

NEK-CAP News Summer Edition ~ June 2012

Serving Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Jefferson, Leavenworth, Marshall, Nemaha, Pottawatomie and Riley Counties



NEK-CAP's Mission

We are committed to helping people thrive now and ending poverty for future generations.

The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

NEK-CAP, Inc. Announces 2012 Award Recipients

Submitted by Linda Grier, Integrated Services Office Manager

NEK-CAP, Inc. honored the 2012 KACAP (Kansas Association of Community Action Programs) Distinguished Honoree Award nominees during a luncheon on May 11, 2012, in conjunction with National Community Action Month. Prior to the luncheon, the nominees were introduced and the winners announced. The three winners will be recognized at the Awards Ceremony during the opening reception for the 2012 Kansas Conference on Poverty in Wichita on July 25, 2012 at 5:30pm to 7:30; being held at The Hyatt Regency.

The nominees for the 2012 KACAP Caring Service Award were Thor Brown, Hiawatha and Tom Jones, Hiawatha. This award honors an individual who has contributed significant volunteer time and energy to supporting the efforts of a Kansas Community Action Agency. Recipients should exemplify the spirit of community and individual partnerships and should have made a significant contribution of volunteer service to the organization. The award was presented to Tom Jones of Hiawatha, although he was unable to attend the luncheon. Mr. Jones has coordinated the Salvation Army Bell ringing for the agency. For years he has braved the cold weather and elements to ring the bell during the holidays – this money supports families in this community with rent and utility assistance and clothing vouchers.

The 2012 KACAP Personal Responsibility and Achievement Award nominees were Christopher and Felicia Willard, Marysville; Megan Besette, Atchison; James and Dayna Gabrielson, Wamego; Melinda Reyes, Atchison; Beth Linville, Atchison; Louise Lane, Meriden and Juley Kolterman, Onaga. This award recognizes an individual or family who has endeavored to make a better life for them, their families and their community. Recipients should have worked closely with a Community Action Agency, but also demonstrated personal perseverance in overcoming obstacles. The recipient should be out of, or well on their way out of, poverty. Louise Lane of Meriden was awarded The KACAP Personal Responsibility and Achievement Award. Ms. Lane began her journey to self-reliance about six years ago when she moved back to Kansas and enrolled her son in NEK-CAP, Inc. Head Start in Jefferson County. She became involved in Policy Council, and even served as chairperson. She had twins and became enrolled in Early Head Start; her days were long and filled with the joys and challenges of raising four children, keeping a household in tack, studying for exams and attending classes at Washburn University. Ms. Lane has been advocate for NEK-CAP, Inc. with trips to Washington DC advocating for our programs.

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****Comments/Questions: please contact Linda Grier, Integrated Services Office Manager, lgrier@nekcapp.org****

Award ~ continued...

She continues to a mom to four children but on May 12th she will receive her BS in Nursing and is well on the road to being self-reliant.

The 2012 Award for Collaborative Excellence (ACE) nominees were Atchison Dental Clinic, Atchison; Three Rivers Inc, Wamego; Autos 4-U, Horton; and Jingle Bell Committee, Hiawatha. This award is presented to an organization, business or agency that has demonstrated outstanding initiative through community collaborations that have significantly contributed to the success of the Community Action mission to advocate for and improve the lives of low-income people and communities. The ACE Award was presented to the Jingle Bell Committee of Hiawatha, representatives Patti Merchant and Cheri Pavish were present to accept their award. The Brown County Christmas Bureau has received the donations of this group for numerous years. Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the donations come from the hard work of this group and the Brown County Christmas Bureau would not have been possible without them. In the past three years this group has helped 943 adults and 1,324 children have a Merry Christmas.

NEK-CAP, Inc. would like to congratulate and thank all the award nominees and winners for their dedication and commitment to Community Action.



2012 KACAP Personal Responsibility and Achievement Award ~ pictured are (left to right): Rose Sigmund, Head Start Director; Louise Lane, and Jet Sperfslage, Integrated Services Specialist



The 2012 Award for Collaborative Excellence (ACE) ~ pictured are (left to right): Jet Sperfslage, Integrated Services Specialist; and Jingle Bell Committee representatives Patty Merchant and Cheri Pavish.

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Counties Served:

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Introducing Integrated Services

Submitted by Jeanette Sperflage, Integrated Services Specialist

NEK-CAP, Inc. has implemented a new approach to change the way we “providing services” to the customers in our 10-county area. As an agency, NEK-CAP, Inc. is committed to moving people out of poverty and into self-sufficiency or self-reliance. To achieve this goal and better serve our families and communities, we are collaborating internally and have blended funding sources and hiring 20 new Family Development Advocates. NEK-CAP, Inc. would like to welcome everyone into their new position.

So, what is the Family Development Partnership program? Well, it means instead of using the “providing services” approach we have decided to integrate services and develop a “family development” approach. The “providing services” approach might work sometimes; however, most people need more support and encouragement, an increase in skills, and the opportunity to determine what goal they want to work towards; allowing their family to develop or to change. This “family development” approach gives the participant a better chance of successfully changing their lives and moving to self-reliance or self-sufficiency. During this period, NEK-CAP, Inc. Family Development Advocates will support and encourage families by providing employment and financial literacy training, parenting and life skills workshops, and one-on-one and group support.

The Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework (PFCE) is another component of integrated services. NEK-CAP, Inc. plans to continue support of Head Start families as they transition out of the program and into the elementary education arena. Head Start has always had a strong parent involvement component, however, this framework allows for us to support and encourage parents in being advocates for their children and their education. Also, NEK-CAP, Inc. will continue to support the families' development continuing their movement out of poverty.

Another important element of this change relates to community partnerships and the mobilization of resources. NEK-CAP, Inc. has always be an integral part of the communities served by our organization, however, NEK-CAP, Inc. plans to renew some old community partnerships and create new partnerships where appropriate. This renewed interest in the communities will support families and make the community a better place to live for all people. Our organization cannot possibly serve all the families needing help in changing their lives. So NEK-CAP, Inc. is reaching out to solidify the partners in each of our communities and ask for volunteers to support and mentor families. Families do not get into poverty over night and it may take families years to move from poverty and the constant in their development is their community.



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
~ Margaret Mead

Comments/Questions: please contact Linda Grier, IS Office Manager, lgrier@nekcap.org

NEK-CAP Weatherization Dept.

Submitted by Jack Shaefer, Weatherization Director



"Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless."

~Sherry Anderson

Last year's (4/1/11-3/31/12) programs have been closed-out. The Department of Energy (DoE) program provided assistance to fifteen (15) homes. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) funds provided assistance to thirty (30) homes. The ARRA funds provided assistance to eighty (80) homes.

The ARRA funding was awarded in 2009, and was planned to provide assistance for three (3) years. The original ending-date of the program was March 31, 2012- but was extended to September 30, 2012, to give states time to spend-out and close-out the program. Our total production with the ARRA funding will exceed two-hundred twenty (220) homes.

Funding for this year (4/1/12-3/31/13) is very low. DoE funds will assist approximately seven (7) homes and LIEAP funds another twenty-nine (29). Also, regulations that went into effect at the beginning of this year's program resulted in greater restrictions. The income-eligibility guidelines were reduced from 200% of the poverty level, down to 130%- meaning that many applicants on our waiting lists will no longer be eligible. The average-cost-per-home has been reduced from last year's \$6,500.00, down to \$4,500.00. So, fewer measures will be installed on the homes we serve this year. Another big change in this year's rules affects renters. During the three (3) years of ARRA funding, renters received the exact same assistance as home-owners. This year, if a rental home requires a furnace replacement we can only provide a maximum of \$250.00- the owner must pay any costs to repair or replace the furnace that exceeds our \$250.00 maximum.

So, if a rental home has an unsafe furnace and the owner can't, or won't pay the costs over \$250.00, we will not be able to provide any assistance (since we can't work on a home with an unsafe heating system). If a rental home has an inefficient heating source, and the owner won't pay the costs to upgrade it, we can still provide other weatherization measures. Meanwhile, owner-occupied homes will be eligible to have heating sources repaired, replaced or upgraded (up to the amount we can afford to maintain the new, lower, average-cost-per-home).

Statewide, the benefits for recipients of weatherization assistance has been an approximate 25% reduction in energy-usage (and related costs) and a safer, healthier and more comfortable-home. The benefits to the economy and the environment are the decreased energy-demands, the reduction of our carbon footprint and global warming and the increased health of our client population.

As always, we give priority to applicants whose home includes elderly (over 60) and/or disabled persons. Every measure we provide/install on our clients' homes must save at least as much energy as the measure costs—if something won't save at least as much energy as it costs, we are not allowed to do it (so, we do not work on unconditioned areas of the home, we cannot do remodeling/painting/appearance items, etc.).

Donor Acknowledgement

Submitted by Connie Wymer, Donations/Volunteer Tracking Specialist

NEK-CAP, Inc. would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers and donors for their hard work and dedication to our agency. Without you, our agency wouldn't be the same. I would like to share with you those donors and volunteers that staff turned in during the months of April and May that contributed more than 25 hours of volunteerism, or \$50 worth of goods or services. We distribute all Central Office donations within our service area.

Central Office: Sue Felps: 33.25 hours; Hallmark: paper products worth \$10,501.83; Kansas Cavity Free Program: dental supplies worth \$486.

Atchison County: Shirley Fuller: 40 hours; Loretta Downing: 65 hours; Gloria Harris: 84 ½ hours; Hester George, Doris May and Sue Schuler: 98 hours each

Brown County: Anonymous donor gave supplies for the classroom worth \$71.28;

Doniphan County: Norma Jean Holcomb: 52 ½ hours
Jackson County: JoAnn Pfeiffer: 71 ¼ hours; Betty Camblin: 78 ½ hours; Jerry Larrison: supplies worth \$50.00;

Marshall County: Helen Kracht: 66 ¾ hours; Courtney Henry: 16 hours and \$125 in materials

Nemaha County: Nancy Swart: 50 ¼ hours

Pottawatomie County: Jean Estelle: 65 ¼ hours; Pat Ratcliff: 141 ½ hours; Onaga Hospital: books worth \$100.80

We apologize for any donations we failed to recognize in the above listings.