

# CHANNELING IDEALISM INTO BETTER LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

For several years, Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center has captured the youthful idealism in the national AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) program and used it to improve the lives and raise the opportunities of children and young adults in the Marvell and Elaine communities.

This year, BGACDC has five AmeriCorps VISTA members, who work intensely with other BGACDC programs "to provide social, educational, recreational, health and housing opportunities for low to moderate income residents of the Marvell-Elaine School District."

Two of the VISTA workers concentrate on tutoring and other activities that support the schools' academic programs. Another two coordinate work experiences and career-related activities that help retain students in grades nine through twelve. Another member plans and coordinates housing and financial literacy counseling and workshops.

"We are always amazed at what these idealistic young men and women are able to accomplish creating pathways to good careers for youngsters and helping to reduce poverty in our community," said Louis Bennett, Youth and Family Programs Coordinator. "And while they are at it, they learn valuable leadership skills and a higher appreciation for citizenship and service."



**BGA VISTA members: Bottom, l-r: Laketia Farr, Vera Harrison  
Top, l-r: Jesselia Maples, Diamacious Sims, Laverne Sims**



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