October 5th, 2017 marked the 20th anniversary of a valued partnership that continues to exact positive community change.

In 1997, Little Dixie Community Action Agency, Inc. became a NeighborWorks Chartered Member. Since, NWA has provided several million dollars to support agency programs including housing counseling and homebuyer education. NeighborWorks has also been essential to LDCAA in creating safe and affordable housing developments and loan funds for residential and commercial lending programs throughout Southeast Oklahoma. Additionally, NWA has provided thousands of hours in housing, leadership and community development training to LDCAA staff, Board Members and volunteers.

NeighborWorks’ mission is to build strong, resilient communities and they have brought that mission to the tri-county area through many projects. A few accomplishments within the NeighborWorks and LDCAA partnership include revitalizing Ansley Park, rehab of Terry Hill apartments, creating a community garden, expansion of walking trails in Broken Bow and numerous clean up projects throughout the tri-county area.

Little Dixie CAA participates in National NeighborWorks week every year. During NeighborWorks Week, various sectors of the community come together to address a community need. The project usually centers on revitalizing abandoned properties. With help from community partners, public officials, residents and volunteers, NeighborWorks Week helps LDCAA create stronger communities.

Less than 250 non-profit organizations are members of the NeighborWorks network. Through this partnership, LDCAA is proud to drive change at the local level for individuals, families and communities.

The NeighborWorks 20th anniversary was celebrated with a groundbreaking held at Kirk and 10th St. in Hugo, OK where a new single family home will be constructed in the near future.
HANNIBAL, Mo. (WGEM) -

Some northeast Missouri homes will be getting makeovers, as part of the Self-Help Housing Program.

NECAC announced on Thursday that it has received an $159,000 Rural Development grant from the USDA to help low-income homeowners. The plan is to help rehabilitate 26 homes in Marion, Pike, and Ralls Counties. NECAC said the program will cover the cost of the supplies, while families or individuals do the labor.

"It gets homes rehab that need to be rehabbed, but it also provides people training on how to do the work themselves," said Carla Potts from NECAC. "So that if other things happen in their home, they have those skills and knowledge."

She said a construction supervisor will be on-site teaching people how to do the labor. NECAC plans to start the program up by the end of November.

LDCAA Technical & Management Assistance Program

Pictured at right are Kyle White, Program Director LDCAA T&MA Contractor; Carla Potts, Deputy Director NECAC, Daniel Page, Chief Deputy Director NECAC; Pam Anglin, Program Director RD; Janine Stephenson, Area Specialist RD; Randy Griffith, Self-Help Specialist LDCAA; and Bryce Nash, Self-Help Specialist LDCAA.
T&MA News

Little Dixie Digest
Volume 13 Issue 4

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Little Dixie Community Action Agency’s Technical & Management Assistance staff came together during October to review program updates and regulation changes. A few of the topics covered were: the new Quality Control Assessment requirement, new Administrative Notices, 502 loan processing, questions or concerns regarding the SHARES program and grant renewals/transfers. Discussions were also held regarding the recent T&MA Contractor’s meeting in Rapid City in September and updates of regional grantees.

Region 2 Technical & Management staff are pictured in front of LDCAA’s Homeownership Center in Hugo, OK

T&MA Staff Training

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

The following organizations have recently been refunded:

**Proyecto Azteca** in San Juan, Texas received their ninth grant. They plan to complete 15 homes.

**Crawford-Sebastian CDC** in Ft. Smith, Arkansas was funded to complete 16 homes. This is their sixth grant.

**North East Community Action Corporation** in Bowling Green, Missouri was funded to accomplish 26 Equivalent Units of rehab. This organization had been a new construction grantee in the past.

The T&MA coverage area includes 11 states in the South Central Region.

- Arkansas
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- New Mexico
- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- Texas
- Oklahoma
- Wyoming

**Program Contact:**
Kyle White, Program Director
kwhite@ldcaa.org
580-326-5165
500 East Rosewood
Hugo, OK 74743
SELF-HELP HOUSING

Self Help Housing participants save thousands through provision of sweat equity.

