

C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation

2009 Award Recipient Booklet



Family of Distinction Award Recipient

The Tina Cottingham Family



Family of Distinction Award

The Tina Cottingham Family

Tina Cottingham is the single mother of three girls—Billie (age 16), Samantha (age 14), and Christina (age 1). Tina and her daughters were previously living in Edgar County, but chose to leave due to an abusive situation. They moved to Vandalia to stay with her mother.

Not only did Tina and her family have to reestablish themselves in a new community, but also their new living situation was overcrowded. In August 2008, a family member referred them to C.E.F.S.'s Fayette County Outreach office. C.E.F.S. was able to enroll Tina and her family in the Transitional Housing Program, which provided them with many services, including housing, case management, and budgeting assistance. C.E.F.S. was also able to provide her family with Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds, free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) tax completion, and food pantry assistance.

Throughout her counseling with C.E.F.S. and the Continuing Recovery Center, Tina has met several milestones towards self-sufficiency. She was able to enroll her children in a new school district and create a new support system of friends and family. She is now employed at the Fayette County Hospital as a phlebotomist, and plans to attend Kaskaskia College this fall to further her education in social services.

Community Services Block Grant

Dena Weber, Program Director

Janet Wise, Fayette County Outreach Coordinator

Personal Achievement Award Recipients

- Jessie Jackson
- Jean Hulbert
- Kimberly Tate
- Jeannette Wolf



Jessie Jackson

Jessie Jackson is a Career Seeker in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program. She has worked at two separate worksites and has attended the program's leadership group regularly. In May 2009 she obtained her Associates degree as a Teacher's Aide/Assistant.

When Jessie entered the WIA program she was a single mother struggling to get by. She knew she had to obtain an education if she were to make a better life for herself and her child. Jessie was able to hold down a job and attend school full-time while taking care of her family.

Melody Lilly, Family and Community Development Specialist, notes Jessie's determination. "She began as a very young single mother with ambition and is now becoming an outstanding and responsible adult". Now 22, Jessie is married with a small child. She has learned to appreciate her own personal achievements, and plans to give back to the community in her work as a Teacher's Aide.

Workforce Investment Act Program

Kevin Bushur, Program Director

Melody Lilly, Family and Community Development Specialist

Jean Hulbert

Jean Hulbert has been attending the Nokomis Golden Circle Nutrition Program (GCNP) Congregate Site for the past twenty years. She has been an active member of her community, volunteering at the GCNP Congregate Site, playing in several card clubs, and holding active membership in the First Methodist Church. She has also been a member of Eastern Star for sixty-five years. Her and her husband also owned a plumbing and heating business for forty years.

Though her husband has since passed away, Jean has remained active in her community. She continues to meet at the Nokomis GCNP Congregate Site almost daily. Jamie Benny, Nokomis GCNP Site Supervisor, states that Jean “represents what congregate nutrition sites are about: keeping seniors healthy, active and engaged”.

Jean enjoys her time at the Congregate Site, noting, “Life doesn’t get much better...friends, food and being needed”.

Golden Circle Nutrition Program

Debbie Weber, Program Director

Jamie Benny, Nokomis GCNP Site Supervisor

Kimberly Tate

Kimberly Tate has been enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program since June 2007. WIA helped to enroll her in the Registered Nurse Program at Kaskaskia College and Kim graduated there in December 2008 with an Associates Degree in Nursing. When Kimberly started in the WIA Program, she was married and had only a high school diploma. Now the single mother of two children, Kimberly has handled her transition by remaining level headed and focused on her goals.

Now employed by St. Mary's Hospital in Centralia, Kimberly has reached her goal of becoming a registered nurse. She plans to continue her education.

Workforce Investment Act Program

Kevin Bushur, Program Director

Melody Lilly, Family and Community Development Specialist

Jeannette Wolf

Jeannette Wolf has been an active member of her church and several civic organizations for many years. She previously worked as the librarian at Effingham High School and boasts that one of her twelve grandchildren pitches for the Baltimore Orioles.

