

OACAA *briefing*

News from Ohio's Poverty Fighting Network • August 2011

Dance event doubles fund-raising tempo

Celebrities in Lake County proved they can mash potato and do the twist all while raising big bucks for their local Community Action Agency, Lifeline, Inc. And the community certainly loves them now that they can dance – to the tune of \$30,000.

Dancing Under the Stars was held August 12 at LaVera Party Center in Willoughby Hills, Ohio.



Tonja Schleicher, a local child care provider, won the Judge's Choice Award with her partner, Kenny Kinder, during Lifeline's Third Annual Dancing Under the Stars event.

"That is very nearly double what we brought in for 2010," said Carrie Dotson, Executive Director of Lifeline. "The event is growing and we will have to move to a bigger venue next year."

Ten area community and corporate leaders were tapped as celebrity dancers for the third-annual event. They were either paired with the partner of their choice or a local dance instructor. Each committed to raising at least \$1,500 for the privilege of dancing, Dotson said.

"It's a big event because it's so unique," she said. "The money is all raised by the dancers."

The People's Choice Award is decided by an online vote that involves donating \$1 per vote. This year's People's Choice winner raised \$5,000. Melissa Hurley Ferguson performed a freestyle dance with professional partner Bob Dennis to "Just Your Imagination." Ferguson is an



Tom Szabo, owner of A Thomas Image Photography, and professional partner Terry Salvatore, perform a rumba to "You Can Leave Your Hat On" during Lifeline's Third Annual Dancing under the Stars fund-raiser.

Interior Designer with Functional Design in Willoughby, Ohio.

The Judge's Choice Award went to Tonja Schleicher, owner of Ridge Pointe Child Care in Mentor, Ohio. Schleicher performed a Cha Cha with professional Kenny Kinder to "Mercy."

Dotson said the funds benefit both Lifeline and the Family Planning Association of Northeast Ohio. She awaits a decision on the 2012 federal budget before allocating the funds.

Register now for Communications Conference

There will be something for everyone at this year's Communications Conference sponsored by OACAA and its training arm, the Ohio Community Action Training Organization.

The Communications Conference is scheduled for September 8 and 9 at the Holiday Inn Capitol Square in Columbus. Thursday's agenda will feature workshops on writing, messaging, fund-raising and marketing with Facebook.

Friday will be a morning-only session with Anita Lichtblau from CAPLAW who will answer questions on privacy, lobbying and related communications issues.

"This is a great lineup and a wonderful opportunity to learn from and network with colleagues from around the state," said Sharon Naragon, OACAA Communications Director and coordinator of the conference.

The cost of the Communications Conference is \$145 for members and \$185 for non-members. Visit www.oacaa.org for the full agenda and a registration form.

The room rate at the Holiday Inn is \$89 per night when the group code "OAC" is mentioned. Call 614-221-3281 or register online at www.holidayinn.com/cmh-cityctr.

Parking at the hotel is included in the conference registration fee.

Visit the Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies online at www.oacaa.org.

Dayton COO earns CCAP



Congratulations to Joyce E. Price, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Community Action Partnership of the Greater Dayton Area.

Price has completed the requirements for the national Community Action Partnership's Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) program. She is the first employee of the Dayton agency to earn this prestigious credential.

"The CCAP credential reflects a mastery of many areas of knowledge about Community Action and social service delivery principles," said Tim Donnellan, President and CEO of CAP Dayton. "The time commitment is almost overwhelming and Ms. Price has devoted literally hundreds of hours toward it. We are all well-served by her achievement."

Price is the ninth CCAP in Ohio, according to the national partnership office. OACAA plans to host a CCAP class this fall. If you are interested in joining, contact Phil Cole at 614-224-8500 or phil@oacaa.org

PICCA hosting golf outing to benefit men's shelter

Pickaway County Community Action (PICCA) is hosting a golf outing to raise money for the Men's Homeless Shelter in Pickaway County.

The program houses homeless veterans while transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing.

Residents receive case management services including a comprehensive assessment and action planning with a timeline to help them achieve self-sufficiency. Residents are referred to PICCA for transportation needs and connected to other agencies to provide the best possible outcome for each participant.

The culture at the transitional house provides support for an individual's desire

for sobriety and an alcohol and drug free lifestyle where everyone is involved, accountable, and respected. The transitional house gives the residents a "home like" atmosphere during their transition from homelessness to permanent housing.

The golf outing is set for Friday Sept. 30 at Upper Lansdowne Golf Course, 17565 Winchester Road, Ashville, Ohio 43103.

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. with a shotgun start at 8. Registration for teams of four is \$240 which includes lunch and snacks. Sponsorships are also available and range from \$60 to \$250.

For registration materials, visit www.picca.info or call 740-477-1655.

OACAA seeking new Communications Director

The Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies is looking for a new Communications Director following the resignation of Sharon Naragon.

