

The Square Network

Capital Markets Volunteers: Orlando Day Nursery

On November 14th, associates from Capital Markets spent the day serving graham crackers and juice, playing hide-and-seek, and practicing their ABC's. So maybe it wasn't your typical day at the office, but it was a typical day volunteering at the Orlando Day Nursery.

"Orlando Day Nursery has been in downtown Orlando for 86 years. It first started in 1921 when a group of civic minded women saw that families were taking their children to work with them. Many of which were inappropriate for small children. Places like the orange groves or packing houses and not really much has changed. We have the same mission, to serve low income families who have childcare needs that are really cost prohibitive to them," said the Nursery's executive director Patricia Zindler.

These associates came to help out the teachers and interact with the kids; something that researchers suggest can help young children develop language and literacy skills. "Volunteering is very important," said Patricia. "Any volunteer who sits and has a one-on-one conversation with a child is instantly rewarded. They realize that social interaction is really advantageous to a child's success in school later on because they are learning language skills and new words, and how to communicate."

Miss Dorothy, one of the nursery's employees, shared with us what an average day of volunteering might be like. "We may have some classrooms right now where children are getting up from naptime, and usually after nap time they'll eat a snack and then go outside. So most of the volunteers will interact with the kids, they'll help the teachers, they'll just have fun."

Associates were met with smiling, enthusiastic faces at every turn. The children were clearly appreciative of the time these adults had set aside to focus on them. "I think CNL, especially being situated downtown; they realize that Orlando's economy is based on the service industry. We really have no middle class anymore. There are the high end tech jobs and the low end service industry jobs. So the families that come here do a lot to support Orlando's economy, but they don't get much in return for it. We have maids who make beds, taxi cab drivers, restaurant and other entertainment, call center workers, and they're vital to our economy, so supporting that through a company like yours is really marvelous," said Patricia.

It looked like the associates were having a pretty good time themselves, helping distribute refreshments at snack time, getting the kids all riled up on the playground, and even being treated to an enthusiastic rendition of the ABC's from an all toddler chorus.

Volunteering at the Orlando Day Nursery could mean being “it” on the playground, a lap to sit on at story time, or an extra pair of hands for those tricky everyday tasks like tying shoes. Whatever the job required, these CNL associates were up to the task, and found themselves richly rewarded.

At the end of the day Patricia left the volunteers with kind words and an open invitation to return. “I’m very glad that you came today and thank you very much for all you’ve done for the children. These things really stay with them a long time. Thank you and come back!”