Doris Long was presented the Fred Tucker Service Award during the OKACAA Awards Banquet in Oklahoma City on September 22, 2017. The Fred Tucker Service Award recognizes an outstanding Community Action employee who has distinguished himself/herself as an individual who has significantly contributed to the mission of fighting poverty, through a career dedicated to Community Action.

Long, the Victim and Youth Programs Director, has been an employee of Little Dixie CAA for 20 years. She was nominated for the Fred Tucker Service Award by virtue of her commitment to the agency and her community. Long has worked diligently to improve the lives of those less fortunate and is an admired and respected member of the Little Dixie CAA family.

Terry Wren was the recipient of the Ted Allen Memorial Award at the OKACAA Fall Conference in Oklahoma City on September 22, 2017. Currently, Wren is the Weatherization Auditor and Quality Control Inspector for Little Dixie CAA’s Weatherization Program.

Wren began his career with Little Dixie CAA in 2005 and has served in a variety of capacities since coming to the agency. Wren has served two years as Chair of the Oklahoma Weatherization and Housing Advisory Council. Wren has received praise from his co-workers for his work ethic, service and positive attitude.

At left, Doris Long is pictured with Rebecca Reynolds, LDCAA Executive Director.

At right, Terry Wren is pictured with Rebecca Reynolds, LDCAA Executive Director.
Little Dixie CAA Employees Receive Awards

Several LDCAA employees attended the Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies’ Annual Conference during the week of September 20th through 22nd in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The conference provided employees across the state with opportunities for networking and trainings to increase their capacity to better serve their communities. The conference concludes with an awards banquet on the last day.

LDCAA employees who were recognized for their years of service to Community Action included:

- Joshua Braziel 10 Years
- Rita Burke 10 Years
- Tina Foster 10 Years
- Francis Fuller 10 Years
- Ruby Gann 10 Years
- Elette Hamill 10 Years
- Sommer Springfield 10 Years
- Sandra Maynard 10 Years
- Cynthia Mills 10 Years
- Lori Peevy 10 Years
- Shirley Richison 10 Years
- Valerie Robinson 10 Years
- Charles Rust 10 Years
- Cynthia Smith 10 Years
- Kimberlee Weatherford 10 Years
- David Wyrick 10 Years
- Larry Wyrick 10 Years
- Cathy Zachry 10 Years
- Lisa McKinney 15 Years
- Kristy Priddy 15 Years
- Carolyn Whitley 15 Years
- Tammie Fewell 20 Years
- Doris Long 20 Years
- Sharon Pennell 25 Years
- Barbara Johnson 25 Years

Thank you for your dedication and service to
Little Dixie Community Action Agency.
Pictured from left to right: Rebecca Reynolds, LDCAA Executive Director; Doris Long, Victim and Youth Programs Director; Lisa McKinney, Transit – Broken Bow; Lori Peevy, Transit – Broken Bow; and Terry Wren, Weatherization Auditor and Quality Control Inspector. Long and Wren received two of the five annual awards at the OKACAA Banquet on September 22, 2017.

Rebecca Reynolds, LDCAA Executive Director, presents Lisa McKinney with a Service Award during the OKACAA Banquet. McKinney is a Driver with the Transit Program as has been employed with Little Dixie CAA for fifteen years.

Rebecca Reynolds, LDCAA Executive Director, presents Lori Peevy with a Service Award during the OKACAA Banquet. Peevy is a Driver with the Transit Program as has been employed with Little Dixie CAA for ten years.

Little Dixie CAA staff enjoying the OKACAA Banquet. Pictured left to right are Doris Long, Shaun Long, Rebecca Reynolds, Lori Peevy, Lisa McKinney, Terry Wren, and Alex Leonard.
**LDCAA Administration Welcomes New Hires**

The Planning Department is very pleased to announce the addition of two new Program Planners, Ms. Alex Leonard and Ms. Macy Maxwell. In addition to preparing and submitting applications for grant funding to sustain and/or expand agency programs, each will also be involved in working with directors, front line staff and others on various projects and activities to include: preparing and distributing the Little Dixie Digest, raising awareness about agency and community events via social media and other news outlets, providing training and technical assistance to staff with reporting requirements, ensuring compliance of Community Service Block Grant Organizational Standards and much more.

Maxwell is from Hugo and is a 2017 Southeastern Oklahoma State University graduate with a B.S. in Psychology. Leonard is from Idabel and graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma in 2016 with a B.A. in Strategic Communication.

Though their time in Little Dixie CAA has just begun, they report feeling very welcomed and are excited to impact their community in a positive way. We are very happy they chose a career with Little Dixie CAA and are confident they will do a great job in helping to achieve the Mission of Community Action: “Helping People, Changing Lives.”

