



Commission Approves Fiscal Year 2006 Budget

By Stephanie M. Bond
Editor

The Oklahoma Commission for Human Services approved the more than \$500.1 million OKDHS budget for fiscal year 2006 at its June 14 meeting. Child care subsidy, developmental disabilities services, child support enforcement, adoptions, adult day services and the ADvantage Waiver program received needed funding boosts.

Steve Beebe, human services commissioner and chair of the commission's budget committee, recommended the commission accept the proposed work plan. He stressed, though, that "even though the budget is not strained, there are no funds for growth. A big chunk of the budget is replacing federal dollars for state dollars."

The Oklahoma Legislature increased the state appropriation for the Department by more than \$73.6 million



(Foreground) Oklahoma Commission for Human Services commissioners Wayne Cunningham (left) and Steve Beebe (right) view OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick's PowerPoint presentation at the June 14 commission meeting. The commission approved the Department's work plan of \$500.1 million state dollars for fiscal year 2006.

for fiscal year 2006. The appropriation totaled \$481.9 million – an 18 percent increase from last year. The state dollars allocated by the Legislature combine with federal appropriations and other funding to create a \$1.6 billion budget for OKDHS in fiscal year 2006.

"The appropriation was a hard-fought accomplishment," said Sharon Neuwald, coordinator, Office of Legislative Relations and Special Projects.

House Bill 1094 allocated the Department \$408.3 million in state dollars. The bill outlined several line-item adjustments separate from the base appropriation. It included \$15 million for child care subsidy funding, \$1.65 million for child support enforcement, \$3.9 million for program growth for the Adoption program and the ADvantage Waiver program, as well as \$632,000 for adult day services. The line-item adjustments totaled \$73.6 million, bringing the total state dollar appropriation to \$481.9 million. Funds carried over from fiscal year 2005 will make up the remaining \$19 million to meet projected budget obligations for fiscal year 2006, said Heidi Mitchell, director,

Commission Adjusts Director's Salary

By George Earl Johnson Jr.

The Oklahoma Commission for Human Services approved adjusting the salary of Oklahoma Department of Human Services Director Howard H. Hendrick to \$155,000, effective June 16.

The Commission had not adjusted Hendrick's salary since he took the position July 1, 1998. Hendrick's current salary is \$125,000 annually and is below the minimum salary recommended for such a job by the Office of Personnel Management. The approved salary

adjustment amounts to a 4 percent increase per year over the seven years.

Human Services Commission Chairman Richard DeVaughn, DDS, Enid, said the increase was long overdue.

"For the level of responsibilities Howard Hendrick carries for this state, he has been one of the most underpaid public servants in Oklahoma," he said. "Since the Oklahoma Constitution states that the commission is charged with setting the salary for the human services director, we thought it was a timely decision." ■

Office of Finance Budget Unit.

Mitchell said the \$15 million child care subsidy received will help “offset challenges the program might encounter” without having to increase parent co-payments or resort to waiting lists. She said the state funds child sup-

port enforcement received can “draw down” an additional \$3.2 million from the federal government that will be used to collect child support.

“I’m most encouraged about the appropriation to increase the rates to services providers, which, in many

cases, are long overdue,” said Mitchell.

The Legislature approved \$6.3 million to improve the rates OKDHS pays to Developmental Disabilities Services Division and Aging Services Division providers, such as habilitation training specialists, job coaches and personal care assistants. According to Mitchell, job coaches, for instance, had not received a rate increase since 1995.

DDSD also received \$1.6 million to help 4,200 clients who are waiting for services. OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick said the funds will be used to move at least 25 percent of those clients off the waiting lists.

While there were many bright spots in the OKDHS appropriation, the Department originally requested \$514 million to fulfill its work plan and expand programs.

“Unfortunately, we can’t fund the majority of needed program growth,” said Mitchell. “We’re going to have to absorb costs in some areas because other areas weren’t fully funded.

“While we’ll maintain our current workforce, we needed 303 new staff for Field Operations, which we can’t hire. Case workers are overworked and case-loads are too high.”

The Legislature passed several mandates for the Department, but only funded half of them. It funded the rest of the pay increase for employees effective July 1. It did not fund the 1.5 percent increase in retirement contributions nor the 15 percent in projected benefit allowance increases coming in January. It also did not fund, but mandated, hiring 10 social service specialists for the Breast and Cervical Cancer and Family Planning Programs.

Neuwald said, “It will still be a tight year, but we’ll live with what we received.”

