



Latino Community Development Agency, Inc.

420 SW 10th Street / Oklahoma City, OK 73109

405-236-0701 / www.lcdaok.org



**For Oklahoma's Kids. For Oklahoma's Families.
For Oklahoma's Future.**

**2022
Spring Newsletter**



The sign over the outdoor classroom entrance remembers Tony Reyes, who died in the Murrah Building bombing, and how his dream for a bilingual child development center was realized when **LCDA** inaugurated a program twenty-five years ago that bears his name.

Drew Dugan, Greater OKC Chamber;
Andrew Norton, Sunbeam Family Services;
Dr. Sean McDaniel, OKCPS; Debi Moore,
E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Foundation;
Kyle Impson, The Chickasaw Nation;
Judge Natalie Mai, Oklahoma County District Court.

Child Development Center Celebrates 25th Anniversary

When is a playground more than kids just running around having fun?

When it's a Nature Explore® Outdoor Classroom!

LCDA's Tony Reyes Bilingual Child Development Center (TRBCDC) celebrated its 25th anniversary on May 5 at its Riverside Headquarters on SW 10th Street, when civic leaders, educators and **LCDA** staff and volunteers joined together to recognize the important milestone and to christen the program's newest feature, a **Nature Explore® Outdoor Classroom**.

Guests were greeted with remarks by Dr. Raúl Font, **LCDA** president, and Paloma Cisneros, LCDA's director of children's programs. Next, guests were treated to a children's performance. Following a ribbon-cutting ceremony, guests saw firsthand how an outdoor space for kids can be a vital place for learning important concepts.

"We actually have two bilingual outdoor classrooms in Oklahoma City, both of which are certified by Nature Explore®, a national nonprofit program, that works with a network of organizations throughout the U.S., with a goal to help nature become an integral, joyful part of children's daily learning," states Dr. Font. "**LCDA** continues to invest in kids, and is grateful for a grant for the outdoor classrooms from E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Foundation, and the outdoor classroom design plans created by Sunbeam Family Services' Andrew Norton. As this is our anniversary year, we also want to recognize the important financial support for our child development center programs provided by Potts Family Foundation, Lopez Foods, Inasmuch Foundation and Oklahoma State Department of Human Services."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

LCDA has two **Nature Explore**® outdoor classrooms, and both are certified by the program's national office in Lincoln, Nebraska. **LCDA's** programs are the only two in Oklahoma County that are certified. **Nature Explore**® provides research-based workshops, design consultations and resources created to support programs as they continue to connect children and families to the wonders of nature. **LCDA's** staff is trained in how to incorporate a curriculum approved by **Nature Explore**®.

Paloma Cisneros states: "Many of the children we serve have limited experiences with nature because of their living environment. They are from low-income families, where parents often work multiple low-wage jobs to make ends meet. We believe that by teaching children about the natural world at an early age they will learn to take care of, advocate for, and have a deep appreciation for nature. We also believe that children need to experience outdoor play in a setting that is guided by a proven curriculum, so that play is that much more meaningful."

Both of **LCDA's** child development centers are located in south Oklahoma City. One program site provides Early Head Start services for up to 48 children, ages zero to three, and the other site provides early care and education services for children ages three to five, for an additional 45 children. Both sites have accreditation from the Oklahoma State Department of Human Services, and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

TRBCDC was established in June 30, 1997, in memory of Antonio "Tony" C. Reyes, a dedicated child advocate who provided his time to mentoring children at **LCDA**. Tony wanted every child to have the same opportunity affluent children had, but in a bilingual setting that was culturally and linguistically age-appropriate for them. Sadly, Mr. Reyes was killed in the 1995 Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City. His niece, Nina Gonzales, had the vision for what became the **TRBCDC**, and served as its first paid director.



Children from the **Tony Reyes Bilingual Child Development Center** provided attendees with a super performance before the ribbon cutting.



