

Connections

Bringing Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services employees closer together

October 2011
VOLUME 11, ISSUE 10

CEO Kerry Winterer and Division Directors attended ceremonies across the state recognizing employees for years of service. These are just a few examples. See inside front cover for story.



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Stay Connected:

DHHS now on [twitter](#), [facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) .

DHHS in the News Update. . .

Here are a few headlines of news releases recently issued by Communications & Legislative Services about DHHS programs.

GI Veterans' Home Doctor Named "Medical Director of the Years"
by NHCA *September 27, 2011*

Nebraska has First Death From Listeria Outbreak *September 23, 2011*

Mental Health Awareness Event at the Lincoln Regional Center *September 30*
September 21, 2011

Go to DHHS in the News on the Employee Homepage for links to Omaha World-Herald and Lincoln Journal Star articles involving DHHS program and services.

Have a story idea you think DHHS should be sharing with media? Contact Communications & Legislative Services at (402) 471-9108.

make the connection . . .

DHHS Public Website: www.dhhs.ne.gov

DHHS Employee Website: www2.dhhs.ne.gov

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Kerry Winterer

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Division Director:
Scot Adams, Ph.D.

Children and Family Services
Interim Division Director:
Scot Adams, Ph.D.

Developmental Disabilities
Division Director:
Jodi Fenner

Medicaid and Long-Term Care
Division Director:
Vivianne Chaumont

Public Health Division
Director/Chief Medical Officer:
Dr. Joann Schaefer

Veterans' Homes Division
Director:
John Hilgert

Chief Operating Officer:
Matt Clough

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About the Cover:

Celebrating Long and Loyal Service...

CEO Kerry Winterer and Division Directors have attended ceremonies across the state recognizing employees for years of service. The front cover of this month's *Connections* features a few examples.

Top Cover Photo: In Grand Island, employees from the Grand Island Veterans Home got together for a group photo to celebrate many, many years of devoted service to the Department. This particular recognition ceremony was held in Grand Island on Oct. 11. Photo: Bonnie Engel

Bottom left: **Loetta Raatz** retired in February after 65 years with the Department. She's pictured here with from left: **Gov. Dave Heineman**, **CEO Kerry Winterer**, and **Division Director Scot Adams**. Loetta was honored for her 65 years of service to Nebraskans in a ceremony at the Governor's Residence in Lincoln on Oct. 20. Photo: Bill Wiley

Bottom right: In Beatrice, **Debra Heist** (center) of BSDC, receives her 40-year service award from **CEO Kerry Winterer** (left) and **Division Director Jodi Fenner** (right) on October 13. Photo: Bonnie Engel

See pages 11-14 for a complete listing of DHHS employees and their years of service (starting with 10 years).

The Good Life: A reminder of what we all share and hope to provide to our fellow Nebraskans

Editor's Note:

CEO Kerry Winterer shared the following remarks with DHHS Employees of the Year and Supervisors/Manager of the Year at a recognition ceremony in Lincoln on Oct. 27. He wasn't able to attend the ceremony in person, but took time to videotape his remarks earlier so he could be there in spirit.

By Kerry T. Winterer, CEO

Good afternoon and welcome to this exciting event.

Those of you who will be recognized today as either an Employee of the Year or, as a Supervisor/Manager of the Year, have all been selected because of your outstanding service to our Department and to the customers we serve.

But what do we mean when we say you provide excellent 'service?' I think we can find the answer by simply looking at the definition of the word 'service.'

Service is partly defined as:
"Contributing to the well being of others through helpful acts."

I've read the nominations for all of you, and it's easy to see why you're being recognized for your outstanding service:

- Your work here at DHHS includes serving;
- Your work includes contributing to the well being of others; and
- Your work includes being helpful to others.



Over the last year your high level of service has epitomized the values of DHHS. Every day you bring us your very best—

- a constant commitment to excellence in everything you do,
- a high personal standard of integrity,
- a commitment to be positive and constructive in your attitude and actions,
- an openness to new learning, and
- a dedication to the success of others.

Each of you demonstrates our **core competencies** as you help DHHS meet its mission of helping people live better lives. It's what we do through serving and helping the citizens of our state – and you do it well.

Because of your leadership and the skills you've honed, and through your enthusiasm and commitment to quality service, you are excellent role models for your co-workers and inspire them to do their very best.

