

# NEK-CAP News

Fall Edition ~ September 2012

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



## *Strengthening Values and Economic Security in America*

*Submitted by Jeanette Collier, Executive Director*

The National Community Action Partnership Annual Convention, *Strengthening Values and Economic Security in America*, was held in New York City August 19-22. Board of Directors Member, Rita Reiff; Head Start Director, Rose Sigmund; Integrated Services Specialist/Mental Health Consultant, Jet Sperflage; Integrated Office Manager, Linda Grier; and I attended the four day training.

The Region VII Caucus (Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska Community Action Programs) kicked off pre-conference activities with presentations from each state association on activities associated with advocacy, technical updates, best practices and innovative programs.

The opening session began with the traditional Community Action Promise; welcoming remarks by NCAP Board Chair, John Edwards, and CEO, Don Mathis; presentation of colors; the national anthem; and invocations from Jewish, Muslim and Christian leaders. Mayor Bloomberg and other governmental dignitaries delivered heartfelt messages from the City and State of New York. The session was filled with informative updates and fervent speeches by David Bradley, National Community Action Foundation Lobbyist; Gene Nichol, Director of the Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity University of North Carolina; Mark Shriver, Vice President and Managing Director U.S. Programs for Save the Children and the son of the late Sargent Shriver; and George Sheldon, Acting Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families Department of Health and Human Services.

Staff participated in numerous workshops presented on the following topics over the course of the convention: Asset Development; Community Economic Development/Job Creation; Emerging Leaders; Energy & Weatherization; Governance; Head Start/Education; Housing & Homeless Prevention; Leadership; Management & Organizational Development; Public Relations/Social Media; Risk Management; and CSBG/National Partner Collaborations.

2012-2014 NCAP Board of Directors were installed and the Certified Community Action Professionals Class of 2012 were recognized at the annual Awards Gala. Outstanding Community Action Programs and individuals were awarded for innovation, achievement of the Pathways to Excellence honor, corporate partnership, volunteerism and personal achievement. Charles Braithwait, who founded West Central Missouri Community Action Program and devoted almost fifty years of service to the Community Action movement and advocacy for the low-income community, reminded the crowd of the passion and vision that is required to serve as the voice of the poor.

The closing session ended on a somber discussion of pending global mega-trends including, resource depletion, climate change and economic turmoil reflected in the NCAP special report, *Facing the New Reality Preparing Poor America For Harder Times Ahead*. The synergistic effects of these factors will grow the ranks of those living in poverty and will require individual and community commitment to an ever changing environment. The time is here to rethink and reshape the course of the next fifty years of the Community Action movement!

## 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.



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# Positive Reflections ~ Kansas Conference on Poverty

*Submitted by Family Development Advocates*

Many of the new Family Development Advocates attended the Kansas Conference on Poverty in Wichita, July 25-27, 2012. What an amazing learning experience! This year's theme, HOPE (Helping Overcome Poverty's Existence), presented by Kansas Association of Community Action Programs (KACAP) was said by many to be the best conference yet.

The staff that attended felt they had been impacted on many levels and would like to share some of their experiences with you...

We had several trainings and hands on participation. I was particularly amazed at the bean game where we had so many beans to use to pay our bills, no matter how hard I tried I did not have enough beans to get by, our families we work with everyday live this way month after month, I was really frustrated after only 10 minutes of play.

The homeless program in Wichita was interesting in how they did there program, it seems to be working and people are becoming productive. I did a session on how we talk to one another and how they perceive what we said, it was very interesting in that if you were happy and positive the feedback was great, if you were sad and looked disheveled it was a whole different story. The families we work with go through this everyday of their life.

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The Poverty Simulation allowed us to experience the same struggles as those we work with and was a very insightful tool that we can use in our day to day work! Also, we attended workshops about everything from attitude and personalities in the workplace to the future of the Medicaid system. I gained so much by attending the conference. First, I learned many new things about the cycle of poverty and the systems that struggling families must work through; and also refreshed my mind on topics I was already familiar with. Secondly, I feel like the bonds between the new FDAs were strengthened. Being new to this position, and all together learning how things work, that trust and familiarity with fellow co-workers is critical. In addition, I networked with others in the field from across the United States that I now call friends. I have already utilized these resources to learn new things and to bounce ideas off of. Lastly, I was re-energized by the conference. Not only did it remind me why I

love what I do, but it gave me a new zest for my job! A huge thanks you to NEK-CAP for sending us and for allowing us to gather new knowledge and information to use in our day to day lives!

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I was very humbled by the Poverty Conference. It reminded me of all the reasons I became a Social Worker in the first place. The workshops I attended were fantastic, very educational and informative, and I felt empowered to make a difference! Or to try, at least. It was a great experience in several ways, and it was nice getting to know our fellow FDA's and establish a relationship with them so now it's easier to ask questions and such.

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We felt the Poverty Conference was very educational. We learned about a lot of programs that are out there that we weren't aware of. We enjoyed the education and bonding with our Coworkers. Thank You for giving us this opportunity!

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I really enjoyed the Poverty Conference and think that everyone else did as well. The workshops and speakers were great and I think we all left with several valuable ideas and resources. The "Collaborate, Coordinate & Communication" was a great wrap around example from Tennessee where the county extension agency is the hub of their coalition. Even better, the "Bright Futures" from Joplin, MO is an awesome model of what it seems they would like to establish in St Marys/Rossville where the school is the hub of the coalition. Overall it was both fun and informative and I'm very glad we all got to go.