Paloma Cisneros, LCDA children's programs director; Pat Fennell, former LCDA president; Cristina Perez, TRBCDC program director; Nina Gonzales, former TRBCDC founding director and niece of Tony Reyes.



The Outdoor Classroom climbing area. One of the play-and-learn stations.



Tony Reyes Bilingual Child Development Center Staff.



Judge Natalie Mai, Oklahoma County District Court; Dr. Raúl Font, president, **LCDA**



LCDA board member Beto Balderrama, OKC Police Dept.; **LCDA** board member Valerie McMurphy, Metro Tech; Dr. Sean McDaniel, superintendent, OKCPS

Save the Date, Por Favor!
31st Annual Awards Luncheon
September 21, 2022 | National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum



The following donor sponsorship levels are now available:

Host Sponsor - \$25,000

Compadres - \$10,000

Vecinos - \$5,000

Amigos - \$2,500

For sponsorship details, contact Mario Medrano at m.medrano@latinoagencyokc.org or call 405-236-0701

Some LCDA Program Staff Relocate to Capitol Hill Neighborhood

Some **LCDA** team members have relocated this month from S.W. 10th Street to the historic Capitol Hill neighborhood in Oklahoma City. Leased space at 300 S.W. 25th Street will house several health department programs, economic development projects, school services and the president's office. Additional space will also provide room for new community outreach and collaboration opportunities.

"As we have expanded our program offerings during the last several years, our circa 1909 former school building on NW 10th Street that we have called home for several decades is just not large enough," states Raúl Font, **LCDA** president. "Relocating some of our administrative team deeper into the heart of the Latino community will allow for growth and reduce our current issues with not having enough office space or parking."



LCDA Receives Express Employment International Fellowship

LCDA is one of seven Oklahoma City nonprofits granted an “Express Employment International Fellowship” by the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. Fellows are defined as “members of the OKC nonprofit community who have been able to rejoin or increase their membership level in the Chamber and showcase the important work they are doing as they interact with the business community through a generous grant courtesy of Express Employment International Headquarters.”

With a Chamber membership at the “Board of Advisor” level, “Fellowship recipients will be able to enhance their exposure and networking with business community leadership through board meetings, participating in the Chamber’s Leadership Summit and a host of other opportunities,” writes Nathan Fisher in a Chamber news release. “In addition, the fellowship will allow many of the organizations’ staff members to participate in Elevate, the Chamber’s all-day professional development summit, providing educational opportunities in leadership development, networking skills, public speaking, financial management and more.”



Photo Courtesy of Greater Oklahoma City Chamber

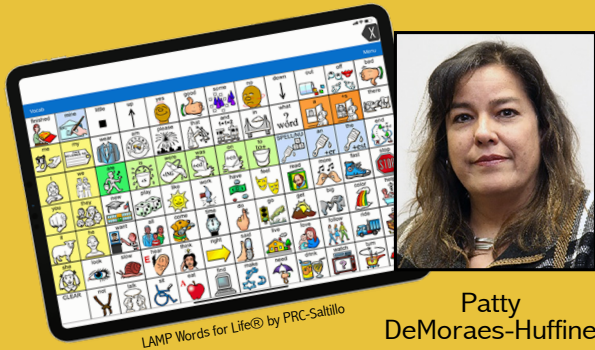
“Express Employment International is a company that believes in putting people to work, giving them job skills and empowering them to be experts in their field. We feel we should also be doing that with nonprofit organizations and nonprofit leadership,” said Jessica Gilmore, director of corporate philanthropy at Express. “This fellowship says, ‘we believe in investing in you. We believe in the people behind the program, not just the program.’”

“Nonprofits play a key role in economic development by strengthening the communities that they serve. This partnership between Express Employment International and the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber will have a lasting impact on our community for years to come,” said Roy Williams, president and CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber.

