

HURRICANE IAN IMPACTS RCMA FAMILIES AND FACILITIES



An organization as large as RCMA has plans for everything. But we can't control Mother Nature.

The effects of Hurricane Ian were felt differently by each of our 66 child development centers, two charter schools and state office in Immokalee.

RCMA's priority after a disaster like Ian is always to get our centers up and running so that we can ensure children are in a safe and enriching environment as quickly as possible. We enacted our recovery plan immediately. Senior managers checked in with all staff to ensure their safety. School and center staff contacted our families to identify their needs. Staff also assessed and repaired damage at our locations throughout that weekend, so we could open and serve families as soon as possible.

Within two days after the storm, our child development centers in the Miami-Dade area were open. Less than a week later – after our staff could safely leave their homes and power/water had been restored to our buildings – 52 of our 66 child development centers and the Academies of RCMA were open.

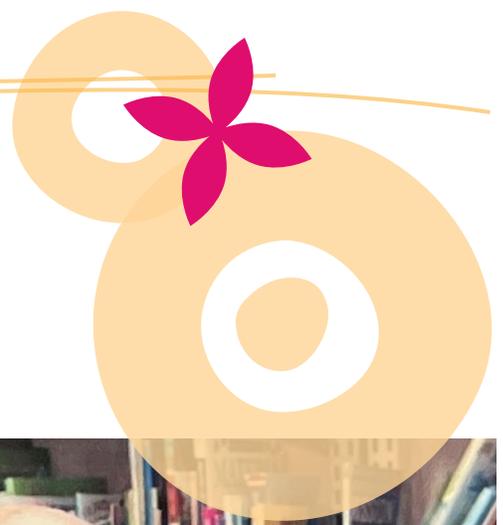
RCMA's five centers in DeSoto and Hardee counties sustained the most damage, including compromised roofs, torn siding, interior flooding, and broken playground equipment, playground shades and fencing. It will take time to restore these buildings, in the meantime, RCMA staff in those areas kept in touch with our families and provided them support.

We want to thank all of our partners for quickly stepping up with monetary donations, food, water, diapers, baby formula and cleaning supplies. These included Global Emergency Mission, Florida Immigrant Coalition, Smile Trust, Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association, Save the Children, Feeding Florida, HERS Construction and many more.

Your generosity helped us get children back into our centers and provide specific emergency assistance to families based on their needs.

You make it possible for RCMA to go beyond education and help our families and communities survive and thrive. Thank you!

MORGAN ROBERTS DEVOTES TIME AND FINANCES TO RCMA



Morgan Roberts tutoring Wimauma Community Academy student

In his early 90s, Morgan Roberts was still going to school three days a week. Not as a student, but as a tutor.

A retired pastor, Dr. Roberts was a beloved volunteer at our Wimauma Community Academy until the pandemic altered our in-person volunteer opportunities. He and his wife, Nora, have also financially contributed to RCMA every year since 2007.

The couple first got involved with RCMA by helping in our 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms, making a positive impact on these young students. After a few years, Nora's volunteer work became limited as she helped care for their grandchildren, but her husband continued his commitment with RCMA.

"It was exciting to know that you were preparing kids for escaping from migrant work and having careers and good jobs," Dr. Roberts says of providing one-on-one support in subjects such as English and history. "You could see the results and knew you were getting something done that would stay with them through high school."

Heather Hanson, Director of Professional Development and Analysis at Wimauma Community Academy, praises Dr. Roberts for his patience, his dedication and his good sense of humor.

"Sometimes, the scholars don't like being taken away from their peers to go to the office to meet with a volunteer," she explains. "But he was always cheerful and encouraging." Heather says students ask when Dr. Roberts will return, because they miss him and also want to show him how their reading has progressed.

Dr. Roberts shares that, other than his college and seminary, all of his financial contributions go to RCMA.

"Whether they get good jobs or whether they go on to college, these kids are going to grow up and have children and this (impact) is going to get larger and larger," he says.

We are grateful to Dr. and Mrs. Roberts for assisting RCMA in so many ways.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we have done throughout our founding 57 years ago, RCMA responds to the needs of our children and families as well as to shifts in the educational industry.