What that means is that you serve not only the citizens of Nebraska, but also the Department's employees. We depend on you to continue using those outstanding qualities and to instill the same values, commitments, integrity, openness and attitude in your coworkers.

Today, you join an elite group of employees who have been selected for this honor.

I am honored to have all of you on the DHHS team and I tip my hat to all of you! Thank you for your outstanding contributions to DHHS and to the citizens of Nebraska.

Enjoy the day; this honor is well-earned and well-deserved.

DHHS Employees/Supervisors/Managers of the Year!

DHHS is proud to announce the 2011 Employees/Supervisors/Managers of the Year. State agencies are allowed to select one Employee and one Supervisor/Manager of the Year for every 500 people employed by the agency. The following write-ups were taken from the nomination forms. *Congratulations to all!*

Employees of the Year



Bryan Bretschneider
Facility Maintenance Specialist,
Norfolk Regional Center

Bryan has dedicated his career to the Norfolk Regional Center (NRC). Not only does Bryan's skill in all areas of maintenance make him a very valuable employee, but his sense of personalization while working

keeps him in touch with all of the departments that he is assisting. Bryan takes the time from his busy schedule to share his knowledge and love for the facility and literally captivates the listeners' attention with his stories. Bryan personally knows the history, buildings, grounds, and the people at NRC.



Diana Buhrman
Staff Care Technician II,
Grand Island Veterans' Home

Diana has touched many people's lives over the past 29 years in her career at the Grand Island Veterans Home. She provides care with a smile and is well known for her positive attitude, always treating others with dignity and respect. Diana has a

knack for making each person feel important when she interacts with them. She is a mentor for new employees, provides training, and carries out her duties following the established guidelines. Diana welcomes opportunities to learn. In a word, she is exceptional.



Randy Fischer
Health Program Manager I,
Public Health, Lincoln

Randy is someone that you can proudly say represents the strong work ethic and commitment of Nebraska State employees. He

has continually been recognized for his dedication to protecting the health of Nebraskans. Randy is able to see the broad picture of emergency preparedness and how multiple entities must work together in planning and response. Randy is always willing to do what needs to be done and goes the extra mile. He is consistently organized, prepared and professional.



Russell Fralin
Staff Assistant II,
Beatrice State Developmental Center

Russell goes the extra mile on each and every task assigned to him. He is prompt, efficient and self-directed. Russell has supported many of the consultants that have been assisting the BSDC in their recertification efforts. Whenever assistance is needed

on a project, Russell's name seems to be the first to come to mind as he shows willingness to learn new skills. He volunteers to assist on additional projects outside the scope of his normal job duties and this is all done with a smile on his face.



Christina Garcia
Secretary II,
Children & Family Services, Gering

Christina has been selected for the employee of the year award because during the past year, she has stayed late after work to help clients and fellow co-workers in many different areas, such as:

interpreting, processing e-applications, and billings. She also maintains eight different vehicles, the vehicle schedule, room scheduler, and seven different copier machines while completing her primary duties as a receptionist. While being thorough and committed to her daily tasks, she always finds the time to help others no matter what situation arises.



Julie Hippen
DHHS Program Specialist,
Children & Family Services, Lincoln

Julie has worked tirelessly to improve the programs she is involved with including the Adult Protective Services (APS) and Domestic Violence programs. She has been instrumental in bringing APS to the attention of people outside of DHHS to better serve vulnerable adults in Nebraska. Julie has been instrumental in creating community collaboration including working with the Attorney General's Office and Nebraska's Domestic Violence Coalition. She is a great advocate for these programs and the people they serve.



Greg Kosmicki
Child and Family Services Specialist,
Children and Family Services,
Omaha

Greg's team-oriented attitude includes his taking on the entire caseload of a colleague who transferred to another unit. As a result, Greg was able to provide stable quality investigations and management to these cases. In addition to his casework duties, Greg has been instrumental in accessing training for Adult Protection Service workers to enhance their knowledge and expertise of services and providers. Greg has made a positive impact on the lives of vulnerable adults.



