Florida Impact Award for "transforming the future of its region."





# Opening doors for 43 years

**I'm feeling nostalgic.** This will be my last column as RCMA's executive director. In the annual report next year, you should hear from my successor – someone who will be chosen next spring by the RCMA Board of Directors.

I'll be 75 years old by then. The time is right for this change. RCMA is being run by a strong staff and strong systems. Our course is set to continue for the next 50 years.

I am so lucky to have found RCMA 43 years ago – it was classic “being in the right place at the right time” with the right people!

Who would have thought those three old wooden child care centers in Homestead would lead to our current organization? Wendell Rollason, the farm worker leadership and I seized opportunities with both hands! RCMA grew by invitation mostly, meeting needs that were identified by parents, by agricultural entities, by other advocates, such as clergymen and social workers. Farm worker parents needed us and later, other low-income rural families reached out to us.

In the beginning, as the first Education Coordinator, I remember loading

as many kids as would fit in my Datsun station wagon to go to the beach (before seat belts existed, of course)! Gloria Kendrick put her kids in the back of a van, seated on buckets. That was a step up. We still go on field trips, but in approved vehicles with certified drivers, sign in sheets, and many staff!

And I remember getting ready for Board meetings in

the old buildings, with one small room air conditioner, making sure no bugs were scurrying about to embarrass us! The Board was smaller than it is now, but it had same interest in how to do more for the communities we served.

And I recall the first vehicle the Board bought Mr. Rollason, my predecessor as executive director. It was a used pickup truck at his request. As you rounded a curve, you had to hold onto the door handle to keep the door from flying open! Today, we have a fleet of more than 180 vehicles, with a maintenance company to ensure doors stay properly closed!

And when our charter school dream became a reality, it was again in primitive facilities, with committed staff and that optimistic attitude that we could open doors to more opportunities for the children and their families, by providing bilingual, bicultural environments to the best of our ability. Now there are beautiful school buildings filled with more than 500 children, all doing very well, indeed.

I am proud of whatever part I have played to build RCMA to last; grateful I found a partner/soulmate in Wendell Rollason to share my life with; appreciative of my family for allowing me to work the hours I did all these years without heaping too much guilt on me; amazed at the generous friends and donors who show their belief in our mission by sharing their resources; and happy that our funding sources' staff members recognize that RCMA provides the best bang for the buck, over and over again!

There is no doubt that the next 50 years will see changes as dramatic as those in the past 50, but if the spirit and soul of RCMA remains intact, children in our care will continue to grow into caring, responsible and loving adults prepared to lead in an increasingly complex global society. What a worthy mission to keep opening the doors to opportunities!

**Barbara Mainster**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



ALEX MCKNIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY



FLORIDA GROWER MAGAZINE

## WE GET ALONG BY RESPECTING CULTURES

In its early days, RCMA was largely rejected, even though it offered free child care to farm workers. They were from a different culture than RCMA's young Mennonite staff members. Then RCMA hired farm workers to be teachers. Culture became a uniter instead of a divider – for 50 years! Cultural competence makes us unique. It is the secret to our success.



**Isabel Garcia**  
RCMA since 1988

## PEOPLE AND SYSTEMS ARE ALL-IMPORTANT

We may not have had offices, computers, or cell phones in our early or mid years, but we had dedicated people passionate about the mission who were willing to work hard together to make it happen. I remember standing under a big shade tree at the Redlands Migrant Camp, where one of the centers and a small office were located, pretty much at the end of every day for a brief come together – which we now call scheduled dialog, part of a system of communication! We were able to share good and not-so-good happenings of the day and things to know for the next day. We went home knowing the team was working together.



**Barbara Mainster**  
RCMA since 1972

## YOU CAN'T FIGHT RACISM, BUT YOU CAN OVERCOME IT

People frequently judge others by their differences – different appearance, different behavior. When we judge each other as equal individuals, we start to get along.



**Gloria Kendrick**  
RCMA since 1975

## PARENTS ARE THEIR CHILDREN'S FIRST TEACHERS ...

... and homes are their first classrooms. Poverty forced many RCMA parents to abandon school for work. They feel unqualified to participate in their children's educations. We tell them, "Even if you can't read, open the book, look at the pictures and talk about them with your child. Show him things when you cook food, when you walk down the street, when you visit a store." Parents can inspire their children to succeed. Long after the children have grown up and the parents have passed away, they will remain a strong influence.