Pictured at left is Alex Leonard, LDCAA Program Planner.

Pictured at right is Macy Maxwell, LDCAA Program Planner.
Little Dixie CAA Receives New Grant to Assist Victims of Crime

The agency recently received a Notice of Award from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women for a FY 2017 Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program Grant. This grant funding will be used to directly serve victims of such crimes; build the capacity of direct service providers to better serve and protect victims; encourage reporting of these crimes; and ensure all service providers are adequately trained on how to appropriately respond, assist victims, improve the rate of prosecution of such crimes, and work together through coordinated service delivery.

The overall aim of the grant project, titled the “Safe Place Healing Hearts Program”, will be to enhance the safety of rural victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. To accomplish this, the project will work towards the goal of expanding and more efficiently delivering appropriate services to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking in Choctaw, McCurtain, and Pushmataha Counties, in order to meet their emotional and physical needs victims, as well as ensure victim safety and security. Secondly, the project will work towards the goal of enhancing collaboration between and building the capacity of service providers in the target rural communities to appropriately respond, improve the rate of prosecution, coordinate service delivery, and assist victims in cases of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. At least 75% of the total project (goals, objectives, activities, expenses) will work to meaningfully address sexual assault, with a secondary focus on domestic violence, then dating violence and stalking.

The Safe Place Healing Hearts (SPHH) Program will operate as a branch of LDCAA’s Victim and Youth Programs, which have a wealth of experience in dealing with victims of abuse and advocacy for such victims. There will be two full-time staff positions under the program, overseen by Victim and Youth Services Programs Director Doris Long. LD will partner with the following agencies to assist with the development and implementation of this project: the Choctaw County Freestanding Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team, Choctaw County Sexual Assault Response Team/Coordinated Community Response Team, Kidz Kottage Child Advocacy Center/McCurtain County Multidisciplinary Team, McCurtain County SART/CCRT, Pushmataha County Freestanding Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team, Pushmataha County SART/CCRT, and the Rural Health Network of Oklahoma. For more information, please call (580) 298-2921.
New “Youth First” Project to Counteract Delinquency

Little Dixie CAA was recently awarded a Delinquency Prevention Formula Grant Award from the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs – State Advisory Group. This grant award will establish the “Youth First” Project, which will operate as a new branch of the Victim and Youth Programs Services, and in doing so would be able to draw from existing agency capacity in serving at-risk youth.

AJ Henslee, has been hired as a full-time coordinator and will implement various child and family intervention strategies. His job is to ensure at-risk area youth and their families receive services and support to counteract delinquency. The project utilizes the Strengthening Families Program (or SFP), an evidence-based prevention and family skills training program listed as “Effective” in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Model Programs Guide. It was chosen for the project primarily as it has been shown to “significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance”. SFP will be followed during project trainings (held at least two times per month over a six month period), which will utilize group discussion, modeling, coaching, and group/peer mentoring. Participants and their families will also partake in monthly group activities, as well as semi-annual recognition events, which will provide positive activities, family resources, and recognition of youth achievement.

The project will provide youth with services and support to become productive, law-abiding citizens. Coordinators will promote anti-drug lifestyles, provide coping tools and create a safe environment for adolescents and their families by bringing together key community stakeholders.

For more information on the program or to assist as a volunteer, please contact Program Coordinator AJ Henslee or Program Director Doris Long at (580) 298-2921.

Pictured at left is Youth First Coordinator, AJ Henslee.

LDCAA hosts Mutual Self-Help Housing T&MA Contractor’s Meeting

Representatives from the Little Dixie Technical & Management Assistance Contractor Department hosted a meeting in Rapid City, South Dakota for all Rural Development Mutual Self-Help Housing Program Technical & Management Assistance Contractors. Staff were privileged that personnel from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development headquarters were able to attend the meeting.

Many productive sessions were held, including discussion covering new contract deliverables, regulation changes affecting the program through recent administrative notices and how best to meet the intent of those changes for the betterment of the program, issues being faced by Grantees such as improving credit worthiness, 502 loan processing strategies and how to improve processing time, and improving appraisal values and times.

Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation, which is located on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota invited all meeting attendees to tour the homes currently under construction. Cecily Engelhart, Director of Communications, shared the vision, inspiration and planning of the project that will result in the development of a Regenerative Community using self-help homes as part of the project. Greg Montgomery, Construction Supervisor, guided a tour of the homes and provided an overview of features being built into the homes to make them as energy efficient as possible.