What is sweat equity?

sweat eq·ui·ty  “an interest or increased value in a property earned from labor toward upkeep or restoration”

On average, Self Help Housing Participants contribute 700 hours in Sweat Equity during construction of homes in their group.

Pictured at left, Self-Help Housing Group Worker Sommer McMurtry. McMurtry and the Self-Help Housing staff set up recruitment booths in various counties in order to educate the public about Self-Help Housing. McMurtry stated, “It’s (recruitment booths) a good way to get our information out there and potential clients are able to ask questions and learn more about our program.” She is pictured at the Choctaw Casino Health Fair ready to pass out brochures, applications and credit counseling information. Additional Recruitment Booths were set up at the Bryan County Healthy Fair, the Bryan County Fair Grounds, the Choctaw Clinic Health Fair and the new Choctaw Clinic in Durant.

New Homeowners—Thanks to the Section 523 USDA Mutual Self Help Housing Program

Pictured below are Self Help Housing families that are ready to move into their new homes.
On Average...
Self-Help Housing participants contribute 700 hours of sweat equity

Above, Little Dixie Self Help-Housing set up a candy station at the Durant Christmas Parade on December 5th 2017. They were able to pass out flyers and brochures for their program and had applications on hand for those interested in building a self-help home.

Above, Little Dixie Self-Help Housing staff drove in the Calera Christmas Parade on December 9th. They threw out candy and passed out brochures and flyers to Bryan County residents.

Kayti Townsend (below) closed on her loan in December and is ready to begin building her new home. She is pictured with Sommer McMurtry, Self-Help Housing Group Worker.
2017 Agency Highlights

Community Action changes people’s lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

42 seniors established safe & affordable housing

980 children provided educational opportunities

338 volunteers served 70,805 hours in the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program

1,943 households served

115,330 passenger trips provided by Transit

1,229 parents participated in improved parenting and family
Head Start

Early Head Start

Early Head Start—Child Care

Head Start Staff Holds Annual In-Service

Little Dixie Head Start/Early Head Start/Early Head Start—Child Care held their annual in-service in October 2017 at the Kiamichi Technology Center in Hugo. Classroom teachers, Family Advocates, child care partnership and management staff were all in attendance. Various training topics were presented by Little Dixie CAA staff including education, nutrition and the Strategic Plan. Each year, Head Start staff participate in child abuse awareness training. This year, Lynn McCarn from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services presented the training. McCarn educated staff on how to look for warning signs of abuse as well as the appropriate reporting procedures if abuse is suspected.

Susie Mashburn, Early Childhood Development and Curriculum Coach, presented updates to Teaching Strategies GOLD, which tracks student development levels. Katelyn Nelms, Nutrition Specialist, updated staff on changes to the Child & Adult Care Food Program. Lastly, Jordan Mack, HS/EHS Assistant Director, presented Strategic Plan updates, including progress made toward program goals.

Multiple staff members participated in the second annual in-service costume contest. Some staff showed their Halloween spirit through individual costumes, while some planned group costumes for entire centers (pictured at left and next page).

While in-service is a time for training, management staff were happy to provide an opportunity to have fun as a large group while working towards one goal: improving the lives of children and families.

Mission

Providing life changing education and resources

— Exceeding expectations.

— Embracing individuals.

Above, Battiest Head Start students and parents are pictured enjoying the monthly “Dads Day” event which took place in December 2017.
In order to provide Head Start, Early Head Start/Early Head Start—Child Care participants the best services possible, teachers and assistants participate in round table sessions throughout the year.

Two roundtables were held in November for teachers and assistants. Teachers received training from Twyla Kurlee on a new curriculum called “Creative Curriculum”. Teachers were introduced to the curriculum by Ms. Kurlee, a Creative Curriculum representative, who served as a guide. The new curriculum will provide everything teachers need to teach a lesson all at their fingertips. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to hear how others have used the curriculum in their classrooms.

During the round tables, teacher assistants were able to enhance their classroom skills. Assistants were provided tools to work with children who exhibit challenging behaviors, and how to handle difficult situations skillfully. Methods for uncovering children’s behaviors were provided along with how to best serve those children. Several seasoned Teacher Assistants were in attendance and shared tips with new Teacher Assistants.