“It’s a good budget when you look at the overall picture of what we’re going to be able to do this fiscal year,” said Hendrick. ■

Legislation Affects DDSD Clients, Alerts Long-Term Care Residents to Sex Offenders

*By Stephanie M. Bond
Editor*

More than 70 bills affecting OKDHS passed in the first session of the 50th Legislature. Sharon Neuwald, coordinator, Office of Legislative Relations and Special Projects, discussed the legislation having the most impact on the Department.

Senate Bill 219 and House Bill 1094 appropriated state dollars to the Department. SB 219 was the \$20 million supplemental measure that allowed OKDHS to meet its fiscal year 2005 work plan obligations. Under HB 1094, the Department’s fiscal year 2006 appropriation, the Department received \$482 million – an increase of \$73.66 million over last year’s appropriation.

“I’m really championing SB 1015,” said Neuwald. This legislation creates the Oklahoma Self-Directed Care Act for people with developmental disabilities. The measure requires OKDHS to create the Self-Directed Care Pilot Program, which will allow people with developmental disabilities to choose service providers and to direct the delivery of services to best meet their long-term care needs.

“This legislation really addresses the needs of our developmental disabilities populations,” said Neuwald, “and is consistent with the aims of the Olmstead Task Force, which encourages services in the least restrictive

environment.”

Advocates for residents of long-term care facilities were active at the Capitol this session. The advocates fought for ensuring sex offenders not be allowed to reside nor work in long-term care facilities. HB 1963 addresses the issue.

Neuwald said SB 259 “took a lot of work,” but the result was allowing community-based providers to provide more services to clients with developmental disabilities.

SB 635 expands OKDHS’ abilities to enter into lease purchase agreements for office space.

SB 905 requires state agencies to terminate employees when the employee has received three notices of noncompliance for not paying state income taxes in the same tax year.

HB 1649 prohibits paying for lottery tickets with debit cards and requires the lottery commission to withhold any delinquent debts for OKDHS from lottery winnings. The measure requires that the Commission for Human Services determine what types of debts, such as overpayments and past due child support, that will be collected.

According to Dena Thayer, programs manager IV, Office of Planning, Policy and Research, OKDHS tracked 324 bills for potential impact on OKDHS during the legislative session and 253 more bills for the Human Services Cabinet. ■

Happy Birthday, America: Keep Your Best Foot Forward

By George Earl Johnson, Jr.

While many can point to the faults of our great nation, the United States of America, few are running to its borders to escape the freedoms. Our challenges in the 229-year history of this democratic republic are numerous. However, they are outnumbered by our blessings. Why? Because we have learned from experience how to keep our Best Foot Forward.

Best Foot Forward



June 14 we honored our American Flag on National Flag Day. In the recent history of mankind, it has stood tall as our symbol for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness – for Americans and all around the world who seek the freedoms to live and worship as they choose.

There are those who could argue with these statements, but America still remains one of the few places on the planet where one can do so without fear of governmental retribution. Our opinions can vary widely; however, we still pledge our symbol of freedom, the American Flag, by saying “One Nation Under God, With Liberty and Justice For All.”

We can do this because we praise freedom above all else, even when it’s not for ourselves. While no one really wants to die for his or her country, thousands of men and women have done just that for America since before we became this great nation. And as long as there are conflicts and oppression in the world, we will continue to do so.

Yes, Happy Birthday, America – land of the free and home of the brave – Happy Birthday, America. Keep Your Best Foot Forward. 🇺🇸



Vietnam veterans (left and right) John Fears, 1st Lt., U.S. Marine Corps, and Tommy White, Petty Officer 1st Class, U.S. Navy, along with Eduardo Chavez, who served in the U.S. Navy from January 2000 to January 2005, raise a new flag during Flag Day ceremonies at the Sequoyah Memorial Office Building, Oklahoma City, June 14. Fears is OKDHS' assistant general counsel, Chavez serves as a Spanish translator in the Office of Planning, Policy and Research, and White is programs administrator, Office Support Services Division, Departmental Services Unit.

Amy Crews,
child welfare
specialist II

Teresa Jefferson,
school-based
service worker

Deanna Gordon,
administrative
technician III

Tammie Kreger,
administrative
technician III

Miranda Williams,
school-based service
worker, Coal County

Alberta Gunter,
child welfare
specialist III

Jan Stowers,
county director

Michelle House,
social services
specialist II

Laura Banciewicz,
social services
specialist II

Clarice Sparlin,
social worker

Tara Clary, social
services specialist II

Andrea Hudgens,
social services
specialist IV

Anna Scribner, adult
protective services
specialist II

Diane Niblett,
administrative
assistant I

Stephen Blankenship,
social services
specialist II

Lori Black,
social services
specialist II

**Johnston
County**



**Caught
Working**

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Child Welfare Worker Nominated for National Award

By Stephanie M. Bond
Editor

Jackie Warren considers advocating and finding permanent placements for children all in a day's work, but staff members at Oklahoma County 55F believe she exemplifies child welfare and OKDHS at its best.