Three of the first seven homes in the Regenerative Community are being built through the mutual self-help method. Consideration was given to the direction the homes were facing regarding door/window placement to take advantage of capturing the warmth generated by the sun’s rays.

Nick Tilsen, Executive Director (second from left) greets USDA Rural Development staff Barry Ramsey, Janell Telin and Myron Wooden.

Tours were enjoyed by all participants as they observed methods being used to reduce energy use and costs as well as the air filtration systems utilized to lower the risk of mold and dust.

What is the Mutual Self-Help Housing Program?

The Mutual Self-Help Housing Program is a way to help qualified, low and very-low income families/individuals become home owners. Housing organizations, assisted by organizations such as LDCAA’s T&MA Program, assist groups of 4-10 families who agree to mutually contribute labor to each other throughout the building period. Construction assistance and training is provided by a construction supervisor employed by the housing organization.
Tri-County Indian Nations CDC Cares a Hurdle

Tri-County Indian Nations CDC is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help low and very-low income families become homeowners. Finding suitable building sites for homes can sometimes be a challenge in the area they serve. Tri-County had located five affordable home sites to be used by their Mutual Self-Help Housing clients, however, the private road leading into the housing development did not meet program requirements. Recently, Pontotoc County commissioners voted to add the road to the county inventory which “paves the way” for it to be used by Tri-County’s prospective homeowners.

“We have two (clients) whose options to purchase have been approved,” Tri-County Account Specialist, Jennifer Covington said. Covington added, “Land is hard to find altogether, especially on a budget a low-income family can afford. Low-income homebuyers often face obstacles when trying to find rural home sites, chiefly because so many rural sites require aerobic septic systems for wastewater to be installed, driving up the total cost of the home. We have to find them a really good deal for them to be able to afford to buy (a site like that).”

One of the homes recently completed under the supervision of Tri-County Indian Nations CDC.

How does a Self-Help Housing Program work?

Three elements are necessary to make Self-Help Housing work:

- Technical assistance from Housing Organizations to assist the participants with loan applications and house construction;
- Mortgage loan financing; and
- Families who want to become home owners, and are willing to do a significant portion of the work in building their homes.

Spotlight Website

The Spotlight website, selfhelphousingspotlight.org, was created and is maintained by the T&MA Contractors to highlight the success of the Self-Help Housing Program. The Spotlight Website receives about 1,400 hits per month, and is a great tool to help promote your program.

Send a success story to feature on the Spotlight Website. The success story should be 2 or 3 paragraphs in length and can include a photo, if available. Submit your stories to pprice@ldcaa.org.
When are the houses built?

Most of the construction takes place on Tuesday-Saturday between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Since some participants in the program must work during the day, most work is done in the evenings and on weekends.

How many families are in each group?

Generally, a group in the program is made up of 6-12 families.

How are the houses built?

Most of the construction takes place on Tuesday-Saturday between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Since some participants in the program must work during the day, most work is done in the evenings and on weekends.

Can I select my house plan?

There are a variety of house plans available in each project area. The size of the house depends on the size of the family, what the family can afford, and the size of the building lot. In many cases, the house plan is assigned to a specific lot.

One Step Closer to Becoming a Homeowner

Pictured left to right: Sommer McMurtry (Group Worker), Joscelyne Burns, Robert and Suzy Burns (Homeowners), Georgia Burns, Robert Burns and Grady Ford (Construction Supervisor) at the Burns’ Loan Closing in Marshall County, Oklahoma on August 21, 2017.

Jessica McGinnis pictured at her Loan Closing in Atoka County, Oklahoma on September 20, 2017.

Pictured from left to right (starting in the back) is: Bobby Woods, Tyler Woods, Sommer McMurtry (Group Worker), Grady Ford (Construction Supervisor), Brandy Stachowski (Program Secretary), Jenna Loyd (Home owner), Joplynn Loyd and Jovi Loyd during the Loyd Loan Closing in Bryan County, Oklahoma on August 10, 2017.
Can I make changes to my house?

No. These are not custom homes and have to be built according to USDA-Rural Development approved plans. Once you move into your home, you are allowed to make any changes you would like.

Helping families achieve the dream of homeownership, one home at a time.

How many hours of labor does each family contribute to the construction of all the houses in the group?

Each family contributes as much labor as is required to complete all the houses in the group. Generally, about 1,200 hours of labor per family is required, with each family contributing at least 35 hours each week to the building group. "Family hours" include the labor of all owners, any child 16 years of age or older, and 1-3 approved helpers (optional).

Pictured left to right: Dianna Horner (Home owner) and Ashlynn Bruce during the Horner Loan Closing in Bryan County, Oklahoma on September 6, 2017.
Little Dixie T&MA Contractor staff, Bryce Nash and Randy Griffith attended the 12th Annual Zuni Housing Fair in Zuni, New Mexico on September 15, 2017.