As the year continues, HS/EHS/EHS—CC will continue to provide roundtable sessions with topics to best help serve classroom staff.

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CREDENTIALING

Little Dixie Community Action Agency is currently offering a Family Development Credential course for Family Advocates. The course is a ninety-hour program that teaches Family Advocates how to assist families in maintaining self reliance. The Little Dixie CAA Head Start program is focused on moving towards an outcome-based practice in order to not only provide services, but serve the entire family. The FDC course will also focus on training Family Advocates to provide life, social and communication skills to Head Start families. Additionally, compassion, empathy and fostering healthy relationships are taught in the course. Upon completion of the FDC course, Family Advocates will be better prepared to succeed in social work and family development. The course will be offered through April 2018.
HEADING PARTICIPATES IN BOODLE BRIGADE

The “300 Boodle Brigade” is a group of parents and communities who worked to gather items to send to troops deployed overseas during the holiday season! Items that were sent to troops included ornaments, cards, decorations and personal items that work to help lessen the feeling of isolation that comes with being half way around the world from their family and loved ones.

This year, children from the Battiest and Horace Mann Head Start Centers shared in this endeavor to bring joy to those fighting to maintain our freedom here in the USA. Approximately 70 art projects-cards, ornaments and decorations created by the children were sent to troops in Afghanistan. Soldiers will love these personal touches from home.

Below left, Horace Mann Head Start students entertain friends and family during their Christmas program.

Below right, students at Rattan Head Start receive a surprise visit from Santa Claus.
Coordinators Provide Life Saving Training

In December 2017, Little Dixie Healthy Start Coordinators completed their shaken-baby training. Recently, the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Impact Program staff teamed up with Healthy Start to provide a Reality Works Shaken Baby Simulator doll for each of the three counties served by Healthy Start. The coordinators are now able to use the dolls in demonstrations for their participants. Healthy Start is excited to be able to better teach parents and caregivers in our area the dangers of a shaken baby. In addition to teaching parents what dangers come along with shaking an infant, they are now better prepared to help their participants come up with a plan to use when faced with stress.

Healthy Start Strives To:

- Improve women’s health
- Discourage alcohol use during pregnancy
- Promote breastfeeding
- Develop interventions that are culturally sensitive, community specific and family-oriented
- Include fathers
- Foster partnerships with other programs and organizations

Visit Facebook.com/littledixiehealthystart to learn about parent trainings in Choctaw, McCurtain and Pushmataha Counties!
The early years of a child’s life are vital in developmental growth. Associating early literacy with early childhood can have a beneficial impact on the growth of a child’s developmental process. Early developmental opportunities establish a foundation for children’s academic, health, and general well-being. There are many ways to correlate early literacy into child development. These five steps will benefit a child’s early literacy development:

READ. Reading is the most important thing to do in order to prepare a new reader and expose a child to early literacy.

TALK. Talking is how children learn their spoken language, starting at birth.

SING and RHYME. Singing and rhyming help children hear the smaller sounds in words.

WRITE and DRAW. Writing and drawing let children represent ideas and words, beginning with scribbling.

PLAY. Playing is how children discover, explore, and understand the world and their place in it.

The ECCS Impact Program focuses on early literacy in the community. They have partnered with the Washington Community Center and Project G.A.I.N. (Get Active & Involved Now) to create early literacy corners. This “Kid’s Corner” (pictured at right) is located at the Washington Community Center. This corner was created to enhance the nutrition program provided by the Washington Nutrition Center Wednesdays and...
Early Comprehensive Childhood Systems

IMPACT

Fridays. It provides parents a place to interact and read with their child. Another early literacy corner referred to as “Shorty’s Corner”, (pictured at right), is located at Shon’s Redfront Barber Shop. This corner provides children a place to read and play while waiting on a parent to get a haircut. These early literacy corners are stocked with books, interactive learning activities, and information about resources in the community that parents might find helpful. ECCS Impact staff and partners hope each location will expose children to books and activities they might not have at home. Parents, remember that the small aspects in a child’s life can turn out to be the most important qualities they can acquire.

