



Hope Inside



Board of Directors

- President: Gail Steen
- Vice President: DeLynn Hay
- Treasurer: Lorene Bartos
- Secretary: Lisa Hale
- Members:
- Jaylen Vella
- Amy Jensen
- Ashley Ulmer
- Les Buckley
- Scott Larson
- Jim Baumann
- Christine Marvin
- Marla R. Styles
- Michelle Libal
- Brodey Weber

Management Team

- Vi See, Executive Director
- Jeri Winkelmann, Chief Financial Officer
- Jill Bomberger, Early Head Start and Head Start Director
- Steve Langdon, Human Resources Director
- Michelle Martinez, Community Services Director
- Heather Loughman, Communications and Development Director

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 } Ramona's Story
- 2 } Executive Director's Message
- 2 } Oh, the Places They'll Go!
- 3 } Tiauna's Journey
- 3 } You've Empowered Ana's family
- 4 } Thank You for Helping Provide the Basics
- 4 } Coming Soon—Your Gift Will Be Matched!

“I needed connection, and the Gathering Place was there.”

Your support gave Ramona more than good meals – it connected her with resources to follow her dreams.

If you ask Ramona what she's been up to lately, she'll beam.

“Well,” she says, “last week I went to the park and took samples from the stream. For homework. And that was so neat. I'm just so in love with my major.”

Having homework again is new to Ramona. Just last month, she enrolled in an environmental science degree program at UNL. She's thrilled about it, and the opportunity to learn more about how the world is connected. Attending these classes is her dream.

If you ask Ramona what inspired her to go back to school, she won't hesitate: Community Action's Gathering Place.

When Ramona first went to the Gathering Place for meals this past February, her world seemed small and dark. She lives with PTSD, and was going through a difficult time. She felt uncreative and isolated, distrustful of others, and suffered from distressing suicidal

thoughts.

“The Gathering Place was like this beacon,” she said. “At that time in my life, it was the only place I could go and not feel scared or alone or looked down upon. People respected me there. I felt welcome. Eating at the Gathering Place feels like coming home to a big family dinner. There are people there who know me and care about me, and they've empowered me to gain confidence.”

You see, by giving to the Gathering Place, you give so much more than hot, nutritious meals. You give safety. You give encouragement when and where it is needed the most. And you give those who often feel hopeless and lost in the world a sense of community and hope. Ramona found

connection.

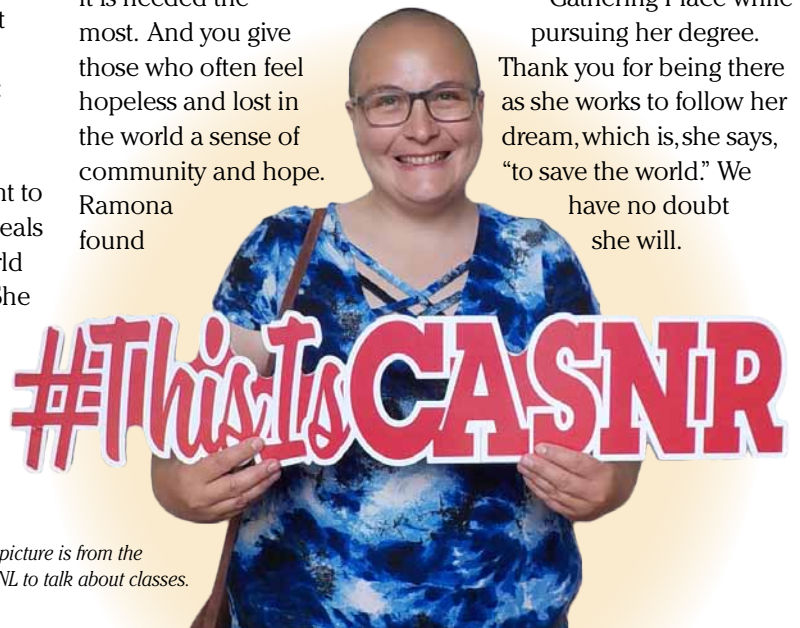
“It's felt like this intersection of everything for me,” said Ramona. “Because of the Gathering Place, I got connected to a hiking group, which inspired me to go back to school. Because of the Gathering Place, I learned about SNAP benefits I qualified for, which meant I could afford school. Because of the Gathering Place, I believe in myself and in other people. I feel safe, comfortable, and confident. And I can't

believe my life now is the life I get to live.”

Ramona continues to enjoy dinners and the company of her newfound empowering community at the Gathering Place while pursuing her degree.

