



CAP-LINES

COMMUNITY ACTION'S MISSION SUMMARY

To alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty through the promotion of public policy that helps those in poverty move to greater self-reliance and by providing services and resources that meet basic needs, promote self-reliance and enhance the quality of life for individuals and families.

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.

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Lead Story

People who help people feted at meeting

Staff, board, and partner commitments to Topeka area varied and impactful

THE CHALLENGE OF ENABLING people to help themselves and each other was celebrated at Community Action's annual meeting, held October 9 at the Holiday Inn West Holidome in Topeka.

The meeting included recognition of 15 individuals and two groups committed to moving people in poverty to greater self-reliance.

Sandra Victor won the Personal Achievement Award, given annually to an agency consumer who "demonstrates that Community Action works and sends a positive message to others struggling in poverty."

Victor came to the agency three years ago after leaving New Orleans, La. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

She was unemployed when she arrived in Topeka and accepted whatever jobs came along to supplement FEMA rent money.

She now works for Westar Energy and recently bought a home in Topeka she shares with her adult son and grandchild.

Board Member Joe Hoytal won the Bill McCormick Community Action Person of the Year Award, bestowed annually by the Community Action board "to recognize significant contributions to specific activities or long-term efforts that have helped achieve agency goals."

Hoytal has served on the agency's board since 1999 and

played an important role in establishing the Meriden Heights housing complex in Meriden, Kan.

He also serves as chair of the board's Housing Committee and is a member of its Finance and Executive Committees.

Hoytal is Executive Vice President of Capital City Bank's South Topeka center at 37th and Topeka Blvd.

Lynda Bitner won the Velma Paris Humanitarian Award, given annually to a government official "who has made outstanding contributions in promoting the principles of Community Action."

Bitner has worked in many roles with the Region VII Head Start office and partnered with the State of Kansas on Early Head Start initiatives.

She helped develop and implement the National Head Start Risk Management process, which helps to identify grantee risk.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services also honored Bitner's work in meeting the needs of Hurricane Katrina survivors.

Shawnee Heights Unified School District 450 won the Award for Collaborative Excellence Award, presented annually to "a company or organization that has significantly contributed to the ful-



2008 Community Action award winners: (1st Row, L to R) Sandra Victor, Personal Achievement; Joe Hoytal, Bill McCormick Person of the Year; and Lynda Bitner, Velma Paris Humanitarian Award. (2nd Row) Shawnee Heights USD 450, Award for Collaborative Excellence (L to R: Michelle Peacock, Psychologist; Ann Dunn, Board President; Dr. Martin Stessman, Superintendent; Dr. Kyle Goodwin, Director of Special Education Services). (3rd Row, L to R) Elmer Robinson, Staff Person of the Year; Executive Director Sue Wheatley, 35 years of service; and Housing Program Director Jewel Welch, 15 years of service.

fillment of the agency's mission."

The Shawnee Heights school district provided space for one Head Start classroom in its Tecumseh North Elementary School building.

The district has provided transportation and made

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(L to R) Executive Director Sue Wheatley with Maria Moreno, inaugural winner of the Susan M. Wheatley Commitment to Excellence Award.

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”
— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Head Start

Staff complete professional development opportunities

Pre-service, conferences provide new chances to educate children

EXPERIENCING NEW WAYS TO reach children was the focus of Head Start activities during the past three months.

Pre-service activities included Creative Curriculum training provided by Teaching Strategies. Creative Curriculum is based on the latest research on how children learn best and has been shown



Improving classroom quality and promoting school readiness are the goals of The Creative Curriculum.

through experimental and quasi-experimental studies to improve classroom quality and promote the school readiness of preschool children.

Other pre-service training included Infant/Toddler Language Development and Nutrition, Emergency Procedures and Ruby Payne’s Culture of Poverty.

In August, Executive Director Susan Wheatley and Head Start Director Phyllis Marmon attended the National Community Action Partnership conference, where Marmon was recognized as a Certified Community Action Professional.

Wheatley and Marmon also attended a conference sponsored by Region VII Head Start on federal reauthorization of Head Start and its effects on local programs. Marmon said the agency now will be able to plan changes to meet the new federal requirements.

Marmon also attended the Region VII Directors’ Caucus, where Ann Linehan, from the Office of Head Start, presented information on the reauthorization.

Family Service Specialists attended training on family partnerships and goal setting, and those staff and home visitors attended an Advanced Home Visitation training.

Health staff attended a session on using the new health literacy materials, while Kathy Johnson attended the National Dual Language Institute.

Both Family and Community Partnership Content Area Expert Christen Brown and Health Services Content Area Expert Kim Rhoades have been accepted into the first class of the Management Acceleration Program, which is a two-year program providing training for new Head Start managers. **END**

MEETING, from Pg. 1

renovations to the building to meet fire and licensing regulations at no cost to the agency. The partnership has allowed more children to be touched by Head Start.

