



# Community Action Solutions

September - October 2005

## Community Action mobilizes to aid hurricane victims

Oklahoma's Community Action agencies provided money, supplies and services to aid victims of Hurricane Katrina.

The Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies (OKACAA) and Oklahoma Weatherization and Housing Advisory Council each contributed \$2,500 to the Louisiana Association of Community Action Partnerships Disaster Relief Fund and to the Mississippi Association of Community Action Agencies United Relief Fund. The Oklahoma Head Start Association contributed \$1,000.

"With more than 40 years of experience 'Helping People and Changing Lives,' members of Oklahoma's Community Action network are collaborating with local partners to aid victims of this disaster," Michael Jones, executive director, OKACAA,

said.

Big Five Community Services helped 50 – 60 evacuees with food and referrals to other organizations in the area. While many of those evacuees are currently living with family members, Big Five prepared for those who wanted to live in area housing.

The agency worked with the area utility companies to get deposits waived for those who want to stay in the area. Big Five was also willing to assist them with their first month's rent.

Community Action Development Corporation provided three of its transit buses to take food and supplies to a relief organization in Lawton that was to transport them to the disaster area. The agency also donated \$500 to the Louisiana Association of Community Action Partnerships.

The Community Action Agency of Oklahoma City and Oklahoma/Canadian Counties provided a variety of services to 14 evacuee families.

The services included vouchers for food, clothing, gasoline and other supplies. Also, provided were college books, eye glasses and an identification card.

The agency also donated 3,000 bottles of water to the hurricane victims. Feed the Children transported the water.

Delta Community Action Foundation provided referrals.

Great Plains Improvement Foundation provided money, food, clothes, toys and personal hygiene items to local faith-based groups that had taken in evacuees. The organization's child support enforcement unit joined other state child support offices to assist in

the relief efforts. The agency was designated by the Department of Human Services Child Support office as a drop-off site for donations in the area.

INCA Community Services worked closely with the Ministerial Alliance to help the 19 members of a four-generation family get clothes, medical services and housing.

KI BOIS Community Action Foundation, Stigler, provided free transportation for the elderly and evacuees with handicaps at Camp Gruber on a request basis.

Opportunities, Inc., Watonga, shared information about services and other resources available in its 13-county service area.

United Community Action Program's outreach worker coordinated social service efforts in Perry. When a family came in, they had access to clothes, food, medical services and benefits.

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### Helen James receives Fred Tucker Service Award



Helen James, executive director, Cookson Hills Community Action Foundation, was recognized for a career dedicated to Community Action at

OKACAA's annual awards banquet.

She began her career in 1967 as a clerk-typist in the summer Head Start program. She served in a variety of positions before being named executive director in 1998.

She plans to retire at the end of 2005.

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### Carroll Huggins presented Guy Davis Leadership Award

R. Carroll Huggins, CCAP, executive director, KI BOIS Community Action Foundation, was recognized for his leadership during the OKACAA awards banquet.



He was named executive director in 1978. Under his leadership, KI BOIS has grown into one of the largest agencies in the state with about 900 employees and a \$27 million budget.

# Training offered at OKACAA Annual Conference



*About 180 people registered for OKACAA's Annual Conference held Sept. 21-22 in Oklahoma City. The conference featured training for human resources, nutrition, housing and other Community Action staff members as well as board members .*



*Barbara Oberg, early child development content specialist, Boaz, Allen & Hamilton, describes Head Start social and emotional child outcomes in a session for Head Start disability coordinators.*



*Don Hardin, administrator, Oklahoma Commission on Consumer Credit, describes mortgage scams, small loan scams and internet security issues in a session for Community Action staff members.*



*Helen James, executive director, and Cleon Harrell, board chairman, Cookson Hills Community Action Foundation, discuss ways to foster an effective working relationship between the board and executive director.*



*Jeff Alexander, assistant director, Big Five Community Services' Head Start, was presented a special award by the Oklahoma Head Start Association in recognition of his support of Head Start in testimony before a U.S. Congressional subcommittee.*

*Melissa Wagner, Keith & Associates, highlights the importance of vitamins and minerals in nutrition planning for Community Action nutrition staff.*