She has faced many barriers in her life; including losing a child and placing her husband of fifty-five years in a long-term care facility. Now legally blind, she has become a home-delivered meal participant in the Golden Circle Nutrition Program. She has remained positive despite her obstacles and considers the daily meal and visit a “vital role in keeping her in her own home”.

Golden Circle Nutrition Program

Debbie Weber, Program Director

Norma Deters, Dieterich GCNP Site Supervisor

Outstanding Volunteer Award Recipients

- Bernadine Rankin
- Marie Henson
- Tina Prinz
- Sally Schofield



Bernadine Rankin

Bernadine Rankin has been a Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteer for over 18 ½ years. At 91, she still volunteers regularly at nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Clay County by playing the piano and visiting with residents. She has also helped with American Red Cross blood drives and has assisted the elderly by providing transportation to doctor's appointments and the grocery store.

Before retiring, Bernadine was the Administrator of Flora Manor. She has shown enduring dedication to the community through her continued volunteering. She truly enjoys serving others.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

Debbie Weber, Program Director

Sharon Byrd, Clay County Coordinator

Dora Riley, Clay County RSVP Site Supervisor

Marie Henson

Marie Henson has been delivering home-delivered meals in Flora for the Golden Circle Nutrition Program (GCNP) for many years. In addition to delivering meals on a regular basis Marie also delivers in emergency situations. Within a moment's notice she will be at the center ready to deliver when someone has to cancel because of an emergency.

Besides volunteering with the Golden Circle Nutrition Program, Marie is very active in the Nazarene Christian Church. She also teaches Sunday school at a local nursing home. She is a very dedicated and dependable volunteer and is ready to help anyone in need. She has told Megan Riley, the GCNP Flora Site Supervisor "please don't hesitate to call...I can be ready in a few minutes". Marie only wishes she had more time during her meal delivery route, commenting that she "would love to sit and visit with each participant". Megan Riley values Marie's volunteer work, stating, "Marie is an amazing person and really cares about the seniors in this community".

Golden Circle Nutrition Program

Debbie Weber, Program Director

Megan Riley, Flora GCNP Site Supervisor

Tina Prinz

Tina Prinz has helped many low-income individuals by volunteering at non-profits that provide assistance in Moultrie County. A Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteer for 6 ½ years, Tina has volunteered by providing community outreach, friendly visitations, transportation to medical appointments, senior assistance, aiding in the Head Start classroom, and providing medication reminders to those in need via telephone calls.

Tina also volunteers for Habitat for Humanity, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), American Red Cross, Eastview Terrace, Moultrie County Health Department, Sullivan Chamber and Economic Development, United Way of Moultrie County, numerous local schools, and several other non-profits in Moultrie County.

According to Melissa Broeringmeyer, RSVP Program Specialist, in the 6 ½ years Tina Prinz has been an RSVP volunteer, she has reported over 18,000 hours of service with 18 different non-profit organizations. Melissa Broeringmeyer calculates that “In that time she has provided more volunteer hours than a full-time employee working 40 hours a week...According to the Independent Sector the dollar amount for a volunteer in 2007 was \$19.51. Tina has helped non-profits in Moultrie County save \$351,180 as a volunteer”.

Tina and her husband John moved to Moultrie County from New York in 1989 when their son John became the principal of the Sullivan Junior High School. Besides her volunteer work with non-profits in the area, Tina also writes letters to people in nursing homes, sends cards, and prepares food for shut-ins and those in poor health.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

Debbie Weber, Program Director

Melissa Broeringmeyer, Program Specialist

Norma Piper, Moultrie County RSVP Coordinator

Sally Schofield

Sally Schofield has been volunteering at the Clay City Golden Circle Nutrition Program (GCNP) congregate site for the past ten years. She helps pack up the home-delivered meals, serves congregate meals, counts project income, and represents the Clay City GCNP site on the Project Council.