Warren, a child welfare specialist II in Permanency Planning, was chosen as the Oklahoma nominee for the Lisa Renee Putman Excellence in Direct Service Award, sponsored by the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The award recognizes and honors front-line child protective service workers who promote the health and safety of children.

"Ms. Warren has received accolades from foster parents, court-involved parents, Director Hendrick, the Post Adjudication Review Board, Court Appointed Special Advocates, directors of service agencies and co-workers,"



Jackie Warren, child welfare specialist II, Oklahoma County 55F, earned the Oklahoma nomination for the Lisa Renee Putman Excellence in Direct Service Award, sponsored by the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Warren, who has worked in Permanency Planning for more than five years, received an all-expense-paid trip to Boston.

said Kathy Simms, programs administrator, Children and Family Services Division. "Last year, Ms. Warren was honored by Oklahoma CASA as the Oklahoma Caseworker of the Year."

Jeri Poplin, Oklahoma County 55F director, Jan Bynum, assistant county director, and Eno Mowarin, child welfare specialist II and Warren's supervisor, nominated Warren for the award. Their nomination said she "develops positive relationships with families by treating them with respect and empowering them to become independent, resourceful and self-reliant." They described her as "outstanding, compassionate, responsive, skillful and collaborative."

Warren has worked for OKDHS in Permanency Planning for five years. She holds a master's degree in education, but quickly learned that, while she enjoyed working with third through fifth graders, she "wasn't a very good classroom manager."

"Permanency Planning is very challenging," said Warren. "Sometimes I have 24 hours straight of tears, but when kids go home or find a permanent placement, it makes it all worth it."

Having lived in Massachusetts, Warren said she enjoyed the all-expense-paid trip to Boston for the 15th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. A social worker from Washington State was selected for the award.

"I'm honored to be nominated, but I just do my job," said Warren. "I work hard. There are a lot of gray areas in social work. If a family situation is salvageable, I'm going to fight for the family and the child. You have to empower them. Sometimes, though, you can't, and you have to accept that, too." ■

An award certificate from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. It features a portrait of Roy Keen on the left. The text on the right reads: "Oklahoma Department of Human Services Director's Lifetime Achievement Award. In great appreciation this Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to Roy R. Keen. For a lifetime of committed service to the citizens of Oklahoma. Vision, availability and responsiveness are the hallmarks of committed service. Committed service is an attitude. Roy Keen's attitude of committed service is paved with integrity, compassion and understanding. For almost half of a century, Roy Keen has combined committed service and a shared purpose with a positive attitude that has proven to be an unapproachable force within the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. His dedication to Oklahoma's citizens is deeply appreciated. Presented June 8, 2005. Howard H. Hendrick, Director Oklahoma Department of Human Services." The certificate has a blue border and the OKDHS logo at the top left.

Pontotoc County OKDHS Staff Volunteer with Compassion



Pontotoc County social workers volunteer at the Compassion Outreach Center in Ada. (L – R) Front: Shanna Wood, adult protective services specialist II; Vanessa Sawyers, social services specialist II; Sandy Gray, social services specialist II; Melissa Heitland, social services specialist II; Don Venable, social services specialist IV. Back: Cathy Wood, adult protective services specialist II; Leslie Bratcher, adult protective services specialist II; Ivan Otero, social services specialist I.

By Dustin Pyeatt
Associate Editor

Every day OKDHS employees across the state work to help people who are struggling to survive get to a place where they can start living and planning for the future. But the services offered by OKDHS only cover so much. What happens when people are sick, and what if they don't speak English? OKDHS staff in Pontotoc County have found the solution in a powerful new faith-based partnership with the Compassion Outreach Center, Inc.

The Compassion Outreach Center is a free medical clinic sponsored by the Central Church of Christ in Ada and supported by the Chickasaw Nation, local hospitals, the local Ministerial Alliance and medical professionals of all faiths in the Ada area.

The clinic offers free consultation and medicine to low-income or uninsured families and people transitioning from welfare to work.