“Outstanding nonprofit leadership deserves to be recognized and rewarded for their hard work, just like any other staff member. They deserve the opportunity to continue their education and pursue bigger and better programming that benefits their organization,” Gilmore added. “As a nonprofit, they don’t often get that opportunity. These seven nonprofit organizations are making a huge difference in the Oklahoma City area and Express is excited to be involved in helping them continue to grow.”

High-Tech High-Touch

Latino Children with Disabilities Aided by New Technology



Patty
DeMoraes-Huffine

aid non-verbal individuals communicate their wants and needs by pressing buttons on a speech-generating device. The Snap Scene App uses in-the-moment learning opportunities by taking a photo with a recording to help the individual communicate. The assisted technology will help better serve the families participating in our home-based services by assessing the child's need and aiding the family in how to use the technology provided.

LCDA's Prevention Program's home-based services division received a \$4,500 grant from ADRC COVID-19 Community Funding to purchase assistive technology to be utilized with families with children with disabilities. "We will purchase three electronic tablets with protective covers/ amplified speakers, and Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP) Word and Snap Scene Apps," states Patty DeMoraes-Huffine, director, Prevention Programs. "This will help the children with disabilities tremendously by helping them be more self-sufficient at home, communicate with family members and friends, and reduce stress in the families."

The LAMP App uses voice output communication to

LCDA provides home-based parenting support through two different program models: Parents as Teachers (PAT) and SafeCare (SC). Both cultivate family well-being and healthy child development. PAT is an evidence-based early childhood home visiting model, which is designed to build strong communities, thriving families, and children who are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. SC is a program for the prevention of child maltreatment that supports evidence-based home visitation services for high-risk families, the purpose of which is to meet the health, safety, and well-being needs of families with young children. We offer trauma-informed services with the belief that strengthening families with protective factors will result in enhancing the quality of life of the families served.



LCDA Offers Free Father-Improvement Classes

24/7 Dad® is nationally-recognized program

Fathers whose children attend one of LCDA's Tony Reyes Bilingual Child Development Center program sites have recently had an opportunity to improve their parenting skills through a nationally-recognized program designed to train fathers to be involved, responsible, and committed to their child 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The 24/7 Dad® curriculum-based program, made possible by the National Fatherhood Initiative, began in March and ends in June.

24/7 Dad® is a voluntary, comprehensive fatherhood program designed to help men improve their parenting skills and fathering knowledge. An expected beneficial outcome is improved parenting. The program focuses on building self-awareness, self-caring, and parenting, fathering, and relationship skills. An additional potential beneficial outcome is improved family functioning.

"COVID-19 has really added a new level of stress to our families' lives," states Paloma Cisneros, LCDA's Tony Reyes Bilingual Child Development Center director. "People have had their lives turned upside down, and this has caused friction in families. This program allows men to think about their important parenting duties and how children need help navigating home life and school life with as little stress as possible. We serve men who are married, single parents or separated and or divorced and co-parenting."



**Latino Community
Development Agency, Inc.**

420 SW 10th Street

Oklahoma City, OK 73109

~ LCDA Board of Directors ~

Richard Lane, Board Chair / Lopez Foods

Miriam Campos, Vice Chair / Arvest Bank

Julia Adame Lagace, Secretary / Alterra Home Loans

Lynn Groves, Treasurer / Great Nations Bank

Cinthya L. Allen, City of Norman

Beto Balderrama, Oklahoma City Police Department

Carter Baumert, Bank of America/Merrill Lynch

Joe Cardenas, EST, Inc.

William Dooley, M.D., OU Health Sciences Center

Jeff Ewing, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

Chris Fusselman, Tyler Media

Ronald L. Grant, Jr., Oklahoma City Public Schools

Valerie J. McMurry, Metro Technology Centers

Follow Us On Social Media



Make An Online Donation

<https://lcdaok.com/donate/>



Telephone: 405.236.0701

Fax: 405.236.0737

lcdainfo@latinoagencyokc.org

www.lcdaok.org

