



PO Box 1466
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We would like to thank CHI Health Good Samaritan for providing mailing services for our newsletter.

Newsletter August 2016

Kearney Works Board Development

The new nonprofit, Kearney Works, has just appointed a full board of directors. "We have put together a dynamic and progressive board that will further the work that began as America's Best Communities Kearney," said Chairman of the board, Marion McDermott.

While Kearney Works looks to be a workforce development resource for all people in the area, the primary goal of the Kearney Works is to provide comprehensive services and resources to the unemployed and underemployed who need to improve their labor skills in order to fill available jobs and increase their earning potential.



It will provide three pillars of service. It will develop a soft skills/ pre-employment training curriculum, it will assist residents in matching them with training and continuing education opportunities, and it will provide mentoring services through volunteer coaches to ensure long term success.



Kearney Works board at first meeting, July 26, 2016, to discuss funding, goals and vision, as well as initial projects for unemployed and underemployed.

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Kearney Works was developed as the main priority in the community wide revitalization plan developed during the America's Best Community competition for Kearney. Buffalo County Community Partners has facilitated the group through the planning of their goals, mission & vision, to appointing of the board of directors.

Kearney Works Board Of Directors

- Marion McDermott, Bank of the West – Chairman
- Jonathan Nikkila, Kearney City Council Member – Vice Chairman
- Judi Sickler, Kearney Area Community Foundation - Secretary/Treasurer
- Kelly Christensen, Central Community College
- Meredith Collins, Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska
- Shawna Erbson, City of Kearney
- Darren Robinson, Economic Development Council
- Max Kathol, Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce
- Shawn Sterling, BluePrint Engines, Marshall Engines

The board had its first official meeting on July 26 to discuss funding, goals and vision, as well as initial projects to get underemployed area residents matched with training to fill high-paying jobs that area manufacturers are desperate to fill.

Kearney Works is also focused on serving as a clearinghouse for residents to navigate workforce opportunities that already exist among all area organizations, agencies and businesses. This will help increase participation and prevent duplication among agencies.

Buffalo County Community Partners Contact Information

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Visit bcchp.org/board for complete board member listing or bcchp.org/contact for complete staff listing and contact form.

Mark Your Calendar

Submit your picture by **August 15** and join us for a reception on **September 21** for an exhibition of the photos. The theme for the photos is "Living in Harmony." Show us what it looks like to you.

*picture below submitted by Bobbie Heitman



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Kearney Cruise Nite Recap

The Be Safe, Be Smart Task force saw great community response this year. The letter the task force sent to alcohol retailers was well received. A handful of retailers put up signs to reduce the sale of glass bottles during the weekend. Two retailers did not sell glass bottles. Around 1,000 buttons with the Be Safe Be Smart logo were passed out to retailers to wear and promote the campaign.

“When individuals from the community came together in 2013 to talk about the troubling behaviors that were following Cruise Nite, we knew a couple of things: it takes time to change a culture, but also, Kearney has a unique way of working together productively.

We knew, also, it would take individuals from law enforcement, the Cruise Nite organization, neighbors and landlords, and community leaders with skills in communication to all work together. A big part of our conversation and collaborative plan was the news media,” said Kelly Bartling, member of Be Safe, Be Smart Task Force.



The City of Kearney recognized retailers, Walgreens and Kwick Stop, for omitting the sale of glass bottles during Cruise Nite, at a City Council meeting.

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Law enforcement was a key part to enforcing safety during the weekend. 80 officers worked the event.

“In 2014, 2015 and 2016 we have seen decreased instances of arrests, citations and infractions, including fewer trips to the emergency room, and just a progressively improving attitude about after-Cruise Nite. People seem empowered to do something, to call law enforcement, or share via “word of mouth” that Kearney wants a safe, fun Cruise Nite week. By working together, we’re seeing a difference. I know I feel positively about the event and see others are feeling more in control, thanks to everyone working together. This project is one great example of what Buffalo County Community Partners does best: collaborate and communicate,” Bartling said.

“I think people are understanding that they’re asked to behave. We want them to have fun, and I think they are,” said Brad Kernick, event coordinator.

The City of Kearney recognized two retailers, Walgreens and Quick Stop at their city council meeting for their participation in the Be Safe, Be Smart efforts.

“I have never seen support for law enforcement—locally or nationally be as dramatic as it is now. The *community always has supported officers*, especially when the profession is under attack”

~Lt. Dennis Lewis, Kearney Chief Police



Chief of Police, Dennis Lynch, speaks at the city council meeting. Lynch said the results of Cruise Nite are a direct result from community involvement.



Over 80 police officers from Kearney Public Police Department, Buffalo County Sheriff’s Office, NE State Patrol, University of Nebraska at Kearney Police helped keep Cruise Nite fun for everyone.

2nd Step Results

During the 2015-16 school year, United Against Violence provided Second Step social/emotional learning curriculum kits to several school and community-based pre-schools in Buffalo County. The kits include 28 weeks of lesson plans on subjects that include, listening skills, focusing attention, identifying one’s own emotions, showing care and concern for others, self-regulating strong emotions, and making and keeping friends. Children who learn these “soft” skills early can more easily resolve their own emotional and friendship issues themselves and devote their school time to learning. The kits are provided to educators free through a grant from the CHI Mission and Ministry Fund.

The educators who implement the curriculum are asked to respond to pre and post-tests with questions that pertain to their students’ social emotional skills before and after they engage in the Second Step lessons. Over 300 pre-school students were rated on the pre and post-tests. The results of this testing are in and the changes are dramatic. On qualities like “Able to focus attention and follow directions often or very often” the teacher’s rating of student abilities went from **47.6% in the pre-test to 73.1% in the post-test**; “Offers to help others often or very often” improved from **48.8% to 76.8%** and “Shows age appropriate social/emotional development often or very often” went from **58.4% in the pre-test to 83.2%** in the post-test. The tests evaluate 11 dimensions of social/emotional development and, in the words of our objective evaluator, “**From pre to post, each one of these items improved significantly...**”

The abilities to self-regulate our attention and emotions and work well our classmates and teachers are powerful predictors of academic and social success in school and success in life. Children who learn and practice these skills early can take full advantage of them throughout their lives. The Buffalo County early childhood centers and teachers who are engaged in social/emotional learning are helping to make a positive and lasting difference in our future.



Right/Below: Carol Renner speaks to the Kearney Public Schools teachers who are implementing the Second Step program in their classrooms. The teachers gathered for a morning of training to see what the program can do for their classrooms.



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2016 Annual Fund Thermometer

These funds will help achieve the 2020 vision.
Add your strength to our partnership and help us reach our goal of \$140,000.



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