Retired Senior Volunteer Program

Pictured at left is Little Dixie Community Action Agency Executive Director, Rebecca Reynolds and Pam Price. Price was the winner of LDCAA’s Retired and Senior Volunteer Program’s gun raffle. She won a Browning AB3 Hunter Bolt Action Rifle. The fundraiser will benefit activities throughout the year provided by RSVP. The successful fundraiser raised over $3,500.
Little Dixie Community Action Agency Inc., hosted its annual 5K Race Against Poverty and Youth Fun Run on October 14th, 2017. Staff and participants gathered at Hugo Lake State Park in support of Little Dixie RSVP Program. The race extended across the scenic park and runners were represented in almost every age category. Alli McDaniel, Rural IMPACT Coordinator coordinated the event by securing multiple sponsorships from businesses and vendors. Karla Luginbill, RSVP Program Director stated that this year’s 5K was among one of the most successful in agency history, due to McDaniel’s efforts. Total funds raised exceeded $5,450. Charles Lennox of Hugo (top left) and Megan Johnson of Valliant (top center) were the Overall Male and Female Winners of the 5K race. Lennox and Johnson ran impressive times of 19:37 and 29:22 (respectively). LDCAA would like to congratulate staff on hosting a successful event, and thank you to all participants and donors for raising money for a worthy cause.

Pictured at left is Board Member and community volunteer Clinton Crawley as he crosses the finish line during the 5K Race Against Poverty.
Veterans were recognized, honored and celebrated on November 9, 2017 in Pushmataha County. In days prior, RSVP volunteers along with Antlers High School students collected items for the Red, White & You Project. These were small tokens of appreciation put together with a simple message to say thank you to the volunteers. The gifts were distributed during the Antlers High School Student Council Veteran’s Day Program. Thank you to Antlers Family Dentistry, Dr. Twana Duncan, K-Rays, Chris and Amy Gay, the Antlers High School Student Council and National Honor Society and students for collecting items, assembling the gift bags, and distributing them to the Veterans.

In addition, RSVP volunteer Martha Tucker along with other RSVP volunteers from the Finley Quilters Group made a beautiful patriotic quilt which was given to World War II Veteran and RSVP volunteer Lowell Burgess. Martha Tucker represented the Finley Quilters as she attended the Veteran’s Program and the quilt was presented to Mr. Burgess by Antlers High School Student Council (pictured at left).
RSVP volunteers from Hand to Hand Food Bank helped prepare an early Thanksgiving dinner and bingo games for residents and veterans in the community. Approximately 40 people attended. Hand to Hand food bank served over 3,000 individuals during the first six months of 2017 and served 372 families in October 2017 alone. Little Dixie RSVP would like to thank all members of the armed services for their dedication and commitment. Pictured above are Roy Harper, RSVP volunteer and US Navy Veteran, and RSVP County Coordinator, Jerri Mitchell.

At left, RSVP Program Director Karla Luginbill presents Little Dixie CAA Employee Monique Knight with OKC Thunder tickets. Little Dixie CAA and the Masonic Lodge #39 of Antlers partnered in a fundraiser to raise funds for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.
On Oct. 21, 2017, the "Can You See Me Now" Suicide Awareness Fashion Show was held at Hugo Elementary School. The show featured local retailer Factory Connection, boutique Diamond D’s, t-shirt designer Shareka Lampkin, dancers Kortezz Freeman and Shaquonna Rose, artist Kentaaj Adamson, and youth and adult models from local and surrounding areas. Survivor testimonies were given by Trainer Debra Greenwood and Yoga Instructor Emily McDaniel. The show was sponsored and supported by local community partners: Little Dixie Passport to the Future Mentoring/CASA, Little Dixie Drug Free Communities, Little Dixie ECCS, CWF Organization, Hugo Helping Hugo, TSET, Red River Hoops, Hugo Public Schools, Healing Hearts, Choctaw/ Pushmataha County Youth Services, and Little Dixie Healthy Start. The emcee of the night was Mr. Shade Dill and youth presenter was Ayreona Parish. The fashion show was coordinated and organized by Di’Mehlia Adamson, and staffed by youth and adults from local and surrounding areas. This event was dedicated to Mrs. Karen Howser and her family in memory of their son Jarrett Howser and all families affected by suicide.

