

Call for Focus Holiday Stories

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is in the business of helping people. During the holidays, many employees take that mission of service to the next level by lending a hand in their own communities. If you or your office are helping to make the holidays bright for people in your community, we want to know about it. The annual Focus holiday listing will appear in the Dec. 22 edition of the Focus, the last edition of 2008. Send your holiday stories to the Focus editor at Emily.moses@ky.gov. Information should include, but is not limited to:

- Name of your office or branch, including the county
- Your charitable project
- Who it benefited (names not necessary, just a general description)
- Photos of collections or the members of your office who participated (optional)
- Other information if desired

Information should be sent to the Focus editor by Wednesday, Dec. 17. If you have questions, please e-mail the Focus editor.

Child Support Contractors, Staff Honored

Last month, more than 500 people attended the Child Support Enforcement Conference in Lexington.

Sponsored by CHFS' Office of Child Support Enforcement, it was the first such conference in 10 years, and several awards were presented to the state's top child support contracting officials.

Gov. Steve Beshear, Secretary Janie Miller, Department for Income Support (DIS) Commissioner Stephen Jones and federal Office of Child Support Enforcement Commissioner Margot Bean attended the conference.

The Child Support Enforcement program, part of the DIS, administers child support enforcement jointly with local contracting officials. Contracting officials are ranked based on their paternity establishments, the establishment of child support orders, child support collections and arrearage (past-due) collections.

The top 10 performers for the 2007-08 fiscal year, in rank order, are:

- Steve O'Connor, Morgan County Attorney
- Russ Goff, Green County Attorney
- William Haggbuch Jr., Allen County Attorney
- Jennifer Hutchison-Corbin, Adair County Attorney
- Billy N. Riley, Livingston County Attorney
- Richard Deye, Butler County Attorney
- John R. Fendley, Oldham County Attorney
- Neil Ward, Bell County Attorney
- H.B. Quinn, Trigg County Attorney
- Dale M. Morris, Larue County Attorney

The Crittenden County Attorney's Office, led by County Attorney Rebecca J. Johnson, showed the greatest improvement.

The Contracting Official Child Support Employee of the Year Award was presented to Tammy L. Branham, Pike County Child Support Office, in recognition of professionalism and dedication in providing excellent child support services to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

The Child Support Enforcement Attorney of the Year award was presented to Angie Anton, Jefferson County Child Support Office, in appreciation and recognition of unselfish devotion and distinguished service to the children of Kentucky.

Exemplary staff also received awards.

Maria Lewis, manager of the Field Services Branch, was presented the State Employee of the Year award for providing outstanding child support services to the families and children of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Deputy Commissioner Steven P. Veno presented the Deputy Commissioner's Award to Wanda Parker, Fayette County Child Support Office, in appreciation of her leadership and devotion in organizing the conference.

The Tim Olds Customer Service Award was created to recognize excellence in customer service. Tim Olds was a longtime employee of the Child Support Enforcement Program. In his last position within the program, Tim answered numerous telephone calls from noncustodial and custodial parents. Tim always provided exemplary customer service to the public and to his coworkers. His professionalism and positive energy were a positive reflection on the child support enforcement program. Sadly, shortly after Tim retired, he passed away. Tim's sister, Frankfort attorney Rita Snider, presented this special award to Carol Brockwell, Kenton County Child Support Office.

The conference also offered several workshops and opportunities for networking.

Cabinet Reports KECC Totals

CHFS raised nearly \$203,000 for KECC this year. While the Cabinet's overall participation was down this year, its average gift increased to \$126.23 versus \$119.19 for 2007.

Lisa Ballinger, the lead CHFS KECC coordinator, treated all KECC coordinators throughout the Cabinet to a celebration on Nov. 20 to thank them for their hard work. Secretary Miller stopped by to praise the group, pointing out what a great accomplishment raising over \$200,000 was in these difficult economic times and reminding everyone that giving seems to be always returned to the giver many times over.

Frankfort Portrait Gallery Raises Adoption Awareness

Professional photographers team up with state for recruitment effort

A collection of children's portraits designed to raise awareness for Kentucky's adoption needs premiered late last month in Frankfort.

