

## United Way's Women's Leadership Council, Success By 6, Celebrate 1<sup>st</sup> Nationally Accredited New Orleans Child Care Center Post-Katrina!

### *Mayoral Proclamation Honors Royal Castle's 'High Quality' in the Heart of Hollygrove*

**November 15, 2010**-United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area's Women's Leadership Council (WLC) and Success By 6 (SB6) today celebrated Royal Castle Child Development Center's distinct honor of National Accreditation, an award bestowed upon only superior child care centers that provide extraordinary care to young children.

Present for the celebration were Mrs. Kim Sport, the founder of United Way's Women's Leadership Council, and Mrs. Carol Wise, the first chair of Success By 6 upon inception, who were both instrumental in paving the way for early childhood education. Also in attendance, were Mrs. Phyllis Taylor, Mrs. Barbara Turner Windhorst, and Mrs. Karen Coaxum, along with other members of United Way's Women's Leadership Council.



*Pictured from left to right: (back) Karen Coaxum, Ana Gershanik, Gary Ostroske, Tara Richard (middle) Carol Wise, Phyllis Taylor, Diana Lewis, Patty Riddlebarger, Barbara Turner Windhorst, Joycelyn Jenkins (front) Kim Sport, Pearlie Harris, Todd Battiste*

**United Way's Women's Leadership Council and Success By 6 have been key to Royal Castle's accomplishments.** The mission of SB6 is to support high-quality child care that prepares children for success in school. SB6 focuses on bringing child care facilities in the greater New Orleans area up to NAEYC accreditation, as well as ensuring centers meet the state of Louisiana's Star Quality Rating System-"Quality Start Louisiana". SB6, with support from the WLC, was instrumental in bringing Quality Start into existence.

"Children are our focus and our future. In hard-hit Hollygrove, kids are getting a better start in life," said Phyllis Taylor. **Research of high-quality, early childhood education programs for low-income children confirm lasting positive effects such as greater school success, higher graduation rates, lower juvenile crime, decreased need for special education services later, and lower adolescent pregnancy rates.** The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation system sets professional standards for early childhood education programs across the country and helps families identify high-quality programs for their children that assure equal opportunity regardless of race, class or income.

The WLC, founded in 2002 by a group of corporate, civic and community leaders, supports the unique health and human service needs of women and children in the seven-parish greater New Orleans area. **The WLC has committed over \$500,000 and countless hours to raising the standards for quality child care and rebuilding child care facilities after hurricane Katrina.** Royal Castle's success proves, once again, that an investment in early education will yield the highest return on that investment.

"None of this would be possible without the commitment and support of United Way's Success By 6 partners to the High Quality Child Care project," said Karen Coaxum, SB6 Chair. "Thank you to the Greater New Orleans Rebuild Child Care Collaborative; Drew Brees Dream Foundation; Pearlie Harris, the owner of Royal Castle Child Development Center; parents, students and all community partners involved in high quality child care."

