

NEK-CAP News

Spring Edition ~ March 2016

Serving Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Jefferson, Jewell, Leavenworth, Marshall, Mitchell, Nemaha, Osborne, Pottawatomie, Republic, Riley, Smith, and Washington Counties.



From the Executive Director's Desk

Submitted by Jeanette Collier, Executive Director

From NEK-CAP, Inc. we wish you a happy spring!! Staff and I have been busy this legislative session advocating for several positions which impact the lives of low-income Kansans. Topics covered have included juvenile justice reform; reduction or elimination of the highest food sales tax in the country; approval of dental therapists; support for the KEY (Kansas Endowment for Youth) Fund and CIF (Children's Initiative Fund) to remain under the administration of the Children's Cabinet; maintenance of the Kansas Department of Education's finances within the department rather than being moved to the Department of Administration; mental health system reforms; protection of safety net programs (TANF, SNAP and Childcare Subsidies); and transparency of the legislative procedures.

We applaud the Kansas legislature and Governor Brownback for approving juvenile justice reforms, which will provide for community based options with fewer children being incarcerated or sent to out-of-home placements.

Due to the childhood and long term adverse effects on the physical health, socioemotional development and educational achievement of children living in poverty, the American Academy of

Pediatrics has issued new guidance for practitioners who serve this ever increasing population of children. Pediatricians and other health practitioners will be assessing families for financial stability (food security, energy, transportation and housing); linking families to resources; and coordinating care with community partners in a significant effort to address the social determinants of health and contributors to child health disparities.

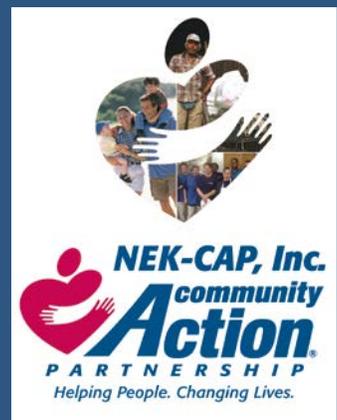
Community Action Programs are in the process of revising national goals and performance measurement systems for both individual/family and communities by focusing on the integration of information of the people served services and strategies provided, and outcomes achieved by developing a system of continuous quality improvement. Community and systemic change are receiving significant emphasis and will require greater levels of community effort and collaboration focused on collectively impacting the conditions of poverty. We will be contacting current and potential stakeholders over the summer months to begin the discourse on community conditions related to poverty and prioritization of local goals, strategies and desired outcomes. For further information, please contact me at jcollier@nekc.org. Stay up to date on current NEK-CAP, Inc. news by visiting us on Facebook and agency website!

NEK-CAP's Mission

We provide comprehensive education and social services to low-income community members through collaborative partnerships focused on promoting family development, empowerment, and economic security.

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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Happy Retirement Phyllis ~ 37 Years!

Submitted by Jeanette Collier, Executive Director

Phyllis Shaefer is retiring from NEK-CAP, Inc., after 37 years of service. Phyllis started her employment with NEK-CAP, Inc. in 1979 as an Alcohol/Drug Abuse Counselor Trainee. Later that same year, she was hired as secretary in the Weatherization Assistance Program. She continued in the Weatherization Program as the Office Manager until 2013, when NEK-CAP, Inc. made the decision to no longer administer the program. At that time, she was offered a position as the Housing Program Manager in the Housing Department where she managed three grants: Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS), Supportive Housing Program (SHP) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). All three of these programs operate on the philosophy of providing rental assistance for participants that are working on goals of self-improvement.

"Working at NEK-CAP, Inc. has been a very rewarding experience and I feel fortunate that I have been able to spend so many years with the agency. There have been so many family success stories and it makes me very proud to have been able to be a small part of giving families a little help to allow those stories to happen.", Phyllis stated.

When Phyllis started employment at NEK-CAP, Inc., she was a single mom with three young children, and met her husband Jack Shaefer while

working here. She now enjoys being a grandmother to seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Phyllis has always had a great love for animals, and has worked diligently with the Brown County Humane Society for the past 6 years. She recently became the Shelter Manager at the newly opened animal shelter here in Hiawatha.