On alternate Monday and Tuesday nights, staff from the Pontotoc County OKDHS office volunteer at the clinic, offering services after hours such as AIDS information, adult day care, adult protective services, food stamps, personal care programs, energy assistance, transportation and help for parents with children with disabilities.

"One man who came in was diabetic and was eating nothing but Ramen Noodles," said Sandy Gray, social services specialist. "He said he was fine and didn't want any help, but we certified him anyway, and he took the card. We talked to him about his diet, and he had more money to eat healthier. He made candy for Christmas and brought it to

the clinic. If I never help another person, that was worth it."

"We've even gotten people approved for Medicaid, and they didn't have to come back to the clinic," said Vanessa Sawyer, social services specialist.

On alternate Monday nights, OKDHS staff assist with the indigent drug program. Through this program, local volunteer pharmacists work with OKDHS staff in processing pharmaceutical applications and sending them to pharmaceutical companies who donate medicine to people who can't afford it.

"We sometimes have 10 to 30 people come in one night," said Gray. "It's wonderful that we can do this."

The Compassion Outreach Center also receives the voluntary services of 25 doctors and 12 nurses, as well as

certified counselors. And according to Ed Poblete, director of the Compassion Outreach Center, some people who used the clinic in the past have even come back and volunteered.

Though the center helps many people who have fallen through the cracks, there are those who come through its doors only to face one more obstacle – the language barrier.

"Some of the people who come in are migrant workers or here legally or visiting," said Ivan Otero, social services specialist. "Some are here without documentation and don't receive benefits. They get scared that we're going to report them. They have a lot of fear."

Otero, who was born in Honduras and raised in Ardmore, speaks Spanish and uses his language skills to alleviate their fears.

"Some come in with the notion that if they receive assistance or food stamps, it will go on their permanent record and hurt their children's future," said Otero. "A lot of them lack education, and they just don't understand that we're social workers, not deportation officers. I don't care why or how they're here, if a child is ill, they need help."

The partnership with the Compassion Outreach Center has also allowed OKDHS staff the opportunity to get closer to the people they serve and form a stronger connection with them.

"It's been a real positive experience for us just to mingle with the people," said Melissa Heitland, social services specialist. "You see a lot of people who work around town, but who don't have insurance and use the clinic. Everyone is so appreciative. It's all very organized and runs very smoothly. Everyone's treated with respect."

Added Gray, "We don't wear OKDHS name tags or anything, we're just other volunteers there."



(L – R) Ronnie Magar, Pontotoc County director, has joined with Ed Poblete, director, Compassion Outreach Center, Inc., to provide services to people in need.

The OKDHS staff who volunteer at the clinic also credit the success of the partnership to the leadership of two people – Pontotoc County Director Ronnie Magar and Don Venable, social services specialist IV.

"If it weren't for Ronnie and Don, we wouldn't be able to go out and do work in the community," said Leslie Bratcher, adult protective services specialist.

"Don has helped come up with forms to use there," said Gray. "He's also helped us with getting computers."

Added Heitland, "Don just rocks!" "They manage to keep their caseload up without lapses even while volunteering," said Venable. "And they all do full caseloads."

Magar is equally proud of his staff and their efforts to reach out into the community. "They'd do it whether I had anything to do with it or not," said Magar. "All these folks are totally invaluable to the success of this. It not only helps keep people out of the system, it allows them to see OKDHS staff as something other than a government official with a form." ■

Interpreter Allows OKDHS to Meet Client Needs: Pilot Program Set Up Statewide

By Stephanie M. Bond
Editor

When Emilia Veras first went to the Marshall County office in 2000 to apply for medical assistance, she took her husband with her to interpret. She had to wait until he got off work and then rush to the county office before it closed. Veras learned though that her husband didn't trust the staff, so he wouldn't give his wife all the information. When Veras became pregnant with her daughter, Ana Cristina, in 2002, Veras relied on family and friends to help her.

Other Hispanic clients, however, tried to make sense of what the social workers asked, and social workers tried to make sense of the answers. The technique proved hit and miss at best, said Area IV Director Bill Wilson.

The county office soon recognized a pattern. Alicia Velasquez, a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Work Experience Program participant, worked at the office. After she moved to Kansas, clients kept asking for her. Jan Stowers, Marshall County director, realized that Velasquez had served unofficially as an interpreter.

"Clients asked for her. Workers missed her. The clerical staff were at a loss," said Stowers. "Everyone was frustrated."

Marshall County lies on the Oklahoma-Texas border. Several manufacturing companies, which are labor-intensive businesses, are located in Madill. According to 2000 Census information, 5.2 percent of the county's population are Hispanic.

