



east bay **community action** program
THE BRIDGE to SELF-RELIANCE

EBCAP Foster Grandparent Volunteers Receive Presidential Honors

Story by Dianne Farrar, Head Start Family Engagement/Volunteer Specialist, and Maggie Laurianno, Communications and Development Dept.

The **President's Lifetime Achievement Award**, for completing at least 4,000 hours of volunteer services to those in need, was presented to six of EBCAP's Foster Grandparent program participants. The awards, along with signed letters of recognition from President Trump, were presented to the honorees at the annual volunteer recognition luncheon.

Darlene Smitherman, of Middletown, RI, and Claire Curvelo, Joan Feola, Carmela Hazzard-Viera, Anna Howes and Carol Nelson -all of East Providence, RI - received the presidential honors.

The letter from President Trump recognizes the importance of volunteerism, stating "Your many hours of service have strengthened the bonds of cooperation and trust that bring people together, while helping to address some of the greatest challenges of our time." The letter also acknowledges the volunteers' service, concluding with "Thank you for your enduring commitment to serving your community and our Nation. I trust that you will continue to work for the betterment of others and an even stronger future for the American people."

Smitherman has volunteered at EBCAP as a Foster Grandparent for a total of five years. Her first placement was at Pell Elementary School in Newport where she worked in both the afterschool program (Champion Child Care) and the school lunch program. But most of her time as a volunteer at EBCAP has been with the Head Start program at the John F. Kennedy School/Pell Annex in Middletown.

At Head Start Smitherman works in the classroom alongside teachers, interacting with children. And, when necessary, she will fill in working in the kitchen to make sure the children's lunches are served on time. "I love Head Start and I love the children," said Smitherman.

The other honorees also work with school children; Curvelo, a volunteer since September 2014, serves at EBCAP's Turner Avenue Head Start in East Providence, Feola, a volunteer since April 2009, serves at Waddinton School in East Providence, Hazzard-Viera, a volunteer since November 2014, serves at Orlo School in East Providence, Howes, a volunteer since February 2009, serves at Oldham School in East Providence, and Nelson, a volunteer since September 2012, serves at Whiteknact School in East Providence.

Foster Grandparents make their neighborhoods stronger by assisting children in need at schools, Head Start sites, Boys & Girls Clubs, libraries and other non-profit organizations. Volunteers must be 55 years or older and meet certain income eligibility requirements. For information on volunteering through the Foster Grandparents Program please call 401-435-7876.

Next page: photo of letter from President Trump



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Congratulations on receiving the President's Lifetime Achievement Award.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, I thank you for your lifetime of service to your fellow Americans and those most in need. Through at least 4,000 hours of service, you have ensured the continuation of America's unparalleled commitment to improving the lives of others.

You have served as a model of the American spirit. Your many hours of service have strengthened the bonds of cooperation and trust that bring people together, while helping to address some of the greatest challenges of our time.

One of our Nation's greatest strengths remains the compassion of our everyday citizens, who give so willingly of themselves and their lives for the benefit of others. Each generation of hardworking and kindhearted volunteers helps to write a new chapter of American greatness and our Nation is proud for your commitment to this honorable tradition.

As we reflect on your many acts of kindness and charity throughout your life, our Nation draws inspiration from those who answer the call to help their communities and our Nation. With your continued efforts to build on our Nation's culture of service, America will proudly remain a land of freedom and opportunity for all.

Thank you for your enduring commitment to serving your community and our Nation. I trust that you will continue to work for the betterment of others and an even stronger future for the American people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Barack Obama", is written at the bottom of the letter.