**Lourdes Villanueva**  
RCMA since 1984

## GOVERNMENT REGULATORS ARE PEOPLE TOO

Politics gives them a terrible image, but they are just regular people with jobs to do. We try to treat them like we would want to be treated. Sometimes, they overreach, and we object, politely. Government funding is the fiscal foundation of RCMA. We could not operate, nor grow, without it. So we have longstanding, open relationships with regulators. We show them that taxpayers' dollars are helping children, families and the larger society through RCMA.



**Gilbert Flores**  
RCMA since 1998

## CHILDREN MUST LEARN TO CONVERSE

I remember formulating the first goals of our education program which were 1. the importance of language development and 2. developing self confidence in our kids. I remember saying, "For schools to know how smart our kids are, they need the words to be able to express themselves and the confidence to do it!" Now the education experts at FSU tell us oral language is the best indicator of later reading success.

**Barbara Mainster**

## NOBODY SHOULD GRIEVE ALONE

Tragedy is a regular visitor to RCMA. We are too close to too many families to avoid it. In a time of grief, low-income people are especially moved. Most survivors need real help.



But even if they don't, they need to know we care. We all bleed the same. When tragedy comes, we always reach out.

**Evan Portee**  
RCMA since 1982

## WE MUST ENGAGE FAMILIES



Living in poverty is stressful. That's why we at RCMA engage parents frequently. It's why RCMA staffers visit the homes of our kids. We partner with parents to tackle nearly every challenge they may face, and we link them to community resources. This approach is the only way to make sure that all kids have a shot at unleashing their full potential.

**Ivette Galarza**  
RCMA since 2001

## CONTROVERSY CAN LEAD TO PROGRESS



Controversy is the vehicle on which every social change rides, be the change for better or worse. Controversy, objectively ridden, is democracy's means of moving

progressively from one point to another. However, placing controversy into an annual report is almost universally shunned as being poor "image" practice. That's one reason annual reports are almost universally dull.

**Wendell Rollason**  
RCMA 1968-1997



# Highlights

JULY 1, 2014 – JUNE 30, 2015

**RCMA served 6,733 children, ages six weeks to 14 years**, during the year.

Head Start chose RCMA as one of 10 Florida recipients of new grant funding to upgrade services. **RCMA received \$3.7 million to provide health care, family services and other benefits for 156 children**, and to expand its Tampa-area operations to accommodate 48 more children.

The business magazine, *Florida Trend*, featured **Executive Director Barbara Mainster** in its "Icon" series.



**RCMA screened 2,362 children for vision problems, 2,302 for hearing difficulties and 1,694 for dental issues.**

Donations, fund-raising events and non-governmental **grants to RCMA exceeded \$1.7 million.**

**RCMA served 534 children with disabilities**, connecting them with the therapies and special-education services they need.

In its first season, **the soccer team fielded by RCMA Leadership Academy compiled a 12-0 record and won the championship of the Central Florida Charter Athletic League.** Leadership is a charter middle school south of Tampa.

RCMA's associate executive director, **Isabel Garcia, was named an "exceptional emerging leader"** by *Exchange*, a national magazine for child-care administrators.



Buoyed by RCMA's 50th birthday, the **Lipman Golf Classic netted \$100,000 for RCMA** child-care centers, making it one of the most successful since the tournament began in 2000.



Head Start awarded a \$1.1 million construction grant, **enabling RCMA to fully build a \$3 million child-care center** that had been planned for phased construction in Dover, east of Tampa. The remaining \$1.9 million was financed with low-interest government loans.

For the second straight year, an "RCMA baby" won a summer internship in Washington, courtesy of the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association. **The new recipient, Ilda**

**Martinez, worked at the U.S. Department of Education during the internship. Her predecessor, Yesenia Calderon, worked at the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund.**



Ilda Martinez

They were the first Floridians to win the internships, reserved for former migrant children.

**RCMA netted \$76,000 from the Bright House Networks Strawberry Picking Challenge**, the second annual celebration of strawberry farming staged by board member Gary Wishnatzki and his company, Wish Farms.