Little Dixie CAA, a “Bronze Partner”, received a Certificate of Appreciation and a Certificate of Participation from Zuni Housing Authority Executive Director, Michael Chavez in recognition of their valuable contribution and participation in the 12th Annual Zuni Housing Fair.

Pictured left to right are Bryce Nash, LDCAA T&MA Self-Help Specialist; Randy Griffith, LDCAA T&MA Self-Help Specialist; Rebecca Reynolds, LDCAA Executive Director; Kyle White, LDCAA T&MA Program Director and Johnny Moffitt, LDCAA Associate Director.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

One new Administrative Notice has been released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Rural Development:

**AN 4844: Section 523 Indirect Cost Negotiations**

Section 523 Updates can be viewed on the Rural Development website at www.rd.usda.gov, click on the **Publications** tab and then on **Regulations & Guidelines**.

**T&MA Congratulates USDA Rural Development Re-Funded Housing Programs**

The following organizations have recently been refunded:

*Family Resources of New Orleans* in New Orleans, Louisiana was funded to complete 12 homes.

*Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership* (Rehab) in Madison, South Dakota was funded to accomplish 40 Equivalent Units.
LITTLE DIXIE Small Business Lending Services would like to congratulate Beverly McKeever, owner of the new LIL’ DAWGS CHILDCARE CENTER located at 400 E Mosley in Valliant, OK. Lil’ Dawgs Childcare Center will serve children ages three months to 12 years. Beverly and her staff look forward to providing a safe and developmentally appropriate environment for the children they serve. The center will focus on providing a stimulating early care and education experience which promotes each child’s social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. Call 580-933-7007 to enroll your child today.

Little Dixie CAA offers business technical assistance and loans to new and existing businesses. Please contact Sheila Pierce at 580-325-5201 for help with any business needs, and remember to support local businesses.
Head Start would like to welcome Ms. Darla Galyon as the Head Start/ Early Head Start/ EHS – Child Care Director. Ms. Galyon has over six years combined experience working with Head Start/EHS/EHS - Child Care programs as well as in various administrative, supervisory and fiscal management roles.

Darla Galyon graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business from Northeastern State University. Additionally, she has a wide-ranging skill set in early childhood development. Ms. Galyon was previously employed by the Oklahoma Department of Health and Human Services and Choctaw Memorial Hospital.

She began her tenure at Little Dixie CAA as a Home Visitor with the Head Start Program and was soon promoted to AmeriCorps Planning and Development Specialist. Due to her dedication to the program and strong work ethic, she then served as the Professional Development Content Area Specialist. In 2015, Galyon was promoted to Assistant Director of the EHS – Child Care Partnership Program.

As Program Director, Ms. Galyon will ensure the efficient delivery of high quality services in accordance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Head Start staff is confident that the leadership and dedication demonstrated by Darla Galyon will allow her to excel in her new role.

Congratulations
Early Head Start-Child Care

Recently, the Early Learning Centers have received various enhancements—including installation of new playgrounds, installation of new ADA sidewalks and ramps as well as installation of new signs at each Early Learning Center. Each Center Director greatly appreciates the new enhancements, but what they appreciate the most are the smiles on the children's faces. The children love their new playgrounds and the learning activities that they provide.

The Early Learning Centers received their yearly visit from the University of Oklahoma Early Childhood Education Institute during the month of June. The eight learning centers were observed using the ITERS-R observation scale. Each classroom was observed for three hours and during that time the teachers were scored on space and furnishings, personal care routines, listening and talking, activities, interaction, program structure, and parents and staff. Scores for the childcare centers have improved since the last observation in 2016. Great job everyone!!!

The Early Head Start-Child Care centers are accepting applications. If you know of a child that would benefit from the program, please refer them to Deana Beason at (580) 326-7581.

At left, Turner Learning Center in Hugo received new ADA parking.

At right, Giggle Time Schools in Hugo received a new ADA parking and ramp.
The Role of Health within the Head Start Program

Health plays a very important role in the Head Start Program. Head Start believes a child is not fully ready to learn without being healthy. Children who enter the program will be asked to complete a well child exam, dental exam, and a hemoglobin test. These measures are taken to ensure children’s bodies will be ready for the learning process. They also assist in instilling a sense of importance for their health at the earliest age possible.

Upon entering the program, children are given hearing, vision, and speech screenings. The children also receive developmental screenings that evaluate where a child scores on an averaged scale. These screenings identify any abnormal findings that will need to be referred to ensure the child receives any intervention services that may help them to be successful and school ready.