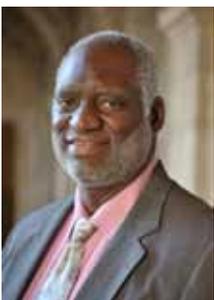
Lisa Irwin
Career Education Teacher,
Youth Rehabilitation & Treatment
Center – Kearney

Lisa is a very dedicated teacher who works hard for the benefit of the youth. She spent countless hours working on a new program at YRTC-K, the Work Readiness Program. This program allows youth to go through the experience of building a resume, filling out a job application, interviewing with potential employers and actually being hired for a job in the community. Lisa presents herself with a smile and a positive attitude. She encourages her peers and the youth she works with directly. Lisa is a great asset to the YRTC-K team.



JoAnne Meyer
Food Service Assistant,
Norfolk Veterans' Home

JoAnne is a valuable asset to the members and staff at NVH. Because of her positive attitude, team work, ability to think outside the box, and close personal relationships developed with our members, she exemplifies our vision of "Members Living Well." JoAnne takes time to listen to our members and does everything she can to ensure their dining experience is a great one. Her solutions make it possible for the members to have their needs met without compromising the quality of food served or the dignity of the member.



Phillip Jefferson
Training Specialist I,
Lincoln Regional Center

Phil is very conscientious when training new employees so when they start working on the patient units, they are well-equipped to do their job. When Phil is on the patient units, he always takes care to show a personal interest in the patients with whom he interacts. Employees who have contact with Phil are encouraged by his caring, positive demeanor toward them. He naturally takes a personal interest in the well-being of his co-workers and makes time to genuinely listen and talk with people.



Courtney Miller
DHHS Program Specialist,
Medicaid and Long-Term Care

Courtney is making valuable contributions to the Medicaid program in the area of non-emergency transportation. She has been instrumental in the development of the concept and bringing it to fruition, all while maintaining her regular workload. Courtney is very sharp and has learned complex technical details about three computer systems. Courtney is always professional and patient in communicating with clients, providers, and other staff. She educates fellow staff about the policy and how to apply it correctly to their clients' situations.

Supervisors of the Year



Julie Reineke
Accounting Clerk II,
Operations, Lincoln

Julie is a dedicated staff member who is always willing to help others. She notices when a staff member is not in the office and volunteers to assist with coverage before she is asked.

Julie accepts additional duties, makes necessary changes and keeps going. She always has a smile and positive comment. Julie keeps her work current and works on special projects every time she is asked. Julie's area is successful in part because of her work ethics, her desire to do a good job and her friendly outgoing behavior.



Mary Stockwell
Developmental Disabilities Service
Coordinator,
Developmental Disabilities, Gering

Mary is a very conscientious and compassionate employee who actively advocates for the best quality of life for individuals. She exhibits initiative for new tasks, upcoming changes,

and challenges. Mary consistently considers new and innovative ways to do the work of a Service Coordinator in a more efficient and effective manner. Mary has a gift of giving herself to the benefit of individuals and families she serves. She eagerly applies her experience and knowledge to assist individuals.



Linda Weber
Information Technology
Infrastructure Support Technician,
Hastings Regional Center

Linda is always willing to go the extra mile to support HRC by making herself available to all shift workers when needed. She is a patient and understanding teacher and truly does every task as if it were the

most important one. Linda volunteers to take on extra projects and is a huge asset to any team because of her interpersonal skills. She never hesitates to assist with computer problems when they arise and is committed to meeting the needs of not only staff, but also the youth's work towards their education using the computer.



Jesse Bjerrum
Intermediate Care Facility /
Developmental Disabilities Manager,
Beatrice State Developmental Center

Jesse has played an instrumental role in BSDC's recertification process to restore funding to the area he supervises. Jesse is a role model for his staff by being able to meet time frames on assignments and his

willingness to work beyond the normal scope of hours. Jesse has developed a rapport with staff he supervises by learning their different personality traits and then shifting his supervisory skills to meet the needs. Jesse is not afraid to take on extra duties to help out the facility as a whole.



Tom Blacketer
Facility Maintenance Supervisor
Eastern Nebraska Veterans' Home

Tom goes above and beyond his job to ensure excellent customer relations. Always honored to serve the American heroes who call ENVH their home, the facility recognized Tom for being "a hero of his community." He selflessly

worked 15-hour days evacuating people and animals with his airboat during the 2010 summer flooding. Tom was recently recognized as "Citizen of the Year" by the Douglas County Sheriff's Department. Tom is a key supervisor of ENVH and an outstanding hero of his community.