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The Poverty Conference was great I very much enjoyed it. Poverty comes in all colors shapes and sizes. Meaning it only takes a blink of an eye to find yourself in poverty. It can happen to anyone. Sickness, death, loss of a job, many other things can affect your life that can change without notice. It can happen to anyone of us. I also had a class that taught us that we all are different in thinking to ways we handle life. I found out I'm a lam, I always like to talk things out. I like to help and work things out. I got to know all of the great FDA's we have. We have a great group.

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

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### **Counties Served:**

*Atchison, Brown, Doniphan,*

*Jackson, Jefferson,*

*Leavenworth, Marshall,*

*Nemaha, Pottawatomie*

*and Riley*

*"You have not lived until you have done something for someone who can never repay you."*

*~ Author Unknown*



## Success Story

*Submitted by Gayle Hawkins, Family Development Advocate*



*Success means doing the best we  
can with what we have.  
Success is the doing, not the getting;  
in the trying, not the triumph.  
Success is a personal standard,  
reaching for the highest that is in us,  
becoming all that we can be.*

*— Zig Ziglar*

This story is about a young woman living with her grandfather in Seneca, Kansas. She came to me crying and very upset about her living situation. She and her grandfather would argue about rent money and when she arrived home after a day of busing tables at the local diner; she would find herself locked out of the house.

This young woman had learning disabilities, no relationship with her biological mother and was new to the Seneca area. She was riding her bicycle to her minimum wage job that did not even cover her necessities. She was alone and afraid living in this small town. After visiting with her, I found out she had been trained as a nurse's aide but needed some help completing the applications to become certified by the state. I encouraged her to get an application from the nursing home and we got all the

paperwork and application completed and returned to state and nursing home. Time passed and I had not heard from her in 3 or 4 months, but she gave me a call and now she is living in a rent assisted housing unit walking distance from the nursing home where she is employed earning over eight dollars an hour. She was able to get her driver's license and found a vehicle she could afford and has reunited with biological mother. She now returns to me monthly so I can support her in the area of budgeting.

This young woman has increased her self-confidence, better family relations and it has led to self-reliance and making her way in the community.

## Donor Acknowledgement

*Submitted by Connie Wymer, Donations 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 June, July, and August 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: 28 hours; BCDS: 571.75 hours  
**Atchison County:** Stephanie Green: clothing worth \$75; Joyce Duitsman: Playmats worth \$240  
**Brown County:** Immanuel Lutheran: \$100 school supplies and cash donations; Edward Jones, Investment: \$165 school supplies; First United Methodist Church: \$182 school supplies; Ella Stevens: \$315 quilts; Apostolic Christian Church: \$1,082.61 cash donation towards school supplies; Sac & Fox Nation: \$2000. cash donation towards school supplies  
**Jackson County:** JoAnn Pfeiffer: 58.25 hours; Geraldine Amon: 112 hours; Glenda Camblin: 130.5 hours; Betty Camblin: 164 hours;  
**Nemaha County:** St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church: \$201.45 cash donation towards school supplies; Apostolic Christian Church: \$2165.23 cash donation towards school supplies

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

## Calendar of Events

Sept 12-14 ~ Kansas Housing Conference, Manhattan  
Sept 20 ~ Board Committee Meetings, 5:30pm-7:00pm, Hiawatha  
Sept 20 ~ Multi-County Board Meeting, 7:00pm, Hiawatha  
Sept 28 ~ Head Start Policy Council Meeting, Hiawatha

Oct 16-18 ~ Region VII Director's Caucus, Kansas City

Nov 12 ~ Agency Closed - Veteran's Day  
Nov 15 ~ Board Committee Meetings, 5:30pm-7:00pm, Hiawatha  
Nov 15 ~ Multi-County Board Meeting, 7:00pm, Hiawatha  
Nov 19-20 ~ Love & Logic Training  
Nov 22-23 ~ Agency Closed - Thanksgiving



# National Community Action Conference

*Submitted by Rita Reiff, Board Member*

*It's not for money,  
it's not for fame,  
It's not for any  
personal gain,  
It's just for love of  
fellow man,  
It's just to give  
a helping hand.*

*It's your reward in  
your heart,  
It's a feeling that  
you've been a part  
of helping others  
far and near.  
That makes you want to  
**VOLUNTEER**  
Many thanks for all  
your help!*



Hello everyone;

On August 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012; I attended the Community Action Partnership Annual Convention in New York City. What an honor it was, to be asked as a Board Member to represent our wonderful Board of Directors from NEK-CAP, Inc. and the wonderful staff who also attended. They are the best and thank you all. I met so many wonderful people from all over America.

Some of the sessions I attended were: Dynamic Community Engagement for Transformation Change; Community Action works for America; A Dialog with Congress; and Attributes of a High Performing Action Board.

I want to thank the Board and all staff; what wonderful people they are. Be proud of all the staff, they work hard for everyone.

Thank you,  
Rita Reiff



Mark Shriver (son of Sargent Shriver) spoke at the National Community Action Conference



NYC Mayor Bloomberg addressing to our group at The National Community Action Conference

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## It's Going To Be A Great Year!

*Submitted by Rhonda Mitchell, JF County-Oskaloosa Center Director*

News from Jefferson County – Oskaloosa:

We are excited about our new school year. We are fully staffed, fully enrolled and ready to go! As a teaching staff we are excited about the new Creative Curriculum with its Mighty Minutes and Study Fields. This week we start at ground zero to nurture, encourage, play, sing, and read together as we build relationships and watch little people become lifelong learners.

Our staff motto this year is "it's going to be a great year"



*\*\*Comments/Questions: please contact Linda Grier, Integrated Services Office Manager. [lgrier@nekap.org](mailto:lgrier@nekap.org)\*\**