In addition to intervention services for children, the staff are also extensively trained on the importance of children’s health. Various health-related trainings are held throughout the program year, and include Heart Saver First Aid, Entry Level Child Care Training, and Safe Sleep Training.

Mr. Eric Eickle came to speak to the Fort Towson Head Start classroom about his job as a pilot.

Forest Grove Head Start celebrates dad’s day by making fish art and learning about fish.

An Antlers Early Head Start child paints nature scenes on classroom window during a hot summer day.
Head Start Nutrition News

Little Dixie Head Start’s Nutrition Specialists provided training sessions during the annual pre-service training week in July. These sessions were geared toward relaying the new performance standards and Child and Adult Care Food Program information to teachers, teacher’s aides, center cook’s, and other Head Start/ Early Head Start staff. The training included the new CACFP revisions, such as those pertaining to infant meals, toddler and adult meals, and new food program state regulations. The CACFP Program is implemented the most changes it has seen in 30 years. The Nutrition Component Area Specialists were required to appropriately revise menus, guidelines, and food allergy procedures, which the new Head Start Performance Standards now also reflect.

The Nutrition Specialists also conducted “break-out” training sessions for head Start/Early Head Start cooks further detailing the revisions and menus. The cooks were given the new menus, supplies and documents that reflect changes for the upcoming year. The cooks attended four break-out sessions and the Head Start/Early Head Start teachers and aides attended two separate presentations.

The Nutrition component area is now focusing on renewing the annual CACFP application. In order to submit an application, the Nutrition Specialists obtained signatures from each Superintendent of the public schools with which Little Dixie Head Start contracts. These contracts reflect updated/revised food cost amounts and other information, including mealtime schedules for each center, as well as which meals are to be provided by the schooling institution. The application also reflects current budgeting and other program information. The application is to be submitted at the end of September 2017 in order to be active for the oncoming school year.

The Nutrition Specialists are currently conducting rounds of CACFP checks at each facility’s kitchen, as well as Head Start center folder checks. The Nutrition component area is also preparing for the unannounced state audit this upcoming spring.

Ellen Gross, Assistant Nutrition Specialist
Battiest Head Start children are busy learning about balls—how they roll, how they bounce, how to throw, their shape, predicting and graphing with their new Creative Curriculum.

Battiest Head Start children visited the Pickens Community Library on September 7th for their first monthly trip of the year!
Congratulations!

*Idabel Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Idabel Early Learning Center*

*Won 1st Place at the McCurtain County Free Fair*
Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Impact Program and Healthy Start Partner to Offer Parenting Classes

The ECCS Impact Program has partnered with Oklahoma State University’s Cooperative Extension Office and Little Dixie Healthy Start to provide free Active Parenting classes in Pushmataha County. These classes not only meet Department of Human Services criteria but also help guide parents with effective ways to teach children responsibility, encourage school success, defuse power struggles with children, and stimulate independence as a child grows older. The ECCS Impact Program also had the pleasure of participating in the Valliant Watermelon Festival, Clayton Health Fair, and the Choctaw County Fair. At each event program staff provided early childhood resources, including children’s book to encourage parents to read to their children and bring awareness to the importance of early literacy.

Pictured above is Sarah Gross, ECCS Impact Program Analyst.
Victim and Youth Services Programs

Passport to the Future Mentoring Program mentees and mentors painted rocks with inspirational quotes and pictures then placed rocks in random locations within the community to be found and relocated.

When the rocks are found they are then posted on a Facebook page called SEO Rocks.

This was a match art event for the program.

The Court Appointed Special Advocates and Mentoring programs distributed bags with toiletries to foster parents at the Foster Parent Appreciation Event hosted by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

The Court Appointed Special Advocates and Mentoring Programs partnered with Christian Life Outreach Ministries to host the 11th Annual FunFest.

CASA and Mentoring clients, along with the whole community, were invited to attend and partake in the fun, food and water activities.
Doris Long, Victim and Youth Programs Director, and Marissa Jordan, CASA Advocate Coordinator, attend the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) training in San Diego, California.

Rita Plummer, CASA Advocate Coordinator/Mentoring Program Assistant, and Kimberly Priddy, Mentoring Program Assistant, attended the Mid-Atlantic Network of Youth & Family Services Mentoring Training.

Rita Plummer, CASA Advocate Coordinator/Mentoring Program Assistant, and Sheryl Marseilles, Oklahoma CASA Association Executive Director, attend Oklahoma CASA Training.

Pictured above left to right is Katy White, Mid-Atlantic Network of Youth & Family Services Project Manager and Rita Plummer, CASA Advocate Coordinator/Mentoring Program Specialist.