Naragon, OACAA's first Communications Director, has been with the Association since April 2009 and has been commuting from her home in Dayton to the OACAA office in downtown Columbus. She will become the Community Relations Director for Supports to Encourage Low-income

Families, the Community Action Agency for Butler County.

"It's a credit to Sharon's dedication that she has made the commute for so long," said Executive Director Phil Cole. "We'll miss her in Columbus, but we're very glad she is staying in the network."

Naragon will also be doing some work throughout the network as an Internal Consultant, Cole said. Naragon's last day with OACAA will be August 31. A replacement has not yet been named.

Exemplary Practices sought

The Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies has received funds from the Federal Office of Community Services to identify, assess and document exemplary practices at our member agencies.

Specifically, OACAA wants to identify community economic development programs or initiatives in which Community Action has played a significant role.

"Our motto has been 'Helping People, Changing Lives,'" said OACAA Executive Director Phil Cole. "Through this program, we want to show everyone how much Community Action changes neighborhoods and entire counties."

Through a competitive application process, OACAA selected Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs to conduct this project.

Working with OU, OACAA has defined community economic development programs as projects or initiatives which accomplish one or more of the following:

- Attract capital investment;
- Increase business development opportunities;
- Increase employment or enhance employment opportunities;
- Result in infrastructure development or redevelopment;
- Improve the long-term financial security of individuals through education and asset building.

Certain programs and initiatives have already been suggested as exemplary and the Voinovich School will be contacting those agencies very soon to arrange interviews. Additionally, a self-nomination form will be distributed in early September.

The goal of the interviews is to establish how exemplary practices are structured so that more of them can be replicated across Ohio's Community Action Network.

Questions about the program can be addressed to Josh Summer, OACAA's Development Director, at 614-224-8500 or josh@oacaa.org or to Robin Stewart at the Voinovich School at 740-593-9564 or stewarr7@ohio.edu.

Network gets creative to feed hungry

From Meals on Wheels to feeding Head Start students, Community Action Agencies in Ohio run various food programs throughout the year. And this summer, many agencies are thinking outside the box as they implement unique ways of getting food to people who need it.

Hocking Athens Perry Community Action is running a program in which animals are donated from fair auctions. Nutrition director Dick Stevens says they've had a great response, which works out well because meat is one of the hardest food donations to come by.

"This was more or less a novel way of trying to get high-quality protein into the hands of the families we serve and help our pantries, who are overstretched with the demand."

Some CAAs are participating in the Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry Program, where venison is processed and then donated. And some agencies are operating growing gardens or giving out vouchers that are good at farmers' markets so people can have access to fresh



Sara Valentine, Administrative Assistant for SOURCES, is pictured with some of the plants donated for last year's inaugural Giving Garden.

produce.

Sara Valentine is administrative assistant for SOURCES, the CAA for Mercer and Auglaize Counties, which runs a big giving garden.

She says the produce is a great addition to the non-perishable items they already donate. And she says the garden has been a terrific experience for the agency and the community.

"The greatest thing the garden has done for us is not only to help the people in our community, but it's also brought our community together to help others, and it's a project so many people can be involved in, and so many businesses and organizations."

Jill Lee is the director of the Crawford County Center, which is part of Ohio Heartland Community Action. They're running a summer backpack program that provides food for the weekend for low-income children. This year they've served an average of 60 kids a week.

"One little guy goes home to his apartment and empties his bag and then rushes it right back over to make sure we can fill it for the next weekend. He said he kind of feels like it's an Easter basket every Friday."

According to a recent report from the Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies, 1.7 million Ohioans live in poverty.

This story aired on Public News Service August 1. To hear the audio, visit www.publicnewsservice.org. Special thanks to Mary Kuhlman.

CAP Dayton gears up for 4th Blue Moon Affair

A blue moon is rising once again for the Community Action Partnership of the Greater Dayton Area.

The agency will host its Fourth Annual Blue Moon Affair on Friday, Sept. 30 at the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Center for Performing Arts in downtown Dayton. The gala fund-raiser for the agency's Youth Empowerment Center is scheduled from 6 to 11 p.m.

Proceeds from the Blue Moon Affair benefit the Youth Empowerment Center in Trotwood which provides valuable, life-enriching activities for youths ages 7 to 17.

"We have been fortunate to serve our youths and families for the past six years through programs offered at the center," said CAP Dayton's President and CEO Tim Donnellan. "However, sustaining and growing our programs is especially critical today as resources dwindle and needs continue to arise."

The Youth Empowerment Center provides mentoring, life skills and leadership training, tutoring services and more.

"The Center continues to play an important role in ensuring the well-being of those we serve," Donnellan added. "This is possible through support from the communities we serve."

The Blue Moon Affair features a free cocktail hour, silent auction, dinner, dancing and live entertainment. Messages will also

be heard from families that benefit from the Youth Empowerment Center. Judge Glenda Hatchett, author, personality and parenting expert, will be the guest speaker.