Sheri Dawson
DHHS Administrator I,
Behavioral Health, Lincoln

Conscientious, dependable, and visionary are just a few of the words that describe Sheri. Sheri has developed an extremely talented team of professionals that collect, aggregate, analyze and monitor data

funded by the Division of Behavioral Health related to mental health, substance abuse, and problem gambling. Sheri's management style is one of inclusiveness, valuing partnerships and building on the individual strengths of

each team member. She balances accountability with support and is always searching for ways to improve how we do business. Since receiving this award Sheri has moved to a new position as an Administrator of Community Services for Behavioral Health.



Pam Hovis
DHHS Administrator I,
Developmental Disabilities, Lincoln

Pam has been an instrumental leader in the expansive changes we've made within the Division over the past year. When discussions began about the changes, she fearlessly took on the challenge of putting our vision into

words. Pam has been a long-time, dedicated employee. When she realized many of the things she'd always hope we could do for the people we served were about to become a reality, her passion was invigorated. Pam is a true leader and valued member of our leadership team.



Michael Judson
Psychologist,
Hastings Regional Center

Dr. Judson goes above and beyond his job description to meet the needs of the program. You will find him in his office on off hours, working with youth struggling to meet objectives of the program or personal problems. His calm and

accepting demeanor makes it easier for youth to be open and honest with him. Dr. Judson also works with all staff to assist them in becoming better at what they do. He is the glue that keeps the chemical dependency program moving forward.



Sandra Klocke
Health Program Manager II,
Public Health, Lincoln

With the reorganization of the Department, Sandra's responsibilities have increased over the years. She has kept her employees morale up with her professionalism, divided up

workloads to cover programs/services during extended employee medical absences, and always seems to know when her employees have needed that extra smile or thank-you to motivate them. Sandra has the ability to

recognize that each member of the team is an individual with unique working styles and unique strengths and incorporates that into their work.



Lisa LeVasseur
Food Service Supervisor,
Western Nebraska Veterans' Home

Lisa leads by example with energy and enthusiasm. She is valued by our members and is always mindful of their needs. She has been known to take immediate and direct action with anything that may adversely affect a member's quality of life. Lisa has shown good judgment and critical thinking skills that allow her to distinguish problems and deal with them effectively. One of her most enduring qualities is her ability to adapt. She gravitates towards new ideas and goals in the department.



Lara Novacek
Child and Family Services Specialist
Supervisor, Children & Family Services,
Columbus

In addition to supervising the ongoing Children & Family Service staff in Columbus, Lara serves as the Northern Service Area (NSA) Permanency Liaison. Lara is a valuable asset to the NSA Comprehensive Quality

Improvement. She has chaired many groups to recommend protocols and policies to enhance day to day work. Lara is great with data and is quick to assist other Supervisors in pinpointing problems and getting reports to them. Lara has helped staff get through difficult times and is always available to answer questions.

Georgia (Suzi) Skinner
Administrative Assistant III,
Operations, Lincoln



Suzi has an employee development mindset, a management style that enhances loyalty, and creates a work environment that the staff enjoys. Suzi encourages ideas from staff to increase efficiencies and improve customer service. She looks for opportunities for organizational improvements; actively seeks to provide prompt, efficient and courteous service. Suzi is a supervisor who models the DHHS' Values and Core Competencies and mentors her staff in the same manner.



Kathleen Stolz
 Child & Family Services Service
 Delivery Administrator I, Children &
 Family Services, Grand Island

Kathleen came to Children & Family Services from the Foster Care Review Board and jumped in with both feet. Kathleen is able to make critical family-centered decisions on issues that will affect policy for years to come. During stressful times, Kathleen makes sure families' needs are met by working through issues one at a time. Staff appreciates her open door policy and the ability to discuss issues with her. Kathleen is personable, friendly and takes extra effort and concern to make staff and families successful.



JoDeen Swartz
 Office Supervisor,
 Youth Rehabilitation & Treatment
 Center – Geneva

JoDeen excels in teaching new staff members. She demonstrates good leadership skills with her staff and works with them to maintain high standards in the work they complete. In addition to her office supervisor duties, JoDeen has assumed coordination of video conferencing at the YRTC-G and has been an active member on the Accreditation Committee. JoDeen can be counted on in all situations as she is respected by subordinate staff and coworkers.



