Mayor, New Principals Attend Annual Meeting

By: Alyssa Kenney

Madison Mayor, Dave Cieslewicz, joined with Kennedy Heights neighborhood residents and members of the Board of Directors for our annual neighborhood meeting on August 25th. The community center was overflowing with community members who came to hear the mayor speak and meet the new principals for Black Hawk Middle School and Lindbergh Elementary School. Families enjoyed a community potluck.

Board Chair, John Givens, launched the meeting by introducing staff members and members of the Board of Directors. Givens explained the critical role of the Board of Directors and encouraged any community member to consider joining or to visit a Board meeting to learn more. The Board of Directors meet the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30 at the community center. Childcare and Hmong translation are available upon request. All community members are always welcome.

Following Givens, both the new principals Lindbergh Elementary School’s Elizabeth Fritz and Black Hawk Middle School’s Sean Storch introduced themselves to the community and provided some back to school tips for parents. See their full introductions and tips for success inside the newsletter on pages 4-5.

Mayor Cieslewicz was the final guest on our agenda. The Mayor’s message to families was simple; read. He encouraged parents to work to instill a joy of reading in their children.

The sooner that children master reading, the sooner they can use reading to learn other subjects. Parents can support reading by visiting the library with their children, reading with their children, talking with their children about what they are reading and making space and time for reading everyday. The Mayor’s message was simple; reading with your child is a great gift and critical for their success.
News From the Heights

Executive Director’s Note

Annual Meeting
A huge thank you to everyone in the neighborhood who attended our annual meeting. The turnout was phenomenal, the food was delicious and the speakers were engaging. As folks were leaving the center we asked them to briefly place dots on items that should be priorities for the center in the future. The survey results are below:

- More academic help for kids: 13 votes
- High school programs: 13 votes
- More adult programs: 17 votes
- Full-day childcare: 18 votes
- Improve area playgrounds: 21 votes
- Improve and expand center building: 26 votes.

Cancer
Over the past few months a number of families in the Kennedy Heights community have been profoundly affected by cancer. My heart goes out to the families and individuals whose lives are impacted. On page 7 there is a brief article about Beast Cancer awareness month. I encourage women to consider a free health check.

Book Festival
At the beginning of October the Kennedy Heights Community Center will host two Wisconsin Book Festival events with guest author Kao Kalai Yang. These should be a wonderful opportunity for learning and a community dialogue, I hope that many community members will attend.

“V” IS FOR VEGETABLE

By: Lisa DuChateau

It is hard to believe that another summer has come and gone! All the sunshine and rain we had definitely made it memorable and great for gardening.

Girls Inc. spent the last four months planting, watering, and harvesting vegetables and fruit at the UW Extension Children’s Education Garden. In May, the girls helped to plant lettuce, kale, carrots, beans, and squash (among other things) in the raised beds outside the Extension offices. Each week the girls would return to tend to the vegetables, harvest what they could and use it to prepare healthy recipes.

Some of the favorite recipes included: collard greens, pea pod salad, spinach quesadillas, lettuce wraps, and homemade ice cream with fresh raspberries—and sold them at a produce stand. The girls determined prices for each product and utilized their sales’ skills with customers.

This was a great long term project, that the girls were able to see it through from start to finish and enjoy the “fruits of their labor”. It was a great summer for gardening and the Girls Inc. participants had a great time working with the staff at the UW Extension and learning gardening, healthy cooking and entrepreneurial skills.
News From the Heights

By: Danielle Treu

The Urban League of Greater Madison and Kennedy Heights Community Center are working together to provide the comprehensive Foundations Job Simulated Work Program right here in Kennedy Heights. The Foundations Program consists of four steps.

The first step is to “Learn the Basics”. Our members do this in a class for five weeks at twenty hours a week. The purpose of this class is to give our members the tools to stand out amongst others applying for the same job and help them overcome the barriers they face in securing employment. This includes: knowing how to present oneself, knowing how to articulate skills in interviews and resumes, using computers and relevant computer software, having the right attitude, and knowing how to work with a team of people from a variety of backgrounds.

Individuals in the Foundations Program will also work one-on-one with a skilled Employment Coach to achieve employment. The second step is to “Enhance your Skills”. This step is about putting the secrets of the job search and the behaviors of successful people into practice. It includes 80 hours of community service or work experience, being interview ready at all times, conducting a part-time job search, and enrolling into intense career-specific trainings.

The third step is “Achieving Employment”. This step is about finding that job and achieving goals. Our members in this step will do a full-time job search for forty hours a week, under the supervision of their Employment Coaches.

The final step is “Retaining Employment”. In this phase of our program, Members will receive one year of support and follow up from the Urban League. We do this by following up with the Member to ensure that all is going well with their job as well as with their employer. In most cases, if a person maintains employment for one year, they are likely to stay employed. If you would like to be a Member of the Foundations Program and change your life, please come to one of our Membership Classes to find out more and get started.