**Four RCMA teachers became the first recipients of Krome Scholarships, awarded through an endowment created by Bill and Phoebe Krome**, early RCMA supporters in Homestead. The four scholars received \$2,000 apiece.

**RCMA placed 1,143 children on waiting lists** because it lacked the capacity and resources to serve them.

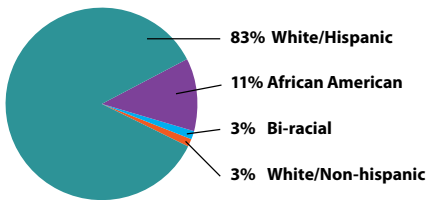


*Redlands Christian  
Migrant Association  
is a nonprofit,  
nonsectarian  
organization that  
provides high-  
quality child care  
and education for  
children of migrant  
farm workers and  
other rural, low-  
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Head Start, Migrant  
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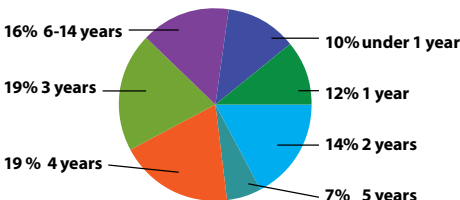
# RCMA statewide services



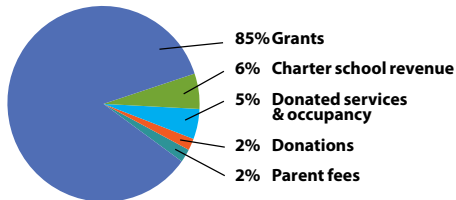
## OUR CHILDREN



## OUR CHILDREN'S AGES



## OUR FUNDING



# Our donors

PEOPLE AND GROUPS WHO MOST HELPED RCMA OPEN DOORS FOR OPPORTUNITIES,  
JULY 1, 2014 – JUNE 30, 2015

**The Redlands Christian Migrant Association receives most of its funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Florida Office of Early Learning, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the school districts of Hillsborough and Collier counties.**

**RCMA also relies heavily on other local government entities, United Ways, corporations, religious institutions, foundations and individuals, including:**



## \$100,000 - \$1 million

Naples Children & Education Foundation  
United Way of Miami-Dade  
United Way Suncoast

## \$50,000 - \$99,999

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**RCMA sincerely thanks the hundreds of supporters whose donations totaled less than \$250. They enhanced the crucial help RCMA provided to nearly 7,000 of Florida's most vulnerable children.**

## Statements of Financial Position / June 30, 2015 / with comparative totals for 2014

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Combined Totals 2015	2014
<b>Assets</b>				
<b>Current assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$4,442,125	\$63,680	\$4,505,805	\$4,674,795
Accounts receivable - grants	3,135,511		3,135,511	2,441,140
- other	8,913		8,913	
- school boards	221,302		221,302	230,683
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	339,626		339,626	425,738
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>8,147,477</b>	<b>63,680</b>	<b>8,211,157</b>	<b>7,772,356</b>
<b>Property and equipment</b>	<b>11,568,876</b>	<b>7,364,158</b>	<b>18,933,034</b>	<b>19,949,768</b>
<b>Deposits and other assets</b>				
Cash - sinking fund	830,641		830,641	760,349
Cash set aside for -				
Future health insurance claims	931,235		931,235	511,735
Building and utility deposits	47,306		47,306	48,210
Donated rental property	125,000		125,000	125,000
	<u>\$21,650,535</u>	<u>\$7,427,838</u>	<u>\$29,078,373</u>	<u>\$29,167,418</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$1,528,970		\$1,528,970	\$1,777,850
Accrued payroll, vacation, sick leave and other expenses	3,618,823		3,618,823	3,010,615
Advances from funding agencies	56,490		56,490	19,863
Current portion of long-term debt	175,000		175,000	165,000
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>5,379,283</b>		<b>5,379,283</b>	<b>4,973,328</b>
<b>Long-term debt, less current portion</b>	<b>2,605,000</b>		<b>2,605,000</b>	<b>2,780,000</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>7,984,283</b>		<b>7,984,283</b>	<b>7,753,328</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>				
Designated reserve for future use	931,235		931,235	511,735
Other net assets	12,735,017	\$7,427,838	20,162,855	20,902,355
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>13,666,252</b>	<b>7,427,838</b>	<b>21,094,090</b>	<b>21,414,090</b>
	<u>\$21,650,535</u>	<u>\$7,427,838</u>	<u>\$29,078,373</u>	<u>\$29,167,418</u>

Attention is directed to independent auditors' report and notes to financial statements.



