

**THE EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF PASCO AND HERNANDO COUNTIES, INC. RECOGNIZED AS FINALIST FOR TAMPA BAY BUSINESS JOURNAL'S "2011 ULTIMATE MANAGEMENT TEAM AWARDS"**

*The award acknowledges the best and brightest executive management teams from around the seven-county Tampa Bay region over a variety of industry sectors, businesses and organizations.*

The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. is competing against top organizations and companies within the seven-county Tampa Bay region in the hopes of winning the title of having the **Ultimate Management Team**.

The award, sponsored by The Tampa Bay Business Journal, recognizes area firms and their management staff that have accomplished unusual and extraordinary business achievements. Finalists were chosen by an independent panel of judges, who consider the Coalition's application and the history of its growth.

The Coalition has grown exponentially since 2008, a year when its Board of Directors and staff were divided and the office doors were ready to close due to disarray.

Since the hire of James J. Farrelly as Executive Director in 2008, the Management Team—consisting of: **Betsy Kier, Assistant Executive Director; Kim Borrego, Program Manager; Pattie Eacobacci, Office Manager; and Jake Jakubauskas, Administrative Assistant**—has accomplished objectives that not only created a flourishing organization, but also improved the quality of Early Learning in Pasco and Hernando Counties.

In the short time of three (3) years, the Coalition reduced its administrative cost to an extraordinarily LOW 3.74 percent while an incredibly HIGH portion of its budget (81.4%) is spent on direct childcare services for children.

Both statistics are well beyond what is required by the state of Florida, which is that the Coalition spend no more than 5 percent of its budget on administrative costs, and 75 percent on direct services to children.

The Coalition moved from a single Eligibility Resource and Referral office in Spring Hill with seven (7) employees to a vibrant, popular community organization of 41 staff and four (4) offices throughout both counties.

"The office expansion is one of our proudest accomplishments," said Borrego. "We're able to serve over 9,000 children and their families in locations that are convenient to them, with well-trained and compassionate staff."

The addition of two (2) Mobile Outreach Vans increased community awareness and involvement. The Coalition Outreach Specialists purchase and lend Early Learning toys to its over 300 childcare providers

by traveling to their facility. They also attend as many community events as possible that offer engaging activities for children and families.

These achievements are a direct reflection of the dedication of the Coalition Management Team, who promote an enjoyable, family-oriented work environment for staff, and inspire them to provide the best services possible

“Regardless of the final outcome, I am very proud of our Management Team and our accomplishments, and proud of our Coalition’s overall achievements, since only 2008,” said Farrelly. “We’ll continue to serve children the best way we know, laying the foundation for strong communities for years to come.”