"We realized we were taking a good stab at serving all of our customers," said Joey Bishop, family support specialist IV in Marshall County. "More and more people kept coming in because one of the livestock-trailer manufacturing companies laid off folks. We had clients leaving who were not served, and we weren't getting all the information we needed."

In December 2004, Stowers presented Wilson with a solution – hire a temporary translator. And Bishop knew just the person – a 22-year-old, married mother of two who had crossed the river from Mexico when she was 11. Camelia Segura, who didn't speak English when she arrived in Madill, had learned English working in a restaurant. For several years she had translated for family members and friends and eventually for local businesses.

"Cami graduated from Madill High School and lived in both worlds – the Hispanic community and the American," said Bishop.

Martha Trevino Hernandez has been receiving OKDHS services for nine years. She always had to bring in a friend to interpret for her. Now, working with Camelia Segura, she finds it easier to ask questions and understand what's offered.



Emilia Veras talks to interpreter Camelia Segura about medical benefits for her children, Ana Cristina, 2, and Norma Edith, 3 months, at the Marshall County office.



At the March Commission for Human Services meeting, Area IV Director Bill Wilson (right) explained how Marshall County implemented a translator program. County director Jan Stowers (left) recognized the need. Joey Bishop (second from left), family support services specialist IV, helped implement the program. Camelia Segura (center), a native of Mexico and U.S. citizen, works four hours a day.



Camelia Segura came to the United States from Mexico when she was 11. She didn't speak English. Today, Segura serves Marshall County clients by translating what services OKDHS offers.

Segura works as an interpreter four hours a day in the county office. She has no caseload. She sets appointments with clients and workers and helps both. She serves where needed, including going out in to the field with the Adult Protective Services and Child Welfare staff.

"Having Cami has brought an overwhelming sigh of relief," said Bishop. "We realized that clients were spending a long time talking with her. We asked her what was going on. The clients identify Cami as a state employee that they can trust, and they ask every question they've always wanted to know."

"Once Cami talks to people, we've been able to identify a lot more services for them. We've also been able to prevent a lot of fraud. The language barrier has been used as an excuse to take advantage of the system. Cami has learned enough about OKDHS to intervene and ask questions, too."

Segura said she loves working for OKDHS, though getting the job wasn't easy. Her husband, Rafael Quiroz, didn't want her to work, especially for a government agency. Bishop first convinced Segura that she could be successful and then he helped convince her husband.

"My husband was laid off for a month, so now he's glad I'm working," said Segura. "I encouraged him to take English as a Second Language classes. He went and he liked it. Now he's thinking about getting his GED."

Segura plans on starting college in the fall. "I'd like to be an actual social worker," she said.

In February, Director Howard H. Hendrick unveiled a statewide Interpreter Pilot Program. Areas I, II, IV and V will each have two temporary interpreters. Area III will have 10, and Area VI will have four. The qualifications for the interpreters will look very much like Segura's – must have a high school diploma or equivalent, must pass a criminal history background check and must demonstrate effective written and oral communications in English and subject non-English language. The program will be implemented next year.

"I just love doing this," said Segura. "I feel like I'm doing something for my community."

Veras said she no longer has to wait for someone to go with her to the county office. She's happy to go by herself and she understands more. She knows someone is going to help her when she needs it. ■

Cherokee County Child Welfare Specialists Assist Federal Marshals In Arrest of Fugitive

By Stephanie M. Bond
Editor

Two child welfare specialists in Cherokee County participated in Operation FALCON, a nationwide fugitive apprehension operation coordinated by the United States Marshals Service.

Jeana Heist, child welfare specialist III and four-year OKDHS employee, and Jay Cook, child welfare specialist II and five-year OKDHS employee, helped U.S. Marshals find a fugitive wanted for kidnapping and brutally raping a child.

“We hadn’t worked with the Feds before,” said Heist, “though we are part of a multi-disciplinary team that includes other law enforcement.”

The fugitive was staying with a family who was well-known to the child welfare workers. On her way to court, Heist received a call from an agent with OKDHS’ Office of Inspector General. He told her to expect to meet a U.S. Marshal at the courthouse. U.S. Marshal Dan David met her and asked questions about the family, where they lived and their activities. The marshals had tried following the fugitive’s girlfriend, but kept losing her in bad weather.

“We didn’t have an address in our records,” said Cook, who happened to be meeting with the girlfriend on a child welfare complaint.



