**Upshur Human Resources, Inc. Head Start**

**Annual Report**

**2021-2022**

**INTRODUCTION**

Covid-19, temporary closures, and staff shortages continue to plague our agency. Several of our families are still concerned over the effects of Covid-19. Some of the requirements due to Covid has also caused a loss of staff. By mid-year we were back to some normalcy and began to see an increase in enrollment, but not to its fullest potential.

**HISTORY**

The Upshur County Head Start Program began as an eight-week summer program in 1965, and later expanded to a nine-month program administered by the Upshur County Community Action Council, Inc. In 1983, a non-profit organization, Upshur Human Resources, Inc. was formally established. The governing bodies of the organization consist of a board of directors comprised of ten members that is responsible for the legal and fiscal management of the program and a policy council comprised of ten members that serve in an advisory capacity.

Upshur Human Resources, Inc. is a comprehensive early childhood development program that provides preschool services for 193 income eligible children in Upshur County, West Virginia. Upshur County is a rural county located in the central part of West Virginia. Of the 193 children, the majority of eligible four-year old children are served in pre-kindergarten classrooms through a partnership with the Upshur County Board of Education. UHR, Inc. operates a center based full day variation program that operates four days per week, seven hours per day for at least 128 days per year in three centers with four classrooms. The remaining four classrooms operate 146 days per year in four centers with six classrooms. UHR, Inc. employs 58 full-time and part-time staff. All UHR Head Start Centers are licensed by the WV Department of Health and Human Resources to provide childcare services.

**BUDGET**

UHR demonstrates sound fiscal practices. A flawless audit for the 2020-2021 fiscal year was completed. The total funds of $1,831,530 and $21,948 for training and technical assistance was received to operate the program for the year. The ongoing budget from the American Rescue Plan was $230,925 and $58,087 for Covid-19 Rescue Plan. Funds from these two accounts must be spent by March 2023. A copy of the financial report is attached.

**TRAINING**

During the program year, staff training, financial, governance, budget and application, and officer training was provided. Due to continuing concerns of Covid-19 staff was afforded time at the beginning of the year to complete virtual trainings on line to ensure that 15 hours of training was completed. Those training hours were West Virginia STARS approved. The career development plan that is in place defines paths for career progression, career development, outlines on-going training for staff and parents. An annual employee recognition day is held in December to recognize employees years of service, their academic accomplishments, an outstanding achievements. College classes continued to be offered to staff to enhance their degree requirements with support financially from the agency. Current teachers are certified through the state and have their permanent Pre-K certification for both UHR and Local Education Agency (LEA). One teacher assistant for UHR and two teacher assistants from the LEA are in the process of completing their ACDS as the other remaining teacher assistants meet or exceed the requirements.

**ENROLLMENT/ATTENDANCE**

The agency continues to struggle to meet full enrollment due the pandemic. We had an average attendance of 156 children for the year. The agency maintained a waiting list of 2 children. Of the funded enrollment, 90% were income eligible and no more that 10% were over-income families. We also exceeded the requirement for disabilities of having more that 10%.

**CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

The UHR education staff utilizes Creative Curriculum, Sixth Edition throughout the program to prepare children with kindergarten readiness skills. Brigance screenings are completed on children to determine entry level skills. Based on the results of the developmental screenings, children low in two or more areas are referred to the local education agency. The Early Learning Revised Scale (ELRS) is used for children’s individualization. Child Outcomes Reports are generated three times per year that indicates children’s progression or regression. Of the total enrollment, 96 were transitioned into the public school system. To assist children with transition, specific activities were completed prior to the day of transition. Pertinent records for these children were forwarded to receiving schools. Attached is a copy of the FY 2021-2022 Child Outcomes Report for children that attend Upshur Human Resources, Inc.

**SCHOOL READINESS**

Ninety six transitioning packets were prepared for children going to kindergarten to utilize over the summer months to assist with maintaining skills. The remaining sixty children received skills packets to continue learning during the summer month, as well. Teachers completed on-line transitioning reports that are shared with the receiving schools. In order to prepare children for the school system cafeteria style meals was completed from March to May for the classrooms.

**FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

We offer many trainings for our families. We refer identified parents to Parents as Trainers to support at-risk families with needs in their home. Parents are provided training in: life skills, GED preparatory, school readiness, CPR/First Aid, tax preparation, child abuse and neglect, and FIT curriculum for parents. Parents serve on the various standing committees in all aspects of the agency. Qualified parents are given preference for vacant Head Start positions. All our centers are equipped with literacy libraries that have books, videos, parenting magazines, community resources, and computers for parents. There were 63 fathers that attended various events sponsored by Head Start. The Snuggles and Read program continued to provide blankets of the classrooms with a book for each child. The Read-A-Loud program continued to provide readers for every classroom with monthly visits from each reader. UHR continue to have 30 community partnerships. Throughout the year at various functions 763 parents were documented. These activities included trainings, field trips, special events, and end year celebrations.

**MENTAL HEALTH**

A contract is in place for mental health services to provide counseling for all children, staff, and parents of UHR. We unfortunately will be losing our mental health consultant at the end of this year due to retirement and will begin the task of finding a replacement. Six referrals were made for mental health services and three children has Integrated Service Plans. In addition, the mental health consultant provided training to parents and special needs aides.

**DISABILITIES**

A contract was secured with the Upshur County Board of Education for disability services. Six referrals were made for follow-up to needed services. Thirty-four children were provided Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for services through the Local Education Agency (LEA).

**NUTRITION**

The UHR Head Start programs coordinates nutritional services with the LEA. A registered dietician certifies all menus. During FY 2021-2022, 70 referrals were made to the WV Women’s, Infants and Children’s Program (WIC). In order to assist with the reduction of childhood obesity and to promote family awareness, a national initiative, I Am Moving I Am Learning, continues to be utilized by our agency and is used in the classrooms, at staff and parent trainings, and other events in the community.

**HEALTH**

One hundred fifty-nine children had health insurance, 128 were enrolled in Medicaid/EPSDT and/or CHIP, 22 had private insurance, and thirty children had no coverage. One hundred twenty-four children had completed up-to-date physicals. 187 children were up-to-date on their immunizations, 136 completed dental exams, 15 were diagnosed as needing treatment and ten followed up with appointments for treatment.

**FACILITIES/SAFETY/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

All UHR facilities are inspected annually by the State Fire Marshal and other state inspectors. Safety inspections to include pest control, smoke and carbon monoxide are conducted monthly. All facilities are cleaned daily by custodial staff. Playgrounds and equipment are checked on a regular basis by the UHR Nutrition/Facilities/Safety Manager, education staff, and site supervisor. The Emergency Preparedness Plan remains in effect to address natural and man-made emergencies or disasters. The purpose of the plan is to expedite the decision making process after notification of an emergency or accident. On-going training was provided to staff, parents, and volunteers throughout the program year. The Emergency Preparedness Committee meets annually to make improvements to the plan. For further protection of enrolled Head Start children, other safety measures have been put in place. UHR continues to utilize photo identification badges and wrist bands for all transported Head Start children. Children are to be released only to individuals that are listed on emergency forms and on the back of their child’s photo ID badge. In addition, individuals that children are released to are required to verify their identity by photo ID. Security cameras been installed at all centers and at the central office. In addition, signs have been installed to alert individuals that cameras are on premises. The UHR centers completed 4 evacuation drills to better prepare the children and staff for any possible emergencies.

**TRANSPORTATION**

UHR Head Start owns a fleet of nine buses. One hundred fifty-six children were transported by bus. The daily bus routes extend north to Hodgesville, south to the French Creek area, east to Tallmansville and west to Lorentz and the Brushy Fork area. The majority of the children reside in and around the city of Buckhannon. Children that attend collaborative classrooms with the LEA are transported by the LEA. A waiver is in place for transporting these children without an aide. A total of 33,936 miles were traveled to transport children to and from the centers, field trips, special activities and screenings during FY 2021-2022. The total cost to transport children for 2020-2021 was $16,684.54. All buses are equipped with child safety harness systems that meet the height and weight requirements in accordance with the standards set forth by the Office of Head Start. Buses maintain first aid kits, emergency contact cards, hand sanitizer dispensers, and all air filters.

Additional information is contained in the attachments. For your perusal, other information including the annual report is available at [www.headstart-upshur.org](http://www.headstart-upshur.org).

Respectfully submitted,

Brandi C. Workman

Executive/ Head Start Director

*A child’s life is like a piece of paper on which every person leaves a mark -Robert A. Heinlein*

*What will you write?*