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Social Worker Receives Champion Award

Sandra Fields, a social worker with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services for seven years, was recognized by Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky as the recipient of the Dr. April Vandeventer Champion for Children award during a ceremony at the Marriott Griffin Gate Resort in Lexington. The award was presented for her work serving youth and families at the 12th annual KIDS ARE WORTH IT! Conference.

Fields conducts investigations, works with numerous foster care cases and serves as an ongoing caseworker for families and children in her county. Along with participating in community events to promote Child Abuse Awareness month, Fields has become very involved in finding community resources for her clients such as housing, heating assistance through grants or getting preventive assistance for needy families.

Dr. April Vandeventer used her position as deputy commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services to shape and strengthen the child protection and foster care systems in Kentucky to better serve the state's most vulnerable children. This award is presented to an individual who embodies Dr. Vandeventer's devotion to children and improving the systems serving their interest. The award was presented to Fields by David Vandeventer.

Public Health Projects Win National Acclaim

A Cabinet for Health and Family Services team is on one of two project teams from Kentucky to win a national award.

Irene Centers, director of the Cabinet's Tobacco Prevention and Cessation program, along with her project team from the Kentucky Public

Health Leadership Institute (KPHLI), won the prestigious Balderson Leadership Award.

The award, given each year by the National Public Health Leadership Development Network, recognizes individuals and teams participating in public health leadership institutes nationwide.

Centers' KPHLI team includes Angela Champion, Jessica DuMaurier and Amy Young. The group's project was to motivate Kentuckians at high risk for developing colon cancer to get recommended screenings. Jennifer Redmond, M.P.H., program director of Kentucky Cancer Consortium, served as the group's mentor.

The teams will travel to San Diego, Calif., to present their project accomplishments and findings during the Balderson Leadership Session scheduled as part of the American Public Health Association (APHA) annual conference at the end of this month.

KPHLI has been recognized seven times - more than any other institute - with runner-up Balderson project awards.

"It is truly an honor that not one but two of our teams are winners of this year's award and will be able to share their work with a national audience," said F. Douglas Scutchfield, M.D., principal investigator on the KPHLI grant, which is funded by the Kentucky Department for Public Health and the CDC.

KPHLI is a year-long development program for practitioners in the field of public health. Scholars who complete the KPHLI experience are awarded a Certificate in Public Health Leadership from the University of Kentucky College of Public Health. KPHLI's mission is to strengthen the public health system in the Commonwealth by improving the skills of the professionals who administer state, regional and local public health systems.

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For more information, visit
www.ukcph.org/kphli.

Communications Staff Honored

Several staff from the Cabinet Communications Office was recognized earlier this month as winners in a state communicators' competition.

The employees were honored as part of the Kentucky Association of Government Communicators' annual Awards of Excellence competition for work that promoted Cabinet activities and programs. Here are the honorees:

Barbara Fox -- Honorable Mention, Special Events

Emily B. Moses – Merit Award, Advertisement
Emily B. Moses -- Honorable Mention, Brochure
Emily B. Moses, Beth Crace Fisher, Barbara Fox -- Honorable Mention, Public Information Campaign

Anya Armes Weber -- Merit Award, Speech and Editorial Writing
2007 State Fair Planning Team – Honorable Mention, Special Events. Weber was coordinator of this group.

In addition, Fox was honored at the National Public Health Communicators' conference in San Antonio, Texas, with a Bronze Award for an ongoing project to create and utilize pictograms for mass disasters.

Congratulations to these staff for their honors.

Pet-Owner Match Contest Raises \$110 for KECC

The Pet-Owner Match Contest drew more than 150 entries and raised \$110 for KECC.

John Nix with OHRM won first prize -- a pet bed filled with many wonderful goodies for both cats and dogs including coupons for a free grooming from Canine Grooming and \$50 toward any

veterinarian service courtesy of Town and Country Veterinary Service, food, treats, toys, collars leashes, picture frames, dishes, brushes, kerchiefs, scratching pads and more---estimated value of over \$200.

Barb McCarter with Corrections won second prize, a Boots and Barkley pet bed. The final prize, a dog bone and catnip, went to Sam Rodgers with Office of Administrative and Technology Services.

