

# Mothers for Clean Air Annual Report

## June 2002 – May 2003

### Summary

Mothers for Clean Air (MfCA) made several significant accomplishments through outstanding collaborations despite the loss of funding for our community organizer position. Having a full time executive director for a complete year was essential to our fundraising and successful collaborations, thanks to a grant from Houston Endowment Inc.

The most exciting news this year is the formation of a new MfCA Spring Branch/Memorial chapter. MfCA maintained communication and built capacity with our four existing chapters and conducted two leadership development workshops with a grant from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. In another chapter project, we contracted with a technical consultant for the Fifth Ward's Many Diversified Interests Superfund site through an EPA Technical Assistance Grant (TAG). In November, EPA invited us to make a presentation about building our Fifth Ward Chapter at their Region VI Listening Session.

MfCA continued its collaboration with the Houston-Galveston Citizen Air Monitoring Project (HGCAMP) and assisted in recruiting and training thirty-one citizens who collected eighty-three samples during a 12-month period. In addition, we explored new and exciting projects with the Theatre Outreach and Education group at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston (UTMB) involving interactive drama and theatrical exercises. Another new collaboration came about when MfCA worked with the Sustainable Energy and Economic Development (SEED) Coalition to produce an Air Monitoring Roundtable Discussion and Fair that brought together regulatory agencies, vendors, academic institutions and the public. Other projects included our fifth annual tour of the Houston Ship Channel on the M.V. Sam Houston and a screening of the film *Blue Vinyl*, an award-winning documentary about the polyvinyl chloride industry.

Adding to our educational materials, MfCA produced two new publications, Managing Asthma and Ozone in the Houston Area and Safer Household Cleaners, a collection of less-toxic recipes. MfCA also published four issues of our newsletter, Clearing the Air, mailed them to 1000 members and stakeholders, and acquired three outlets for distribution. We continued twice weekly e-mail notices of upcoming events and possible actions to 300 of our members. Our executive director gave six presentations on Houston's air quality and increased media exposure through interviews with KUHT, KPFT, and the *Houston Chronicle*.

This year we continued our tradition of community education, setting up nine air quality information booths at local fairs and festivals. In addition to adult-oriented education, we encouraged younger people to learn about air quality by conducting hands-on children's activities at five outdoor festivals and three indoor locations. In conjunction with this goal, we worked with UTMB to develop two new interactive educational activities for elementary school children about air pollution and its health effects. We also presented three special awards at the Science Engineering Fair of Houston and hosted an intern from the University of St. Thomas. Such activities could not have taken place without the help of the 20 volunteers MfCA recruited over the year, including a new graphic designer and a web master.

In working to promote better air quality policy, MfCA presented oral comments in response to the Houston Clean Air Plan (SIP). We also sent written comments on the final Environmental Impact Statement for I-10, supported the Katy Corridor Coalition's alternative plan and made official comment on three bills in the 78<sup>th</sup> Texas legislative session.

Despite current economic conditions, MfCA received nearly \$48,000 in grants and sixty-three individuals contributed \$5100. During the year we prepared proposals and applied for funding to ten foundations and government agencies for operating costs and special projects. In an effort to increase overall leadership within MfCA, we expanded our board to seven members, adding two new members this year. In addition, we held our first annual meeting in June and jointly produced board member orientation sessions with the Galveston Houston Association for Smog Prevention. Board members started work on our long-term strategic and operational plan for 2003 at a retreat in November. Our goals include increasing our leadership and financial base, improving and expanding public outreach and education, and strengthening our participation in collaborations. According to the progress we have made this year, we are well on our way to achieving these long-term goals.