# Staff members recognized for years of service at banquet

## Big Five Community Services

### 10 years

Anita Cummins  
Vickie Grant  
Garen Marris  
Dana Turner

### 15 years

Carol Ammons  
Betty Gordon  
Ione Haney  
Marsha Latham  
Alene Lawrence  
Melinda Tuck  
Michelle Ward

### 20 years

Gary Fenn

### 25 years

Jo Roberson  
Dorothy Stofel

### 30 years

Cora Mayes

## Community Action Agency of Oklahoma City and Oklahoma/Canadian Counties

### 10 years

Miles Benefield  
Vera Benson  
Angela M. Blackaby  
Christine Blair  
Patricia Bridges  
Martha H. Brooks  
Claudia Brown  
Ruth Caldwell  
Lourdes Castellanos  
Dee Couch  
Margaret Francis-Rico  
LaVonne Giles  
Toga Huffman  
Gayland Lappie  
Tish Marshall  
Ruby L. Moore  
Cheryl Palmer  
Melissa Richard

Cathleen Shepherd  
Rolanda Smith  
Vicki Splawn

Deborah Telemeco  
Clayton Westcott

### 15 years

Gloria Berry  
Randy Betchan  
Jami Carbary  
JoAnn Davis  
Myra Farrior  
Betty Nelson  
Bonnie Schwartz  
Annette Valliancourt

### 20 years

Patricia Collins  
John Green  
Iva Jean Hinton  
Pastoria Littleton  
Audrea Smith

### 25 years

Rick Cartwright  
James Harris

Patsy Kizzie  
James E. Sconzo  
30 years  
Georgia B. Jamison

## Community Action Development Corporation

### 10 years

Shannon Bink  
Jon Bower  
Barbara Wright

### 15 years

Elma Clift  
Judy Creswell  
Teena McCuiston  
Judy Payne

### 20 years

Carla Britton  
Charlene Hancock  
Judy Smith  
Harriet Turner

## Community Action Resource & Development

### 10 years

Wanda Harley  
Karen Nelson  
Rhonda Thompson

### 15 years

Lori McClellan  
Donna Thompson

### 25 years

Karol May  
Tammy Scullaw

## Community Development Support Association

### 10 years

Kim Bailey  
Eilene Crites  
Linda Record

## Cookson Hills Community Action Foundation

### 10 years

Suphronia Amaro  
Margaret Ary  
Naomi Ashley  
Pearlie Blair  
Lillie Bolin  
Berlie Carrillo  
Carolyn Christie  
Georgia Heustis  
Dee Ann Johnson  
Weetah Lawson  
Sherry Martin  
Maxine Neugin  
Lois Parks  
Ruby Ramsey  
Sennie Seymour  
Marjorie Stewart

### 15 years

Margaret Floyd  
Geraldine Magreevy

Nettie Walkinstick  
20 years  
Evelyn Brown  
Linda Campbell

### 25 years

Debbie Petree  
Ellen Philpott  
30 years  
Beatrice Dougherty  
Ruby Grogan

## Deep Fork Community Action Foundation

### 10 years

Erma Sallie

### 25 years

Jean Spear  
Fran Toliver  
30 years  
Deloris Blair

## Delta Community Action Foundation

### 10 years

Tina Battiest  
25 years  
Janis Pollock

## Great Plains Improvement Foundation

### 10 years

Linda Bradley  
Marilou Shaw Green

### 15 years

Billy Ables  
Carmela Hardy  
Margaret Mitchell

### 20 years

Patricia Sims  
Virginia Spencer  
Vicki Sprugeon

## INCA Community Services

### 10 years

Sandy Bonham  
Kathy Hathaway  
Deborah Hook  
Anna Belle Nanney

### 15 years

Elaine Hogue  
Joyce Lawson  
Teresa Workman

### 25 years

Pauline Tolbert  
30 years  
Sharon Garrison  
Mary Spence

## KI BOIS Community Action Foundation

### 10 years

Dennis Christopher  
Joyce Cockerhan

Theresa Embrey  
Jackie Garland  
Joanna Goad  
Connie Hailey  
Kim Hale  
Barbara Harris  
Sheri Isabell  
Belinda McKenzie  
Alicia Sumpter