Executive Director Susan Wheatley was recognized for her 35 years with the agency, including a new award named for her, the Susan M. Wheatley Commitment to Excellence Award, which recognizes transitioning from agency consumer to employee and length of employment. Assistant Teacher Maria Moreno received the first award.

Project Attention Site Coordinator Elmer Robinson was named 2008 Staff Person of the Year.

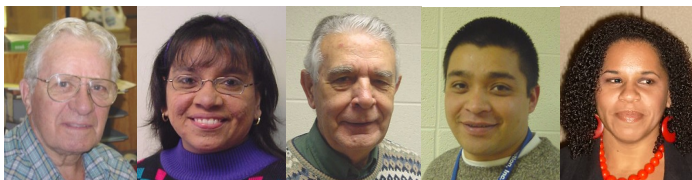
Housing Program Director Jewell Welch (15 years), as well as staff members Charles Bratton (10 years), Herminia Chavez (10 years), Jaime Gonzalez-Vallejo (10 years), and Miguel Ortiz (5 years) were honored for their years of service.

Tammy Miles was recognized as the winner of the agency’s 2008 staff scholarship.

The Administrative Services Team was awarded the 2008 Team Spirit Award.

Departing Board Members Foster Chisholm, Dee Puff and Tom Sirridge were saluted for their years of service.

Board Vice-President Brian Thompson was re-elected, while Dana Singleton was designated secretary-treasurer. Also, new board members Yolanda Taylor and Renee Wiggins were seated. **END**



Other 2008 Community Action honorees: (1st Row, L to R) Chuck Bratton (10 years service), Herminia Chavez (10 years), Jaime Gonzalez-Vallejo (10 years), Miguel Ortiz (5 years); and Tammy Miles, winner of the 2008 staff scholarship. (2nd Row) The Administrative Services Team won the 2008 Team Spirit Award (Front, L to R: Thea Warren, Brigitte Arnold, Tammy Miles, Herminia Chavez, David Lunson, Jonathan Saunders, and Mike Bell). (3rd Row, L to R) Departing Board Members Tom Sirridge, Dee Puff, and Foster Chisholm were recognized for their many years of service to the agency.

← DATABASE-LINES: TIMELINE – SUSAN WHEATLEY’S 35 YEARS AT COMMUNITY ACTION:

1973	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003	2008
Sue hired; Water-gate break-in, cover-up exposed; U.S. & N. Vietnam sign cease fire.	“Saturday Night Fever” soundtrack No. 1 for 24 weeks; “Dallas” debuts on CBS.	Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” goes #1 for 37 weeks; last episode of “MASH” airs on CBS.	George H.W. Bush elected president; Cubs play first home night baseball game.	Bill Clinton sworn in as 42nd president; KC Royal George Brett hits 300th home run.	“Titanic” wins Best Picture Oscar; St. Louis Cardinal Mark McGwire hits 70 home runs.	Arnold Schwarzenegger elected governor of Calif.; Bob Hope, Katherine Hepburn die.	Sue marks 35 years at Community Action!

“People grow through experience if they meet life honestly and courageously. This is how character is built.”
— Eleanor Roosevelt, U.S. Diplomat and Reformer

Community Services

First “First Tee” graduates recognized with ceremony

35 youngsters complete the 12-week program; Safe Kids Shawnee County reminds children to walk safely

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE WERE par for the course at the inaugural First Tee of Shawnee County graduation ceremony, held on Sept. 13 at Lake Shawnee Golf Course.

The graduation culminated the 12-week summer program. Thirty-five



The graduates at the Lake Shawnee Golf Course with Community Action and Shawnee County staff.

youngsters completed the program and nine passed the PAR Level tests. Those tests include demonstrating basic golf skills and written exams covering their understanding and practice of The First Tee’s core values (honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy, and judgment).

The next step for these youngsters will be BIRDIE Level, which includes increased golf proficiency and advanced understanding and leadership around the



Over 80 parents and youngsters attended The First Tee of Shawnee County graduation ceremony, held at Lake Shawnee Golf Course.

nine core values.

Each youngster received a certificate of achievement and a First Tee of Shawnee County t-shirt. Those completing the BIRDIE Level curriculum also received a free First Tee golf bag and bag tag.

Over 80 parents and kids attended the graduation.

Executive Director Susan Wheatley, Community Services Director John Homlish, The First Tee of Shawnee County Coordinator Elmer Robinson, Shawnee County Commissioner Ted Ensley, and Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Director John Knight presided over the graduation.

Safe Kids Urges Children to “Walk This Way”

Safe Kids Shawnee County “talked the talk” and “walked the walk” for children’s pedestrian safety on Oct. 27 at Scott Magnet School in Topeka.