The program will take place at the community center. The staff at the community center can assist adults with limited childcare and some language translation as needed for successful participation. Please attend one of the following meetings to learn more and see if the program is a good fit for you. Space is limited.

Informational Meetings:

**Wed. September 22**
9:30 AM—11:30 AM

Or

**Wed. October 6**
9:30 AM—11:30 AM

All training is in English. Limited Hmong translation available.

This program is made possible by a grant from the City of Madison’s Emerging Neighborhood Fund.
News From the Heights

The New Lindbergh Principal—Mrs. Fritz

By: Elizabeth Fritz

I am so pleased to be coming to Lindbergh as your new principal. I have heard so many positive things about the Lindbergh students and staff. I also understand that there is a strong community at Kennedy Height and that parents want to support the school in any way possible.

This is the beginning of my nineteenth year as an elementary or middle school principal and my eleventh year in the Madison Metropolitan School District. The 2010-11 school year will be my 32nd year in education. In addition to being a school principal, I have also taught kindergarten, sixth grade and special education. I have organized summer school and been a district talented and gifted coordinator.

My husband, Chuck, works at Covance Laboratories and has told me that he knows that there are many Lindbergh parents who are employed there. We have two grown sons. Keith is an engineer in Cleveland, OH and Brian goes to graduate school in Evanston, Ill.

I will be dedicated to helping each Lindbergh student grow intellectually, socially and emotionally. While I believe that school is a place for learning, I also believe that schools should also be places for having fun and making friends. The staff and I will be continuing to work on improving student behavior, math instruction and instructional differentiation so that we are meeting the needs of all our students.

I value the diversity of Lindbergh Elementary and look forward to getting to know all Lindbergh students and parents. Please stop by and meet me when you are at school!
News From the Heights

The New Black Hawk Principal—Mr. Storch

By: Sean Storch

Thank you for welcoming me back to the East Side! My name is Sean Storch. I’m excited to begin my first year as principal at Black Hawk, where I will continue the tradition of teaching academic excellence, personal integrity, and community service.

I am proud of the successful values I learned growing up on the East Side of Madison, and will expect hard work, honesty, and a helping hand from each of our kids.

I am a graduate of La Follette High School and UW Madison, and taught for nine years as a classroom teacher, coach, adviser, mentor and administrator. I’m also a family man, and my wife and I have a six-year-old son, four-year-old daughter and two-year-old son.

In the next year, I look forward to meeting with you personally and learning about your hopes, dreams and expectations for your kids and community.

Set Up for Success

Some tips shared by the new principals

Be there for your child from cradle to career. Study after study shows that parental involvement is the most critical factor in a child’s educational success. Here are a few tips to get you started toward a more enjoyable experience for you and your child.

BE INVOLVED
Join the PTO
Volunteer to help
Talk with your children about materials they bring home
Keep a line of communication between you, your child and teacher.

BE DILIGENT ABOUT HOMEWORK
Some parents and guardians are a bit nervous about not being able to help their children with homework. You can find homework help in lots of places; ask your child’s teacher if you need assistance.

DON’T FORGET THE BASICS
Make sure they get enough sleep
Help children get organized
Provide healthy breakfast food

Adopted from WEAC Classroom Connections 2010-11

Book Festival Events at Center

On Friday October 1st Kao Kalia Yang, author of The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir, will facilitate a writing workshop for youth. The workshop will encourage youth to define and write their own stories. Youth in 4th through 9th grade are invited and encouraged to attend. The event will be hosted at the community center between 4:30—6:00 PM and will include a light dinner.

Following the young writer workshop with Kao Kalia Yang there will be a screening of The Place Where We Were Born, a lyric documentary about the Hmong experience in the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp. The screening will be followed by an interactive dialogue with audience members. Popcorn will be served.

Saturday October 2nd at 5:30 Kao Kalia Yang, author of The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir, and Judy Pasternak, author of Yellow Dirt: The Betrayal of the Navajo will speak at the Overture Center.

The Kennedy Heights Community Center has purchased copies of The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir. Copies are available for community residents to borrow in advance of Kao Kalia Yang’s visit. Just stop by the center and ask for a copy to borrow, two-week limit.
News From the Heights

Youth Summer Program Highlights

By Roy LaValley

The Kennedy Heights Community Center summer program wrapped up on August 13th after 8 amazing weeks. Our turnout was higher than it has ever been, with as many as twenty-seven 5th-9th graders coming most days. Weekly activities included art, cooking, sports, acting, dance, nature field trips, swimming at Goodman Pool, and more.

When asked about his favorite part of the summer program, Sasha Lewis-Norelle said, “Playing tag at the swimming pool!” Xaoly Xiong enjoyed the acting club. “I liked acting out skits and writing our own plays” he said.

A few highlights from the summer:
- Making salsa, smoothies, and coconut wrapped fruit kabobs in Cooking Club.
- Playing frisbee golf at Olin Park and going to Olin beach.
- Playing capture the flag with water balloons
- Making t-shirt presses and paper mache in the Art club.
- Going to pick strawberries and to the Owen Conservancy in the Outdoors club.
- Awesome guest teachers from UW Madison running activities in the Acting club.
- Our end of the year day at Mount Olympus in the Wisconsin Dells.