Ruth Vineyard
 Child & Family Services Service
 Delivery Administrator II, Children
 & Family Services, Lincoln

Her area has undergone a tremendous change during the past year with the opening of the first Customer Service Center in Lincoln. Due in large part to Ruth, there has been minimal disruptions to the work flow and clients have been receiving their benefits. Ruth's attention to detail and organization in planning for all aspects of the move made that possible. She has worked hard to ensure that all staff had the training and tools needed to succeed at their jobs. Since receiving this award, Ruth has moved to a new position as Deputy Director of Medicaid and Long-Term Care.



Kay Wenzl
 DHHS Administrator I,
 Medicaid and Long-Term Care

Kay is a supervisor who is constantly looking for ways to improve the programs she oversees. She looks for efficiencies, always keeping in mind the people that Medicaid is here to serve. Kay's responsibilities were increased when she was assigned the oversight of the Durable Medical Equipment program and the transportation which Kay approached with clarity and common sense. It is never easy to effectuate changes in Medicaid's benefit structure and Kay has managed to do so with minimal amount of disruption to providers, clients and the Medicaid program. Kay's attitude is always positive. She is well liked and respected by her peers and the stakeholders with whom she works.



Kay Wessel
 Information Technology Business
 Systems Analyst Supervisor,
 Lincoln

Kay takes her mentoring role serious and is appreciated and admired by her team leads, business analysts and temporary staff. Kay is the key person that ensures the legacy Medicaid Management Information System team stays aligned with the Medicaid business needs and goals. Kay's positive attitude is very contagious. She is organized, efficient and takes great pride in her work. Her perseverance, stamina, ability to adapt and sense of humor is admired in dealing with the ups and downs in the last year.

Congratulations!
TO
EVERYONE!

Way to Go!

Statewide and national recognitions, honors and awards

Gianakos Named 2011 Foundation Fellow

The Nebraska State Bar Foundation recently named **Brad Gianakos, JD MBA**, DHHS Administrator of Legal Services, one of this year's Class of Fellows.

Each year notable individuals are nominated from across the state to become a Foundation Fellow. It's a very prestigious honor that is given to 30 attorneys every year. Attorneys are selected based upon their dedication to improving the administration of justice in their state, their leadership in the legal profession, their civic service, their integrity and their Foundation support.

Gianakos is a Contributing Member of the Nebraska State Bar Foundation and has participated in a number of its programs, including the Mock Trial program, the Teen Parents and the Law program, and the Age of Majority booklet. This year's group of Foundation Fellows have the privilege of nominating the new class of Fellows next year.

Congratulations, Brad!



Ruth Cover Completes Health Security Fellowship

Ruth Cover, DHHS Hospital Preparedness Coordinator, recently completed a one-year fellowship with the Federal Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group (ITACG).

ITACG's mission is to better protect the public by sharing information about federal counterterrorism, homeland security, and weapons of mass destruction to assist in recognizing terrorist threats. Cover's training included fundamental and intermediate intelligence analyst courses, a counter-terrorism analyst course, and coursework in the recognition of terrorist tactics, techniques, and procedures. Cover relocated to Washington, D.C., during the fellowship. When she returned to DHHS earlier this year, the Department benefited from all of her fellowship training.

Cover, a retired Navy Reserve Senior Chief Petty Officer, said her military experience and an extensive background in hospital-related health administration positions provided a good foundation for the fellowship experience. Cover graduated with a Master of Healthcare Administration degree from Bellevue University in 2006.

At DHHS, Cover manages and oversees Nebraska's Federal Healthcare Preparedness Program cooperative agreements, which provide federally-funded grants totaling between \$2.5 million and \$3 million to assist more than 90 hospitals and health care systems in handling a sudden influx of patients following a large-scale disaster or public health emergency.



