

## By Robert Hamilton

Some 250 fifth graders from West Homestead Elementary and Coconut Palm K-8 Academy will connect what they learn in school to the workplace — and life — working with community volunteers this year through the Kids and the Power of Work (KAPOW) program. Untitled Document

KAPOW is a network of business/elementary school partnerships that connects students to the world of work through professionally designed lessons taught by business volunteers in the classroom, and through visits by elementary school students to the work site.

This year more than 300 volunteers will teach KAPOW's lessons or host presentations for participating students at their worksites through KAPOW partnerships, working directly with 260 teachers and 6,000 students in 53 Miami-Dade County schools.

KAPOW's volunteers come from businesses and organizations both large and small, from one- or two-person operations located in small commercial offices, to international corporations.

Volunteers at the two Homestead Schools are: Lesly Diaz and Izella Murry, Homestead Job Corps Center; Luis Badillo from Keller Williams; Stacey Palmer from Something Borrowed Something Blue; Jennie Garret, Keyes Company Realtors; Clara and Ed Powell, who work with the Homestead Chamber of Commerce; (Ms.) Charlie Hudson from RKH Enterprises, and Steve Alexander from Pick's Safe and Lock Corporation.

KAPOW's partner schools use the monthly KAPOW lessons to help fulfill the district's goal, "to develop our students so that they can successfully compete in the global economy," while teaching students the importance of reading, writing, and math skills and how they apply in the workplace, and in life.

In the Cross Curriculum Connections component of the program, teachers integrate KAPOW's lessons into science, social studies, math, reading, writing and the fine arts. This program has given students a new appreciation for the world of work and given its volunteer teachers a new appreciation for the world of the classroom.

For more information about KAPOW, contact John Casbarro at 786-877-0334, send email to <[jcasbarro@dadeschools.net](mailto:jcasbarro@dadeschools.net)> and visit online at <[www.kapow.org](http://www.kapow.org)>.



Community volunteers and elementary school teachers met on Sept. 9, for a KAPOW (Kids and the Power of Work) orientation meeting led by KAPOW district coordinator John Casbarro (pictured far left). Homestead Job Corps Center was the host center for the orientation meeting.