

## Family Events

The Wilson Community Center believes that when families are engaged in positive participation with their child's education and school, children are more likely to do better in school and are less likely to engage in substance abuse and other problem behaviors. Several recreational events involving the entire family are held each year at Wilson.

Wilson School District Governing Board members, administrative, classified, certified and other staff help organize, implement, and participate in many of these events.



### Neighborhood Clean Up:

In 1993, Rebecca Flanagan then Deputy Manager of the Arizona Department of Housing and Urban Development served as "Principal for a Day" at Wilson Elementary. She recognized the extremely deteriorated and hopeless conditions of the neighborhood in which the children lived. In order to better understand the needs and organize to solve problems in this area, the Wilson Coalition was formed. Committees were established to focus on specific issues such as Business/School Connections, Safety & Security, Renovation, Youth Activities, Family Wellness, Neighborhood Cleanup and Educational Outreach.

For the past few years, the Wilson Community Center has spearheaded the neighborhood cleanup. This event normally takes place in late September. Since its inception, organizations and agencies such as Arizona Army and Air National Guard, Phoenix College M.E.Ch.A., Laidlaw, Arizona Public Service, City of Phoenix, Bank of America, Corona Del Sol High School, Grace Community Church, FedEx, Auto Zone, Phoenix Clean & Beautiful, Councilman Michael Johnson's office, Food City, Fry's Food Store, Target, Sam's Club, Costco, Arizona State University wrestling team, Gateway Early College High School, Marcella Busto and State Farm Insurance, First Student, and others have helped with the organization, donations, implementation, participation and, after-event cleanup.

On the average, there are approximately 450 volunteers consisting of Wilson school students, parents, teachers, staff and volunteers from various agencies in attendance. The District is divided by streets. Teams are organized by classroom. Each team has 1-2 team leaders (usually a teacher and an agency volunteer). The City of Phoenix Police Department provides security for this event. They drive (or ride bikes) through the different areas to ensure the safety of our students and volunteers.

We collaborate with Councilman Michael Johnson's office and the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Services to obtain clean up materials such as gloves, garbage bags, rakes, shovels, dumpsters, etc. Lunch is provided free to everyone in attendance, compliments of donations received from various agencies, food and/or department stores.

Donations of bottled water are sought. Volunteers drive to the various areas and distribute water to the cleanup volunteers. In years past, the Army National Guard has brought their trucks and/or "Hummers" and distributed water. However, due to unfortunate circumstances, they have not been able to participate in the last few years. Their dedication to their country and community is truly appreciated!

Entertainment is provided by our own music students under the direction of the music teacher or by a local radio station. Media is invited to observe and take photos of this worthwhile event.

The cleanup is a wonderful event for all. The Wilson School District is cleaned. It provides Wilson School students an opportunity to take pride in the cleaning of their own backyard. It offers volunteers the opportunity to "discover" our wonderful school district and students. It offers families an opportunity to spend the day working together, taking pride in their neighborhood. And, it provides us the opportunity to collaborate with other agencies.

Everyone works as a team to organize, manage, and implement this great event.

#### Fall Festival:

Our annual Fall Festival is normally held on the last Friday of October. The Wilson Community Center organizes this district-wide event, procures donations and collaborates with clubs and organizations to hold the festival. The festival includes food, games and activity booths from the many different clubs and organizations within the District. A disc jockey provides music for dancing and listening pleasure. Many parents donate food and help at the different food and game booths. All proceeds go back to the students in the form of field trips, end of year activities, etc. The festival provides a safe place for our students and their families to enjoy an evening of fun, music and food.

## Health Fair

The first annual Wilson Health Fair was held in May of 2007. Health agencies were invited and 31 health agencies participated and provided information, materials and/or screenings regarding medical, dental, vision, nutrition, prevention, and overall well-being that would help our population.

In May 2008, our second annual Health Fair was held in collaboration with the Hands On Greater Phoenix Festival. Numerous agencies have participated in our subsequent Health Fairs. Blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, dental, bone density, and vision screenings are performed. Other agencies provide information regarding insurance and, preventative health. Children identification and fingerprinting is provided by the National Latino Police Officers Association. The Health Fairs are attended by approximately 1,000 parents and students.

Volunteers are recruited to help organize, monitor and troubleshoot the Health Fair activities. The Wilson Health Fair brings much needed medical and dental awareness to our community.

Hands On Greater Phoenix (formerly Make A Difference) Festival:

The Make A Difference Festival was instituted in this District in approximately 1993/1994. The festival is held on the same day as the Hands On's Serve-A-Thon which is a day of volunteerism. This day normally occurs in March or April and lasts for approximately three (3) hours. Hands On coordinates and manages this event in collaboration with the Community Center. The Center facilitates the location, equipment, recruitment of school and/or private booth sponsors and participants.

The festival includes arts and crafts, games, and other activities for the students. These activities are provided at no charge to everyone attending the festival. School clubs are invited to perform and/or sponsor a food booth. Sponsoring a food booth provides school clubs the opportunity to raise funds for end-of-year activities. Private and/or governmental agencies are also invited to sponsor a booth and are encouraged to distribute materials of interest to this community such as health and welfare, security, employment, job readiness, etc. A disc jockey provides music entertainment.

Approximately 300 to 500 students and parents attend this wonderful event. The City of Phoenix Police Department provides security. Hands On does a great job in managing this project and in recruiting volunteers from large corporations such as FedEx, Ikon Office Solutions, Basha's, and others. Volunteers from Cesar Chavez High School's JROTC and M.E.C.H.A. have assisted in this event.

This festival provides our students, parents and neighborhood residents the opportunity to come out on a spring morning and enjoy a fun day of activities and entertainment in a safe environment.