*My Office Family
Thanks for the memories...*

*By Nancy Widdowson**

*I come each day, with a cup full of Joe,
Into a world that lots of folks know.
But this one is special as you can see,
Because everyone here has love for me.
They care if I'm happy, sad or sick,
And they know my faults and what makes me tick.
They notice when a new blouse I wear,
Or if I need to do something with my hair!
We laugh, we cry, we joke and tease,
But all these dear friends we just like to please.
We grumble and complain with each new change,
And think out loud, "My, isn't that strange!"
But we do our work as best as we can.
We cover for each other and lend a helping hand.
We're a family you see, as diverse as can be,
All sizes, all ages from different family trees.
And now on this day that I last walk out,
My cup is empty, but my heart is not.*



**Nancy, a case aide in the Central Service area, retired from DHHS in September.
She wrote this poem as a thank you to her coworkers.*

Leave A Legacy



Best Care
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Leaving a Legacy

This poster from Best Care Employee Assistance Program talks about Leaving a Legacy. It's an important message to remember. DHHS employees leave a legacy every day by helping people live better lives. Some employees have been with DHHS for a number of years and are celebrating special years of service awards this year. See pages 11-14 for the complete listing.

DHHS Years-of-Service Honorees

“Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.” *Theodore Roosevelt*

Because employees are located across the state, those working in facilities and Service Areas are identified accordingly. The Regional Centers are in the [Division of Behavioral Health](#), Veterans' Homes are in the [Division of Veterans' Homes](#), the Beatrice State Developmental Center is in the [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#), and the Youth Rehabilitation & Treatment Centers and Service Areas are in the [Division of Children & Family Services](#).

Connections publishes this information provided by DAS State Personnel. If errors or omissions appear, please contact your local Human Resources Office.

65 YEARS OF SERVICE

Loetta Raatz was honored for her years of service to the state. Loetta retired earlier this year.