Rita Plummer, CASA Advocate Coordinator/ Mentoring Program Assistant and Kimberly Priddy, Mentoring Program Assistant, attended the Mid-Atlantic Network of Youth & Family Services Mentoring Training.
Pictured at left are Passport to the Future Mentoring Program participants, staff and volunteers from the Antlers and Tuskahoma Masonic Lodges, who worked to prepare necessity bags for the CASA Program.

The Antlers and Tuskahoma Masonic Lodges partnered with the Mentoring Program to purchase the bags.

Rita Plummer, CASA Advocate Coordinator/Mentoring Program Assistant, sang at the final Pickin’ on the Porch event, which raised funds and awareness for Little Dixie CAA’s Victim and Youth Services Programs.

Jim Priddy, a volunteer with both the Passport to the Future Mentoring Program and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, celebrated his 69th birthday at the final Pickin’ on the Porch.

Pictured at right is Jim Priddy and CASA Advocate Coordinator Marissa Jordan.
Victim and Youth Services Programs
Welcome New Staff Members and Volunteer

Pictured on the left is AJ Henslee, Program Coordinator for the Youth First Program.

Pictured at right is Rita Plummer, CASA Advocate Coordinator/Mentoring Program Assistant.

Pictured at left is DeeDee Atwood, Victim Services Coordinator for Little Dixie CAA’s Victim Advocacy Services Program.

Pictured at right is Marissa Jordan, CASA Advocate Coordinator, with Samantha Noin, McCurtain County CASA Volunteer, as she is being sworn in by Judge Deberry.
RSVP Director Karla Luginbill and Executive Director Rebecca Reynolds recently had the pleasure of meeting Presidential appointee, Senior Corps Director Deborah Cox Roush.

Little Dixie CAA staff had the opportunity to discuss Little Dixie RSVP’s Program accomplishments and highlights with Ms. Roush during a short meet and greet while she was in the state visiting with Senior Corps programs.

Pictured above (left to right) are: LDCAA Executive Director Rebecca Reynolds, Senior Corps Director Deborah Cox Roush and LDCAA RSVP Director Karla Luginbill.
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and Choctaw County Drug Free Communities Program Partner for 9/11 Food Drive

CANNED GOODS FOR A CAUSE
DONATE TODAY THROUGH 9/11

In honor of 9/11 national day of service, we are asking you to donate non-perishable items to be given to the local food bank.

DROP OFF LOCATIONS:

HUGO INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
HUGO MIDDLE SCHOOL
HUGO HIGH SCHOOL
LITTLE DIXIE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE (inside the Hugo Post office)

Little Dixie RSVP in partnership with Little Dixie Drug Free Communities Call Tonya at 580-325-3351 to donate or for more information.

Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success. ~Henry Ford
Hugo Intermediate School students gathered over 700 lbs. of food for the 9/11 Canned Goods for a Cause Food Drive, which was given to the local food bank, Sharing Hope in Hugo. These items will assist over 35 families with food needs. This event was a great way to let children perform a good deed and give back to their community.

The Sharing Hope in Hugo Food Bank, has 14 RSVP Volunteers who this year have served over 1,100 hours. The RSVP Volunteers have served an average of 114 families per month through their effort at the food bank.

~Helping People. Changing Lives~
Thank You Volunteers ~ We Appreciate You!

Pictured at left, Little Dixie CAA RSVP Program Director Karla Luginbill, RSVP Volunteer and LDCAA Board Member Clinton Crawley, and Hugo Intermediate School Principal Vivian Shanklin load donated food items.

Pictured at right are RSVP Program Director Karla Luginbill, RSVP Volunteer and Victim and Youth Programs Director Doris Long, Drug Free Communities Director Tonya Finley, RSVP Volunteer and Board Member Clinton Crawley, and RSVP Volunteers Meredith Russell and Jama Bishop at the Sharing Hope in Hugo Food Bank.

Together

WE

Achieve

More
September is National Infant Mortality Awareness Month. Little Dixie Healthy Start and other members of the Choctaw County Coalition teamed up to raise awareness during Infant Mortality Awareness Month at events such as the Choctaw County Fair.

In the State of Oklahoma, there are 7.5 deaths per 1,000 live births. The goal of the Health Start Program is to raise awareness in an effort to reduce the number of infant deaths in the tri-county area. Healthy Start employees also took part in the Pushmataha County and McCurtain County Fairs. Community members in all three counties will be wearing their Infant Mortality Awareness shirts every Friday in the months of September and October to raise awareness.