(L - R) Jeana Heist, child welfare specialist III, and Jay Cook, child welfare specialist II, talk about the family a federal fugitive was living with when he was arrested. The family has a long history with child welfare.



United States Marshals Service Eastern District Chief Marshal John W. Loyd awarded Heist and Cook certificates of appreciation and pins for their help in finding a federal fugitive.

Through communication, happenstance and deduction, the workers and the marshals figured out the address. The marshals burst into the home and found the fugitive watching cartoons.

“We didn’t think about the



(L - R) Cherokee County’s Jay Cook, child welfare specialist II, and Jeana Heist, child welfare specialist III, frequently aid local and state law enforcement as part of a multi-disciplinary social services team.

impact of what we were doing until it was done,” said Heist. ■

OIG Frequently Involved in Federal Law Enforcement Operations

By Stephanie M. Bond
Editor

Operation FALCON, a nationwide fugitive apprehension operation coordinated by the United States Marshals Service, netted 565 fugitives in Oklahoma, many of whom OKDHS' Office of Inspector General helped find.

"OKDHS OIG has a statutory mandate to investigate crimes against the agency and crimes committed in the course of its programs," said Mike Fairless, OIG interim Co-Inspector General. "Some cooperative agreements have arisen as an outgrowth of our regular work for OKDHS. One group of folks we are interested in as it relates to program eligibility fraud is fleeing felons and probation or parole violators."

The United States Marshals Service falls under the Department of Justice. Its mission is to protect and support the federal courts. The Marshals Service has various programs to help protect everyone involved in the different stages of the judicial process. The larger programs include Judicial Security, Prisoner Services and Investigative Services. Supporting programs include Special Assignments and Special Operations Group. The deputies and administrative personnel that work in the 94 districts all over the United States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands serve as the core of the United States Marshals Service. Oklahoma has three districts: Northern, which includes Tulsa and surrounding areas, and Eastern and Western, which divide the state in half.

"We maintain a low profile so most people don't realize it, but OKDHS OIG actually has had a few agents cross-deputized as U.S. Marshals and assigned as part of the U.S. Marshal fugitive task forces for the

Eastern and Western districts of Oklahoma for some time," said Fairless. "We also traditionally maintain close ties with the U.S. Marshal fugitive task force in the Northern district, and have had one agent cross-deputized and assigned as part of the U.S. Marshal / Secret Service Financial Crimes task force in the Oklahoma City Metro for about a year."

Fairless said law enforcement at every level frequently contacts OKDHS OIG for information and assistance, if needed. From January through March 2005, Fairless said OIG's Oklahoma City office documented 104 requests from law enforcement for information about fugitives.

"Of the 104 requests, we were able to supply useful information regarding the fugitive in 96 cases," said Fairless. "Although we know our information on apprehensions that were made is incomplete, we were able to document 53 apprehensions made by other agencies based on information OIG supplied. In other words, during that quarter, information supplied by OIG resulted in an apprehension 55.2 percent of the time."

While getting felons into prison helps everyone, the 104 requests also allowed OIG to identify nine previously unknown ineligible fleeing felons on current food stamp or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families cases.

"One case in particular resulted in an out-of-state parental kidnapping warrant being resolved and previously unknown ineligible fleeing felon being identified by our receptionist," said Fairless. "The arrest here of a non-custodial parent who kidnapped two children permitted the kids to return home for Christmas with their mom." ■

BRING LIFE BACK IN



ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Each year thousands of adult Oklahomans suffer abuse, neglect and exploitation by family members and other caregivers. Many victims are elderly, frail and vulnerable, cannot help themselves and depend on others to meet their basic needs.

Each year, APS receives and investigates more than 15,000 referrals.



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<http://www.okdhs.org/aps>

Oklahomans Donate Generously to Provide For State's Children

By Douglas Doe
Associate Editor

For expectant parents, baby showers are a blessing. For the second consecutive year, generous Oklahomans have extended that joy to the state's families in need.

From car seats to diapers and blankets to bibs, gifts have poured in from all over the state to help the roughly 14,000 moms and their newborns who live below the poverty line. A number of baby showers to benefit these newborns in need were held statewide including at the State Capitol, Frontier City, Crossings Community Church in Oklahoma City and in Nichols Hills.