45 YEARS OF SERVICE

CEO's Office - IS&T

LaDonna Brule

Division of Public Health

Mary Ann Moore

Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care

Sharon Kuehn

Division of Children and Family Services - Central Service Area

Sheila Williamson

40 YEARS OF SERVICE

CEO's Office - IS&T

Margo Gamet

Operations - Human Resources & Development

Barbara Maas

Operations - Financial Services

Willard Bouwens

Operations - Support Services

Twila Williams

Division of Public Health

Carla Hartl

Stanley Jensen

Joyce Novak

Katherine Olmsted-Backhus

Gary Scott

Marsha Wandersee

Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care

Joyce Ann Dingleline

Division of Children and Family Services - Central Service Area

Sharon Deepe

Division of Children and Family Services - Northern Service Area

Jacque Belles

Division of Children and Family Services - Eastern Service Area

Janet Chaussee

Darlene Steindl

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - Kearney

Ronald Cox

Robert McMullen

Lincoln Regional Center

Vicky Bulin

Linda Luther

Norfolk Regional Center

Karen Ehlers

David Hallberg

Beatrice State Development Center

Debra Heist

Charlet Nichols

Bonnie Oria

Grand Island Veterans Home

Mabel Gilpin

Norfolk Veterans Home

Kathleen Renter

35 YEARS OF SERVICE

CEO's Office - IS&T

Candice Avery

Nancy Staley

Operations - Financial Services

Daniel Albrecht

Sharon Egger

Karen Jaques

Elmer Meiler

Operations - Support Services

Vicki McAhren

Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care

Chet Hartwig

Division of Children & Family Services

Peggy Borrell

John Kwiatek

Ruth Wilke

Division of Children & Family Services - Central Office

Joseph Skorupa

Division of Children & Family Services - Western Service Area

Joyce Freeman

Kathy Kinkade

Division of Children & Family Services - Central Service Area

Mary Batenhorst

Lucinda Janulewicz

Marlys Schmidt

Division of Children & Family Services - Northern Service Area

Marilyn Abrego

Mary Ann Birkel

Sharyn Hjorth

Division of Children & Family Services - Southeast Service Area

Carla Heiser

Geri Kean

Joyce Maly

Janice Kay Meints

Juanita Williamson

Division of Children & Family Services - Eastern Service Area

Wesley Flott

Terry Lorenzen

Lynette McCowen

Marvelan Schultz

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - Geneva

Daniel Scarborough

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - Kearney

Anthony Kleidosty

Hastings Regional Center

Susan Callan

David Haase

Shelley O'Connor

Joann Stromer

Dennis Stromer

Lincoln Regional Center

Diane Ellis

Jerald Hanley

John McCoy

Elizabeth Willey

Norfolk Regional Center

William Beutler

Linda Hansen

John Kroll

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Timothy Mick

Ellen Moeller

Cynthia Novotny

Donna Ray

Beatrice State Developmental Center

Billie Carel

William Clark

LuAnn Faris

Russell Fralin

Joan Schmidt

Ronald Voegel

Grand Island Veterans Home

Rose Haggard

Mary Kontos

Linda O'Brien

Roxanne Shuman

Norfolk Veterans Home

Glenda McGrew

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

CEO's Office - IS&T

Jeff Casper

Michelle Otto

Elizabeth Robertson

Operations - Human Resources & Development

Deborah Smith

Operations - Financial Services

Kathleen Tiede

Operations - Support Services

Dianna Knoop

Mitchell Schwichtenberg

Division of Public Health

Nancy Byrd

Kris Chiles

Pamela Harris

Barbara Packett

Terry Philippi

Ruth Schuldt

Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care

Pamela Haas

Susan Spitzer

Rosemary Stubbendeck

Sally Hinds

Division of Children & Family Services

Roxann McCormick

Division of Children & Family Services - Central Office

Steven Wilson

Division of Children & Family Services - Western Service Area

Cathleen Callahan

Jeanette Koncaba

Katherine Rosenthal

Linda Scovill

Division of Children & Family Services - Central Service Area

Mary Gingrich

Division of Children & Family Services - Northern Service Area

Margaret Fleming

Janet Mulligan

Robert Sterken

Division of Children & Family Services - Southeast Service Area

Patricia Gomon

Cindy Johnson

Jean Nolte

Deborah Swearingen

Division of Children & Family Services - Eastern Service Area

Theresa Baxter

Vicki Carr

Kim MacKenzie

Jean Smith

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - Kearney

Robert Dworak

Hastings Regional Center

Carmen Novak

Lincoln Regional Center

Marc Ostrander

Debra Roberts

Glen Thummel

Steven Urban

Sandra Waldron

Norfolk Regional Center

Judy Burnett

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Jodi Derby

Joni Gebhard

Peggy Maruhn

Beatrice State Developmental Center

Lynn Bogart

Sara Keuten

Rodney Koch

Allen Lantz

Linda McConnell

Dwight Parde

Grand Island Veterans Home

Julie Burkhardt

Judith Terrill

Norfolk Veterans Home

Daniel Muehlbauer

Western Nebraska Veterans Home

Catherine Fillinger

Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home

Thomas Blacketer

Diane Blacketer

Barbara Jorgensen

Debbie Nelson

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

CEO's Office - IS&T

Sheila Bluford

CEO's Office - Legal Services

Teresa Hampton

Operations - Support Services

Amir Azimi

Rita Imlay

Grace Salvo

Division of Public Health

Thomas Cox

Becky Hill

Marva Honea

Anita Jackson

Mark Miller

Sally Nichols

Christine Noren

Monica Pribil

Pamela M Wicht

Patricia Barnas

Wolfe

Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care

Pamela Cade

Gaylene Jeffries

Janis Theiler

Margaret Van Dyke

Division of Children & Family Services

Mary Becker

Jean Morgan

Division of Children & Family Services - Central Office

Terri Farrell

Division of Children & Family Services - Western Service Area

Denise Brill

Donna Case

Charlotte Gaspers

Cindy Hasty

Nancy Marsh

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Wendy Meyer

Lori Price

Benita Steffes

Darci Wittler

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Geraldine Rutledge

Janis Schmieding

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Stephanie Anderson

Dennis Jackson

Nancie Leinen

Sheryl McCright

James Tolbert

Chatherine Zlomke

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Rodger Stofer

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - Kearney

Susan Bokenkamp

Brian Long

Jana Peterson

Hastings Regional Center

Kelly Hoelting

Ruth Jeremias

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Kellie Thomas

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Janet Trout

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Dellphine Briseno

Barb Buck

Connie J Dembowski

Julie Dvorak

Teri Engleman

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In their own words

Letters to DHHS employees who are *helping people live better lives*

Rita Uldrich, Business Manager, Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center in Kearney, sent us the following note from the SAFE Center for all the hygiene items donated by YRTC-K employees. Rita also want to thank YRTC-K employees for donating to Jeans Day to raise money and wanted to give a big thank you to **Mary Adams**, Corrections Canteen Operator, for organizing this drive and for delivering all the items to the Safe Center.