Thank you for being there as she works to follow her dream, which is, she says, “to save the world.” We have no doubt she will.

“Because of the Gathering Place, I believe in myself and in other people. I feel safe, comfortable, and confident. And I can't believe my life now is the life I get to live.”



Ramona says, “This picture is from the first day I went to UNL to talk about classes. I was so happy!”

Fall is a time for change...for new beginnings

Your support enables our participants to live the lives they want to lead.



Dear Friend,

No matter how long it's been since you last went to school, doesn't September always feel like the start of a new year? This is certainly true when your organization runs several early childhood education programs! In the past month, we've seen dozens of children new to Head Start walk through our doors. We've also seen familiar faces, and welcomed all of their families to walk with us on this journey toward economic stability. Throughout our other programs, too, fall is a time for change.

Each year, your support of

our mission gives thousands of individuals and their families the opportunity to grow stronger and more empowered in unique, important ways. They receive the hot, healthy meals required to fuel the pursuit of their dreams. They earn savings matches to purchase reliable transportation, to drive to and from work. They become involved in their children's education, strengthening a family bond and those children's chances of school success. Each and every one of them works tirelessly in pursuit of their goals. Your generosity makes reaching those goals possible. Thank you.

So as fall approaches and leaves begin to change, I hope you take a moment to join me in celebrating the success of the remarkable individuals featured in this newsletter. Then, take a moment to think about your impact. It's here, in every story shared. It's also greater than these pages. It's in the successful, stable lives these individuals now, thanks to you, have the opportunity to lead.

Thank you,

Vi See

Executive Director

Big news!



Special thanks to our 2019-2020 Head Start classroom sponsors!

Our Head Start programs recently opened two new classrooms at North 33rd Street. Take a look at what our Keen Koalas and Optimistic Owls have been up to so far in their great new classrooms!

Earlier this year, Community Action received supplemental funding from the Office of Head Start that allowed us to increase program hours for children enrolled in our locally-designed Early Head Start/Head Start program option. As a result of this, we were recently able to locate two classrooms, Keen Koalas and Optimistic Owls, at City Impact on North 33rd Street. Classrooms officially opened on September 4th, and children have loved being in their new space.



As we embark on a new program year, we thank our generous sponsors for their kind new or renewed support!

- Bill and Heather Loughman, sponsors of the Thoughtful Turtles
- Candy and Tom Henning, sponsors of the Proud Polar Bears
- James C. and Rhonda S. Seacrest Foundation, sponsor of the Cuddly Cows
- Lincoln Pediatric Dentistry, sponsor of the Fantastic Foxes
- Lincoln Sunrise Kiwanis, sponsor of the Energetic Eagles
- Nelnat + Allo, sponsor of the Playful Pandas
- Pinnacle Bank-Lincoln, sponsor of the Gifted Giraffes
- Vi See, sponsor of the Peaceful Puffins
- In loving memory of Karen Rooney Colleran: one of the first teachers in the Lincoln Head Start program, and all around beautiful person, sponsor of the Optimistic Owls
- Alexander Wealth Management/UBS, sponsors of the Happy Hedgehogs

- Christine A. Marvin, sponsor of the Zippy Zebras
- Drs. Bob and Lisa Rauner, sponsors of the Loveable Leopards
- Mick, Lisa, Jordan, Katie, and Elizabeth Hale, sponsors of the Dazzling Dolphins
- Office Interiors and Design, sponsors of the Diligent Deer
- Steve and Kathy Langdon, sponsors of the Talented Tigers
- Sue Quambusch and Len Sloup and John and Nancy Wiederspan, sponsors of the Keen Koalas

2019-2020 classroom sponsorships are still available! If you're interested in sponsorship, or want to learn more, contact Heather Loughman at hloughman@communityactionatwork.org or (402) 875-9339.



Somewhere to turn

Your giving provided opportunities for Tiauna to succeed in high school, college, and beyond.

Tiauna has always been a hard worker. For the past few years, she's lived and breathed work and school. A double major with multiple jobs, Tiauna understood the importance of managing both her time and her money—skills she was able to learn thanks to our Opportunity Passport™ classes she began taking in high school.

Throughout Tiauna's Opportunity Passport™ journey, she learned how to budget, invest, and apply for reputable loans. Along the way, she worked hard

to save her money. And thanks to the support of donors like you, we were able to match that savings. Tiauna was eventually able to purchase a vehicle using her match funds—and thanks to the education she received while in the program, she has the financial skills necessary to responsibly manage the decision.