"This is a very exciting collaborative effort for OKDHS to partner with the University of Phoenix in the National Baby Shower project," said Karen Jacobs, coordinator, Office of Volunteerism. The items received from the showers will be distributed through-



First lady Kim Henry hosted a baby shower in the Blue Room of the State Capitol. On hand to help collect supplies were (L-R) Melissa Beaver, Oklahoma County 55D volunteer services coordinator, Kathleen KinKade, administrative programs officer III, Field Operations Division, and Karen Jacobs, coordinator, Office of Volunteerism.

out the state and used in many capacities depending on the situation of our recipients. "We have greatly surpassed the number of items received from last year, and plans are being made to increase the number next year."

While OKDHS staff helped collect items last year, 2005 marked the first baby shower thrown by Oklahoma's first lady, Kim Henry. Henry said she got the idea from the first lady of Colorado, Frances Owens, who wrote other first ladies about the idea.

"This is a wonderful occasion for all of us to make a real and meaningful difference in the lives of some of our newest Oklahomans," said the first lady.

"Many of these babies don't even have blankets to go home in," Henry told the Legislative Information Network. "What we're trying to do is gather up the basic necessities, such as a car seat, bottles and blankets, so that the (Oklahoma) Department of Human Services can distribute items to these infants when they're born to help out Mom and Dad during the first few weeks."

Department of Human Services can distribute items to these infants when they're born to help out Mom and Dad during the first few weeks."



Karen Jacobs, coordinator, Office of Volunteerism, carries a donated child car seat and one of many bags of diapers donated by the members of Crossing Community Church during the baby shower.

Lonnie Summers, supervisor of distribution, Supply Warehouse, loads items that were donated as a part of a local baby shower to benefit mothers with newborns who receive services from the Department. The event was held May 15 at Crossings Community Church, 14600 N. Portland Ave., Oklahoma City.

This year's events had numerous sponsors including Citadel Broadcasting, Frontier City, Friday Newspaper and the University of Phoenix.

"At the University of Phoenix, we understand how important it is for us to be involved in the community," said Ingrid Berlin, vice president and director of the University of Phoenix's Oklahoma City campus. "'Open Your Hearts to Newborns In Need' is an opportunity to interact with the public more

and help newborns and their parents receive some of the essential items they'll need to care for their child. We're excited about participating in this effort again this year."

Another first-year participant in the event, Crossings Community Church, collected hundreds of items during a drive that filled nearly half of an OKDHS truck. Because of the need, the church has already announced that it plans to participate again next year, said Michele Prince, church missions director.

"When I was a worker at OKDHS, we didn't have a program like this," said Prince, a former employee in Logan County. "After meeting with Karen (Jacobs) and finding out the needs of the single moms, we really decided what a benefit it was to workers to have access to this to help meet the needs of moms and their children."

Karen Jacobs (right), coordinator, Office of Volunteerism, and Lonnie Summers (left), supervisor of distribution, Supply Warehouse, unload a trailer filled with baby shower donations made by the members of Crossing Community Church. Volunteers with the church's missions program (background) help load the items into an OKDHS truck.



News Briefs

Area IV promotion

Fowler Named Social Services Supervisor

Connie Fowler became a Family Support Services social services specialist IV in Okmulgee County in May, according to Area IV Director Judy Ann Wyatt.

Fowler is a 12-year veteran of the Department and has been an ACE reader and child care liaison in Okmulgee County for several years.

She earned a bachelor's degree in business from East Central University, Ada.

Fowler and her husband, Tim, have two children. Both the Fowlers are very active in their church and community. – *GEJ*

FSSD promotion

Williams Heads New Family Support Unit

Tammy Williams has been named programs supervisor for the newly created Enterprise Development Strategy section in Family Support Services Division, effective June 16.

FSSD Director Mary Stalnaker said, "We are pleased to have Tammy take on these new responsibilities. There is a great deal to be done to implement our new FSS enterprise systems and I believe she is up to handling the task."

Williams was the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act coordinator before accepting her new duties. She came to OKDHS State Office in June 2000 as a programs field representative in the FSSD Food Stamp section. She worked as a food stamp social services specialist in Grady County for 18 months. Williams will remain HIPAA compliance coordinator.

Williams was a medical services supervisor for a central Oklahoma medical group for six years before joining the OKDHS family in January 1999. – *GEJ*

Commission Meets July 26

The Oklahoma Commission for Human Services meets at 9:30, July 26, in Enid, Okla.

Correction

The May issue of *Inside OKDHS* incorrectly identified Erma Willis Alford, RN, BSN. We regret the error.

Tulsa County Foster and Kinship Families Involved in Round-Up

The Children's Services Advisory Board and Oklahoma Department of Human Services Tulsa County Child Welfare Services kicked off National Foster Care Month on May 1 with a "Spring Round-Up" for foster and kinship families at Tulsa's Moose Lodge.