Dear YRTC employees,
Thank you so much for all of the wonderful brand new hygiene items that you gifted to our center! Donations are used to assist individuals and families who are in crisis situations. Thank you for helping others to make safe and positive changes in their lives.

The S.A.F.E. Center (Spouse/Sexual Abuse Family Education Center)

Greg Votava (Public Information Officer and Webmaster, Lincoln),

I just have to let you guys know how much I appreciate the License Verification section of your website. I have to go to other state sites to verify pharmacist licenses and this one is by far the best. I love the ease of use and the Generate a Verification option that prints proof in a very professional format. Please don't change!

Thanks,
A Human Resources Specialist in Omaha

Editor's Note: Waiver Services coordinators use an incredibly diverse list of resources for their clients. **Mary Jane Austin**, Social Service Supervisor, Omaha, tells of two waiver services coordinators and their recent real estate resources. One of the waiver services coordinator's families has their multi level home on the market as their daughter is now in a wheel chair. They wanted to stay in the same geographical area in Omaha due to schools, etc. Another family is moving back to their home state. The out of state family has an adapted ranch style home. Although this particular transaction connection didn't work out, the family was able to give yet another resource for the family looking to buy in that area.

The parents' comments show what a tremendous impact our services coordinators have on their families. Here is what they said:

A friend at work told me today there is a home that will be available soon. It is one street west of where we live. It is a ranch that is partially accessible. She doesn't know any other details but I wanted to pass this along in case it helps another family.

Best wishes to you and thank you so very much for everything. You've been a fabulous help for our family and we are truly grateful for your ongoing, thoughtful consideration.

Thankful Clients

Dear Jana Peterson (Administrator, YRTC-K),

Please extend to the seven youth, **Trevor Spiegel** (Youth Counselor), and **Rich Morse** (Recreation Assistant) our THANKS from the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. This group helped with the clean-up efforts at Buffalo Bill State Historical Park. It originally took a huge workforce to put into place all the protections from flooding of the Platte River, and again a huge workforce to remove all the protections.

Your young men helped with removing a dirt barrier along the fence line at the shop building, which required a lot of shovel work and raking. They also assisted with the moving around of several large historical artifacts in the barn and ice shed. Due to their efforts, it brought the historical park one step closer to re-opening.

Sincerely,
Windmill State Recreation Area

Von Alavi (Children and Family Services Administrator) and **Yolanda Nuncio** (Service Area Administrator),

I wanted to share with you a great appreciation I have for **Chris Nemetz** (Children and Family Services Specialist Supervisor) and his very kind thoughtfulness for not only kiddos but those who he has worked with. I received a phone call from Chris to share with me the tragic death of a prior state ward. We all make connections with these kids, and they become somewhat like family at times. Chris shows through his actions a deep care for people, and it reflects in all aspects of his work. Please be sure to tell Chris thanks and to keep up the good work as it meant a lot to me that he took the time to contact me on his own to share that sad news with me.

As for my new job so far, I have just started to get my feet wet in Kearney and my office is across from the police station. I miss the people I worked with and happy for the experience I achieved while working with DHHS.

Kearney Regional Parole Office

To **Amanda Nawrocki** (Unit Manager, Omaha) and **Camas Diaz** (Administrator II, Omaha),

Just wanted to let you know about the great job the CPS/APS hotline staff is doing!

I was on-call for the CPS unit in the Northern Service area recently. During my week on-call, not one night went by where I was not called out to deal with some sort of issue. Every single time the hotline called me (or I called the hotline), the staff were knowledgeable and prepared to answer my questions.

On more than one occasion I had a hotline worker gathering information for me, then I'd get a call a few minutes later that they had discovered more information they felt was pertinent to my investigation. The hotline staff would follow up to see if I needed anything else. They were eager to look up phone numbers, case assignments, previous intakes, etc. It was refreshing to find a group of folks that were persistent in their pursuit of "how can I help."

Thanks to the staff at the hotline for making my job a little easier and for taking on the task of helping with enthusiasm.

Best Regards,
Seth Coates,
Children and Family Services Specialist, Fremont

Please send letters from satisfied customers via any method listed in our editorial box on page 2, and we'll publish as many as space allows.