Pictured above are Amanda Terrebonne and Cheyenne Carlile with Little Dixie Healthy Start, along with Dwight Kos from Kiamichi Technology Centers in Hugo.
Choctaw County Drug Free Communities’ Thriving Community Garden Project

The Community Garden provides a community-based garden to children and elderly citizens in the community. Its purpose is to encourage healthy eating and lifestyle choices. It also provides much needed fruits and vegetables.

Flowers in the Community Garden help teach youth about pollination.

The Community Garden produced a bountiful crop of purple hull peas and green beans.
Choctaw County Drug Free Communities Program and YouCo! Attends Food Preparation Class

The Choctaw County Youth Coalition learned to freeze vegetables during a class provided by the OSU Extension Service. They were able to use green beans from the Community Garden.
Using purple hull peas from the Community Garden, YouCo! learned the technique of pressure-canning vegetables.
YouCo! Members Attend Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America Mid-Year Training in Atlanta, Georgia

Five Choctaw County Youth Coalition members attended the mid-year CADCA training in Atlanta, Georgia. Pictured from left to right are: community partner, Mehlenie Adamson with Project GAIN, YouCo! Members Jackson Self and Alissa Gilmore, Tonya Finley, DFC Program Director, and YouCo! Members Savannah Ragan, Ayreona Parish and Zack Skelton.

Pictured on the right is Mehlenie Adamson, Project GAIN and Tonya Finley, Drug Free Communities Program Director at the CADCA Training.

Knowledge...

"One's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.”
Oliver Wendell Holmes
Choctaw County Drug Free Communities Program Participates in 9/11 Food Drive

The Drug Free Communities Program, along with Hugo Schools and other agency and community partners, participated in a 9/11 Food Drive to benefit the Sharing Hope in Hugo Food Bank. Pictured below, right is Principal Vivian Shanklin and students at Hugo Intermediate School, where over 600 cans of food were collected.

Pictured above, DFC Program staff and YouCo! members load food for the 9/11 Food Drive.

Pictured below is DFC Program Director Tonya Finley, LDCAA Board Member and RSVP Volunteer Clinton Crawley, and Hugo Intermediate School Principal Vivian Shanklin.

Pictured above is LDCAA Board Member and RSVP Volunteer Clinton Crawley, Drug Free Communities Director Tonya Finley, RSVP Director Karla Luginbill, RSVP Volunteer and Victim and Youth Programs Director Doris Long, and RSVP Volunteer Meredith Russell.
Choctaw County YouCo!, Drug Free Communities & Passport to the Future Mentoring Programs Visit Hawaiian Falls

Staff and youth from the Choctaw County YouCo!, DFC Program, Passport to the Future Mentoring Program and Health Department’s Healthy Living Program traveled to The Colony, Texas to visit Hawaiian Falls during the summer break. A great time was had by all!

Choctaw County YouCo!, Drug Free Communities and Passport to the Future Mentoring Program Partner to Teach Medicine Safety Class

Choctaw County YouCo! and the DFC Program, along with community partners Passport to the Future Mentoring Program and Project GAIN (Get Active and Involved Now), presented an Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Class to Mr. Dill’s 5th grade class at Hugo Middle School.
Little Dixie CAA employee Cindy Cockerham, McCurtain County Housing Coordinator, participated in the Choctaw Electric Annual Meeting held in Idabel on September 23, 2017.

Ms. Cockerham was available to provide information and resources for Little Dixie CAA programs. She also sold raffle tickets for a chance to win a Browning Rifle to be given away October 7, 2017. Funds are being raised to support a loss in state funding for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.

The Little Dixie Self-Help Housing Program in Durant hosted an Oklahoma Blood Institute Blood Drive on September 12, 2017 to assist with the blood supply shortage due to recent hurricanes. Sixteen individuals donated blood during the event.

Pictured at right are Sommer McMurty, Group Worker, and Brandy Stachowski, Program Secretary.

We are Community Action—Helping People. Changing Lives.
Little Dixie CAA and Public Service Company of Oklahoma Partner During Home Energy Aide Month

Little Dixie CAA and Public Service Company of Oklahoma are working together to raise awareness of the need for utility assistance for low-income families.

In honor of Home Energy Aide Month, LDCAA Housing Outreach Coordinator Karen Burton (pictured, above left) and PSO External Affairs Manager and LDCAA Board Member Harolynn Wofford (pictured, above right) teamed up to offer energy efficiency tips to help customers reduce their electric consumption at an awareness event on July 25, 2017.

During this awareness event held at the Hugo Post Office, tickets were sold to raise funds to provide emergency assistance for those who need help paying their energy bills. All proceeds will be used to assist needy families in LDCAA’s tri-county service area.
Congratulations to Sallie Allen and Billie Jean Level-Moore, Winners of the Little Dixie CAA Backpack Giveaway!!