Safe Kids Shawnee County Coordinator Gilberto Chabarría spoke with students about being safe while walking during an assembly at the end of the day.

Scott staff also spoke with the kids about the need to be careful and vigilant as they walk. Topeka City Council Member Sylvia Ortiz echoed their sentiments.

According to Safe Kids USA, “Walk this Way” is a partnership with FedEx and usually occurs annually on International Walk to School Day.

Safe Kids and FedEx have also provided grants to more than 40 communities to work with city leaders, traffic engineers and metropolitan planning organizations to improve safety for child pedestrians at high-risk locations.

In the United States, pedestrian injury is the second leading cause of injury-related death for children ages 5 to 14,



Kids at Topeka's Scott Magnet School for the Safe Kids' "Walk This Way" child pedestrian safety event.

claiming the lives of 669 children in 2001. In 2002, nearly 43,300 children were treated in emergency rooms for pedestrian-related injuries. **END**



(L to R) FedEx's Craig Meats, the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office's Kat Brown, Safe Kids Kansas' Cherie Sage, and Topeka City Council Member Sylvia Ortiz at the "Walk This Way" event at Scott Magnet School.

Community Action Directory

ADMINISTRATION:

Hancock Center
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Topeka, KS 66607-1578
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COMMUNITY SERVICES, HOUSING SERVICES, WEATHERIZATION, CACFP:

Swygart Center
621 SE Swygart
Topeka, KS 66607-2070
Phone: 785-235-9296 (800-792-7056)
Fax: 785-290-3200

HEAD START:

Hudson Center
2410 SE Highland Ave.
Topeka, KS 66607-1765
Phone: 785-266-0245 (800-792-8039)
Fax: 785-266-4967

← **DATABASE-LINES: THE FIRST TEE'S IMPACT ON YOUNG LIVES:** (From The First Tee Website, <http://www.thefirsttee.org>, 2006 data)

- ◆ 78 of 94 (83%) First Tee participants from 2005 were still participating in 2006. The average rate for youth groups is 50%.
- ◆ When 533 First Tee youths were compared with a similar group of 159 youths participating in team and individual sports and other youth organizations, First Tee youths scored higher on a

wide variety of social skills, including meeting and greeting others, managing emotions, resolving conflicts, appreciating diversity, getting help from others, goal setting, positive relationships, confidence, moral conduct, judgment, and perseverance.

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Home and Housing

Meriden Heights opens to fanfare

Town's first affordable housing complex already has two occupants

CONSTRUCTION ON AN AFFORDABLE housing complex neared completion, an old gym is being recycled, and two state programs aimed at repairing and retrofitting homes recently received infusions of cash.

Meriden Heights Ribbon Cutting

Community Action staff; the complex's developer, Manske and Associates; and Meriden, Kans. city officials marked the ceremonial opening of the town's first affordable housing complex on Oct. 24.

Two occupants already live in the

complex, and two more were expected by the end of October. Construction on all of the two-bedroom units should be completed by the end of October, as well.

For more information, call 785-484-2109 or 785-235-9296.

McKinley Apartments Storm Shelter

Renovations to the old gym explosion-proof boiler room into a storm shelter continue. The project should be completed by the end of November.

Emergency Repair and Kansas Accessibility Modification Programs Get New Funds

The new funding cycle for the ERP and KAMP programs started on Nov. 1.

There currently is a waiting list for ERP funds, which primarily repair roofs and furnaces.

KAMP funds primarily go to building ramps and modifying bathrooms for disabled tenants.

END



Community Action staff, developer Manske and Associates, and city officials prepare to cut the ribbon signaling the opening of the Meriden Heights affordable housing complex, located in Meriden, Kans.

COMMUNITY ACTION CALENDAR

Nov., Dec. 2008, Jan. 2009

Meetings

Nov. 5th: Executive Committee
Nov. 11th: Community Committee
Nov. 13th: BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MTG.
Nov. 20th: Head Start Review Comm.
Nov. 25th: Program Committee
Nov. 27th: Housing Committee*
Dec. 3rd: Executive Committee
Dec. 9th: Community Committee
Dec. 18th: Head Start Review Comm.
Dec. 23rd: Program Committee
Dec. 25th: Housing Committee*
Jan. 7th: Executive Committee
Jan. 8th: BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MTG.
Jan. 13th: Community Committee
Jan. 15th: Head Start Review Comm.
Jan. 27th: Program Committee
Jan. 29th: Housing Committee

*To be rescheduled

Events, Holidays

Nov. 27th, 28th: Thanksgiving Holiday (Agency Closed)
Dec. 24th, 25th: Christmas Eve and Christmas Day (Agency Closed)
Jan. 1st: New Years Day (Agency Closed)
Jan. 19th: King Day (Agency Closed)