Students participate in the Suicide Awareness Fashion Show at Hugo Elementary School.
On October 7, 2017, in partnership with Pine Mountain Trails, City Body and Wrecker Service and the Outlaw Crew, Little Dixie Community Action Agency’s CASA Program hosted the third annual CASA Christmas fundraiser.

Tom and Deb Foster, owners of Pine Mountain Trails, provided free trail rides if guests brought a toy for the fundraiser. Nearly every individual brought at least one toy if not more.

The Fosters also donated $500 towards the purchasing of additional gifts for CASA children.

Doris Long, Victim and Youth Programs Director, and Deb and Tom Foster are pictured at left. Long received a check from the Fosters to support the CASA Program.

Pictured above are AJ Henslee, Youth First Coordinator and Doris Long, Victim and Youth Programs Director.

Above left are CASA Advocate Coordinator Marissa Jordan (center) with Passport to the Future Mentoring Program participants.

Above right, Gaylon Ridenour, owner of City Body and Wrecker Service has his hands full while collecting donations for Christmas toy drive.

The Fosters (pictured left) are ready to deliver toy donations for the CASA Program.
On October 16th and 17th, Little Dixie CAA’s Youth First Program offered the “Strengthening Families Program” training.

Several LDCAA Programs attended as well as other partners including members from Project GAIN, Christian Women Fellowship Organization and Choctaw Nation.

Jaynie Brown, the Training Facilitator, from Salt Lake City, Utah, trained 15 people on strategies for becoming Discussion and Group Leaders and Family Coaches. Participants gained knowledge to utilize the Strengthening Families curriculum.

The Strengthening Families Program has been proven effective with both high risk and general population families. SFP is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships as well as reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol abuse in children while improving social competencies and school performance. Child maltreatment has also been found to decrease as parents strengthen bonds with their children and learn more effective parenting skills.

The annual “Cutest Kids in Camo” Contest presented by the CASA Program and sponsored by the Antlers Masonic Lodge #39 took place in November. Children dressed in camouflage received banners and trophies. Every participant received a goodie bag with trinkets and coupons. All funds raised went towards the Little Dixie CAA CASA Program.

Pictured above are the volunteer judges for the “Cutest Kids in Camo” Contest.

Pictured left are the winners by category of the “Cutest Kids in Camo Contest”
On November 30th and December 1st, Doris Long, A.J. Henslee, DeeDee Atwood and Marissa Jordan, representing LDCAA Victim and Youth Programs, traveled to Oklahoma City, OK. to attend the two-day CASA-sponsored “Bridges Out of Poverty” training facilitated by Community Development Consultant Jodi Pfarr.

On December 20, 2017, Passport to the Future and Youth First Programs partnered with Christian Life Outreach Ministries to hold a Christmas ornament making event. All crafts, supplies and snacks were provided for participants who each went home with decorated ornaments. Youth First Coordinator, AJ Henslee is pictured at left assisting children with decorations. Participants are pictured at right with Youth First Coordinators Rita Plummer and AJ Henslee.

On December 15, 2017, the Youth First Program traveled to the Wildlife Heritage Center in Antlers. They were able to learn about Oklahoma wildlife and see the deer. After the field trip and pizza party at LDCAA’s Antlers Office, they participated in the “Strengthening Families” Program (shown at right). At left, program participants and Youth First Coordinator Rita Plummer are pictured viewing an exhibit.
Victim & Youth Programs

LDCAA’s Victim and Youth Programs provided Christmas presents for 145 children in the tri-county area. With the help of volunteers and donations from Pine Mountain Trails; First United Methodist Church of Antlers; First United Methodist Women of Antlers; Ms. Helen Phillips; Antlers Masonic Lodge #39; Campbell Global of Antlers; Kiwanis Club of Idabel and other residents, LDCAA was able to be a part of many childrens’ lives during the holiday season. Pictured at left are some of the donated toys.