Our amazing youth made our summer program fantastic. Thank you to everyone who participated.

Meet the Newest After School Teacher

By: Jaimie Schlicher

Hello, Kennedy Heights! My name is Jaimie Schlicher, and I am very excited to be joining the Community Center After School Program staff. I thought it would be nice if you knew a little bit about me. I was born in La Crosse, WI and moved around quite a bit as a kid before my family settled in Stevens Point, WI which I consider to be my hometown. I moved down to Madison four years ago to attend the University, and just graduated in May with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Social Welfare; eventually, I would like to continue on to get my Master’s degree in Social Work.

In my spare time I enjoy reading, rollerblading, scrapbooking, and going out for lunch or coffee with friends.

I love any time I get with my family, whether we’re camping, taking a vacation, or simply spending time together.

I’m very excited for the school year to be starting and am looking forward to meeting everyone in the community!
News From the Heights

Meet the New AmeriCorps Members

Annika Jones
Hello, Kennedy Heights neighborhood!

My name is Annika, and I am so pleased to be a part of Kennedy Heights Community Center this year. I grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota and moved to Madison this summer with my boyfriend who will be attending UW in the fall. My family includes my mother and father in Minneapolis and my older sister and her husband in Austin. Lots of my relatives are from Wisconsin, so I have always considered this to be my second home.

I have served one year as an AmeriCorps member in Arizona, coordinating trash cleanup and restoration efforts on the US-Mexico border, and I enjoyed the opportunity to serve my community and meet others with the same sense of dedication. In South Korea I taught elementary school English for 16 months, living in a small fishing city called Tongyeong where I learned to eat foods like octopus and kimchi. While my college background is in biology and environmental studies, my time in Korea inspired me to be a teacher, preferably in science or ELL.

My hobbies include cooking, baking, doing yoga, watching movies and riding my bike around Madison. I look forward to meeting you soon!

Johnny Ly
Hello!

I’m so happy to be joining the Kennedy Heights Neighborhood. I’ve heard so many great things about the people here and I look forward to getting to know everyone.

As a little head start to our introduction process, my name is Johnny Ly. I’ve been living in Madison for about twelve years, attending middle school, high school, and college here. The future holds something big for me, but I have yet to choose my path.

I’ve been teaching gymnastics for the past seven years, so it would be great if I could continue working with youth in some manner. With my college degree in political science a career in government or civic engagement could also be possible. Regardless of how I take hold of my future I am committed to making our community a better place to live. One person at a time I want to instill a positive energy within.

I hope everyone, especially the young people, sees the potential they have and act upon it. Thanks for reading about me.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Jeanne Pitot Frank from the Susan G. Komen Foundation stopped by the community center to drop off some information about Breast Cancer Awareness Month. As always the Wisconsin Well Woman Program offers FREE health checkups and FREE mammograms to any woman in Wisconsin. Women can call (608) 242-6392 for information. Also this October there is an additional incentive for women age 50 or over who have never had a mammogram the Get SASSY program will give women who complete their free mammogram a $50 salon gift card. Call Carla at 242-6346 for information.

Thank You

Amy and David Hilgendorf
Amy McGrath
Barb Pokorski
Becker Law Office
Connie and Chuck Palmer-Smalley
DuWaynes Salon
Erich Schwenker
Gina Ostrowski
Janet Axelson
Jim, Maria, and Sierra Powell
Kathy, Bailey and Rosemary Walsh
Kim and Kurt Stege
Kurt and Sarah Wolff
Madison Chiropractic—North
Melissa Sargent
Michael and Nancy Shinners
Michael Rewey Family
Milton Leidner
Steven Ackerman and Anne Pryor
Sue Morrison
Wally and Stacie Meyer
Heights Community Center are in the final stages of creating a “Roots and Wings” mosaic for our hallway entrance.

The mosaic will be publicly unveiled on Wednesday November 3rd at the community center. The final product will be displayed in the center for many, many years to be enjoyed by thousands of community center users.

Mosaic Project Receives City and State Support

The Kennedy Heights Community Center successfully competed for one of the hundreds of grants from the Wisconsin Arts Board and a grant from the City of Madison Arts Commission this year to support a community mosaic for the center.

The Wisconsin Arts Board is the state agency that nurtures creativity, cultivates expression, promotes the arts, and serves as a resource for people of every culture and heritage in Wisconsin’s communities.

Over the past few months the community center has hosted a number of workshops and mosaic design meetings to gather community input and artistic talents into the mosaic. Under the artistic guidance of Michele Hatchell the children and families at the Kennedy Heights Community Center are in the final stages of creating a “Roots and Wings” mosaic for our hallway entrance.

The mosaic will be publicly unveiled on Wednesday November 3rd at the community center. The final product will be displayed in the center for many, many years to be enjoyed by thousands of community center users.