

The Owens Interlink

Volume 7, Issue 1, March 2011

March Madness!

And it's back

by Diana Owens

It is with great excitement we re-introduce our Monthly Company Newsletter... it has been awhile. Even though the Blog served its purpose, for many it was not an option they participated in on a regular basis.

For new employees, our newsletter is a way to keep you informed about the many happenings throughout our organizations. It is a way to assure that you get the information directly vs. from the "rumor mill". For all that are newer to our company since the last edition – WELCOME. We are glad to have you part of our every growing team – whichever location you reside from.

What has happened since our last newsletter – a lot! First, we hope you have taken the time to visit our updated website. We believe it is more "user friendly" and contains a great deal more information. Thanks to Andy Real, it is an exciting change for both our companies to have the website updated. If you have not taken the time to visit it... go to www.the-owenscompanies.com and check

it out.

You may be surprised at all the many things we do on a daily basis in each of our companies. It will also give you insight if you work for one of the other companies on what they do.

When Boys and Girls Home closed their doors last fall, we were requested by DHHS to fill the void in the Central Service Delivery Area as well as the Northern Service Delivery area. This has been quite an adventure taking on two new territories while maintaining our business needs in the Southeast and Eastern Service Delivery Areas.

But with strong staff, we are up and running at full speed.

We are in the process of finding an office and Reporting Center sight in Grand Island. Our goal is to have that Center open by June – just in time for school to be out. The Grand Island location has 11 employees and is supervised by Michelle Dramse. That site has only been open since last October, but under Michelle's leadership, we cannot seem to keep up with the demand.

Diana L. Owens
President & CEO

The Owens Companies
7415 N. 30 St.,
Omaha, NE 68112
Tel: 402 455 1118
Fax: 402 455 4506

5800 Cornhusker Hwy.,
Lincoln, NE 68507
Tel: 402 464 0784
Fax: 402 464 0786



The Interlink
7415 N. 30 St.,
Omaha, NE 68112
Tel: 402 455 1118
Fax: 402 455 4506
joemowens@gmail.com

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This group covers a territory that includes from Lexington west to Columbus. Lincoln staff has been awesome in helping to meet the demand in that area.

South Sioux City is now under the leadership of Dannon Simmons. She has two full time staff as well as one part-timer. Dannon has just begun to develop the area – but we know that she has the right attitude and desire to make the northern area a success.

Lincoln has also seen multiple changes since we do not directly work with DHHS in that area, but do subcontracting for KVC. We have reduced our office space, and combined our teams where we do not have designated staff to do specific services.

Our Family Partners are all qualified and trained to do all the services as requested from our referral source. Under the leadership of Melissa Batt, April Vendetti and Emily Diehl, our family partners have adjusted to the multiple changes and are doing well. Sadie Jensen oversees our Reporting Center, DST and EM programs in the Lincoln area with a staff of four employees. We have a total of 23 employees now in the Southeast Service Delivery Area and will continue to add staff as the business needs increase.

This group has been remarkable in adjusting – almost on a daily basis – to the ups and downs of

our business there.

Omaha continues to grow. This office subcontracts with KVC and NFC, but directly serves one-third of all the cases directly from DHHS. Under the leadership of Eva Abrams, Kendra Shirkey, Jennifer Owens and Elizabeth Buhrman our Family Service staff remains extremely busy. Kevin Ross and Tiffany Doolittle (each with a staff of 8) oversee the Tracking, and Electronic Monitoring programs. Their staff also assists the Family Services group when they have the opportunity.

AND THEN, there is David Allen who oversees our Day/Evening Reporting Center along with four staff. The Center is at capacity most of the time with 12-14 youth in the day and evening programs. David and I were visiting about needing to find more space for the youth if our numbers continue to maintain.

The Center youth are heavily engaged in various community service projects as well as the educational and independent living components of the program. Daily David takes requests for enrollment openings. Our Centers' success is attributable to the staff and their ability to work with such a diversified group of youth as well as David's leadership.