Lake Placid



Arcadia



Crescent City



Dover

## Statements of Functional Expenses / for the year ended June 30, 2015 / with comparative totals for 2014

### PROGRAM SERVICES

	Child Care Subsidized	Head Start	Food Service	Other	Charter Schools	Total
Personnel costs						
Salaries	\$9,491,446	\$18,892,730	\$1,096,669	\$239,030	\$3,545,364	\$33,265,239
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	2,085,276	4,549,040	269,907	54,184	739,669	7,698,076
Total personnel costs	11,576,722	23,441,770	1,366,576	293,214	4,285,033	40,963,315
Contracted services						
Child care services	838,655	878,407				1,717,062
Other	12,810	71,605	525	4,345	41,278	130,563
Food			1,669,723		385,599	2,055,322
Supplies	341,371	1,196,237	218,108	11,121	164,101	1,930,938
Consumable equipment	74,711	433,288	558	8,073	145,232	661,862
Transportation	142,740	419,416	9,108	3,458	131,300	706,022
Out of state travel	654	16,047			6,765	23,466
Occupancy costs	974,621	2,245,837		780	346,481	3,567,719
Donated space		3,389,354				3,389,354
In state travel	66,642	194,257	14,010	5,704	15,902	296,515
Health services	7,057	59,962			81,960	148,979
Interest						
Conferences and workshops	90,404	506,863	7,245	9,533	64,457	678,502
Direct costs of fund raising events	32	14,131				14,163
Other expenses	76,950	236,712	760	1,120	264,317	579,859
Professional fees	632	11,554				12,186
Repairs and maintenance	52,390	105,510	4	457	28,162	186,523
Depreciation	120,649	1,123,551			70,334	1,314,534
Data processing	110,286	203,057	14,711			328,054
Uncollected child care fees					1,237	1,237
	\$14,487,326	\$34,547,558	\$3,301,328	\$337,805	\$6,032,158	\$58,706,175



Immokalee

	General and Support		Combined Totals	
	Administrative	Fund Raising	2015	2014
Personnel costs				
Salaries	\$3,016,971	\$98,277	\$36,380,487	\$34,616,319
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	687,806	19,767	8,405,649	8,028,682
Total personnel costs	3,704,777	118,044	44,786,136	42,645,001
Contracted services				
Child care services			1,717,062	1,802,962
Other	139,845	35,467	305,875	373,381
Food			2,055,322	1,923,872
Supplies	62,805	1,252	1,994,995	1,642,281
Consumable equipment	56,254	278	718,394	576,179
Transportation	69,114		775,136	811,649
Out of state travel	31,574		55,040	36,340
Occupancy costs	280,196		3,847,915	3,724,929
Donated space			3,389,354	3,252,585
In state travel	59,744	2,048	358,307	322,304
Health services	943		149,922	123,386
Interest	5,484		5,484	7,714
Conferences and workshops	65,272	2,731	746,505	743,826
Direct costs of fund raising events		103,789	117,952	115,077
Other expenses	314,081	14,807	908,747	704,908
Professional fees	149,605		161,791	201,603
Repairs and maintenance	45,151	575	232,249	265,906
Depreciation	1,096,131		2,410,665	2,596,152
Data processing	27,572		355,626	401,473
Uncollected child care fees	12,921		14,158	14,103
	\$6,121,469	\$278,991	\$65,106,635	\$62,285,631



Pomona Park

\* Combined Totals: Total of Program Services (above) plus General and Support.



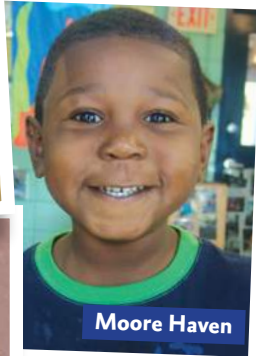


**Redlands Christian Migrant Association**  
 402 West Main Street  
 Immokalee, Florida 34142  
 www.rcma.org  
 (239) 658-3560

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