The Salt River Trail Heart Gallery opened with a reception at Franklin County Family Court. CHFS, Franklin Family Court, Franklin County CASA and several local attorneys are sponsors of the display.

The exhibition features 10 children from the state's Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) who are living in foster care across the Salt River Trail Region. Photographers from the area donated their time and talent to create the portraits of children and sibling pairs.

Patricia R. Wilson, commissioner of the CHFS' Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), said the gallery is an innovative tool for an important effort.

"If there is one thing every child deserves, it's a loving family," she said. "When it doesn't work out that children can stay with their birth families, adoption can give them a place to belong. The Heart Gallery shows the public the depth and warmth of these waiting children."

Photographers who contributed to the event are Eddie Boden, Boden Photography, Georgetown; Robert Burge, Robert Burge Photography, Louisville; and Sara Lovorn, a DCBS employee in Franklin County.

The Heart Gallery was on display at the Franklin County Courthouse Annex for two weeks. It will be on exhibit at Commonwealth Credit Union, 1425 Louisville Road, Frankfort, for the first half of December. It will then travel to Anderson County for the second part of the month and later to locations in all 17 counties of DCBS' Salt River Trail Region. For more information about SNAP, log on to www.chfs.ky.gov/snap or www.wednesdayschild.com.

Hazelwood Honored by Office for the Blind

Hazelwood Center in Jefferson County recently received honors from the Kentucky Office for the Blind (OFB) at its annual awards banquet held at the Capital Plaza Hotel in Frankfort.

OFB is a state government rehabilitation agency in the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet that offers assistance to people who are blind or visually impaired and also provides services for employers. Last year, the agency served 2,993 people in Kentucky.

Hazelwood was among several OFB partners to receive a Partnership of the Year Award, which recognizes dedication to the mission of the OFB to assist people with visual impairments in becoming more independent and productive in the workplace, community and home.

Brenda Hibberd, a counselor at the facility, received a Silver Eagle Award. The Eagle Award is given in recognition of a staff person who has diligently worked to place individuals into competitive employment. The criterion for receiving this award is based on placing significantly

disabled individuals receiving Social Security disability into substantial gainful employment defined by the Social Security system.

Governor Kicks Off KCHIP Enrollment Drive

Gov. Steve Beshear last month kicked off a coordinated effort to enroll as many children as possible in the Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program (KCHIP) by the end of Fiscal Year 2010.

Since changes to the plan were announced in September and the mail-in application became available online Nov. 1, the CHFS KCHIP hotline has received a greatly increased number of calls, including almost twice as many calls coming into the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department alone compared to the same time period last year.

“During these extremely difficult economic times, we must not underestimate the value of preventive health care for our children,” said Gov. Beshear. “With families struggling now more than ever, we must make sure they get the assistance they need to provide their children with appropriate health care.”

As part of its mission to address the most urgent issues local communities face, the United Way of Kentucky will be a primary partner in the effort to get eligible children enrolled in KCHIP.

The Kentucky Primary Care Association presented a \$100,000 check today to Gov. Beshear to help offset the cost of training representatives of community agencies to assist people in applying for KCHIP.

The Beshear KCHIP Plan, announced in September and implemented on Nov. 1, aims to dramatically cut the number of children without health coverage by removing barriers to enrollment, retaining more children once they are enrolled and significantly increasing education and outreach regarding the program. KCHIP provides health insurance to children whose family income is below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, about \$42,400 a year for a family of four.

Details of the plan and enrollment information are available at <http://kidshealth.ky.gov>

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Are you trying to improve your leadership skills? Being a good leader requires many traits. Susan Heathfield, a human resources expert and writer for About.com, outlines her characteristics for good leaders here.

Decide to be a leader. This is the most important step to being successful - you must choose to lead. If you don't believe in your own vision, chances are your co-workers won't either.

Be the person others choose to follow. Good leaders are inspirational, but they are also trustworthy and accountable for their actions.

Make other people feel important and appreciated. A good leader can shine the spotlight on others.

Live your values. Behave ethically. Lead by the example you want others to follow. Use care and compassion in your decision making.

Establish an environment of continuous improvement. Staff with specific goals will strive to meet those expectations.

Enable others to succeed. Provide opportunities for people to grow, both personally and professionally. A good leader will help develop other leaders.