



"Listos Para Vida" (or Ready for Life) Initiative – for Children and Youth of Bienestar Families

- Homework Clubs – originally piloted in 2008 at one site, a site has been added annually and in 2011-12 there will be 5 sites serving about 20 students per term. Homework Clubs were initiated in response to hearing from local teachers that kids from our properties were not turning in homework. Parents reported in Bienestar's door to door survey that they were not equipped to help their kids with homework. Grades were suffering and parents were worried, but unsure what to do. The outcome reports (using pre and post comparison of report cards) show that our participating students experience a notable increase in grades. (Reports are available on our web site, [www.bienestar-or.org](http://www.bienestar-or.org) under youth programs.) This program also helps Bienestar staff get to know individual children at our apartments, facilitating other programming. Caitlin Gable School and Pacific University students have provided volunteer staffing for Homework Clubs, supporting expansion of the program to more sites, and providing fresh excitement for learning for our students.
- Financial Fitness for Life - Bienestar children in grades 1-6 are offered 5 weeks of financial literacy training. Instructor Maria Moreno includes group activities and PC-based learning, based upon Financial Fitness for Life curriculum. Students learn how to make better decisions about earning income, spending, saving, borrowing, investing and managing their money. At the end of the course each child is given a piggy bank, \$8, and goes on a field trip to Wells Fargo to open a savings account. Outcome reports show that in the most recent class, 19 students participated and all finished the course. Attendance at the after school classes ranged between 90 and 95%.
- Bien \$tar \$avers, a Youth IDA Program - *Bien-\$tar-\$avers* is a youth Individual Development Account (IDA) program for children and teens who live in a Bienestar apartment. As of 2011, there are 20 participants in the program ranging from grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>. With the help of the staff program coordinator, all have set goals for saving related to Arts, Athletics, or Academics and are finding ways to earn, saving toward their goal.
- AKA Science Club - In partnership with OHCC (Oregon Health Career Center), staff and volunteers receive training to deliver 'science in a box' hands-on activities for children in grades K-6 for eight weeks. The most recent curriculum was Natural Disasters, taught in spring 2011. Through the pre and post assessment we discovered that more students ended the class believing science was fun, believing they could perform experiments and learn about scientific ideas, and that A.K.A Science Club could help them in school. All but one participating student improved on all of the questions on the assessment. They improved dramatically on "How can you figure out how far away lightning is?" Only one student answered correctly in the pre-assessment and all six of the students answered correctly in the post-assessment. The students attend faithfully, usually arriving early and excited.
- Summer Lunch & Fun - For 9 weeks during the summer, Bienestar offers the Summer Lunch and Fun program at two of our properties in Hillsboro: Montebello Apartments, and Sunset Gardens Apartments. Bienestar offers the Summer Food Service Program to resident children as well as children from the community at large in partnership with the Hillsboro School

District and the Oregon Department of Education. Bienestar also offered activities each day after lunch at each site. In 2010, 5,249 lunches were served.

- Explorador Camp - Summer nature camp in partnership with Audubon Society of Portland offers one week of day camp activities and field trips for 96 children in grades 3-6 over 4 weeks. Originally, 2 one-week camps were offered in 2008. Since 2008, the program has expanded to offer 4 one-week camps in August, and for the first time, is including older children in the camp experience. We are pleased to have received grants from the Gray Family Fund to support the camp as well as the Juan Young Trust. Outcome reports indicate that the children are gaining curiosity about the outdoors and environment, and more importantly, gaining confidence in asking questions. The Camp also exposes them to people who work in the environment professionally.
- Soccer Clubs – With support from Nike, in 2010 a new soccer club was introduced for girls at Sunset Gardens and 10 young girls participated. The sessions were designed to give participants beginner technical skills and develop their interest in the game as well as their self confidence. The participants all had little to no experience playing soccer and started learning basic skills like how to correctly kick a ball when passing, shooting, and dribbling. The outcome report indicated a huge gain in confidence among the participants. They were shy at first, not want people to watch them practice their skills. By the end, they were eager to have an audience for their final “game”. This program has continued in 2011 and a Boys Soccer Club was added.
- Basketball Club - A structured basketball clinic was offered at Reedville Apts. as an after-school sports activity for boys and girls in grades 3-5.
- Zoo to You - ZAP (Zoo Animal Presenters) is a paid 3 year internship program of the Oregon Zoo for low-income teens. Following training, the ZAP teens give live animal presentations in the Portland metro area. The presentations are free to nonprofit organizations that serve families and children. Children at all our properties have enjoyed the animals, and more than 120 adults and children attended Zoo to You in 2010.
- Girl Scouts - Montebello Apartments is the site of a very active Girl Scout troop. Girl Scouts also sponsored a Teen Latina Team week at Reedville Apts. Our all-Latina Girl Scout troop in Hillsboro is a part of a growing phenomenon across the country. Between 2000 and 2007, the number of Latina Girl Scouts increased by 63 percent to 270,000 scouts. In 2007, in the Southwest Washington and Oregon Council, there were 1,950 Latina Girl Scouts. Bienestar is proud to house one of these troops!
- Kids Computer Clubs – With help from Intel volunteers, a new computer club for children in grades 2-6 is offered in the summer months. The class is held on Friday afternoons for six weeks and class curriculum includes the following topics: Internet Safety for Kids, Homework research on the Internet, How to present your homework or project using Microsoft Power Point. Students learned the basics of how to find information on the internet and put it on a power point presentation. Students show excellent progress in pre and post testing. On the last day of class each student presented their work using a power point presentation on the projector for parents and Bienestar staff.
- Teens Build Your Own Computer Club - With generous support from Intel, in September 2010 we held our first “Build Your Own Computer Class” for teens. Eight teenagers from Jose Arciga, Montebello and Reedville apartments participated and completed the class. Intel provided a grant of \$4000.00 to purchase the hardware components. A group of Intel volunteers, working with Bienestar Board member Larry Snow, designed the program and developed a plan for its implementation.
- PlayWrite – Bienestar partners with PlayWrite to facilitate the bilingual production *Muchas voces. Muchas historias*. PlayWrite Inc engages underserved youth by providing them the confidence and knowledge to

create meaningful, original works of art. It is the goal of PlayWrite to provide the teens a safe environment where they can explore their struggles and emotions and ultimately have their voices heard. During an intense two-week workshop our teens work one-on-one with trained coaches – writers and actors from the Portland area - to create plays in the Community Room of the Sunset Gardens Apartments in Hillsboro. In 2010, eight inspiring, courageous, and deeply thoughtful plays were performed at the Walters Cultural Center in downtown Hillsboro and we look forward to August 30, 2011 for the next performance.

- Art/Mural Projects - Children ages 10-15 participated in an art club at Sunset Garden Apartments learning drawing and painting under the direction of Isaac Alonzo, a Bienestar resident and gifted artist from Mexico. A volunteer from Pacific University, Natasha Michalowsky, led a six-week program for resident children in grades 2 - 6 in Forest Grove. Title Artist Lynn Adamo directed children at Sunset Gardens in the creation of a mural for the Community Room. Children of Montebello and Sierra West Apartments in Hillsboro helped to create a new mural for the fence along 12th Avenue. Thanks to a grant from the Hillsboro Arts & Culture Council, Bienestar partnered with artist Adamo to design a tile mural that would be compatible with the ceramic art at the 12th Avenue MAX station.
- Holiday Parties – Holiday parties are planned and held for residents of each of our 10 apartment communities, complete with food and gifts for the children of our residents. The staff gathers quality donated toys and items that appeal to babies, children and youth, ensuring that each child receives a gift appropriate to their age and stage.