

CAP-LINES

COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.

Serving Central and Northeast Kansas

Winter 2010

www.cactiontopeka.com



Community Action, Inc.
Executive Director
Susan Wheatley



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.

Lead Story Agency celebrates 40th anniversary

Still dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other

AS THE TEN-YEAR PERIOD LATER CALLED the "Me Decade" began in 1970, the nation was in flux. The most turbulent decade of the 20th century, the 1960s, had ended with social unrest and a controversial war juxtaposed against landmark civil rights' legislation and the first moon landing. After the '60s, no one could be quite sure what awaited the nation in the '70s.

Shawnee County Community Assistance and Action, Inc., later Community Action, Inc. was created in 1970 to wage locally President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty."

Forty years later Community Action, Inc. is still dedicated to Johnson's call to "strik(e) away at the barriers to full participation in our society."

For Community Action, the "Me Decade" was instead the "We Decade."

BEGINNINGS

By 1973, SCCAA had established itself through Head Start, the Oakland Health Unit, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and its Emergency Center. What made the agency's services unique was that they were all locally created and administered. SCCAA also was instrumental in retaining Topeka Transit, the city's bus service. Agency funding for that year was almost \$1 million.

MEETING CHALLENGES

OVER THE DECADES

By 1980, SCCAA had added the East Topeka Senior Center, Family Day Care Homes, Housing Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), HUD Housing Counseling, and a satellite center on alcohol and

drug abuse. The agency also opened the Deer Creek Child Development Center. Funding for 1980 was just over \$1.5 million.

By 1990 Elderly Outreach and Weatherization and Energy Conservation services had been added to the agency's programs. Community Action funding was \$2.3 million.

By 2000 two housing complexes; in Leonardville and Topeka, KS; had become part of agency services. Funding for the year was just over \$5.6 million.

In 2009 Community Action added Meriden Heights to its list of housing complexes that also includes the McKinley Apartments in Clay Center. Head Start, one of the original services offered, had already expanded to include Early Head Start, and last year included two demonstration projects. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act added approximately \$2.6 million in federal funding, which made total agency funding for 2009 nearly \$7.3 million.

THE FUTURE

As Community Action, Inc. continues into the new millennium, the call to "help people help themselves and each other" will continue to be its credo and its vision. **END**

Head Start was one of Community Action's first programs.



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Head Start

Infant-Toddler classroom slots to increase; local grant to fund life skills classes for single women

Two dozen full-day slots to be added; grant to stress financial, housing skills

HEAD START SOON WILL BE ABLE to reach more children with an expanded Infant-Toddler program, while single women in the area will have financial and housing life skills classes available to them.

INFANT-TODDLER EXPANSION

Twenty-four new full-day, full-year, center-based infant and toddler learning opportunities are slated for the agency's Hudson Center campus.

The new funding will allow Head Start to reach about half of the parents currently on the program waiting list.

A local task force assisted Community Action in the development of the funding

application. The agency would like to thank all of those who helped in achieving this goal.

WOMEN'S FUND GRANT

In December 2009 The Topeka Foundation awarded Community Action a grant to provide ten Financial and Housing Life Skills classes during the 2010 - 2011 Head Start program year. Single women will be targeted for the classes.

FEDERAL REVIEW

Head Start is expecting federal monitoring personnel to conduct a one-week review at the Hudson Center in late spring. Program staff are busy organizing documents for review and prepar-



ing staff and governing groups for the questions reviewers will be asking.

For more information, please call 785-266-0245 (800-792-8039). **END**

Our Neighbors

Community turns out to support family in need

Donations of all kinds help family to recover from fire

THE HOLIDAY SEASON WAS TOUGH for one Topeka family, but through the efforts of Community Action and the community at large the new year has been a little bit brighter.

On Dec. 23 a fire destroyed the home of the Holmes' family. A four-year-old child, Davier, died in the fire. Davier was enrolled in Community Action's Head Start program.

Davier's mom, Emily, and his two siblings were made homeless by the fire. Community Action asked the community to help the family.

The community has responded.

Items from furniture, appliances, and other household items to money have been donated thus far, enabling the

Holmes' family to start over with a head start.

Those donations continue to come in and are still encouraged.

Emily Holmes, while recently making breakfast for her family in their new home, said she was thankful to Community Action and the community for the compassion and love both have shown for her family.

She said that while the adjustments her family has had to make since the fire, particularly to the loss of a child, have been difficult, being in a new home so soon has been a blessing.