The Blue Moon Affair is a "blue tie" event. Blue attire and accessories are encouraged. Tickets are \$60 per person or \$480 for a table of eight. For more information or to order tickets, contact Brooke Dziak or call 937-341-5000, ext. 153.



The crowd at a previous Blue Moon Affair.

Agencies promote breastfeeding during August

August was National Breastfeeding Month and some Ohio Community Action Agencies took the opportunity to promote the practice through their WIC programs.

Both Mahoning-Youngstown Community Action Partnership (MYCAP) and HHWP Community Action Commission (serving Hancock, Hardin, Wyandot and Putnam counties) operated Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and provide peer helpers for new mothers.

"Breastfeeding takes the infant out

of poverty in the important first months after birth," MYCAP WIC Director Fawn Allison told the Youngstown Vindicator. "It gives the child an equal nutritional and caring start in life to help compensate for other inequalities in the world that they will face."

Allison cited studies that indicate breastfeeding lowers health care costs and infant mortality rates as well as promoting bonding and reducing the likelihood of neglect or abuse.

Peer helpers provide mother-to-mother education and support. They meet with WIC clients before baby is born to help mothers prepare, and they follow up after to answer questions and offer guidance.

"Our participants are keeping both peer helpers and their supervisor busy," said Lucy Valerius of HHWP. "From the number of phone calls, there appears to be a renewed interest in breastfeeding."

For more on either program visit www.hhwp.org or www.my-cap.org.

Mansfield program logs fatherhood success story

Richland County Community Action Agency, a project of the Erie-Huron Counties Community Action Agency, has logged its first success story with the Fatherhood Matters Program.

Joseph Kippenberger started the program while incarcerated in the Community Alternative Center in Mansfield. Once released, he continued to come to the meetings held for the public and based on the 24/7 Dads curriculum.

"I thought they were going to tell me how to be a dad, like what to do, when to do it," Kippenberger said. "I never thought that they would guide me to be a great dad."

Kippenberger is the first to complete the new 12-week program. To date, 51 fathers have been enrolled, according to Richland County Programs Director Jennifer Jennette.

"Alex Norris has so much for fathers out there to guide them and show them – not to tell them what to do," Kippenberger said. "He gives great ideas and ways to be a great dad. It's your choice to take it and use it."

Joseph Kippenberger, right, is the first graduate of the Fatherhood Matters Program, operated in Richland County by Alex Norris of the Erie-Huron Counties Community Action Agency.



Head Start parents praise program

As programs around the state prepare for another year, Head Start parents at WSOS Community Action Commission told Congressman Bob Latta and State Senator Dave Burke how the agency has helped them and their children.

"WSOS really is like a family," Crystal Walker told the *Tiffin Advertiser-Tribune* during Burke's visit. "They take care of you and they help guide you. I was young when I started off and they know a lot and they have really helped me."

Walker said Head Start helped her children be better prepared for school. The meeting with Burke at the Stricker Family Development Center focused on funding and issues at the state level affecting education and human services.

"We're very grateful that through the state budget we were able to preserve the early childhood education programs," said Jacquie Wells, Family Development Director for WSOS. "There is definitely a need in our four counties and I'm sure across the state."

Tim Crosser, father of two, told Latta "don't you forget about us," during the Congressman's visit to the Stricker Center a few days later.



"Head Start is a family," Crosser told the *Fremont News Messenger*. "I hope people like Robert Latta remember that when they meet in their committees and start talking budgets."

Across the state, Community Action Agencies with Head Start Programs are gearing up for a new year.

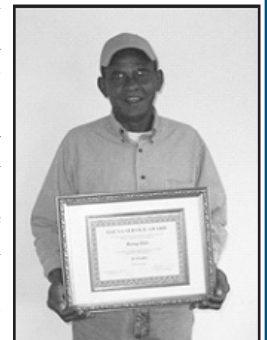
In Cincinnati, the school year starts September 6 and slots are going fast.

The agency offers classroom based Head Start for three to five year olds as well as Early Head Start for children under three and pregnant women. A home-based option is also available for clients of Cincinnati-Hamilton County CAA, which operates the second oldest Head Start program in the nation.

Head Start has been providing low-income children with a great beginning to their educational careers for more than 40 years. The program began as a pilot project in 1964, aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty by providing quality education to preschool children from low-income families.

Tri-County employee retires with 24 years

Henry Artis started working for tri-county CAC in 1987 as a weatherization technician. On July 1, he retired as a team leader.



Artis weatherized hundreds of homes in Champaign, Logan and Shelby counties and enjoyed the sincere appreciation that clients showed. He also trained several crew members and passed down many helpful hints and tools of the trade to several employees.

"CAC and the weatherization staff would personally like to thank Henry for all of his hard work and dedication to the agency," said Executive Director Denise Birt. "He was truly an asset to CAC; his crew will miss his wonderful, hardworking attitude and his smile."