### 15 years

Barbara Amos  
Yvette Andrews  
Louise Bennett  
Judith Brown  
Jo Deaver  
Regina Duvall  
Bernetta Goodrich  
Goldie Green  
Beth Jerrell  
Jimmy Smith  
Molly Smith  
Connie Talhelm  
Melissa Ann Wilson

### 20 years

Ginger Bryant  
Kenneth Gabbard  
Natalie Green  
Nellie Petty  
Barbara Satterfield  
Debbie Weiher

### 25 years

Joanna Bunch  
Rosie Carney  
Paul Ann Denny  
Judy Kennedy  
35 years  
Betty Linker  
Audrey Warren

## Little Dixie Community Action Agency

### 10 years

Florine Terry  
15 years  
Stella Dennis  
Dawn McDaniel  
Joy Smith

### 20 years

Arnetta Burris  
Jacqueline McKee  
Kelly Thomas

### 25 years

Owyne Gardner  
Ellen Pickings

## Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency

### 20 years

Michele Davidson  
35 years  
Jane Hatfield

## Opportunities, Inc.

### 10 years

Melisa Crow  
Carla Flynn  
Yvonne Grice

Amy Niehues  
15 years  
Shawna Gaines  
Diana Roscom  
25 years  
Beverly Tomlinson  
30 years  
Loretta Young  
35 years  
Carol Ramer

## Southwest Oklahoma Community Action Group

### 15 years

Rebecca Morey

### 20 years

Donna Bowen

### 25 years

Christina Crawford  
Barbara Loving

## Twin Rivers Head Start

### 10 years

Jana Farrell  
Gloria LuGrand

### 15 years

Jean Johnson  
Judy Worley

### 20 years

Donna Dyer

## United Community Action Program

### 10 years

Judy Oldham  
Carol Southern  
Lori Upshaw

### 15 years

Helen Jordon

### 20 years

Connie Hall

### 25 years

Dianne Cottrell  
Sheron Daniels  
Ronnie Jestes

## Washita Valley Community Action Council

### 10 years

LeAnna Chandler  
LaDonna Redbird  
Oralia Rodriguez

### 15 years

Tina Dolch  
Renee Hill  
Brenda Rodgers

### 20 years

Ada Stewart  
Darlene Taylor  
25 years  
Debbie PoorBuffalo

### 30 years

Judy Martin



*Johnny Bryant, executive director, United Community Action Program (left), talks about the need for affordable housing during the groundbreaking ceremony for Pawnee Townhomes as Dave Ellison, associate executive director, looks on.*



*Participating in the groundbreaking ceremony for the Pawnee Townhomes are, from left, Harold Harris, United Community Action Program board chairman; Tom Grieb, Buland Group; Lewis Bryant, First National Bank of Pawnee; Chris Nervig, Mercy Housing; and David Ellison, United Community Action Program.*

## **New affordable housing coming to Pawnee**

### ***United holds groundbreaking on 20-unit project***

United Community Action Program (UCAP) took the lead in bringing much needed new housing to Pawnee with groundbreaking for the Pawnee Townhomes.

“Two years ago, a meeting of community leaders confirmed what we already knew,” said Johnny Bryant, executive director, UCAP. “Pawnee is short on affordable housing.”

The major obstacle was finding a partner willing to develop a small complex.

“Initially, we could not find a developer,” said Bryant. “But as it is the goal of our agency to work with cities and governments to address their needs using our expertise, we did the research. We identified Mercy Housing, who provided the necessary support, and decided to step up and become the developer ourselves.”

Pawnee Townhomes is the first multi-family business enterprise to come to the community in more than 60 years, according to Mayor Elzie Smith. The city has committed to upgrade streets, water and sewer lines in the area.

The project is located on four acres in the western portion of the city of Pawnee.

Partners for the development include First National Bank of Pawnee, City of Pawnee, Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency, Enterprise Social Investment Corporation and UCAP.

Construction of the complex is scheduled to begin in November, according to David Ellison, housing director, UCAP. The development is expected to be completed at the end of summer 2006.

The project consists of five buildings. Each building will house four units. The townhomes have been designed to include a washer and dryer, dial-up internet wiring, range, hood, refrigerator, dishwasher and cable hook-ups. Other amenities consist of a playground, sports court, covered picnic tables and grills.