For example, fewer of our families are migrating north during the summer, due to the uncertainty of finding enough work opportunities or housing. So, we now keep several of our migrant child development centers open year round to provide care and learning for hundreds of children as their parents work locally.

We also found an inventive way to address the national shortage of teachers – we looked outside the United States. This year, we have six teachers from Spain working at Immokalee Community Academy and Wimauma Community Academy. Their experience and background are assets in our dual-language curriculum.

Exciting progress is being made toward the opening of our third charter school, Mulberry Community Academy, for the 2023-2024 school year. Watch for details.

I also want to applaud our staff and partners who responded heroically before and after Hurricane Ian. RCMA goes beyond education to support our families and communities.

It is a joy to listen to children's laughter every day when I come to work. I hope you have the same happiness in your life.

Isabel Garcia
Executive Director



RCMA CHRISTMAS CARDS – ON SALE!

Make your holiday greetings stand out in mailboxes! Purchase Christmas cards designed by RCMA students, including exclusive designs that can be personalized.

Proceeds this year will support construction of our new Mulberry Community Academy K-8 charter school, scheduled to open for the 2023-2024 school year.

Visit RCMA.org/cards to see all the designs and place your order.

We Ho-Ho-Hope your holidays are happy!

Christmas CARDS DESIGNED BY RCMA KIDS



KROME FAMILY LEAVES A LEGACY AT RCMA

Medora Krome will be stepping down as Board Chair in January 2023 after six years of steady and productive leadership. She will continue to serve on the Board, adding to her 23 years of service and extending the legacy of the Krome family through RCMA.

Her father, William H. Krome, provided leadership during a critical period of RCMA's development, when our organization grew from about 6 child development centers to 32.

Motivated by her parents' love and commitment to the dedicated farmworkers on which agriculture depends, Medora joined our Board in 1999. Executive Director Isabel Garcia says Medora's respect and care for the children and families we serve, coupled with her insight as a successful avocado grower, informed her recommendations and decisions. "Medora escorted RCMA to our next growth spurt. We would not be where we are today without her thoughtful leadership," Isabel says.

In addition, the Krome Educational Fund was established by her parents, William H. and Phoebe Krome, to help individuals with farmworker backgrounds, and their children, attain a higher standard of living than that into which they were born.

Since 2015, we have also supported dozens of RCMA employees, their families and our alumni by providing scholarships ranging from \$2,000 to \$6,000. More than \$146,000 in scholarship money has been awarded.

Medora says, "It has been a privilege to serve as President of the Board for RCMA. I had excellent examples to follow: George Sorn and my father, William. H. Krome, and when Michael Stuart asked me to succeed him as President, I could only feel flattered, albeit inadequate. RCMA has faced many challenges, as we all know, but I have had excellent guidance and support from the dedicated staff and Board members. Together, we have all worked to overcome those challenges and move RCMA forward to meet the needs of the communities we serve."

We are so grateful to the Krome family for their leadership, stewardship and long-lasting commitments to RCMA, our children and our families.



Alicia Resendiz, who attended our Plant City Child Development Center, was one of nine Krome Scholarship recipients this spring. She says the funds will ease her financial worries as she pursues nursing at Hillsborough Community College, giving her more time to study and increasing her likelihood of finishing college.



OUR CONTINUUM OF OPENING DOORS BEGINS WITH THE FOUNDATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE) AND CONTINUES THROUGH OUR NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED CHARTER SCHOOLS.

GROUP EFFORT INCREASED HEALTH CARE FOR RCMA FAMILIES



There is strength in numbers, and RCMA families benefitted from this philosophy when our organization participated in “Cosecha: Building a Florida Farmworker Promotor Health Network.”

From December 2021 through June 2022, we partnered with the Rural Women Health Project, Women Working Together USA, and WeCount! to provide COVID vaccinations/boosters and education as well as other medical checkups and information throughout our 21 counties.