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all who played to support KECC.

Living Well: One Brisk Walk a Day

Do you need a reason to get up and move? According to evidence from a study in the Journal of Epidemiology, women can actually cut their breast cancer risk by simply engaging in regular physical activity.

Around 2.4 million women living in the United States have been diagnosed and treated for breast cancer. According to the information collected from the American Cancer Society (ACS), breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosis among U.S. women (excluding cancers of the skin) and is the second leading cause of death in women after lung cancer. These facts alone should urge you to get out of your chair and start moving.

- Women who engaged in regular exercise during their lifetime were 20 percent less likely to develop breast cancer compared to those who did not exercise regularly.
- Women who participated in exercise the most throughout their lifetime were 26 percent less likely to develop breast cancer versus those who exercise the least.
- Consistent, moderate intensity exercise aided in lowering the breast cancer risk

regardless of a woman's weight, family history or menopausal status.

Almost every woman can lower her own breast cancer risk by exercising regularly at a moderate intensity level. The other important thing to remember is that it's never too late to start. The study found that women who exercised more after the age of 50 showed the biggest drop in breast cancer risk. Also, the intensity of the physical activity matters with a moderate intensity recommended. Moderate intensity is equivalent to a brisk walk (where you are moving at a fairly good pace but are still able to carry on a conversation while walking), biking outdoors or easy swimming. The American Cancer Society suggests at least 30 minutes of moderate activity at least five days a week (more strenuous activity may even be better if your current health condition permits).

Maintaining a regular exercise schedule is recommended for leading a healthy lifestyle, but because this is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, it is also important to discuss its role in disease prevention. Take advantage of the crisp fall air and utilize your break time to get outdoors and walk. If you can't fit it in at work, take a quick walk around your neighborhood or walk to a local park. If you would like a map of the walking path at the CHR Building, please e-mail kris.hayslett@ky.gov or visit mapmyrun.com to track your own walking routes and distances.

CHFS Health News

Research Focuses on Schizophrenia

From the National Institutes on Health

Scientists have been searching for the genetic roots of schizophrenia for decades. If a few common genetic glitches, or mutations, were linked to the disorder, it could open new strategies for treatment and diagnosis. But new research suggests that schizophrenia is a lot more complicated than many scientists had hoped.

People with schizophrenia have problems with thinking and concentration. They may hear voices others don't hear or believe their thoughts are being broadcast to the world. Schizophrenia affects about 1 in 100 adults nationwide. Symptoms usually first appear in older teens or young adults.

Three new studies, funded in part by NIH, compared the genomes of thousands of patients with schizophrenia with thousands without the disorder. The research teams found that patients with schizophrenia were more likely to have several different, unusual genetic quirks. Many of the mutations disrupt genes that are important to brain development.

"We're moving toward an understanding of the causes of the disease, but we've only explained a tiny fraction of why people might develop schizophrenia," said Dr. Pamela Sklar of Massachusetts General Hospital. "Much more work needs to be done to connect the specific genetic changes to the full spectrum of the disorder."

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Summer's over. Did you take a vacation? Will you have a "fall break"? You might want to consider taking one. Lifeclever.com offers these benefits of regular vacations:

You'll live longer. According to a State University of New York survey, men who took annual vacations reduced their risk of death by 20 percent. Men who didn't take a vacation for five years had the highest death rate and incidence of heart disease than any other men in the survey.

You'll improve your mental health. Another study, published in the Wisconsin Medical

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Journal, found that women who took regular vacations were less likely to become depressed, tense or tired. Women who rarely took vacations were more likely to have stress at home and poor sleep.

You'll reconnect with family. On a real vacation, you won't take your work with you. Use it as a time to revamp your relationships.

You'll gain self-confidence. You deserve a vacation. Taking time off is a declaration that you care about your well-being.

You'll find creative inspiration. Most of our workweeks are monotonous. By observing a new environment and becoming part of another culture, you will allow yourself to think differently.

You will be more productive. You'll get a lot done before your time off because you will want to clear your to-do list. And when you return from vacation, you'll be more refreshed and better able to concentrate.

You will relax. The most obvious benefit is also the one you'll appreciate first.