“This summer, having my own vehicle meant I could work multiple jobs. I could have some independence. I'm so empowered by everything I learned.”

“This summer, having my own vehicle meant I could work multiple jobs. Because of this, I could rent a place to live and have some independence after graduating college. I'm so empowered by everything I learned.”

But Tiauna's story doesn't end there. Just a few weeks ago, Tiauna drove her vehicle to Omaha, where she officially moved to begin her new job. For the next several months, she'll be paying it



You gave Tiauna support through high school and college, and now she's graduated and achieving great things.

forward as a College Possible volunteer with AmeriCorps. She'll be coaching low-income students in strategies to stay in school, get their degrees, and succeed, no matter what opportunities await them.

“Mi familia aprende juntos.” / “My family learns together.”

Every parent wants the best for their child. Your support of Community Action Head Start gives parents the opportunity to realize this dream.

When asked to share something about herself, Ana said, in Spanish, “I am a mother of three sons: Oscar, Santiago, and David.” All three of her children are enrolled in our Head Start programs. Santiago and David both attend center classes, while Oscar has since moved on to succeed at a nearby elementary school.

But Ana isn't only a proud



Ana has volunteered in her sons' Head Start classrooms since 2016.

Head Start parent: She's also a classroom volunteer. Since 2016, she's been spending time at her sons' center every day. It started as an opportunity to bond with Santiago—an infant at the time.

“I could stay and help him get used to the bottle,” Ana said. “It helped both of us get ready for me to go back to work.”

She now does the same for three-month-old David. In the morning, she rocks and holds him. As a classroom volunteer, she also assists with mealtimes and other activities.

“I love Head Start,” she said. “I love how they teach my children, and when we all read books together. When I volunteer, I can practice English with my children. I can see what they're learning, and I know they'll go to school with better English language skills.”

Your support of Community Action Head Start impacts both children and their families. It gives parents like Ana the opportunity to play an even greater role in their children's lives – a critical influencer of school success.

Thank you for providing a space in which families can grow stronger together and create lifelong memories.

In closing a conversation with Ana, we asked what she appreciates most about Community Action Head Start. In English, she responded. “We are learning. And everyone is kind.”

Your generosity supports families like Ana's as they gain the tools needed for economic stability and a lifetime of success.



Thank you for caring for our community

Your generosity supplied over \$5,600 worth of basic needs items to our community's most vulnerable residents.

Soap. Laundry detergent. Diapers. You recognize these items for what they are: Necessities. And when we said there were people in our community going without, especially during the stressful back-to-school season, you stepped up and helped out. Thanks to you, and to Russ's Market and Super Saver, we were able to purchase thousands of items for those working hard through our programs who might otherwise go without. So whether you donated funds, supplies, or time to this cause, we can't say it enough: **Thank you for making a difference.**



Gathering Place Match Campaign launching in mid-October!

Thanks to our generous match sponsors, your gift to fight hunger in Lincoln will once again be matched!

From October 14th through December 31st of 2019, your gift to support our Gathering Place soup kitchen will once again be matched! Giving to this campaign provides a unique opportunity to see your dollars stretch even further to provide nourishment, comfort, and hope for those in our community who need it the most. **Check your mail in October for more information about how you can give to this impactful campaign this holiday season!**

2019 Gathering Place match sponsors, as of September

- LEAD SPONSOR:
Acklie Charitable Foundation

- PRESENTING SPONSOR:
Miriam Moeller Charitable Trust

- PARTNERING SPONSORS:
Inspro
Union Bank and Trust

- CONTRIBUTING SPONSOR:
Bukaty Companies

YES, I want to help empower people living in poverty to reach economic stability.

Please accept my gift of \$ _____

Your donation will go toward supporting:

- Feeding those who are hungry at the Gathering Place
- Preparing children for success in school
- Preventing and eliminating homelessness
- Helping families learn financial skills/save for major asset purchases

I would like to designate my gift to the following program (e.g. The Gathering Place, Head Start)

I have included (or intend to include) Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties in my will or estate.

My name _____
 Company _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

May we publish your name? Yes No

If so, how would you like your name(s) to appear?

Payment Options:

- Check payable to *Community Action*
- Credit Card: Visa MasterCard Discover

Account # _____
 Exp. Date (mo/yr) _____ Security Code _____
 Signature _____ Date _____

For more information contact:

Heather Loughman, *Communications and Development Director*
 (402) 875-9339 | hloughman@communityactionatwork.org



210 O Street
 Lincoln, NE 68508
 www.communityactionatwork.org