Sally stands out because she is always willing to help wherever needed. She is very knowledgeable about the Golden Circle Nutrition Program and on several occasions has stepped in and ran the center when the site supervisor was on medical leave.

Melba Britton, the Clay City GCNP Site Supervisor, feels Sally should be recognized because she is a dependable and caring volunteer.

Besides volunteering for the Golden Circle Nutrition Program, Sally is very involved in the United Methodist Church. She plays the organ, teaches Sunday school, and helps out wherever else needed. She was also on the Board of Directors of the United Methodist Children's Home for nineteen years. She is currently a Little Wabash River District County Coordinator Lay Speaker and Secretary of the United Methodist Village Auxiliary. Having taught kindergarten for thirty years, she is also very active in the Retired Teachers Association.

Golden Circle Nutrition Program

Debbie Weber, Program Director

Melba Britton, Clay City GCNP Site Supervisor

Community Service Excellence Award Recipients

- Fred & Lynne Gocey
- Nice Twice
- Engel Brothers Ford, Inc.
- Vandalia GMAC Real Estate
- Catholic Charities
- Fayette County Hospital and Long Term Care



Fred & Lynne Gocey

Fred and Lynne Gocey recently became the landlords for the new C.E.F.S. Clay County Outreach office. They went above and beyond what was requested by the agency to prepare the new office building for the Clay County Outreach staff and clients. They installed new carpet over a larger area than was requested, installed new doorways and removed others, and added wheelchair access to the building. The Goceys also created a staff parking area.

Because Fred and Lynne are familiar with the C.E.F.S. Clay County Outreach office and its activities, they were able to support all of its needs. The clients served became their highest priority as they remodeled the building. Fred worked for months to install a new furnace, lay new carpet, and finish carpentry work. Sharon Byrd, Clay County Outreach Coordinator, states, "Our new office far exceeds our expectations. We are able to provide a much better atmosphere for our clients and the outreach staff".

Community Services Block Grant Program

Dena Weber, Program Director

Sharon Byrd, Clay County Outreach Coordinator

Nice Twice

Nice Twice is a non-profit resale store selling used clothing and household merchandise at a very low and affordable price to the Vandalia community. It was the recipient of the Community Service Award with the State of Illinois in 2002.

Nice Twice opened in 1994 and is supported by Lutheran Child and Family Services. 31 volunteers, who average 6-8 hours per week, operate the store. The volunteers organize and price clothing and serve as sales clerks. Many of the used clothing and household items are donated or are from garage sales. Every dollar the store makes is put back into the community. They take referrals from the C.E.F.S. Fayette County Outreach office, Fayette County Hospital, Fayette County Health Department, and the Vandalia Fire Department.

Nice Twice has been available to the community in emergency cases such as fires and have also been available for day to day issues and referrals. Whether a child is in need of clothing for school, a family needs warm clothing in the winter months, an unemployed individual needs dress clothes for a job interview, or a homeless individual moves into an apartment and needs household items, Nice Twice has been there for those in need.

Joan Shafer-Siebert from Nice Twice has been particularly helpful to the C.E.F.S. Fayette County Outreach office. She has often helped a family in need by donating a dollar amount of clothing and/or household items from the store. Janet Wise, Fayette County Outreach Coordinator, calls Shafer-Siebert and the rest of the Nice Twice volunteers “compassionate, caring and willing to help by donating to those customers who are truly in need”.

Community Services Block Grant Program

Dena Weber, Program Director

Janet Wise, Fayette County Outreach Coordinator

Engel Brothers Ford, Inc.

Engel Brothers Ford, Inc. has been invaluable to the Central Illinois Public Transit (CIPT) Program. Their service department has shown genuine concern for maintaining the specialty conversion vehicles CIPT must use to serve others. They understand that vehicle down time relates to people served, and work hard to get the vehicles back on the road in a timely manner. They have supported CIPT's cause by providing discounts in parts and labor, and providing quality service and repairs to specialty conversion vehicles that often pose significant troubleshooting challenges.