On December 15, 2017, Victim Advocate DeeDee Atwood (pictured right provided seventy-five emergency bags for a “Foster Families Appreciation Event” in Hugo.

At left, Little Dixie Community Action Agency Employees Rita Plummer and DeeDee Atwood accept a check presented by Bruce Horton of Antlers Masonic Lodge #39. Other members of the Lodge are also pictured looking on. The funds awarded will benefit Little Dixie Community Action Agency’s CASA and Passport to the Future Mentoring Program.
Drug Free Communities

Program

Community Building & Engagement

Community Garden

The Community Garden continues to flourish through the work of DFC, community partners, the Walmart Foundation, International Paper and NeighborWorks America.

“At right, Jamison Lennox poses with LDCAA Executive Director Rebecca Reynolds after completing the 5K Race Against Poverty on October 14, 2017. Jamison received 1st place for males in the 12 and under category.

At left, Savannah Ragan receives her medal from LDCAA Executive Director Rebecca Reynolds at the 5K Race Against Poverty. Savannah received 1st place for females in the 12 and under category.

Choctaw County YouCo! members NaKiaya Lennox and Savannah Ragan (below) cross the finish line at the 2017 5K Race Against Poverty. Many members of the Choctaw County Coalition (YouCo!) participated in the event.

“We might think we are nurturing our garden, but of course it’s our garden that nurtures us.”

- Jenny Uglow
Above, YouCo! members enjoy their annual Christmas Party at the Little Dixie CAA Homeownership Center in Hugo.

Pictured top and bottom right, YouCo! members volunteer their time in order to ring the Salvation Army bell for the Red Kettle Campaign. They volunteered to “ring the bell” at the Walmart Supercenter in Hugo. Drug Free Communities Program Director Tonya Finley was able to coordinate YouCo! members in volunteering for the Red Kettle Campaign.
2017 In-Service

Little Dixie Community Action Agency’s In-Service Training took place on December 8, 2017 at the Bill Grant Civic Center in Hugo. In-Service is an opportunity for all LDCAA employees and Board Members to learn about the happenings throughout the agency and reflect on the past year. During the training, all Program Directors gave presentations regarding their specific programs. Personnel Policies were presented by staff and an employee benefits overview was presented by BlueCross Blue Shield and Aflac representatives. Maria Herron, HR/Benefits Specialist was named the 2017 Employee of the Year and Barry Diamond facilitated karaoke with the entire staff. In-Service not only gives LDCAA staff an opportunity to socialize with each other, but learn about the impact each program has throughout the agency.

Maria Herron is named 2017 Employee of the Year!

Below, LDCAA Board Chairman, Brent Franks and LDCAA Executive Director Becky Reynolds addressed staff at the annual In-Service training.

Hugo Homeownership Center staff entertained the crowd with their performance of “Happy” during the In-Service training.
Red Kettle Campaign Activities

The Antlers, Hugo and Idabel Service Units of the Salvation Army wrapped up their 2017 Red Kettle Campaigns in mid-December. Bell ringers volunteered their time in 1.5 to 2 hour shifts at locations including Walmart Supercenters in Hugo and Idabel, and Pruett’s Food in Antlers.

Volunteer bell ringers included Rotary Club members, Lions Club members, Oklahoma State Department of Health Healthy Living Program; Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; Choctaw County Coalition; Project GAIN; Security First National Bank; BancFirst; FirstBank, First United; AmeriState; ESA Sorority; Kiamichi Opportunities Inc; Little Dixie CAA Board members, staff and families; and many other volunteer residents.

Over the course of three weeks, approximately $8,447.53 was raised. The local Salvation Army Boards appreciate all who volunteered to ring the bell in order to raise funds to help low-income families. All donations dropped in the kettles will be used to assist residents of Choctaw, McCurtain and Pushmataha Counties.

Pictured above are bell ringers representing Board members, LDCAA staff and community residents.
Red Kettle Campaign Activities

Little Dixie CAA organizes the Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign activities for the Antlers, Hugo and Idabel service units in order to assist families in need. While the International Salvation Army provides a multitude of services for poverty-stricken individuals and families, the local Salvation Army Service Units have primarily provided utility assistance for families in emergency situations. This year, some funds were used to provide blankets to residents in area nursing homes and to prepare Christmas food baskets for families with low-incomes. Moving forward, the Antlers, Hugo and Idabel service units will utilize funds to assist families with utilities, food and other emergency needs.

