

MEDIA RELEASE

April 3, 2009

Source: Community Action Partnership of Greater St. Joseph

Rachel McCoy, Director of Development and Communications
(816) 233-8281, ext. 110; (816) 244-2662 (cell)

rmccoy@endpov.com

www.endpov.com

Triumph Foods and Circle of Hope provide funding for Hispanic Parenting Classes; will collaborate with Community Action Partnership to encourage family success

(April 3, 2009 – St. Joseph, Mo.) What do parenting skills and family networking opportunities have to do with school and life success? Everything – as demonstrated in a new partnership between Triumph Foods, Circle of HOPE and Community Action Partnership of Greater St. Joseph.

A gift from Triumph Foods and Circle of Hope in March 2009 will help Community Action Partnership host “Los Niños Bien Educados,” a nationally-ranked and accredited parenting resource program for Latino families. In 2007, St. Joseph, Mo., was listed as having the fastest-growing population of Hispanic families in the nation, according to U.S. Census Bureau data.

Based on local community needs evaluations, Community Action Partnership of Greater St. Joseph has been pursuing resources and curriculum that build confidence and family strength among its growing Latino population. With its central office located in St. Joseph, Mo., the agency was established in 1965 to fight poverty and is part of a national network of Community Action Agencies.

Triumph Foods is a producer-owned pork processing company headquartered in St. Joseph, Mo. The company opened its state-of-the-art facility in 2006 to produce fresh pork products for the domestic and export markets. Triumph Foods employs 2,700 at the St. Joseph location, 40% of which are Hispanic. The company strives to provide training and personal growth opportunities to its employees, beyond the workplace.

Circle of HOPE is a collaborative community effort, dedicated to creating a system of care that integrates physical health, behavioral health and education services. Services are designed to create and promote emotional wellness, especially among children. One of Circle of HOPE’s tools is a cultural component, eager to provide preventive and positive outreach to the growing Hispanic population in this community.

“Teaching the Los Niños Bien Educados curriculum is a natural fit for our long-term goal of creating economic stability for families, and we’re proud to have natural partners in Triumph Foods and Circle of Hope,” says Dave Leyland, executive director, Community Action Partnership. “The program honors the Latino culture and provides real-world skills that complement existing family strengths. It fills a need in our Latino community.”

The “Los Niños Bien Educados” program enhances the impact of Community Action Partnership’s work to help foster school and family success among the Hispanic community. Several local Hispanic families are already enrolled in Head Start - one of Community Action Partnership’s core programs for fighting poverty. Head Start is a whole-family based early child development program designed to foster school success for low-income children and their families. Laura Bakken, the agency’s Hispanic interpreter for Head Start, is currently certified to teach the “Los Niños Bien Educados” curriculum. As the program develops, members of the child development, family services and education community will be invited to attend an on-site training to help disseminate the skills and knowledge across the region and the state.

Hispanic parenting

The contribution from Triumph Foods and Circle of HOPE will help Community Action Partnership purchase:

- Certified curriculum for 24-30 families to attend the “Los Niños Bien Educados” 12-week course series, developed by experts in the 1970s to honor and strengthen the Latino family culture;
- Instructional DVDs for community-wide presentations on understanding and honoring the Latino culture
- Supplies for an opening community celebration and a graduation ceremony to conclude the course
- Establish a mentoring component for course graduates to work with other families
- Opportunity to offer an on-site workshop introducing bilingual members of the community to the process and strategies of the curriculum.

Outcomes for Los Niños Bien Educados include Increase parental confidence, reduced parental stress, improved parent-child relations and improved academic performance for children in school. A special emphasis is placed on integrating fathers into the family decision-making process and building peer networks among dads.

“Circle of HOPE and the partnering community agencies are excited to collaborate with Community Action Partnership in providing “Los Niños Bien Educados” training because we recognize positive parenting skills will support the emotional wellness of our community’s children,” says Niki Butner, Cultural and Linguistic Competency Coordinator with Circle of HOPE.

The initial 12-week “Los Niños Bien Educados” program is being planned for late summer 2009. For more information, contact Laura Bakken, Hispanic interpreter for Head Start, Community Action Partnership of Greater St. Joseph, at (816) 387-1065. “Los Niños Bien Educados” is produced by the Center for the Improvement of Child Care. Visit www.ciccparenting.org/ for more information about the curriculum.

Community Action Partnership has provided programs to move families out of poverty since 1965, serving nearly 16,000 people in poverty in Northwest Missouri. Head Start is one of the agency’s core initiatives, and the whole-family based child development program is currently serving 500 low-income children in the Northwest Missouri area. Additional services provided by Community Action Partnership to low-income families include utilities assistance, affordable housing, financial literacy and home ownership classes, life skills and job skills training.

For more information about Circle of HOPE, contact Niki Butner at (816) 236-5241 or by email at nikibutner@circleofhopesoc.org

For more information about Triumph Foods, contact Patt Lilly at (816) 396-2886.