People in the community have come through when the Holmes' family needed it the most, thereby witness-

ing screenwriter and novelist Budd Schulberg's rhetorical question about the brotherhood of mankind: "Isn't everyone a part of everyone else?"

If you would like to donate, please contact Viccie Ducksworth at 785-266-0245 (800-792-8039) or vducksworth@inlandnet.net. **END**



Queen Latifah

DATABASE-LINES: MILEPOSTS ALONG THE WAY

- ◆ 1970: Kansas City Chiefs defeat Minnesota Vikings 23-7 in Super Bowl IV, Diana Ross leaves The Supremes, The AMC Gremlin, Chevrolet Vega and Ford Pinto all debut (wow!). Actress/recording artist Queen Latifah, tennis legend Andre Agassi, and actress/writer Tina Fey born; Rockers Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin die.
- ◆ 1980: Philadelphia Phillies defeat Kansas City Royals in 6 games in the World Series, Ronald Reagan wins presidency over Jimmy Carter, Federal government bails out Chrysler, CNN launched, Pac-Man released, Tennis ace Venus Williams, Macaulay "Home Alone" Culkin born; Beatles great John Lennon, 1936 Olympic champ Jesse Owens die.

"Few things are impossible to diligence and skill.
Great works are performed not by strength, but perseverance."
— Samuel Johnson, English Author, 1709 – 1784

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Community Services

Free tax prep begins; Safe Kids receives grant; ARRA at work; Vision Clinic, Festival of Trees successes

Tax prep starts Feb. 1, grant to buy car seats, federal funds used in myriad ways

COMMUNITY ACTION, IN COOPERATION with AARP Tax Aide, will offer free tax preparation and counseling services during the tax season.

Starting on Feb. 1, tax counselors are available at the agency's Swygart Center, 621 SE Swygart, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays through the tax season or by appointment. For more information, contact the Swygart Center at 785-235-9296 (800-792-7056).

SAFE KIDS AWARDED GRANT

The Topeka Community Foundation recently awarded Safe Kids Shawnee County \$10,000 to purchase car seats. The initiative also received \$1,000 from Safe Kids Worldwide for pedestrian safety and \$10,000 from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to purchase car seats and other items. For more information, contact Beto Chabarria at 785-235-9296 (800-792-7056) or gchabarria@inlandnet.net.

ARRA AT WORK

Funds Community Action received from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the stimulus package) are at work throughout its service area:

Emergency Assistance: In Shawnee county 37 clients received help with rent and utilities.

Senior Centers: In Shawnee county during the months of Oct. and Nov. 2009 more than 1,850 units of transportation were provided to nearly 100 seniors.

Bus Passes: 68 bus passes were issued in Oct., Nov. and Dec. 2009.

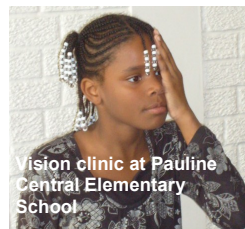
ARRA funds also are at work in partnerships with Housing and Credit Counseling and Kansas Legal Services, as well



CDL graduate
Jody Randol

as providing training for Child Development Associate (CDA) and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) candidates.

For more information, contact Wendy Coonrod at 785-235-9296 (800-792-7056) or wcoonrod@inlandnet.net.



Vision clinic at Pauline
Central Elementary
School

VISION CLINIC

A vision clinic, held at Pauline Central Elementary School last November, tested third graders at the school.

FESTIVAL OF TREES

VISTA volunteers Judy Holliday and Martin Graham decorated a tree at the annual event that was chosen as the Governor's Favorite.



Community Action would like to thank Judy Holliday for her service as a VISTA volunteer. Best wishes to you, Judy!

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Topeka Active 20/30 Club recently gave \$2,500 to the Back-to-School Fair to purchase backpacks.

Community Action is partnering with Safe Streets' "Lock it, Remove It, or Lose It" campaign, designed to remind people to lock up their valuables in their vehicles, by purchasing and posting signs outside local retailers and the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library. **END**

February - April 2010 Safe Kids Buckle Up Events

Feb. 13: 9 a.m. - Noon, Ed Bozarth Chevrolet, 3731 SW Topeka Blvd.

Feb. 27: 9 a.m. - Noon, Bill Kobach Buick, 1980 SW Topeka Blvd.

Mar. 13: 9 a.m. - Noon, Kansas Museum of History, 6425 SW 6th

Mar. 27: 9 a.m. - Noon, Dillons Store #37, 6829 SW 29th St.

Apr. 10: 9 a.m. - Noon, Fire Station #11, 2000 NW Lower Silver Lake Rd.