Our drug department has exploded! This group of 6 is overseen by Anthony (Chip) Erwin. He

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is looking very hard at adding one more full time male and one more full time female for the department. Their dedication to processes and a commitment to the families have assisted in seeing this department more than double from this time last year.

Let us not forget our wonderful support folks. HR has never been more efficient than it is under the direction of Andrea Edie. She is anticipating our first personnel audit the latter part of the month, but has NO concerns about being in compliance. She also assures all new employees complete the necessary paperwork, handles various personnel issues, and does whatever it takes to assure employer/employee harmony in our companies. What did we ever do before she arrived?

Our accounting department now has 3 full time people (Blake, Margaret & Angie) that assure billings are out on time. This group of folks is overseen by Gennifer Amato (one of her MANY functions at Owens). They also assist in other key responsibilities as and where needed. Dorreen is absolutely wonderful on the phone – you hear her cherry voice every time you call in. AND we welcome back Rachael Shipman from maternity leave in Lincoln who attends the front desk with its key responsibilities there.

Of course we have Joe Owens, who does our newsletter, maintains our blog, trains our staff on first aid/cpr and crisis intervention as well as goes after various grants for OES. He assists Andy where he can with technical things relating to the network system.

And yes – Andy Real... what would we do without him and all his fixes to the computers and network system. He recently was instrumental in securing our companies with a new “host” for the web. There is always something that needs his attention in one of our locations.

It is the inspiration of leadership and the commitment and flexibility by staff that has taken Owens to new levels of service delivery which keeps our doors open as we take on new challenges. We do not look behind, but are always forward looking to the future. The past is just that, but the future holds many opportunities that are yet untapped.

No matter what service location you are assigned to... we so appreciate your hard work and commitment to the youth and families we serve.

Welcome to innovation and progress... Welcome to the Owens Companies. ■

One of our own

by Diana Owens

To work in the social services field you have to be compassionate, have a positive attitude, open minded, patient and be able to see the best in people. Throughout our companies, Owens staff embodies and demonstrates all of these characteristics on a daily basis.

However one of our own, John May is in need of our support – emotionally, spiritually and if possible financially. In working with John, it is hard not to be inspired by his positive attitude and outlook on life which has taken him and his family on a journey that no want chooses to travel - cancer.

John has worked with Owens in our Lincoln office through the transitions of the reform and always maintained an upbeat attitude the entire time. This year, in February (2011), John was diagnosed with Lymphoma. John has been going through major treatments since that time. There are immense costs that are associated with any

Save the date

What a time this will be to have an opportunity to meet all the new employees within our expanded territories. On APRIL 9th, our companies will hold their annual company function. It is made possible in part by the Casual Day Participants Fund. This year, like last will be at the Tiburon Golf Club (10302 South 168th Street – Omaha, NE.)

In celebrating another year of amazing success, employees and a guess are cor-

medical issue - not only hospital bills, but also day to day living expenses while you are not able to work.

We have been looking for a way to be able to help out John and his family during this tough time and what seems like a wonderful opportunity has come up...at our annual company function on April 9th, there will be a “gift” basket set up for John if you wish to donate.

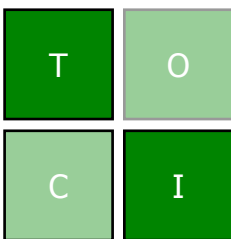
We trust you all know that this is something we would do for any of our valued employees if the circumstances were the same. John is not a “Lincoln” employee – he is an Owens employee and with that, we would like to see you join forces with the Lincoln staff to make this a success! The proceeds will all be donated to John May and his family to use as they see fit.

Let's all come together and help out someone just like us!



dially invited to attend this event. There will be a variety of entertainment and food for the evening. Our Board of Directors is also encouraged to participate and get to know our many new people.

I believe if you asked anyone who attended last year, they will tell you it is an informal, but a genuinely exciting time to get together. We hope to see you there!



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