To honor Phyllis' 37 years of service to the agency, the public is invited to join us on March 11, 2016 from 2 to 4 p.m. for fellowship and light refreshments at the Administrative Office located at 1260-220th Street, Hiawatha. NEK-CAP has chosen to honor Phyllis' service by accepting donations to the Brown County Humane Society for those that wish to donate.



Looking back ~



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Serving the counties of:
Atchison, Brown,
Doniphan, Jackson,
Jefferson, Jewell,
Leavenworth, Marshall,
Mitchell, Nemaha,
Osborne, Pottawatomie,
Republic, Riley, Smith
and Washington

services vary per county

Achievements ~ Accomplishments ~ Successes

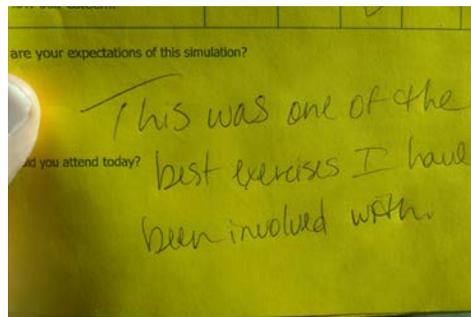
Submitted by NEK-CAP, Inc. staff members

I have a single grandmother who was in the Supportive Housing Program and she has since graduated from that program and has a grandchild in Head Start and she has been able to buy her first new car. So happy to see the progress that she has made. *Submitted by Soni Moranz, Family Development Advocate, Atchison County*

I work with a family that has an 18 month old child. The family enrolled (in Early Head Start) when the child was 12 months old. Mom was concerned the little guy was not saying words, although not a big concern at 12 months, I assured her we would monitor his progress. At 18 months, I performed our health and developmental screenings. The screenings showed him to be a little delayed in the language domain. I encouraged her to discuss her concerns with her doctor at his 18 month KanBe Healthy. Mom did, but the doctor was taking a "wait and see" attitude. I brainstormed with mom, suggested an ENT consult. She called, had an appointment and the doctor confirmed her concerns were warranted. The ENT wanted to have a developmental screening sent to him. At that time, with her permission, I called Tiny-K. They set up an evaluation and the little guy qualified for speech services and his services begin this week. Mom has been so grateful; she said she would have never known where to go to get help. She knew something was wrong, but didn't know how to get help for her son. Mom is beyond excited for services to begin and she will be able to understand what her son is trying to tell her. Not only does this parent have peace of mind, this child will be able to begin to communicate, but with early intervention his speech delay maybe overcome by the time he starts school, and even if it isn't completely accomplished, the services will follow him into school to make a seamless transition for them all. *Submitted by Rhonda Mitchell, Child and Family Development Advocate, Jefferson County*

I recently facilitated a Poverty Simulation for Circles of the Heartland was held in Salina. We had 72 participants in

attendance ranging from college students, landlords, community members, and educators. The Circles volunteers did an amazing job prepping and planning for this event and it was huge success. At one point, the jail was overrun with "minor children" who had been left home alone, not fed for a week, or were kicked out of school. While there, they learned what it is like to live in jail and what life looks like after you are released. Many of the students had no idea of the financial burden that would be placed of families after incarceration. Towards the end of the simulation all but three families had been evicted and were living in the homeless shelter. Participants were surprised to learn that many families were turned away for lack of space. At the end we had the Simulation debrief. A conversation that lasted two and half hours with many questions and lots of comments. This event was well attended and we look forward to working with them again in the future. *Submitted by Brandi Wesley, Child and Family Development Advocate, Pottawatomie County*



NEK-CAP, Inc. would like to congratulate Jackson County Head Start alumni, Stormi Goudie for being chosen as a state finalist in the National American Miss Kansas Pageant. Stormi will be participating in the four to six age division along with other young ladies from across the state. In addition to the official crown and title, the winner of the Kansas pageant receives \$1,000 cash, a bouquet of roses and a trip to California to compete in the national pageant. We would like to wish Stormi the best of luck as she travels to Wichita in July. *Submitted by Kori Anderson, Family Development Advocate, Jackson County*

What your child learns before age 5 is the key to success!

Enroll your child now in NEK-CAP Head Start!!