Pictured at left is Sallie Allen, one of the lucky winners in the Little Dixie CAA Backpack giveaway!

Pictured at right is Billie Jean Level-Moore, one of the lucky winners in the Little Dixie CAA Backpack giveaway!
“There are no problems we cannot solve together and very few that we can solve by ourselves.”—President Lyndon B. Johnson
Congratulations to July Employee of the Month, Sommer McMurtry. Sommer works as a group worker within the Self-Help Housing Program and was nominated by co-worker, Grady Ford.

Mr. Ford stated, “She works tirelessly for and with the applicants that apply for our Self-Help Housing Program to get them approved...many times working with them for several months until they are approved.” Congratulations Sommer for a well-deserved honor!

Congratulations to Cheyenne Carlile, August Employee of the Month. Cheyenne works within the Healthy Start Program as a Care Coordinator and was nominated by co-worker Ashley Staggs.

Ms. Staggs stated, “I have never encountered such a dedicated and hard worker like Cheyenne. She is a genuine good person that makes a lasting impression on everyone she meets and is always willing to help anyone and everyone in any way she can. She is the first person to step up and lend a hand or help find a solution to a problem.” Congratulations Cheyenne for a well-deserved honor!

At left, LDCAA Board Chairman Brent Franks (left) and LDCAA Executive Director Rebecca Reynolds (right) present Cheyenne Carlile with the August Employee of the Month Award.
Employees of the Month continued...

Mary Vannoy was named Employee of the Month for September 2017. Ms. Vannoy is employed with LDCAA’s Healthy Start Program as a Care Coordinator. She was nominated by fellow co-worker Ashley Staggs.

Among the many compliments within the nomination, Ms. Staggs commented: “Mary's name is well-known in the Pushmataha area for her kindness, support, and willingness to help anyone at anytime....we feel honored to have the opportunity to work with someone as respectful and dedicated as Mary.” Congratulations on a well-deserved honor Mary!

At left, LDCAA Board Chairman Brent Franks (left) and LDCAA Executive Director Rebecca Reynolds (right) present Mary Vannoy with the September Employee of the Month Award.

Congratulations to Sharon Pennell, LDCAA Fiscal Officer, for 25 Years of Service to the agency.

Mrs. Pennell was presented with a Service Award Certificate at the September 12, 2017 Board of Directors Meeting. Pictured with Sharon Pennell (center) is Brent Franks, LDCAA Board Chair and Rebecca Reynolds, LDCAA Executive Director (right).
Service Award Winners Recognized in July, August and September 2017

Little Dixie Community Action Agency recognized the following employees for their years of service in helping to support the mission and vision of the agency.

Mission: “To improve the lives of low-income individuals and families through service and collaboration leading to self-sufficiency”.

Vision: “To free generations of people from poverty”

July 2017

Ten Years - Rita Burke (Disabilities/Mental Health Specialist, HS/EHS/EHS-CC Programs)
Ten Years - Lori Peevy (LDCAA Transit Driver)
Fifteen Years - Kristy Priddy (Head Start Teacher)

August 2017

Five Years - Larna Shianne Norris (Head Start Teacher)
Five Years - Lisa Ann Watkins (Head Start Teacher)

September 2017

Five Years - Lisa Diane Corey – Caregiver II, Early Learning Centers
Ten Years - Shirley Richison – Transit Clerk, Transit Program
Twenty-Five Years - Sharon Pennell – Fiscal Officer, Administration

“Individual talents get magnified many times over through the collective lens of an effective team.” Dalal Haldeman
LITTLE DIXIE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC.

REBECCA REYNOLDS, Executive Director

BRENT FRANKS, Board Chairman

DAVID HAWKINS, Vice-Chairman

WILLIAM SMITH, Secretary/Treasurer

Board Members—Choctaw County: Jimmy Brandon, Kevin Cory, Clinton Crawley, Melissa Cress, Michael Melton, Leah Savage, Wade Scott, William Smith, Harolynn Wofford

Board Members—McCurtain County: Trilla Frazier, Jim Freeny, Walt Frey, Jack Griffin, David Hawkins, Andrea Henkel, Sharon Jernigan, Sandra Meeks, Vicky Wade

Board Members—Pushmataha County: Brad Burgett, Alice Courtney, Becky Franks, Brent Franks, Vickie Leathers, Joyce Phillips, Dwight Satterfield, David Smith

Newsletter Inquiries
Please Contact:
Alex Leonard
580-326-3351

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. M/F/Vets/Disabled and other protected categories”