The Salvation Army Unit of Choctaw County provided local nursing home residents with blankets for Christmas. Pictured (left) with residents is: Rebecca Reynolds and Amanda Perry with Little Dixie CAA, Director of Baptist Village of Hugo John Barry, LDCAA Board Members Will Smith and Kevin Cory. Cory also serves as a Board Member of Choctaw County Salvation Ar-

According to the Salvation Army, the Red Kettle Campaigns assist more than four-and-a-half million people in the United States during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.
Maria Herron was presented with a Service Award at the October Board of Directors Meeting. Herron is the HR/Benefits/Insurance Specialist at LDCAA and was recognized for her five years of dedication as a valued employee. We thank you for your commitment to Community Action! Herron is pictured with Board Chairman, Brent Franks and LDCAA Executive Director, Rebecca Reynolds.

Not pictured is Joe Castleman, Transit Program Driver, who received an award for ten years of service to Little Dixie CAA and Robert Marko, who received a five year Service Award for his work within Little Dixie CAA’s Transit Program as a Driver.

Little Dixie Community Action Agency and Local Banks Provide Thanksgiving Food Baskets in Tri-County Area

Partnerships with First Bank, First United Bank, BancFirst and Little Dixie Community Action Agency resulted in the provision of twenty-seven Thanksgiving Food Baskets to families in Choctaw, Pushmataha and McCurtain County. The baskets were assembled and distributed by LDCAA staff in hopes of helping to create a memorable Thanksgiving for families in need in the tri-county area. LDCAA was also able to provide eleven food baskets to low-income families during the Christmas season.

Pictured from left to right: Tom White, First United; Rebecca Reynolds, LDCAA Executive Director; Jay Thomas, BancFirst; Gwen Coffman and Devan Searles, FirstBank.
Employee of the Month

October—Gayla Vaughn—Self-Help Housing Coordinator

Gayla was nominated by Kimberly Priddy, who stated that, "Gayla is hard worker and always goes above and beyond for her clients and helps other programs when needed. She is very professional and informative to her clients."

According to her co-workers, Vaughan is a wonderful presence in the office. "Gayla is always very friendly to whoever crosses her path. There is never a time when she does not tell everyone good morning or to have a great evening." Thank you, Gayla Vaughan for all you do for LDCAA Self-Help Housing.

November—Ashley Staggs
Healthy Start Care Coordinator Manager

Ashley was nominated by her co-worker, Amanda Terrebonne, who stated, "Ashley always shows a caring, positive and willing-to-help attitude." She is well known among colleagues for her compassion not only towards program participants, but towards her co-workers. Along with her other duties, Staggs has been willing to take on the role of Care Coordinator, and according to her co-worker, she “doesn’t just give feedback on problems. She implements solutions.”Congratulations Ashley Staggs! Thank you for everything you contribute to Healthy Start.

December—Amanda Perry—Housing Secretary

Amanda was nominated by her co-workers, Sheila Pierce and Karen Burton. Perry is well-versed in six programs as Housing Secretary. She assist clients in filling out applications, greets guests, transfers calls and completes data entry. She has been described as “the glue that holds us all together.” She is LDCAA’s biggest cheerleader. Thank you Amanda Perry for all you do and congratulations!
Little Dixie Community Action Agency, Inc.

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

Executive Director: Rebecca Reynolds

Board Chairman: Brent Franks

Vice-Chairman: David Hawkins

Secretary/Treasurer: William Smith

Board Members

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

McCurtain County: Tina Foshee-Thomas, Trilla Frazier, Jim Freeny, Walt Frey, Jack Griffin, David Hawkins, Andrea Henkel, Sharon Jernigan, Sandra Meeks, Vicky Wade

Pushmataha County: Amber Abu Namoos, Brad Burgett, David Colbert, Amber Duncan, Brent Franks, Amy Gay, Vickie Leathers, Dwight Satterfield, David Smith