

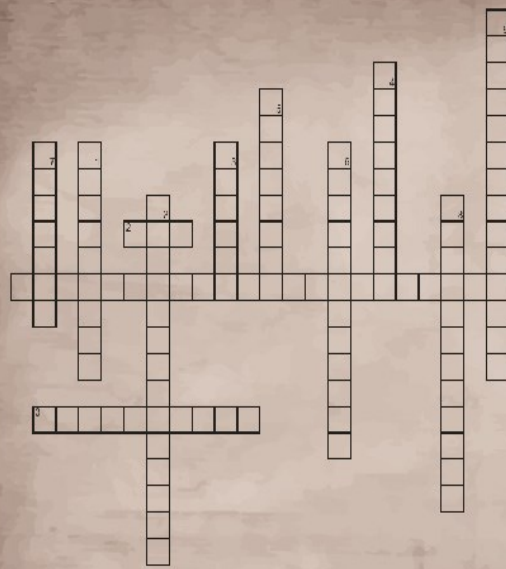


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- Across:
1. DIG
 2. Dental Days at _____
 3. Two _____ Approach

- Down:
1. _____ Start
 2. Annual Children's Dental Program
 3. Early Childhood development/parenting education program
 4. _____ Income Tax Assistance
 5. _____ housing program
 6. CAP Sonoma's Family Resource Center
 7. Weekly parent-child playgroups
 8. 16-week Spanish language parent training program
 9. Annual Health and Wellness Event

Across: 1. Youth Leadership Program 2. WIC 3. Generation Down: 1. Head Start 2. Give Kids a Smile 3. Avance 4. Volunteer 5. Pathways 6. Via Esperanza 7. Pasitos 8. Padres Unidos 9. Once Upon a Smile

A HEAD START FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY GENERATIONS IN THE MAKING

THE LEMUS LEGACY

We had the great fortune to sit down with Esther Lemus, the powerhouse matriarch of the Lemus family and her five extraordinary daughters: Sylvia (Community Activist and HR Professional), Rachel (Assistant Superintendent of Mark West Union School District), Elizabeth (Registered Nurse), Letty (Department of Child Support Services) and 'Little' Esther, as they call her, a District Attorney who is now Windsor's very first Latina City Council Member. All of these women graduated from Head Start and Community Action Partnership holds a special place in their heart.



Sylvia, Rachel, Esther, 'Little' Esther, Letty and Elizabeth Lemus, Santa Rosa, California, 2019.

The year is 1964. Lyndon B. Johnson is President. The Beatles hold the top five positions on the Billboard Top 40, we are deep into the Vietnam War, and the average cost of a new home is around \$13,000.

Twenty three percent of all children in the US are living in poverty and political forces demand change. August 20, 1964, President Johnson signs the Economic Opportunity Act in the White House Rose Garden.

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Helping People-Change Lives. That is the work that we at Community Action Partnership strive to do every day.

We envision a Sonoma County in which a legacy of economic security and educational success passes from one generation to the next. Beautiful things bloom when we nourish people's potential. The Lemus Family is a good example of how Community Action Partnership provided two generations of a family with opportunities to blossom.

As we move into 2020, we will be directing our focus towards supporting the Whole Family. When the well-being of an entire family is met, their full potential is realized. At Community Action Partnership, we work together with local organizations to offer well-rounded services that support the legacy of our clients' potentials. Through this investment, we make a positive impact in neighborhoods across the County.

We invite you to join us in our efforts to help people and change lives by investing with us to support our work towards a vibrant and resilient Sonoma County.

Dr. Susan Cooper
Executive Director



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ADDRESS



A Head Start For The Whole Family

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We discussed their experience with the Head Start early childhood education program and the impact that it had on their lives. All six of these women are remarkable, as they are each, in their own right, working every day to help change the world. They are a shining example of what can happen when a determined mother gets an opportunity for her whole family to get a head start.



Esther moved to Sonoma County from Fresno in 1969, two years after CAP Sonoma was established. At a clinic, a nurse told her about Head Start. Esther, though she was unfamiliar with the new program, called, and a community worker came to their house and registered her oldest daughter, Sylvia. Esther expressed how the program had focused not just on the children, but the parents too. "It was not only good for her (Sylvia) as a child, but it was good for me as a parent because Head Start is a grass-roots parent program. Not having graduated high school, you know, they had tutors to come and help me and the other parents study for their GED. So for me, it was something that just made a big difference as a person, as a parent. Head Start is one of the best programs nationwide."

Esther, the daughter of migrant workers, traveled all over California as a child and went to twenty five different elementary schools in one year. "Back then, I always wanted to do something, but it wasn't encouraged for a woman to go to school and get an education-that was for a boy. I wanted more. So when I had my daughters, I wanted them to succeed," and succeed they did. As her 5 daughters attended the program, Esther applied the skills from Head Start to grow her own career and eventually went on to work as a Head Start Teacher for fifteen years. "I started to volunteer and then I started as a teacher's aide. Then (Head Start staff) encouraged me get my Child Development units at the JC. And once I got my required childhood development units, there was a position for a teacher so I applied...and I got that position. Eventually I became the head teacher of that center."



Her daughters remember the impact that Head Start made on them as family. Rachel remarked, "I think it was really pivotal for our family... I remember a change in [my mom]. A change that wasn't just impactful on her life, but we noticed the change as children." Sylvia added, "It really was family development because we all grew together." Homework time became a family affair. The girls would spread their books out all over

the table to study alongside Mom. "Little Esther" remembered, "When I was doing my schooling, even college, even law school...I would always remember this vision of my mom with her books spread out, doing her work. And so that would kind of keep me going."



Letty Lemus (far right) at her Head Start Graduation in 1975.

Rachel, the second to the oldest, is now the Assistant Superintendent of the Mark West District and a licensed educational psychologist with a private practice. She recalls the advice her mother gave her when she started her career in the Los Angeles Unified School District. "I remember talking to my mom after my first experience as a teacher. She said, 'you know, Mija, when you see those kids, remember, they're me.... when you see them, give them what you want your mom to have received-because I didn't have an opportunity. I needed a teacher to care.'"

Esther Lemus and her daughters, joined by her thirteen grandchildren, will continue to improve this world and change people's lives. And it all goes back to that one day, at a health clinic in Sonoma County, where a young mother got a phone number that would lead her girls to the places she always wished for them to go. "We owe so much to Head Start, we really do," said 'Little' Esther. "It really did its work."

Generations in the Making

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This Act establishes the Office of Economic Opportunity to direct and coordinate a variety of educational, employment, and training programs. These concepts are the foundation of President Johnson's "War on Poverty." The plan is to fund local Community Action Programs as the primary vehicle to end the war. Community Action Programs are to be overseen by a board made up of residents in the neighborhood being served. This gives people a voice and allows them a direct say in how their funds are to be spent and establish the top priorities.

In 1967, the Sonoma County Office of People's Office of Equal Opportunity (SCPEO) opens. Throughout the years, several comprehensive changes within the federal government result in the evolution of the PEOs producing what is currently Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County. Around 1,000 Community Action Agencies are operating today across the United States. Community Action Partnership creates opportunities for all people to thrive, helps the whole family flourish, and ensures a more equitable society for future generations.



Esther Lemus teaching a Head Start class in 1984.

Financial Investments

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CAP Sonoma Expenditures for the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year