Apr. 20: 4 - 7 p.m., Babies R Us, 2190 SW Wanamaker Rd.

Apr. 27: 4 - 7 p.m., *Safe Kids' Week*, Dillons Store #67, 2010 SE 29th St.

The First Tee Annual Golf Fundraiser

May 24: Lake Shawnee Golf Course. Anyone interested in serving on the fundraiser advisory committee or volunteering for the event should call Elmer Robinson at 785-235-9296, ext. 126.

Community Action Directory

ADMINISTRATION, EARLY HEAD START

HOME VISITATION:

Hancock Center
1000 SE Hancock
Topeka, KS 66607-1578
Phone: 785-235-9561 (866-235-9561)
Fax: 785-235-9564

COMMUNITY SERVICES, HOUSING AND HOME SERVICES, WEATHERIZATION/WINTERIZATION, CACFP, SAFE KIDS, FIRST TEE:

Swygart Center
621 SE Swygart
Topeka, KS 66607-2070
Phone: 785-235-9296 (800-792-7056)
Housing, Home Svcs.: 785-235-6671
Weatherization/Winterization: 785-232-3499
CACFP: 785-232-3258
Safe Kids, First Tee: 785-235-9296
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: MILEPOSTS ALONG THE WAY

- ◆ 1990: Kansas City Chiefs go 11-5, but lose to the Miami Dolphins in the 1st round of NFL playoffs, Nelson Mandela released from prison, Germany reunified, Americans with Disabilities Act signed. Muppets creator Jim Henson, astronaut and Topekan Ron Evans, actors Barbara Stanwyck & Ava Gardner, business tycoon Malcolm Forbes die.
- ◆ 2000: St. Louis Rams defeat Tennessee Titans 23-16 in Super Bowl XXXIV, George W. Bush wins presidency over Al Gore (eventually) in closest-ever election, "Y2K" fears come and go, Montgomery Ward shuts down after 128 years. Topeka-born Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks; actors Walter Matthau and Sir Alec Guinness, music conductor Leonard Bernstein die.



Capt. Ron
Evans

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
1000 SE Hancock
Topeka, KS 66607-1578
Phone: 785-235-9561 (866-235-9561)
Web: www.cactiontopeka.com

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Home and Housing

Weatherization staff kept busy; ERP, KAMP suspended

Additional federal money has led to many more applications

WITH THE START OF ANOTHER winter season, so start the challenges of keeping everyone warm and mobile.

An early start to the snowy and cold weather season in December kept staff in both the Weatherization and Housing Programs busy, whether it was ensuring that a Weatherization applicant had a working furnace or keeping up with ice and snow removal at one of the agency's housing complexes.

Since October, Weatherization staff have been working especially hard on addressing homes with no sources of heat. Over 40 new furnaces were installed during the past three months. Many of those receiving new furnaces also had other Weatherization work completed and will begin to see energy savings soon.

According to numbers compiled for ARRA reporting, the Weatherization Pro-

gram has about 300 applicants on its waiting list. To help process those applications, the program has been receiving help from volunteer Sandy Jadlot and recently welcomed Kenneth Slaughter as a clerical assistant and Michael Jackson as a maintenance worker through the SER SCSEP (Service, Employment, Redevelopment Senior Community Service Employment Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor) and the Topeka Workforce Center.

ERP, KAMP SUSPENDED

Due to state budgetary shortfalls, the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation has been asked by the state to transfer \$2 million from its programming to the state's general fund.

In order to meet that mandate, KHRC has suspended the Emergency Repair Program and Kansas Accessibility Modification Program.

Any program commitments that are under specific contract through Feb. 4 will be honored.

END

COMMUNITY ACTION CALENDAR

February, March, April 2010

Meetings

Feb. 3: Executive Committee
Feb. 18: Head Start Review Committee
Feb. 26: Program Committee
Feb.: Finance Committee TBA
Mar. 3: Executive Committee
Mar. 9: Community Committee
Mar. 11: BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
Mar. 18: Head Start Review Committee
Mar. 23: Program Review Committee
Mar. 25: Housing Committee
Mar.: Personnel Committee TBA
Apr. 7: Executive Committee
Apr. 13: Community Committee
Apr. 15: Head Start Review Committee
Apr. 27: Program Committee
Apr.: Finance Committee TBA

Holidays

Feb. 5: All-Staff In-Service (Agency Closed)
Feb. 15: Presidents' Day (Agency Closed)
Apr. 2: Good Friday (Agency Closed)