Applications always accepted!



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

Get to Know Our Staff

Submitted by Robert Grissom and Libby Helms

Robert Grissom – Hello, I am the Chief Fiscal Officer (CFO). My primary duties include: protecting the assets of NEK-CAP, Inc.; advising the Multi-county Board of Directors and the Executive Director on fiscal policy; overseeing fiscal operations; budgeting; training; grant reporting; approving purchases; negotiating leases and contracts; keeping track of the agencies assets; and many other duties as needed. Prior to assuming my current role in October of 2015, I was a fiscal consultant with my friend and mentor, Greg Bride, for about 2 years. I have worked in the CAP and Head Start world since 2009. Some people ask me why I want to work for a rural non-profit agency like NEK-CAP, Inc. One, I believe that you have to give back in life some of what you have been given. Two, I like the people at NEK-CAP, Inc. and I want it to be successful. Three, I like cows and the country. Don't get me wrong, city life has its ups and benefits; but, you get tired of some aspects of city life and wish for a simpler way. Besides, I really like cows (they make me happy for some reason) and my wife likes goats and chickens.

I grew up in a variety of places. I was born in Dayton, Ohio and lived there most of my first 12 years of life. I have lived in: Kansas City, Kansas; Fort Worth, TX; and St. Joe, MO. We settled down in Kansas City, Kansas and I lived there from the age of 12. I took great pride in knowing that I was related to one of the original "Right Stuff" astronauts, Gus Grissom. I read and watched everything about him. In December 1991, I received my Bachelors of Science in Accounting and Business Administration from KU. KU is where I met the love of my life, Amelia, and we were married by her dad in Atchison, KS on August 10, 1991. I worked as an intern for Shawnee Mission School District in 1992, primarily working with their auditors. In November 1992, I joined the U.S Army. I served 2 years overseas in Wurzburg, Germany and 2 years at Fort Hood, TX. I worked in the Finance and Accounting military occupation specialties. I really enjoyed my military time. After leaving the Military in 1996, I worked as a Sr. Accountant for a manufacturing company for over 9 years. In July 2007, I received my MBA from Ottawa University. I worked as a Sr. Accountant at a bank subsidiary. In 2009, I worked as a Sr. Accountant/Budget Analyst for Economic Opportunity Foundation, Inc. a

CAP and Head Start for my mentor Greg Bride and that brings us full circle.

As I mentioned earlier, I have been married to the love of my life and my best friend, Amelia, for almost 25 years. Amelia is a Teacher at F.L. Schlagle High School in Kansas City, KS. She has a BA in Journalism, a BSG in English, and a Master's in Education. Amelia actual grew up in the Northwest spending time in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. We live at our home in Kansas City, KS; but, I maintain an apartment in Hiawatha for me during the work week. We have two children. Cathleen is the oldest and is in her second year at Emporia State University. She is studying to be an Elementary Teacher grades K-6 and is currently tutoring 5th graders. Ethan, my youngest is a sophomore at Sumner Academy in Kansas City, KS and he wants to be a physiatrist. The other member of our household is our dog, Kyla, who has daddy wrapped around her paw she would like you to know. I love watching old movies especially war movies, John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Richard Burton, Humphry Bogart, etc.... My favorite book is "Red Storm Rising" by Tom Clancy. It is my comfort book. I like all kinds of books especially Tom Clancy, Clive Cussler, Agatha Christie, Sr. Arthur Conan Doyle, etc. I love looking at clouds and other things and picking out a pattern. I love looking at art; but, I am not such a good artist myself.

Libby Helms ~ Greetings, I'm Libby Helms, Head Start Transportation Coordinator. I train Head Start school bus drivers and arrange the maintenance and inspection of our agency fleet. NEK-CAP currently runs 16 school buses safely transporting Head Start students to and from their classrooms every school day.

In addition, the agency has a fleet of 46 cars, minivans and pick-up trucks for NEK-CAP Head Start, Early Head Start and Administrative staff use.

I've worked with NEK-CAP Head Start since December, 2000 and I have thoroughly enjoyed working with such an exceptionally talented group of people. I live in Jefferson County with my husband, our really big dog and one very cantankerous cat.



Robert Grissom



Libby Helms

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