

The Owens Interlink

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Happy New Year!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

By Diana Owens

The third annual, Diamonds in the Rough River Boat Fund Raiser has been set for September 24, 2009. This is a Thursday evening. You will find continual updates and information as the date approaches on our website (www.theowenscompanies.com).

We encourage you to start telling your colleagues, friends and neighbors about the event. As before there will be raffle drawings, a silent auction, entertainment, food, beverages, and a most enjoyable cruise up and down the river. Individual, couple or table reservations are now available.

We are also seeking sponsors for this event. If you or someone you know would like to assist us in sponsoring the event, please contact either Diana Owens or Gennifer Amato at the corporate office. Sponsorship has tiers and many benefits to go with being a sponsor.

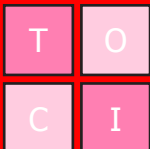
REMEMBER, all funds go to serving the at-risk youth in our community. Without events like this, programming would either have to be halted or at least modified. Our kids need your support! Please mark your calendars and plan on attending this worth while event.



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IN THE NEWS - LINCOLN IN-HOME SAFETY

Edited by Joe Owens

Last month we featured the Omaha In-Home Safety team. This month, we would like to recognize Mary Meyer and her team in Lincoln.

What is unique about Mary and her in-home safety team – is that they were formed before Mary arrived for her first day of work. Mary has not had much time to do anything other than manage and oversee the crisis cases that her outstanding team works with.

On Mary's first day to work, there were two families in crisis and another referral on the way. With the assistance of April and Melissa, the

BOTTOM LINE

Edited by Joe Owens

Bottom line is that as the economy worsens, families are becoming more and more overburdened with the day to day functioning of the family unit which in turns leads to multiple problems where outsiders become involved. This in turns, brings about the need for expansion in the human services area which in turn means we are continually hiring and training.

Every two weeks, we are starting a new training class for those who are dedicated to make a difference in the lives of children and families. In the past six months, there have been over 30 new hires for the Omaha/Lincoln offices.

Our Lincoln office serves the 16 southeast counties of Nebraska while Omaha services Douglas and Sarpy Counties. Will this continue? Perhaps, or at least until those

cases were started but gladly turned over to Mary when she arrived. Under Mary's direction, Holly, Stewart, Ben, Angela, Emily and the newest member of the team, Sonia - keep the children safe and in their homes.

Without this service, children would more than likely have been removed and placed in foster care. We know how devastating that could be for a child. Good Job to the in-home safety team in Lincoln and their fearless leader, Mary Meyer.

Keep up the good work for children and families.



in need find the resources and support they need. We most likely will continue hiring and training for the near future. Sad as it is, when things are bleak for families – it strengthens our business.

The greatest part of the hiring process is to see our long-term employees reaching out and helping the newcomers understand the business. Great job EVERYONE and WELCOME to all our new staff!!

Last year, we had an 86% employee retention rate – this is unheard of in the human services field. I believe that is also attributable to the excellent supervision we have at Owens.

Keep up the good work - please know that your efforts do not go unnoticed no matter your position or job title.



GOOD JOB LINCOLN STAFF

By April Vendetti-Bell

Through the relentless efforts of a few dedicated workers, a child has been successfully returned home. Although the case remains open, the child has returned to the care of his mother with intentions of successful case closure in the very near future.

The case came to Owens due to substance abuse in 07. Services began with visitation only and eventually moved to family support as the mother worked towards maintaining her sobriety by assisting her in establishing routines and implementing disciplinary practices while encouraging and praising her continued

efforts to stay sober.

Through the efforts of the Family Partners, the mother was granted monitored visits moving quickly towards overnight visits and eventually leading to physical custody being granted the mother on Thanksgiving Day of 08.

This would not have occurred without Wanda Studnicka and Tiffany Hick's abilities to implement family centered and strength based practices. Congratulations ladies on a successful reunification for mother and son.



NEW MANAGEMENT TRAINING TO START

It has been sometime since Level I of the management training class ended. Now with the start of a new year, a new series of classes will be held. For Omaha we will start March 5th (Thursdays) and continue thru April 9.

For Lincoln, we will start on Tuesday March 3rd and continue until April 7th. All sessions will start at 3 p.m. and will end by 6:00 p.m. For both classes this will be Level II. Since the training is a grass roots

approach, even if participants did not complete Level I, they will still benefit by enrolling in this series.

Topics covered include Organizational Growth, Conflict Resolution, Discipline, Interviewing Awareness, Pattern for Learning and Effective Team Building. Cost per participant is \$185.00 which include materials. To enroll, just call and leave a message with Margaret or Doreen. They will be happy to enroll you in the session.



UA DEPARTMENT RECEIVES GREAT REVIEWS

Imagine you were a client who had to take a drug test before you could see your child. Now, imagine that someone had to be in the bathroom with you to witness the test. Even with all the uncomfortable circumstances relating to drug/alcohol testing, we are receiving nothing but positive reviews from the clients we serve.

Several of our clients have said the staff is accommodating, timely, courteous and nonjudgmental – which makes

the process much easier to deal with. It is felt that Sarah (team leader for the department) goes out of her way to assist not only the clients but the referral sources as well.

Our staff is a group of professionals with a critical task to perform and they do it in a way that allows not only concrete evidence for the courts but for the families as well. Keep up the good work staff – know that you are greatly appreciated by many.



SEARCHING FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS

Edited by Joe Owens



Even though a recent grant was submitted to Douglas County, for a Day Report-

ing Center for probation youth, Diana met today with three truant officers as well as a Douglas County Juvenile Probation officer to discuss the need to start the Day Reporting Center now versus the end of May when the grant is to be released.

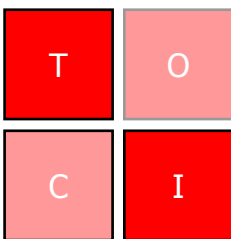
The officers are very concerned that by the time the County funds are available, school will either be out or close to being out, and they will lose the progress that has been made to keep kids in school. They are particularly concerned with the thought of summer coming and no place for kids to be held accountable – all the hard work they started to keep kids in school and out of trouble will be for not.

This in turn can have a definite reflection on youth violence in our community. They are attempting to solicit funds from

individuals, businesses and other agencies to start the program within the next 30 days for a pilot program of 5-6 youth to track their success of the program – which in turn would be a good marketing tool for additional funds. The Officers stated they are not afraid to “help us beg” if that is what is necessary to get the necessary funding.

Our community must remember that these are the future citizens, tax payers, and workers of Omaha. We must also realize that we cannot build enough prisons to incarcerate these young people now or in the future.

Youth need structure, accountability and caring adults to role model for them - which this is the exact purpose of OES’ Reporting Center. Won’t you help us as we undertake this much needed venture. We know that OES has an excellent reputation in the community and our outcomes have always far exceeded the national norms.



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