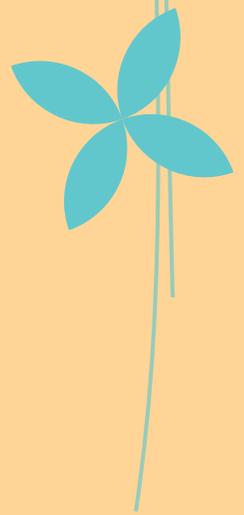
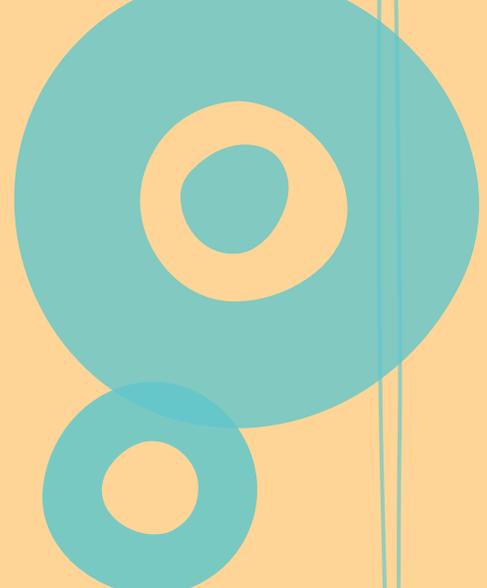
Cosecha was coordinated by Alianza Americas, a transnational network of immigrant-led organizations.

Alianza connected the partnering organizations, developed and distributed educational materials in several languages, and provided training and funding for 50 of our staff members who served as Community Health Promoters, which strengthened how our families and community members view RCMA employees as trusted voices for health care services and information.

The results: we held almost 30 health fairs that reached 1,436 people and provided 965 COVID vaccinations or booster shots. Overall, the Cosecha project reached 2,849 people and provided 1,850 vaccinations or booster shots.

“Members of our hard-working farmworker families respond best to health care information when it comes from a trusted source such as the employees at our more than 60 child development centers,” says Leticia Gonzalez, RCMA’s Field Coach, who served as the Project Lead and met biweekly with Alianza and the partners to ensure the goals were being met. “This project helped us connect with more families and members of our community, bringing them vital health information and preventive services.”

We are extremely grateful for the \$257,337 that Alianza provided for the project expenses as well as their leadership and other support. Together with support from UnidosUS and their various health campaigns, Alianza for All and other partners make it possible to bring these critical health services to the children and families of RCMA.



STAY INVOLVED!

Share our Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages with your friends. Watch “how to” videos on our YouTube channel.



facebook.com/rcma1965

facebook.com/groups/RCMAalumni

YOUR TEE TIME IS SET FOR MAY 20, 2023



2022 1st Place Team – First Bank

We are excited to announce that our 23rd annual Lipman Family Farms Golf Classic will return to the exclusive Naples Heritage Golf and Country Club on Saturday, May 20, 2023.

Our signature fundraiser is so popular, it sells out every year!

Get event details and purchase your sponsorship or foursome now at rcma.org/golf.



BID ONLINE TO SUPPORT RCMA

A Strawberry guitar signed by ZZ Top, a football signed by Rob Gronkowski, a Michael Kors purse, and fine wine are among the silent auction items that will benefit RCMA as part of Pixie Rock, a musical festival being hosted by Wish Farms on Saturday, Nov. 12 in Plant City. Scan the QR code to place a bid, and visit wishfarms.com to purchase tickets to see ZZ Top and all the other amazing bands!

INTRODUCING...THE ACADEMIES OF RCMA

This summer, RCMA's brand extended to our K-8 dual language charter schools, now known as the Academies of RCMA. Immokalee Community Academy and Wimauma Community Academy each have new logos and updated mascot graphics. Combined with the branding refresh we began in 2019, we are all together now under the RCMA values of respect, compassion, quality and opportunity.

Wimauma Community Academy



Immokalee Community Academy





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Fall 2022 newsletter



DONATE NOW

Donate now at:
rcma.org/donate

Make checks payable
to RCMA and mail to:
RCMA
402 W. Main Street
Immokalee, FL 34142



HOW TO HELP AN RCMA CHILD

Scan this QR code to add quality to our programs, help families through crisis, and expand our charter schools.