CSAB and OKDHS have co-hosted an appreciation event for foster parents for the past 20 years.

Sixty-two foster and kinship parents, 94 children and 48 advisory board members, OKDHS staff and volunteers spent the afternoon in "The Old West." While adults enjoyed a western-style buffet and live entertainment, children had their own cook-out and activities. A Jupiter Jump, clowns, face painting and the "Cowboy Town" games and prizes entertained the children. Child care was provided for younger children.

City of Tulsa Mayor Bill LaFortune proclaimed May 1 as Foster Care Day. On behalf of OKDHS, Area VI Director Steve Scott thanked foster families for their many services to abused and neglected children. CSAB President Sherri Finik expressed appreciation from the board and the community for the vital role foster and kinship families play in the lives of children. All foster and kinship families received certificates of appreciation. Alesia Clement, foster care supervisor, OKDHS Tulsa County, presented two foster families with plaques for 35 years of service. Two other families received awards for serving children for 10 years. – *Patricia Copenhagen, child welfare specialist, Tulsa County*

IBM Uses OKDHS IT Project as Business Case

The recent migration of the large OKDHS database that stores mission-critical case management data is the subject of a new case study on the IBM Web site.

The study details the reason for the project, what was done and the successes, which included reduced maintenance and productivity costs, additional data storage capacity and enhanced performance for the more than 1,400 workers who typically use the database.

To view the case study, please go to <http://www-306.ibm.com/software/success/cssdb.nsf/CS/SLOW-684Q9Z?OpenDocument&Site=eserverzseries> - *DD*

Hamilton Named Child Welfare Field Liaison

Wilma C. Hamilton became the new Area IV Child Welfare field liaison, effective May 1. She will cover the Area's western counties of Johnston, Lincoln, Marshall, Okfuskee, Pontotoc, Pottawatomie and Seminole.

"Wilma is a gifted professional with a wealth of experience," said Area IV Director Bill Wilson. "I am confident that she will bring a high degree of excellence to the position. We're glad to have her back in Area IV."

Hamilton began her career with OKDHS in 1985 as a Child Welfare comprehensive worker and later as an intake worker in Garvin County. She served as a Child Welfare supervisor in Pontotoc, McClain and Garvin Counties from 1989-1997. In 1998, she became a programs field representative in the Children and Family Services Division in State Office.

Hamilton transferred to the CFSD Continuous Quality Improvement Unit in 1999. She first became a Child Welfare field liaison in Area VI in 2000. A March 2003 family move brought Hamilton back to southern Oklahoma where she started over as a child welfare specialist II in Pittsburg County.

Her experience brought her quickly back to the top as an area field liaison in the last two years. She will be housed in the Pittsburg County Human Services Center, McAlester.

Hamilton graduated from Jessamine County High School in Nicholasville, Ky. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees in human services, 1984 and 1985 respectively, from East Central University, Ada. – *GEJ*

Please Use New Envelopes

The Departmental Services Unit of the Support Services Division has distributed two types of routing envelopes (approximately 12.5" x 10") throughout the Sequoyah Building for testing purposes. Both are imprinted with the words "Inter-Department Delivery." To differentiate between the two types, the bright orange envelope is to be used for confidential documents and the manila one is for non-confidential materials and is printed on both sides. Please recycle and use them until all the lines are filled.

To June 2005 OKDHS Retirees...



Area II Office	
Developmental Disabilities	
Services Division	
Robbie J. Taber	16 years
Mary E. Jones	23 years
	
Creek County	
Juanita Ann Smith	16 years
	
Developmental Disabilities Services Division	
David M. Taylor	31 years
	
Muskogee County	
Randall L. Woods	28 years
	
Northern Oklahoma Resource Center of Enid	
Connie J. Dowers	12 years
	
Office Support Services Division	
Property Management	
Roger H. Brawley, Jr.	17 years
	
Oklahoma County 55-A	
Theonita C. Lewis	18 years
Charles Q. Sledge	20 years
Trena E. Swafford	28 years
Jeanine Vandyousefi	25 years
	
Oklahoma County 55-B	
Terri L. Moore	26 years
	
Southern Oklahoma Resource Center	
Corrine Y. Morrison	14 years
Betty J. Young	30 years
Mildred G. VanBuskirk	24 years
	
Tulsa County 72-B	
Susan Lynn Adair	28 years
	
Wagoner County	
Carol L. Cleland	16 years

Congratulations and Best Wishes

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OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF Child Care

www.okdhs.org/childcare/

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