Established in September 1970, Engel Brothers Ford, Inc. has maintained the Blue Oval Certified Status since the award initiated in September 2000. This status conveys the highest level of customer satisfaction, and is maintained by each employee in the dealership. Engel Brothers Ford, Inc. also contributes to the community as sponsors of many local organizations including schools, Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Quail Unlimited.

Central Illinois Public Transit Program

Kristie Warfel, Program Director

Robert Bugger, Transportation Coordinator

Vandalia GMAC Real Estate

The employees at Vandalia GMAC Real Estate have donated much time and effort to support the food pantry at the C.E.F.S. Fayette County Outreach office. They have coordinated rummage sales, arranged meetings, contacted the news media, coordinated with other community organizations, and have distributed boxes for food collection around Vandalia at community events.

In 2007 the employees of Vandalia GMAC Real Estate held two large garage sales. The proceeds went directly to purchase food for the food pantry. In 2008 they helped lead an annual food drive. They have also set up monthly meetings with local churches, city members and the news media to spearhead a yearlong campaign. Many donations of food have been received as a direct result of their efforts.

Vandalia GMAC Real Estate is aware of the needs throughout Fayette County and has taken the necessary steps to help families in need. The employees have shown they truly care about others and they have made a solid commitment to their community by making sure the food pantry stays stocked.

Vandalia GMAC Real Estate is a member of Main Street and the Chamber of Commerce. This year Vandalia GMAC received 100% Customer Satisfaction Ratings and Top Referral Company Awards. They have also actively supported Kaskaskia College, the Fayette County YMCA, Vandalia Schools, Vandalia Fire Department, SAFE, and Lighthouse Pregnancy Center.

Community Services Block Grant Program

Dena Weber, Program Director

Janet Wise, Fayette County Outreach Coordinator

Catholic Charities

The Effingham Catholic Charities office opened on July 1, 1981. At that time, Catholic Charities offered services such as counseling, adoption, infant foster care and emergency assistance. Since then, they have established Second Hand Rose and Ramblin' Rose. Second Hand Rose is a resale store that serves low-income people and generates additional revenue for Catholic Charities' emergency assistance program. In 1995 they developed Ramblin' Rose, a school bus that brings clothing and school supplies to children of low-income families in rural areas.

Robert West, C.E.F.S. Effingham County Outreach Coordinator, has found great support through Catholic Charities. "When customers have needed food, they have opened the food bank. When they have needed shelter, they have provided a motel room. When they have needed clothes or anything available in Second Hand Rose, they have provided vouchers to the needy. I, personally, am very thankful that these services have usually been available simply through a phone call versus a referral for an appointment, which could delay the outcome by as much as a month".

Catholic Charities has been instrumental in helping needy families in the community. They are able to quickly respond to emergencies in order to help families get back on their feet.

Community Services Block Grant Program

Dena Weber, Program Director

Robert West, Effingham County Outreach Coordinator

Fayette County Hospital and Long Term Care

Fayette County Hospital and Long Term Care has been invaluable to the Workforce Investment Act's (WIA) Youth Program this past year. Susan Crawford, Human Resource Manager for the hospital, has worked with the Fayette County WIA office in placing youth enrolled in the Work Experience Program in employment at the hospital. Susan is dedicated to placing each youth in the area of the hospital in which they express the greatest interest. While working at the hospital, the youth are supervised diligently and are treated with the same respect as any other employee. The youth appreciate this respect and respond with a great sense of responsibility towards their work. Many of the youth placed at the hospital are interested in working in a healthcare profession, and therefore benefit greatly by working with hospital employees.

Fayette County Hospital opened in 1955. They offer a wide range of health care services, including Senior Renewal, Long Term Care, and sleep disorder and wellness services.

Workforce Investment Act Program

Kevin Bushur, Program Director

Melody Lilly, Family and Community Development Specialist