# OWHAC moves the C.H.E.E.S.E.

About 150 people registered for the Oklahoma Weatherization and Housing Advisory Council's 13th annual Housing and Energy Conference held Aug. 15-18 in Oklahoma City.

With a theme of "O.W.H.A.C. Moves

the C.H.E.E.S.E. (Comfort, Health, Energy Efficiency, Safety and Education), the conference featured training tracks in housing, weatherization, homebuyer/financial literacy and financial management/administration.



*Eloy Villafranca, community affairs officer, Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., describes FDIC's Money Smart program which is a financial literacy curriculum designed for individuals outside the banking mainstream.*



*Janet Walker presents the Ted Allen/David Walker Scholarship to Latt Jeffrey. The \$1,000 scholarship is named Ted Allen and David Walker who lost their lives in the Murrah Federal Building bombing. OWHAC presents the scholarship annually.*



*Mona Taylor, constituent services director, U.S. Rep. Tom Cole, describes the services available from a congressional district office staff during the opening breakfast session.*



*Greg Smith, Community Development Support Association, and Kathy Griffith, Delta Community Action Foundation, chat between conference sessions.*



*Stacie Pace, Little Dixie Community Action Agency, prepares to make a presentation on "Economic Development & Housing Projects."*

# Little Dixie to get \$4 million Early Reading First grant

Little Dixie Community Action Agency is receiving an Early Reading First grant through the U.S. Department of Education. The \$3,992,263 grant will be for a three-year period.

Little Dixie Executive Director Randall Erwin was elated at the grant announcement. "We're excited about what this means for the pre-school children in our area," said Erwin. "This will help our already successful Head Start program to be a model for rural pre-school programs across the country. We want to thank the community and all of our partners for helping us to make this happen."

The name of Little Dixie's Early

Reading First program is Project ROAR (Rural Oklahoma Advocates Reading). Project ROAR includes an equal balance of professional development, improved classroom environment, and family involvement.

Through Project ROAR, Little Dixie Head Start will turn five of its Head Start sites into model centers of excellence. In order to be eligible for an Early Reading First grant, an applicant's proposed sites had to be located within school districts that are eligible for the Reading First program. The five Head Start locations to be affected by the grant are all located within eligible school districts of Hugo, Boswell, Antlers, Idabel and Oak Hill.

A primary goal of Project ROAR is to integrate literacy into all classroom practices, specifically teacher-directed instruction, child-initiated activities, and the physical environment. Project ROAR will supply each targeted classroom with an abundance of literacy materials each year.

Literacy experts from the University of Oklahoma and other experts in the field will provide research-based professional development in language and literacy skills, assessment, and language and literacy rich classrooms.

Literacy mentors will provide teachers with onsite coaching on a weekly basis. Family literacy advocates will work directly with parents to improve home literacy practices.

In addition, parent literacy resource libraries will be established at each site allowing parents to check out books and other literacy materials to use at home with their children. Summer school programs will be established at the targeted Head Start centers. The program evaluation will be conducted by the Center for Research in Educational Policy at the University of Memphis.

Early Reading First is part of President Bush's "Good Start, Grow Smart" initiative. The program is designed to transform existing early education programs into centers of excellence that provide high-quality, early education to young children, especially those from low-income families. The overall purpose of Early Reading First is to prepare young children to enter kindergarten with the necessary language, cognitive and early reading skills to prevent reading difficulties and ensure school success.

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## Housing, Volunteer & Head Start awards presented

Chris Burnett, housing specialist, United Community Action Program, was presented the Ted Allen Memorial Award in recognition of her efforts to promote affordable housing during OKACAA's annual conference awards banquet.

Bobbie Beasley, volunteer for Little Dixie Community Action Agency's RSVP program, was named Volunteer of the Year.

Head Start awards presented included:

- Head Start Staff Scholarship - Brenda

McCurry, Big Five Community Services.

- Friend of Head Start - Ira Harris, Little Dixie Community Action Agency
- Phyllis J. Jones Scholarship - Chandra Dyer, Twin Rivers Head Start
- Goodie Wickland Parent's Scholarship - Isela Boehm, Southwest Oklahoma Community Action Group
- Margaret M. Cofflin Memorial Award - Donna Dyer, Twin Rivers Head Start
- Allie J. Mitchell Scholarship - Tonya Weston, KI BOIS Community Action Foundation