

Initiative Update

Volume 2, Issue 1

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RUSH (Rural & Urban Self-Help)

Did you know...

1. In 2006 **only 53%** of all children starting kindergarten in Walker County, Alabama could name 8 alphabet letters in less than one minute.

2. The average child beginning kindergarten in Birmingham, Alabama, who qualified for free or reduced lunch tested almost **two years behind** middle class children.



Our program makes a difference! See page 2 for details

First Teachers@home, a program of RUSH, partners with a wide range of churches, non-profits and schools to host weekly classes at their locations. Partner organizations help recruit and enroll families—a critical challenge. This gives families uncomfortable with home visits another portal for entering the program.

- 2 models: weekly home visits or weekly classes
- in Jefferson and Walker Counties
- 28 week innovative curriculum improves parents' own literacy
- Paid and volunteer Parent Coaches work weekly with parents

Current partners include:
The Salvation Army, Jesus Is Lord Church, Lovelady Center, Boys & Girls Clubs, Jefferson County Head Start, Sayre Com-

munity Center, Catholic Diocese and Jasper City Schools.

RUSH is also partnering with the City of Birmingham Schools to work with parents of failing kindergarten and first graders, to help boost kids' academic performance.

Expanded Volunteer Opportunities

You can become a Parent Coach, or start a program in your neighborhood or with your congregation, club, or organization. Simply the most rewarding couple of hours a week you will ever spend. Contact Susan Swartz to get started: Phone 205-521-6313 or email susan@rushinitiative.org



Breaking News

***First Teachers@home** is now available in Spanish.

*In an effort to reduce program operating expenses, we have moved our office to a less expensive location, and begun using volunteers in addition to paid staff to help expand our services.

*Mark your calendars for a very special reception at the home of Bill Ratliff, Jr. on Thursday, February 11, 2010, 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Proceeds to benefit First Teachers@home.

*Get social with RUSH and First Teachers@home. Find us on:

facebook

Become a Fan
Join our Cause



<http://www.twitter.com/rushinitiative>

Donations

C First Teachers@home has phenomenal outcomes, and virtually every dollar raised goes directly to providing services. Especially now, when every dollar matters, your gift can make a substantive contribution to breaking the cycle of poverty.

L I/we will provide:

P • scholarship @ \$1,450 per family # of families _____ \$TOTAL _____

& • books, curriculum & supplies @ \$162 per family # of families _____ \$TOTAL _____

M • Payment enclosed for \$ _____

A • Or, donate by credit card at www.rushinitiative.org / click the DONATE NOW button

L

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First Teachers@home is a remarkably effective, innovative, family-centered education program that transforms families. Last year 84% of four-year olds learned the skills necessary to start kindergarten, ensuring that they will succeed in school. 53% of our three-year olds knew enough to pass kindergarten readiness tests.

- Teaches impoverished parents how to teach their kids reading, math and science skills, positive ways to discipline, as well as behavior modification to offset family problems
- Changes the lives of everyone in the home —parents learn to talk with their kids, not just plopping them in front of the tv—a critical part of improving how their kids do in school!
- Parents learn to value education and productive ways to re-enforce this with their children
- It's the families—not the schools! Parents need support to help them understand that the first and most important teacher a child has is a parent, and the first and most important school kids attend is called HOME!

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Breaking the cycle of poverty

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